

born an aristocrat, poor fellow! There is another thing. Miss Gray fairly threw herself into his arms. I have heard so a dozen times."
"It was he who first told it," Irma

said. "It is like him. He was cunning enough to hide the arts he practiced." 'I see plainly my protegee will never and favor in your eyes. We won't make him a bone of contention, though. I'll admit that he is fully-a crankbut with a grace in his curves that one don't find in straight people. These awfully good boys are not amusing.
"Tis true, 'tis pity. and pity 'tis 'tis

She got up laughing—the shining jewel cases in her hand—a bright color on her cheek. Did she only find her pet "crank" "amusing"? It was plain to Irma that it had given her pleasure to know that Miss Gray had resigned all claim to him. It was most probable that Mrs. Minturn herself was not conscious of the true cause of this pleasant emotion. She was not a woman to analyze her feelings. If you had asked her why she felt relieved at Irma's news, she would have told you, and believed she was telling truly, that it was because she did not want to see a gifted boy handicapped at the outset of his career by a marriage with a poor, penniless, helpless girl. She would have been quick to denounce in any other the dishonor of breaking faith, but now she said to Irma, with

the utmost sang-froid. He did not love her, I am sure he never did, though he tried to, no doubt. She ought to make up with Dr. Fontenoy. So it was her face I saw among the tall lillies on your bal-cony? She did look badly, and I am sorry for her. Yes, I will dispose of these things, if only for your sake, my female Quixote. These pearls are beautiful: I'll buy them myself if I can rake up enough money. My own set is

She did not say that her own set had been sold and the money lent to Vane, but it was true. A week later Mrs. Minturn stopped

to see Irma and put into her hands a large roll of bank-bills amounting to twenty-six hundred dollars. There is the result of transforming. I have used my magic wand as well as I was able. Of course, things sold

'second hand' never bring what Irma thanked her warmly. To her it seemed a little fortune, and poor Fannie, whose last dollar had gone

that day to buy some pretty stationery and a box of caramels, sat on the foot of the bed and counted the bills with childish pleasure You must take it to the bank for me, Irma, when you have paid Mrs. Pease for my room in advance. If you think best, you can invest a part of

it for me. I make you my financial manager and counselor.' 'I am not competent to fill the office," returned Irma. "There is only one thing about which I would venture to give you advice. If you will only abide by my counsel in this, I will fore-

go the honor of being your financial Her tone was light but her look was Fannie's eyes sank under it. Almost at the same instant a sharp

double ring announced the postman. Fannie started up. "I will go down-stairs for the letters," she exclaimed, "you are busy, and I think Mrs. Pease is out."

But they heard the little lady's brisk footstep on the stairs. Two letters for you, Miss Fannie," she said as she stood in the door. brought them myself, thinking they might be Cupid's messages."

No danger of that, Mrs. Pease,' cried Fannie, seizing the letters with an eager hand and a hurried "thank she went at once into her own and shut the door. Some time after she came up to the table where Irma was writing, and laid a letter before her.
"It is from May Alice," she said. "She writes that she has missed me, oh, so much! that she is going to have a birthday party next week, and by the way, would I be so very kind as to lend her my diamond ear-rings and pin? They match the ring I lent her, which was never offered back. She does not invite me to the party." Fannie said not a word about the

other letter she had received. The next afternoon, as Irma was starting out as usual, to give a music lesson, she met Vane coming up the steps. He looked a little confused. "You are just now going?" he half stammered; "I thought—"

You thought I had gone. Your visit is not to me? "No," he said more boldly. came to see Miss Gray; I find she is here with you-a good change for her

"She is here, but she can not see you. She is not quite well; and besides, I believe, I hope, that she will not see you now, or ever again. You only keep up this relation because it affords incense for your vanity. If you had a spark of manly feeling you

would not come into her presence. His dark cheek flushed crimson. 'You are a severe censor, Mrs. Vanhorn," he said, "for a young woman in your ambiguous position—wife of a man you will not live with, and in love with another. Nevertheless, I insist on seeing Miss Gray. Do you re-

'Yes," Irma said, shutting the door behind her. You take a great deal of authority in a matter which is no concern of yours. I beg leave to disregard it however; I am here to see Miss Gray by special appointment. I have a let-ter from her, telling me to call at this

As he spoke he drew a letter from his pocket. Irma recognized Fannie's handwriting on the envelope. Still she stood between him and the door, ir"I thought you were gone," she said.
"I saw Mr. Vane open the gate and came down to let him in, I thought Mrs. Pease might be away. I wanted to say a few words to him—on—on business."

Irma was sorry for her. She fore-bore to say a word. She only gave her one warning, entreating look and

When she returned it seemed he had but just left, for she met him on the street, not a hundred yards from the house. They exchanged a cold nod and he passed on Locking back land he passed on. Looking back Irma saw him stop and speak to Dusky who was just behind her, coming from her work.

Irma had gone to her room and was
taking off her hat when Dusky came

in. She held out a letter.
"It is one Mr. Vane dropped." she He stopped to give me a little said. "He stopped to give me a little card-picture to copy. He took it out of his pocket with a handful of letters and papers. When he had walked on, I saw this letter lying on the ground. He had dropped it. I ran after him, but he was out of sight. It is a letter was out of sight. It is a letter mail or may be to send but he was out of sight. It is a letter
he meant to mail, or may be to send
by hand, for it hasn't got any stamp
on it, and no address, only the name."
"What is the name?" demanded
Fannie's eager voice at the door. "Let

me see the letter." The name is Mrs. Dora Minturn," said Dusky, reading it on the envelope. Quick as thought, Fannie snatched the letter from her hand. Fannie!" Irma cried, "you would

not read that letter-surely-a letter written to another person?"
"I will read it—I have a right after what he has just told me. I would read it if I died for it the next min-

Her little fingers clutched the crump led prize as though she feared it would be taken from her. She turned and ran into her room. Half an hour after, Irma heard some one going down the steps. Hurrying to the head of the stairs she saw that

it was Fannie. She had on her hat, but no wrap. "You are surely not going out! It is misting, and turning cold!" cried

tinued to descend the stairs.

Irma ran back, snatched up a shawl, and followed her. She had just shut the gate behind her. When she saw Irma, she waved her back impatiently: "I don't want it," she exclaimed. shall be back in a moment. Pray let ne alone sometimes !" It was a full hour before she re-

Irma, anxious and unhappy, sat at the window and watched for her through the chill, misty rain. It was dark before she came. Her slow, dragging step on the stairs warned her girl-guardian what to expect. She met her and helped her into her room, where Dusky had a bright fire burn-ing. She sank into a chair. She was shaking in every limb.

"I walked too far," she whispered, and I got wet. I have a chill. It is my fault. I would go out. You tried to keep me back. But I was so miserable! Forgive me."

Dusky was down on her knees rub-bing her little cold feet she had just stripped of their wet coverings. Irma made the shivering girl dring a cordial, then quickly undressed her and put her in a warm bed, with a bottle of hot water to her feet. As her dress was being unfastened, a crumpled pa-

'It is that letter," she said, faintly. "His letter to her. You will not read it. I'll tell you what is in it. The nes are burned into my heart. said: 'I have never loved but one woman, and that love is doomed never to be fed by hope. It is like your noble,

generous nature to say those kind things of poor, foolish Fannie Gray. You are right. I never did love her, though I may have fancied I did before I knew what it was to love truly. It was an evil day when I crossed her path. I feel wildly remorseful some-times; but it would be doing her a yet more cruel wrong to marry her when I have neither love nor money to give her. She can not see it that waypoor, infatuated child-and persists in clinging to me in spite of my indif-Then follow protestations ference.'

think any more about it to-night," Irma said, putting the letter in her pocket, resolved to send it to Vane tonorrow with a note that would certainly keep him away hereafter. "Now cuddle yourself up as warm as you can. You will be better soon.

But she was not better soon. A high fever followed the chill. Before mornng she was out of her mind, tossing restlessly, with difficulty of breathing. and a red spot on either cheek, that betokened inflammation. Irma had summoned a physician, but she was not satisfied. She sat and looked at Fannie awhile, then she wrote a few lines on a slip of paper, and told Dusky to take it to the telegraph office and have the message sent at once. Dusky glanced at the paper.

'You have telegraphed to Doctor Fontenoy to come? I am glad," she said. "I was afraid you would not, because it might look like inviting Mr.

"I did not think of that, but it is wrong to let it weigh with me. Doctor Fontenoy ought to be here. I must not think of myself. Besides, his brother is in Brazil, I think. At any rate he will not come here. But Doctor Fontency will start on the first boat. He will be here to-morrow." He did come the next day at sunset.

He was not alone. "I brought my shadow with me," he said to Irma, when she met him in Mrs. Pease's little sitting-room. "She would come. You know what a tyrant she is. She has been crazy to see

Maddie had thrown herself in Irma's arms in her old warm-hearted way, and was half sobbing, her face buried in Irma's bosor "I was afraid I would never see you

again, dear Miss Aimee—Irma, I mean," she said at last. "Then you know about me—you know all," whispered Irma.
"Yes; Bert told us."

"And you-your mother-did despise me. Could she forgive me?"
"Forgive you! Oh, we never thought about forgiving, we were so sorry for you. You had such strange trials. Bert made us understand how it all came about. My mother shed tears. And he told us how nobly you had acted since then. You are a heroine—a grand heroine my Aimer's

heroine, my Aimee."

Irma shook her head. But she was smiling through the tears that shone in her eyes. She met John Fontenoy's look, beaming with kindly sanction of Maddie's words, and a feeling of deep relief filled her breast.

"My mother sent her love," said ohn. "She is well, and in good spirits John. since Bert's return. He came back from Brazil last week." And he had sent her no message; he had not written again? Well, was not this what she had asked of him? "It is better that there be silence between us," she had said. He had obeyed her at last! Why should she feel this pang of dis-

She resolutely put her griefs and per plexities aside, and gave cheerful thought to her scheme of making these other two happy.

Dusky, on hospitable thoughts intent, had come down-stairs to borrow an extra knife and fork of Mrs. Pease.

"Yes; this is my good fairy—my com-rade and ally at the ghostly Grenadier. She has heard of you, too. She has made a little crayon sketch of you from made a little crayon sketch of you from photographs you gave me. Our Dusky is artistic in color as well as in condiments. Go upstairs with her, and inspect some of her ingenious contrivances in our small menage, while I say a word to Doctor Fontenoy about his patient."

She knew he was eager to ask. As soon as the two girls had gone he "Tell me just how it is with her.

"Tell me just how it is with her. You have said only that she is better."

"She is greatly better," Irma answered. "At first, there was fear of pneumonia; but the dangerous symptoms have disappeared. But I am not sorry I sent you the message. It is right that you should see her. I cannot help thinking her condition is critical. She needs something to give fresh spring to her constitution. She has been so long depressed in health and spirits. You knew that?"

knew that? "I did not know. It is precisely what I want to find out—all about her. She would not let me see her. She would not write freely. I beg you will tell me what her true situation is."

"Tell me first what your idea of it "I gathered from the three letters she wrote me—short and constrained they were—that she was happy; that she was living with friends who were glad to have her; that she had means enough to support ner comfortably un-til—until she was married—to Mr. Vane. am surprised that this has not yet

"It will never take place," Irma said.
"What?" he asked quickly, the color coming under his fair skin. "Is the engagement broken? Has he been so

"She has found out that he is unworthy," Irma said. "She believes that it was her fortune he wanted. I do not think she ever gave him her best love. A woman's best love is built upon trust. And Fannie needs a strength not her own to lean upon. You had spoiled her, you know. She had so long had your thoughtful, indulgent love to lean upon. Now she feels herself a bruised As to means, she had none at all until lately she has sold some jewellery and other things. The people she was living with were not glad to have her. They are selfish, sordid people. They thought she would get he aunt's fortune by a lawsuit and repay them twice over for their offer of a home. She felt in a little while that she was not welcome; but she did not know what to do. She stayed in her room brooding over her misfortunes and suffered in health and spirits. She better after she came here, until

bad turn." "I cannot thank you enough for bringing her here and for sending me Dr. Fontenoy said, lifting his head, that had been bent down. His eyes were misty as he went on; "I how she has suffered. I understand her nature. She must have an atmosphere of love and kindness or she droops at once. Can I see her now ?" " In a few minutes. She does not know that the message was sent to you. I believe she longs to see you, but she would not ask you to come. I must

and get a cup of Dusky's good tea, while I speak to her." They went up together. Irma saw Dr. Fontenoy seated at the little oval table, neatly spread, with Dusky in a crous saucerful of strawberries smothered in cream. Then she went into Fannie's room, and stole up noiselessly to the side of the bed. Fanie lay with eyes closed, but she was not asleep. She looked fair and sweet in the

prepare her to see you. Come upstairs

golden-rosy after-glow that filled the She was so fragile and pearl-white that she loked lovely in bed, in her white-laced wrapper, her tiny, child-like hands lightly folded on her breast, a silken tress or two straying over her

She opened her eyes and sighed. "I have not been asleep," she said.
"I am so tired; but I am restless, too. I have been lying here thinking. I thought I heard a man's voice downstairs. I hope that gruff old Dr. Beal has not come again. I never want to hear his cross-saw voice while I live." "It is a new doctor-much nicer. Will you see him ?"

"I suppose I must, or you will think me cross. But I don't want ainy doctors. They never did me any good-only one. Ah! just his look, his presence, rested me better than any ano-dyne. If I could feel his hand on my nead, it would do away with this throbbing. I would feel at rest-at home." "Let him come to you, then, this vonderful doctor," Irma said, smiling.

Let us have him at once." 'You know that is impossible. I will never send for him. But, oh! sometimes I have such a craving just to see him-to ask him to-to-Her voice choked, but her eyes filled with tears. Irma bent down to her. "Fannie," she said, "the doctor who has come to see you waits in the next room. He will prove just as soothing. just as tender, as the one you have spoken of."

She looked up in eager inquiry. "You would not send for him, but he as come.

"Is it- Surely, you don't mean-"Hush! Irma was standing at the door : she fted her hand, smiled and vanished. In a moment more Fannie heard a step he knew. It came to her bedside. Her ands were over her eyes. The fingers trembled as she unclasped them. She looked up and met the blue eyes she new so well bent upon her kindly, tenderly as of old.

she burst out with a sob. "I am so glad you have come."
Her outstretched arms went round is neck, as he bent down to her and sissed her forehead. When Irma came in half an hour afterward, she found Fannie lying calm and happy among her pillows, her little hand resting in John Fortenoy's broad clasp, like a tired bird that has found

the nest. "You have brought me something nice to eat," she said, looking at the tray; "and I am hungry for the first She began to improve at once. In a

few days she was up and able to take daily drives with John. Her nervous restlesness was gone. It was the old ove and petting she needed more than anything, Irma said to herself. anything, Irma said to herself.

Dr. Fontenoy was stopping at a hotel, but he came very day, and he spent his evenings with them. Mrs. Pease had fixed up a tiny snuggery for Maddie, and she and Dusky became the best of friends. The evenings were very pleasant. Fannie had rented a cottage plano, and Berrien, who was the friend of John Fontenoy as well as of Berrien to the property of the state of John Fontenoy as well as of Bert, came very often. He brought flowers and new magazines to Irma, and accompanied her on the piano with his flute. Her singing delighted him, and her sincere, fresh thoughts had a charm for his blase and slightly imbittered nature. John watched the two

"They suit each other perfectly," he said to Fannie. "It would be well if they married." "And Bert?" she questioned.
"I do not understand Bert. With all his frankness, he is reticent in this matter. He never speaks of her now. My mother thinks he will yet marry Florence Bellamy. One can never tell conserving the corpless of love. Ber-

with interest.

as he had noticed in the greets.

The April days were ful of perfume and beauty. The daily ries and quiet petting brought back fannie's roses and her cheery spirits, tempered now by the trials she had passed through These had deepened and tweetened her

These had deepened and sweetened her nature.

One day, after a drive with John, she came into Irma's room, and stood back of her chair as she sat writing.

"Well?" Irma said, trowing down her pen and looking up

"John thinks I ought to have a change. He says we had better go to Florida for a month or two, until the summer opens, and then we will go to a beautiful quiet place in among the North Carolina mountains—a little way from Ashville—the fanous Land of the Sky. He knows of a little brown hotel there, nestled aming the mountains, with a trout steam brawling around it, and Ashville ind the Warm Springs a few miles avay. We will spend a month or two there."

"We?" questioned Irma, arching her brows.

brows.
"Of course; he is to to with me to
take care of me. He car leave his patients to his partner for swhile."

tients to his partner for swhile,"

"But, first, we are to be married she said, blushing. That event will take place day after to-norrow, in the morning, so we can leav on the afternoon train. John has written to them all at Live Oaks about 1, or, rather, he will write to-night. O course they will not hear of it in time to come. To tell the truth, I did not want them, Isabe! particularly. After what has happened, their presence would be embarrassing. We will go to his home in a little while, in time for Isabel's wedding in July, I shall be over with this feeling by them. Now is mortifying to know how unworthy I am to be John's wife, after what I have done, and now that I bring him nothing, only my own poor self!"

"It is all he wants, I cannot tell you how glad I am of his happiness and yours," Irma said.

She took Fannie's hand and pressed it in hers.

it in hers.

"We shall have to be busy, if we are to have a wedding so soen. I must set the girls to work. By the way, what is no be done with Maddie."

"She will go with us to Florida, and then to Ashville, where we will leave her at school. She will enjoy the trip. I wish you were soing with us Irma." wish you were going with us, Irma.' "So do I; but it can't be, and I'll wait till my turn comes," Irma said, more lightly than she felt. "Go now, and

get ready for tea." Fannie tripped away as lightly as of old, and the next moment Irma heard her humming an opera tune, as she brushed her hair. "She is happy. Her love for Vane

was only a short-lived infatuation," Irma thought. "She is not deep-hearted. Ah! I think it is better for Women not to be."

Vane had never been to the Pod since that visit to Fannie when he had dropped the letter. Irma sent him the letter with a note, saying:

"This was dropped by you, and read by Miss Gray, who believed she had a right to read what you had written to another woman. Of course, you will never again come into her presence or dare to address her any

It was a very quiet wedding. body present but the officiating mir ister and the home folks-the half dozen inmates of the Pod. There was a short, solemn ceremony, a nice little breakfast, and then good-byes were said. Dr. John put his little bride and his sister into the waiting carriage, and they were driven away. Dusky and Irma were alone once

Irma stood on the piazza, and look ed after the carriage with a swelling heart. Dr. John, as he looked from the carriage and waved his hand, had looked so bright and handsome, wonderfully like his younger brother. Irma wished he had not reminded her of

him so poignantly. The day before she had received a stab. A newspaper had come to Dr. Fontenoy from his home in Illysandria. In it was a marked account of a "brilliant" ball at the Bellamys'. Fannle read it aloud, not seeing John's warning shake of the head. There was extravagant praise of the "beautiful and exquisitely attired young hostess," and mention of the "charming couple," which she and Mr. Bert Fontenoy had made when they led off the lancers. Then followed a sly hint, after the manner of the provincial editor, that this pair, so well matched in the dance, would shortly be mated in the

matrimonial lists. Dr. Fontenoy glanced at Irma, but her face was inscrutable.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mrs. Minturn was still Irma's en-thusiastic friend. She came often to take her to ride. Two or three times she had induced Irma to go with her to the opera. She had ceased to talk about Harold Vane. Irma wondered if he had not told her not to speak of him. Twice, when she was with Mrs. Minturn in her little sitting room, he had called, and she had excused herself to Irma and received him in the library. When he went away she was distrait and pale. Irma could not help noticing that her restlessness increased. Her spirits were fitful, sometimes extravagantly gay, but of-

ten depressed to melancholy.
One day soon after Fannie's marriage Mrs. Minturn's pony-phaeton stopped before the door of the Pease's abode, and the lady presently ran up to Irma's room and laid violent hands upon her.

"Throw away that old pen," she said, snatching it from Irma's fingers, and tossing it into a corner, "and dress yourself quickly for a drive. And, Irma, please wear your black lace over black silk, and these crimson roses at your belt, and your black lace hat. You look picturesque in that costume."
When Irma was dressed Mrs. Minturn surveyed her critically. Then she stood before her, and seemed to study her face with a keen scrutiny, as though she had a fresh interest in analyzing its expression.
"You have a face at once sweet and

Irma. Who would have thought-"Thought what?" Irma questioned, wondering at her manner.
"Never mind. I was only thinking what riddles there are in the lives and hearts of those we see every day —riddles that we never guess. Are

you ready? No; here are your roses; let me fasten them on. Now, come! The day was fine, and Irma enjoyed the ride. Mrs. Minturn drove; she did not seem in one of her talking moods. She was absent-minded, and Irma often caught her looking. caught her looking at her with a strange expression of wonder and questioning in her eyes. Irma was herself too preoccupied to give much heed to this, and presently she fell into a mood of musing. It was broken by Mrs. Minturn bringing the pony to a

stone-fronted house.
"I want you to come in here a moment, and see three pictures that have just come from Paris. They are by the modern French masters, Delacroix hardwriting on the envelope. Still she stood between him and the door, irresolute how to act. Her doubt was cut short by the door being opened on the inside by Fannie herself. She was carefully dressed and looked flushed and pretty. Her color went and came back in a vivid rush when she saw "This is Dusky, I would know her anywhere. She is just like Bert's des-

room and dressing room—that Mr. Minturn says is beautiful enough for an
mastern sultana. I have been dying
to see them, and to-day we are to
have a peep at them, as well as at
the pictures. Mr. Minturn is at home
here, and he has got permission to
shaw us the "Blue Beard Chamber."
An! ronder he somes now." Mr. Minturn tame down the walk and helped
them from the phaeton, throwing the
reius to the tiny "tiger." If Irms
had been a self-conscious person she
would have remarked that he too regarded her with curious interest and
that there was some excitement in his that there was some excitement in his

manner, and a studied carelessness in the way he said to his wife: "I thought possibly you might call here as you intimated, with Miss Weir, so I stopped on my way to dinner. We will look at the pictures and take a glass of sherry and a biscuit with my triend."

"And the rooms?"

"Yes, you shall see the rooms, though

you will be teasing me to have some just like them." trms liked Mr. Minturn. He was quiet, not stupid. He talked but lit-te, yet what he said was always sensible. She thought, as shrewd old Mr. Pease had said, that there might be hidden fire and force in this quiet,

cold-seeming man, whom people call-ed a business-machine. They entered the house. Irma saw no one but the stately looking colored servant. They went into the drawing room, and looked at the pictures se just hung and others quite as sood, which were new to Irma. There were large double parlors, magnificently finished with carved panels, ornamented ceilings, and mantels of Parian marble wrought in Italy by wellknown artists. The furniture was very rich almost too showy. The library was lined with books in gilt and mor-

and antique vases everywhere. "I promised you should see the lady's apartments. They are kept look-ed. The exquisite bridal chamber has no bride. I have the key and permission of our host-he is busy just now—to gratify your curiosity. I mean yours, Dora. I don't suppose they will interest Miss Weir."

"Miss Weir is a devotee of beauty in all its forms," Mrs. Minturn said,

occo, and there were busts, statuettes

taking. Irma's arm, and following her husband upstairs.

He stopped before a door in the wide hall, inserted a key in its lock, and threw it open. They saw a vista of rooms, separated by looped curtains of rose and damask and silver. It was all so lovely in coloring and design that Mrs. Minturn uttered an exciamation of delighted surprise. The little boudoir looked like an opening rosy morning cloud. Curtains of shell pink and delicate lace. Carpet a pearl ground, strewn with plumy pink thistles, lounges of pink damask, tables inlaid with pearl, and vases of carved onyx. Through the curtained doorway could be seen the mirrors and

-bower bed of the chamber beyond. Mrs. Minturn flitted about like a butterfly in a garden of flowers, exclaiming at the beauty of the furniture, lifting the lovely toilet articles and vases, and looking at her charming reflection in the mirror. She threw open a work-box of lace-work ivory, lined with rose-colored satin, perfect in all its inside appointments, to the gold thimble inclosed in a lily bud of carv-

ed pearl. "Mr. Minturn is right," she sighed. "All these lovely things make me envious. Let's leave this little Paradise without its Eve, and go down stairs. I want Irma to sing one song for us, and try that grand piano."

The drawing room was still empty when they re-entered it. But while Irma was singing two or three persons came quietly in. As she finished, folding doors were softly opened, and the low, trained voice of a servant an-nounced that lunch was served. She rose from the piano; a voice near her said. "Irma."

She turned and saw Solon Vanhorn He was faultlessly dressed. He had recovered his flesh; he looked red, coarse, animal-like, as of old. Two gentlemen and a lady stood behind him. The lady bore a strong resemblance to him, and she was eying Irma with ill-concealed curiosity and dis-

For an instant Irma stood transfixed. Was this Vanhorn's house, and had Mrs. Minturn plotted with him to have her enter it? And for what pur-

She did not take Vanhorn's offered hand. There was a little embarrassed silence broken by Mr. Minturn's saying:
"I have taken the ladies through your house, Vanhorn. Mrs. Minturn exclaims, with the Queen of Sheba.

that the half had not been told her. All the house needs is a mistress." Vanhorn bowed with his broad hand over his expansive vest-front. "It will no longer have that need," he said, smiling. "It has a mistress, who will far eclipse its other furnishings; as you will say when you see her at the head of her table. Irma, my love, the luncheon waits; will you take my arm? My, friends, allow me to present to you, Mrs. Vanhorn-my

wife.' The announcement was evidently no surprise to the guests. They had been prepared for it. To Irma alone this bold coup came as a shock. She was very pale, but she kept her self-pos-

"Mr. Vanhorn is mistaken." she said. 'I am not. I can never be the mistress of his home. I am not his wife, except as made so by a legal form which I do not consider as binding. It was entered into through ignorance on my part and deception on his. I refuse to recognize it. I came into this house not knowing that it was Mr. Vanhorn's.

I beg leave to quit it at once."
She bowed, and walked from the room with a firm, stately step. Vanhorn rushed after her. He overtook her in the hall, and stepped before her. He was purple with passion. He seized her arm as she tried to pass

"You dare to mock and shame me like this?" he said. "You shall suf-fer for it. Your father lies sick and homeless in St. Vincent's Charity Hospital, when a word from you would give him back his home. You have brought me to ridicule to-day; tomorrow I will bring you to shame. This is my last attempt to reclaim you. I swear it by the God of Moses! I have held back, hoping you would come to your senses, but now the blow shall To-morrow I will institute a suit for divorce on grounds that will lay your pride in the dust. My plans are all fixed. I will prove all I accuse you of. You will be a disgraced outcast, when you might have been the honored wife of a rich man. These are my last words to you. I will make them true; I swear it."

"Will you now let me pass?" Irma said, caimly, though her heart sank within her. "You have heard all I within her. "You have heard all I have to say. Do your worst. I will not live with you as your wife."

She was frightened to see how livid he turned. The veins on his forehead stood out like cords. His eyes seemed starting from their sockets. His hold upon her relaxed. She left him standing there, and hurried down the steps, eager to be out of his house. As her foot touched the gravel she heard the rustle of a dress behind her. A hand was laid on her arm.

"Irma, stop and look at me; forgive me," Mrs. Minturn said, her voice trembling with agitation.

"I am sorry you could have lent yourself to this," was the answer.

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