" For their sweet sakes, who love me s I keep the firelight in a glow In our dear home, That, though the tempest roar outside, And flercely threaten far and wide, The cheery blaze may serve to guide Dear feet that roam.

"And as the merry kettle boils, We welcome him who daily toils For us each day. Of true love kisses full a score He gets, I'm certain, if not more. When fond ones meet him at the door, At twilight gray.

"One gets the slippers for his feet, Another leads him to his chair— The big armchair-And while the children round him sing, And make the dear old rafters ring, One little daughter crowns him king With blossoms fair.

"Ah, sir, we are not rich or great, The owners of a vast estate.' The mother said; "But we have better far than gold, Contentment, and a little fold As full of love as it can hold, With daily bread."

Niterature. RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XIX.

CAROLINE'S STRATEGY.

The next day—the last day before the wedding-was full of business at madam's. attended with something of confusion, as much had to be accomplished in the way of packing for the extended tour which of packing for the extended tour which the bridal pair were contemplating. been fastened about her wrist, but she School had been closed a week previous, forced herself to frame some fitting words so strangely?" Ralph asked, regarding this place they at once repaired.

Kenneth took his beautiful bride in his arms and dropped his tenderest giving the pupils a holiday of a fortnight, that madam might be free to devote all hind the fair giver and fastened her dress her time and attention to necessary pre- in the lock of a trunk which stood near "Why, yes; people are always happy parations before the wedding, and gain a by. period of rest afterward, before resuming

leged visitor all along, came again on this make me a visit. It will be as new to me glittering eyes upon him.

She had been so obliging, and had made herself so useful, that Miss Leicester, who had not a suspicion of her real motives, would have lifted her hand and struck always beautiful when happy you know. happy to feel that she did not cherish the vaunt her anticipated possessions in her to me; don't you think so?" resentment which she had betrayed upon first learning of her betrothal to Kenneth.

Had he known of her being at madam's is a most delightful place." on this day, he would doubtless have felt somewhat troubled; but he did not know it, having been called out of town on gave way, tearing a large piece out. business of importance.

There was no trace in her bright face this morning of the wretched girl who had waylaid the young man on the stairs the evening before, and had wept and moaned the long night through. She made herself useful in a hundred ways, taking numberless last stitches which were intrusted to her deft fingers; tying up dainty little parcels to be left as gifts to madam's pupils; packing lovely little boxes with laces, ribbons, and jewelry; fully. and all the while she chatted so brightly and sociably that no one could suspect the existence of the volcano which was seething and boiling within her soul, threatening every moment to burst forth in wildest fury, and pour its fierce lava tide upon all around. During the afternoon Madam Leicester

came to Nina and insisted that she should

my darling," she said, with tremulous thrust into her pocket before entering the wild as he listened. He began to think lips, and she realized how she would miss house. Caroline's object was accomplish. that Caroline's hopeless passion had turnher in the days to come. "We must not ed, and she soon made some excuse to ed her brain, and he was upon the point have a pale face and dull eyes on the morrow, and you have already done too ing Kenneth that night, but she found age stopped before the church door.

"You know it has been only a pleasure mamma. I have enjoyed every moment of this busy time, and I shall show you was she disappointed. a model housekeeper in the future when I come to rule at Melrose Park," laughed | the other had done. the happy girl, little thinking what dire destruction would overtake her before

to go out with her; but she refused upon the servants' parlor when you return from gradually died away, until only the softhad promised to assist the housekeeper more in my arms, and bid you a long good-So Nina went out alone, and Caroline

sat still in her boudoir until the housekeeper should send for her. She went to the window which over-

looked the garden, and, concealed among the folds of the heavy silken curtains, she and position! covertly watched the young girl's every Around her on every hand lay scatter- lion thirsting for human blood.

ed the lovely bridal robes and adornments, colm!" she cried, wringing her hands and which the bride was to wear on the mor- sobbing wildly. "I will not bear it. Oh, row. The silken horse, with their rich when I love him so-when I would give embroidrey, and tiny white kid slippers, wrought with pearls, the wreath and vail so false should blind him so—should cheat on his way out, hastily tucked the note were all spread by themselves upon the him, make of him a plaything, a tool to which she had given him into his vest, large centre-table. The rich dress of corded silk, trimmed

so tastefully yet simply with orange flowers and trailing vines, was a marvel of Kenneth, until she heard Lord Durward to hurry so at the last moment, and his length mirror, before which the young girl would array herself on the morrow to and spent another night as miserable as coachman drive with all speed. go forth to meet her husband. the preceding one had been.

As Caroline looked around on all these ing old and haggard, and posted herself evidences of Nina's approaching joy, and her own despair, moan after moan of anguish burst from her fevered lips. The sight was more than her breaking.

bleeding heart could bear. She had hated Nina from the first for coming be- so wan and miserable, that Lady Durward gotten and unread. tween her and her dearest hopes; now tried to persuade her again not to go to The last stroke of eleven from the great me?" Kenneth cried, angrily. "You Heaven knows that I would have been she hated her tenfold more, for she really believed she was deceiving Kenneth, only marrying him to gratify her ambition for position, while loving another.

"I believe I shall go mad over this,' she cried, as she pressed both hands to her temples, to ease their fierce, throb-

Her face seemed to have grown old all at once, and pinched and drawn with her agony, while her whole body swayed and she returned, with sayage bitterness. was convulsed with the violence of her

She formed the dreariest picture of woe in the world, neither is Miss Leicester the eyes, though his face was slightly pale that ever haunted a bridal bower. She was not allowed to give way to her and see something of life there," said her calm, royal loveliness?

grief long, however. Lord Durward, coaxingly. A movement and the sound of subdued

voices coming up from the garden attract- and then—I will never look upon another trailing vines and orange buds asd blosed her attention.

She cautiously put aside the curtain stinately.

She opened it, and read what was writted.

They were at some distance from the She had never looked so beautiful as Outwardly as calm and self-possessed as for a few minutes before the guests arms I saw you not five minutes ago house and Caroline could not hear what when she came from under the skillful ever, she moved with an ease and let me take you in my arms -you who have just solemnly plighthe said, but when Nina appeared to ans- hands of her maid, dressed for the wed- that were charming, and many a titled once more, and bid you a long good-by." ed you vows at the altar to me?" wer him in the affirmative, he drew a folded paper from his pocket and gave it to her ding.

A sweeping robe of finest India mustin, realized her superior fitness, even though but the daughter of an unknown and un.

What if she were even now clasped in with an overdress of frost-like lace, made but the daughter of an unknown and un.

The overdress was tastefully looped same look of pain cross her face as when with small, glossy berries of deepest crimbride, as she made her responses, fell doubt! and a faintness and sickness, trusted you—how I have loved you!" After thinking a moment, Miss Leices-ter tore off a portion of the note, took a She was very fair, excepting where the

get it-what shall I do?"

Caro?" she asked with a smile.

"No, I did not notice it."

do something in return for you.'

Caroline's face involuntarily darkened.

But she only said, quietly:

have torn your dress," she said.

triumphantly away with it.

see if the note was there.

that he had not yet returned.

"Your unhappy

She walked up and down her room in a

tempest of passion, and like some caged

She arose with the earliest dawn, look.

Her father swore a round oath and said

that made their hearts ache, and said:

keep me from witnessing the last act."

not the world contained so many fools,"

"Come, come, Caro, let them alone.

"It is the only real farce which I shall

she should not go.

lordship, meaningly.

"Yes, it was there.

much excited.

tended dismay.

"Forgotton me? No. Why?"

wardly calm again.

pencil from her pocket, and hastily wrote a few words, folded it, and gave it to the fever fire on her lips.

hectic flush burned on her cheek, and the full of reverence and feeling.

Not lightly did the fair gir boy, who immediately hastened away. Not long after Nina returned to her boudoir, a grave, thoughtful expression on her face, a look of pain in her eyes.

"I must have it—I must have that you make "Don't Caro, look that way, my dear you make me think of a crazy person; note!" Caroline had said wildly on drawing back from the window. "Kenneth must know before it is too late—oh, he

The wedding was set for eleven. will believe me this time; but how shall I had been detained on the train by which flower-like face. And in her excitement she twisted her he came, by a slight accident to the engine hands until the joints cracked, and she He went directly to his rooms, from which he did not emerge until twenty She strove for self-control, however, as minutes of eleven. she heard Nina's step on the stairs, and Caroline was on the watch.

mirth that made her shudder.

when she entered the room she was out-Miss Leicester appeared preoccupied, him to the church. going about from one thing to another. "Kenneth, Kenneth!" she cried, has in an absent, listless sort of way, while tening after him, and thrusting the paper the young girl at the window watched her which she felt sure must save him now, every movement with keenest interest. into his hand, "Read that she added, Suddenly she seemed to remember and then turned away to go to her own enter their names upon the clerk's books turn his heart to stone and freeze caresses with a freedom which you something, and, going to her dressing carriage, which had just driven to the she started up in sudden excitement, every drop of blood in his veins. A have never accorded to me. Had I

"He will read it," she muttered to herself; "there will be a scene, and then "Did you think I have forgotten you, there will be no wedding; for, with this evidence added to the other, he must see "Did you not observe in directing those that she is false.'

parcels to-day that your name did not ap-She fully expected now that the wed ding would be interrupted. She knew Kenneth well enough to "I know that your thoughts have been know that his upright nature hated any all for me to-day, as well as for many days, thing like falsehood and deception, and and I hardly know what I should have that he would not tolerate it for a mo. they reached Madam Leicester's before done without you. You have been very ment, even from his bride elect. He would the arrival of any one. helpful to me, and very kind. I trust insist upon an explanation, before he some time in the future I may be able to would take one step toward the altar, and that explanation, she felt sure, must lead to a revelation of Nina's treachery and She little thought what that return "It will be a long time before I shall

light; the weight which had so oppressed see you again," Nina went on; "but I want to tell you how much I have learned her for the past three months seemed until all the guests should arrive, when to care for you since we have been to suddenly lifted, and she felt as if she were they were to be thrown open, and the gether so much, and to give you this, so treading on air. that when I am away you will not entirely Yet there was a singular feeling in he forget me. I preferred giving it to you head, and she kept putting her hand to

her brow, as if even the light wreath of A lovely bower, with the marriage-She reached forward as she spoke, and, berries was a burden. before Caroline was aware of the act, had She kept muttering and smiling to her- purest and most fragrant flowers, had clasped a beautiful bracelet of costly self, and even sang gayly once, as they been erected for the young couple to

of thanks, while at the same time she her in astonishment. stealthily reached her other hand out be- "Why I am so happy, you know." "Happy!"

when they go to a wedding, are they

"It is looking a long way ahead," Nina not?" said, all unsuspicious of the act, "but "I suppose so; but—" when we return from our tour, I shall "Well, if one is happy, one should look Caroline, whom Nina had made a privis want you to come to Melrose Park and and appear so," she returned, fixing her as to you, and we will enjoy its beauties "You look wonderfully handsome today, Caro, but in a way that I don't like." Ralph said, uneasily. Hed she possessed the courage, she "Yes, I am handsome to-day; one i

enjoyed having her with her, and was her for having dared to stand there and Then these red berries are very becoming guest had arrived excepting Caroline "They look like great drops of blood "Thank you; Melrose Park, I am told, They are blood, aron't they, Ralph?blood that has been flowing from my Nina, feeling a trifle disappointed at heart for the last three months. It is a

the reception her invitation met with, strage idea, isn't it, to spill one's life- said: turned away, and as she did so her dress blood to wear to a wedding?" and she Caroline sprang forth with a cry of pre- fingers, which trembled like leaves blown by the wind. "Oh, Miss Leicester, how badly you "Do stop, Caroline—you make my blood run cold," shuddered her brother, while

Nina, all unconscious of any trick quiet- she went on as if she had not heard him. ly disengaged it from the lock, saying "Do you suppose Nina Leicester's heart I shall have to change it, since it must be cold, beautiful face could ever show a mended; though I cannot conceive how feeling of pain? I don't believe she has it could have caught in such a manner." | any heart, she is always so calm and cool, "If you will take it off, I will carry it to Her hands never burn as mine do; her the sewing-room, and it can be repaired eyes are always clear and untroubled as immediately," suggested Caroline, art pools of shining water, but I don't believe, my happiness is all a dream." with it all, she is half so haypy as I am

Once outside the door she became very "No wedding! What do you mean Caro, by all this strange talk?" demand-She thrust her hand into the pocket to ed Ralph, impatiently, yet much alarmed by her words. She gave him a queer look, and then astonished bridegroom.

Her face lighted with joy, and, with a continued, heedless of his question: smothered exclamation, she hid it in her "She will look lovely in her beautifu bosom and then hastened on her errand. bridal dress, and everybody will say what Madam Mantan quickly repaired the dam- a charming bride she makes; but there go down into the garden and take the age in the dress, and Caroline took it back is no heart in her, and Kenneth will not all nicely folded to be packed. It was marry a wife who has no heart, and there laid into a trunk, and Nina never gave a will be no wedding-bells to-day, I tell you." "There must be no more work for you, thought to the note, which she had hastily It seemed to Ralph as if he should go

return home, forgetting entirely the un of ordering the coachman to drive them labeled boxes, She was desirous of see- immediately home again, when the carri-It was too late now, and, somewhat re- place. She hastened to her own room, eager to lieved to see her attention attracted by read the contents of that note, which she the gathering guests, he entered the woe," she said, prophetically; "read it expected would teach her so much; nor vestibule with her, and an usher immedinow. ately conducted them to seats near the

He noticed with great anxiety that, although his sister no longer talked ed with flashing eyes to her.

"Darling, I must see you once more before you go away. How can I let you go, aloud, her lips kept moving, and her rest- "What did I tell you?" he cried, when we have been all in all to each other less eyes rolled in every direction. she would ever even see Melrose Park.

But she consented to put by all work for so long! How can I give you up, and where shall I turn for comfort when you ment, when the wonderful organ, which for the present, and she invited Caroline are gone? Come to me just once more—I had been swelling and filling the glorious

> There was a momont of suspense, then there came the sound of a slow, measured tread, and the rustle of trailing silken robes along the marble aisle. "Traitress! she shall not cheat him "There will be no wedding to-day!" thus. I will stop the wedding even now! Her heart must be like marble, else how

could she throw over this old love, to the arm with a grip which nearly made which he instantly recognized. gratify a miserable ambition for wealth him cry out with pain.

CHAPTER XX.

AN UNREASONABLE COMMAND.

Alas, for poor Caroline's hopes! serve as a stepping stone to wealth and not a thought entering his preoccupied mind of what its contents might be.

She could not eat; she could not rest. He was wearied with his prolonged She sat at the window watching for journey, irritated at having been obliged He entered his carriage and bade the

Then she hid herself in her chamber. He had not had time to draw on gloves before leaving the house, and, being new, they now taxed his patience until every word was stamped upon her carriage stopped before the church. brain as if in letters of lire, and found A moment later and madam's party

most constantly to herself. She looked have worked such wonders, still lay for. feature. clock had died away ere they had all have remorselessly followed Nina up glad to have found you out but one Kenneth had only time for one look

But she laughed a shrill, reckless laugh into the sweet, grave face of his darling, and one fond pressure of her white gloved you, you cannot do it. I am thankful your fair false face, your calm, innohand, before the ushers threw wide the that I did not read this thing. I am cent ways, by which you have led me ever see played out, and nothing could central doors, and they saw the man of thankful that the dear girl is my wife, on and on, until I stand here this mo-God awaiting them within. "You have not been so successful as The bridal party then swept up the you hoped, have you, Caro?" asked his long aisle and stood before the altar, the

organ ceased, and a solemn hush settled "I should have succeeded long ago, had upon the expectant brilliant throng. or handsome than now, his fine, stalwart the door, eager for the reappearance of lips. figure clad in his elegant dress suit of his bride. Kenneth Malcolm is not the only fine man black. A tender light beaming in his

only beautiful girl. Give up this wedding and very grave. and to-morrow we will take a trip to Paris, And Nina! How can pen do justice to Her rich dress of colored silk fell around "No, sir; I am going to witness this her in graceful folds. It was very simply marriage ceremony to-day, if there is one, made, its only trimmings consisting of she asked, with a gasp at the word wife. "Kenneth, my love—my husband, wedding while I live," she replied, ob soms.

They knew she would have her own very long, was exquisitely draped over reply, and yet his lips grew stiff as he ed hands, and nearly fainting with A little boy, ragged and dirty, was strange words and manner, which grew train, and fastened in place with single His peared to be asking her some question.

peared to be asking her some distance from the great great distance from the great dis

of the proudest portions of the realm. receiving fond caresses?

The clear, pure tones of the young son, and a simple wreath of the same like sweetest music upon the stillness; like death, made him reel and clutch and he groaned aloud, as the force of they never wavered, nor fell, and were at a chair for support.

Not lightly did the fair girl plight her manded. She laid her hot hand upon finger with a warning gesture; "I Her eyes were dazzling, and Lady Dur- vows. Every word was as a solemn his arm, and it seemed to possess the think, from the sound, that the guests ward, as she caught them fixed on her, oath before her God, and, when the strength of a lion in it. He started, must nearly all arrived. Calm yourceremony was over and the man of God for even through his sleeve he could self, dear Kenneth, and I will explain had pronounced them husband and wife, feel its burning heat, but he followed everything to you by and by. I tell at which Caroline laughed, with a wild as she turned at the sound of the joyous her without resistance. wedding march to leave the chancel, the Without a word she drew him from can you not trust me?" light of a deep and holy love seemed to the room, through a long passage and How he longed to believe her only

mony as if turned to stone. She called to him as he was dashing countenance—a look of bewildered sur- Caroline drew him within this, and and he answered with exceeding bitdown stairs to the coach which was to take prise, horror and despair-nor the fierce pulling aside the vines a little, bade terness:

table, she took a little package from a from door, Ralph following to assist her to and, seizing her brother by the hand, groan of horror broke from her ashen not seen it, I never could have becried eagerly:

man herself, and taking a short route, Kenneth and Nina were not long in following, however. It had been arranged that they should remain in the back part of the drawing-room, where the Her heart all at once grew strangely stage had been erected on the night of the reception, with the doors closed,

friends allowed to tender their congratulations and good wishes. bell suspended above, composed of the The girl started as if she had been over Square, she burst into a wild, almost this place they at once repaired.

> kisses upon her lips. "My own wife at last!" he murmured, a thrill of deepest joy in his glad

"Yes, your own until death shall part us." Nina had replied, little dreaming what a mockery her words were; while neither had a thought of the fearful cloud about to burst upon them, nor of the bitter woe which would crush them both within that hour.

Five minutes had not passed since their return from the church. Not and Ralph, and of their presence they

A portion of the wreath which garished Nina's dress had become detach ed, and the young bride, noticing it "Kenneth, will you excuse me for touched the crimson berries with her few minutes? I will be back before the guests are ready to greet us-see, my

veil has become disarranged, and I must fine some one to attend to it." She pointed to the vine of blossoms which had broken and was trailing upon ever bled? Do you suppose she ever the floor, dragging the frail veil with it, "Accidents will happen, and I suppose even had a head ache? I wonder if her and threatening to tear the delicate and

"Yes, my darling," he said, fondly, "but no not be long. I cannot spare in her eyes, from which every trace you one moment to-day or I shall fear She smiled at his tenderness as he Nina removed it, and she hastened to-day, for there will be no wedding, you kissed her again, and then went out, while the happy husband remained hug-

ging his deep new happiness to his heart. Three minutes later Caroline Durward opened the door and stood before the Her face wore a strange expression

it was pale and drawn, and her burning eyes glared at him with a look that made him start involuntarily. "Have you read that note, Kenneth,"

she whispered. "What note?" He had forgotten it entirely. "The note I gave you before you left

" No : I forgot all about it. Here it

He unfolded it, running his eye

hastily over its contents, and then turn- down into the servants parlor to see a from purest marble. sternly.

could not help it. I could not let you ly. "Who might it have been?" transfixed guests, and she fell prone know I ought to ask it-but I shall be in building with tones of richest sweetness, go on being thus imposed upon."

"I suppose this is some more of your glanced in a troubled way at Caroline their wonder or her own exceeding the plea that there were numberless church to-morrow. Make some excuse, and boxes of cake yet to be labeled, and she steal away for a few moments before the pectant ear. The bridal party had ar not let you rest until you have crushed "An old friend who came to say the purest and most innocent woman on good-by to me before I went away," the face of the earth.'

> upon his face as he read those strange, bitterness. whispered Caroline, hoarsely, as she put fond words, penned by the same hand forth her hand and clutched Ralph by which had written the other note, and do not address me in this way," she line, putting her hand to her burning distress. "I will give you all the

brow in a bewildered way; "what do particulars at another time." you mean, Kenneth? I cannot think very well to-day;" and she regarded your wedding morning!" he persisted unheeding her request. "Doubtless "What do you mean by bringing me this foul thing at suck an hour?" he de-

manded, his brain in a strange whirl. "I saw a boy give it to her yesterday.

I found it in her pocket afterward, and wanted to give it to you last night, but you did not come home, you know. ing very pale at his strange words But I thought surely you would read it and conduct, "Kenneth, what has beauty and elegance, and was spread say that the young man thought he should only thought now was a fear that he should before you said those solemn words to happened to trouble you thus? I can upon a frame beside the double full. not be able to return until morning in the not reach St. George's Church before his day, and be saved even at that late

"You are a cruel, wicked girl, Caroline Durward!" he exclaimed, a feeling her and witnessed the interview beof disgust in his heart for her.

"I am sorry, Kenneth, that I could She laid her hand lightly upon his to the utmost. He had only succeeded not save you; I tried, but I cannot bear arm, and lifted her troubled eyes be-Again and again she read that note, in fastening the last button when the that you should hate me so," and she seechingly to his face. shook as with the ague as she said it, He dashed it off impatiently, and herself muttering and repeating them al- arrived, and the fatal note, which could deepest misery depicted upon her every pushed her away with some violence.

"What is all this talk about saving should have been so blind and willful. with your cruel persecutions, trying to hour earlier; and I might have done ruin her life and mine; but, let me tell so, had I not been so bewitched with and that it is beyond the power of any ment the most wretched man in the mortal to separate us."

There was a strange pain in his heart, "Kind Heaven, what does he mean? notwithstanding his boasted confidence, I am not false to you," she murmured Kenneth had never looked more manly and his eyes turned anxiously toward almost inarticulately, with her white

Beyond the power of mortal to separ- ledge," he went on, excitedly; "you ate them! Alas! he did not know. Caroline kept her burning glance you empty honors and glory in them

"Where is your-wife, Kenneth?" never look upon your face again." "Her dress became disarranged, and what is this? What can you mean?" she has gone to have it fixed," was the Nina pleaded, reaching out her clasp-

What if-oh, the agony of that

"Yes, I saw you! Oh! how I have

"Hush! I believe they are coming

"I will-oh, Kenneth, I will tell

"It is an unreasonable command.

" Not one instant-tell me!"

"Then I leave you here."

"Tell me!"

"Are you mad?" she gasped.

She yielded; there seemed to be

"It was-" she began, faltering

With one angry stride he reached

For one moment the proud girl

(To be continued.)

The doors moved slightly, and

his misery nearly unmanned him. "Come with me," Caroline com- "Hark!" Nina said, raising her you I have done you no wrong, and

Kenneth did not return until ten; he cast a halo of light upon her rare, down a flight of stairs. At the bot- his own breaking heart knew; but he tom of these she opened a door and was too angry and excited to wait or Caroline had sat throughout the cere- led him out into the garden, along a act wisely. shaded walk until they came to the He saw that she was trembling vio-Ralph never forgot till his dying day vine arbor, of which he had heard so lently, and he attributed it to fear and the look that was stamped upon her much. Still holding him by the arm, guilt at having her perfidy discovered, painful grip which never relaxed its him look. Just opposite to them was "Can I not trust you? I did trust a window looking into a small room, you-oh! how fatally-until I saw As the newly wedded couple passed and through this Kenneth Malcolm you with my own eyes clasped in the Particular attention given to orders. Repairing done in the best manner, and at the shortest notice out of the church and into the vestry to saw a sight which instantly seemed to arms of another, and receiving his lips, and he put up both hands to hide lieved you to be so false; now tell me "Quick, Ralph-get me quickly out the dreadful sight from his eyes. In who it was. I have the right to know, of this place, for I must reach Madam's the center of that room stood a tall and I will know," and the veins stood young man, with a stalwart, perfect out full and purple upon his forehead, She hurried him through the crowd, form, and with a face which Kenneth's and his voice was fierce and comhe not daring to oppose her, lest there one glance had told him was as hand- manding. some as Apollo's own. He was dress. A look of pain, mingled with some Caroline gave her orders to the coach- ed in the uniform of a soldier, which thing of pride, swept over the beautishowed his fine figure to the best ad ful face of the bride. She approached vantage, and was exceedingly becom- him again, and said, soothingly, yet ing. Clasped close in his arms, and with an anxious glance toward the

leaning her head upon his shoulder, drawing-room: was the bride of Kenneth Malcolm. To add to the young husband's tor- to open the door; pray, be calm and ture, while he looked as if fascinated wait a little while. Kenneth, I could by the horrible scene, he saw his wife not be false to you." lift her white arms and twine them "Tell me!" he whispered, hoarsely, around her companion's neck, draw laying a heavy hand upon her shoulhis head down to her, and press kiss der. after kiss upon the handsome lips.

Was it a trick she had with them you all; only be reasonable, and do all, to cheat them with her fondness, and look at me thus -do not speak to her shy, sweet tenderness? me so. When this is over, and we Kenneth ground his teeth, as he re- are by ourselves, you shall know all." membered that only a few hours be- "When this is over I shall never rode along; and as they turned into Han- stand in during this ceremony, and to fore she had caressed him in the same look upon you face again. You have way, and he had accepted it as a proof aroused a sleeping lion; I cannot be

of her loyalty to him. reasonable. Tell me who that man There were traces of tears upon her was; I command you to tell me!" cheeks and lashes, a bright flush glow ed with sobs. It was a sight to mad- it, since we are not alone," Nina said, den the brain of any man-a sight to quietly but firmly, with a meaning sear the eyeballs, and dry up his life- glance toward where Caroline still

blood to its very fountain. Then she seemed to plead with the "It matters not; I must know," he young man, for she litted her face, her returned, recklessly. eyes seemed to meet his with thrilling "Hush! the doors are moving earnestness, while his lips moved Oh, wait!" she pleaded.

He mournfully shook his head, and again she bows her head upon his through the same aperture they could shoulder and weeps afresh. just distinguish the crowd of eager.

Suddenly she seemed to remember expectant faces; but Kenneth, only that she has duties elsewhere; she conscious of the one great principle at motions that she must go, and kissing stake, bent forward with almost breathher again and again with passionate less eagerness to gain the knowledge eagerness, the young man reluctantly he sought. releases her, and a moment after she But the white patrician face of his bride became instantly calmed as she But Kenneth has already gone, and realized their terrible situation should

stands, with white, set face and stern that waiting crowd behold them thus gloomy brow, awaiting her in the A proud look came into her eye her tall form was drawn to its fullest He faces her with a look of con- height, and, speaking very rapidly,

tempt and wrath the moment her foot she said touches the threshold. She came in with the same sweet, Kenneth, I swear that I am pure and innocent, happy smile upon her lips true; more I cannot tell you now." that had rested there when she went out; the same pure love-light beams

cheeks are somewhat unnaturally moment's delay about opening the She uttered a cry as she met his be seen thus. flashing, accusing glance. "Kenneth, what is it-are you ill?" ly, her pale lips twitching nervously.

of tears is removed, although her

"You have not yet succeeded in re- There was not an instant to lose. arranging your vail, madam," he re- "Whom?" and Kenneth bent nearer marked, with stern sarcasm, and point to eatch the faint whisper which came ing to the wreath, which was still from her pale, quivering lips, and then started back as if he had been pierced hanging as before.

A bright color suffused her face, with an arrow. more at the manner than at his words "Your lover! I thought so. Then while she started, having forgotten en- send for him to come and help you tirely, during her painful interview receive the congratulations awaiting with the stranger below, what her ex- you.' cuse had been to go away. "No, I have not had time to arrange the door just as Caroline glided into

it, but a pin will make it do, I think," the hall, another, and it closed with a is," and he drew it forth from its hiding she said, gathering it up in her white bang which jarred the whole building. gloved hands, and appearing for once The next instant the folding doors "Then your own will be the greater in her life a trifle discomposed. slid smoothly and noiselessly back, "Not had time! Was it not for revealing the pale bride standing alone beneath the fragrant bridal

that you went away?" "Yes, Kenneth, but I had to go bower, and looking like a figure carved "A visitor in the servant' parlor, strove for the mastery over herself,

and at such a time! I do not under- the next a low, heart-rending moan "I know what you told me, but I stand you," Kenneth returned, severe broke upon the astonished ears of the Nina looked deeply pained, and upon the floor, unconscious of either

she said, sorrowfully. He spoke with hot indignation, but a "May I inquire was it a gentleman cold sweat had nevertheless started out or lady?" he asked, with exceeding "A gentleman, Kenneth. Please

added, her lips quivering painfully as "Revenge! revenge!" repeated Caro- she again looked at Caroline in deep

"A gentleman visitor to you upon he was very sorry to part with you for so long a time as our contemplated tour embraces. But he might have saved himself the trouble of coming to say farewell, since we shall not go

away at all now." "Shall we not?" she askel, grownot understand it at all."

Neither could she; she had not a suspicion that he could have followed

"Fool!" he exclaimed, "that I

"You have won the day, I acknow-

are Lady Malcolm and future Count-

ess of Melrose, but that is all. Take

if you can, but from this hour I wil

terror at his cruel words.

which lay upon her bosom.

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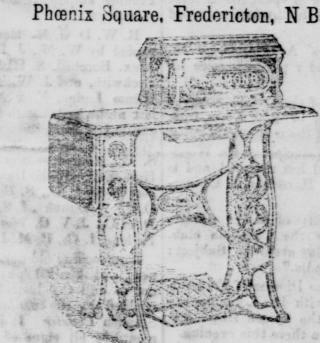
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