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Her Promise True.

BY DORA RUSSELL.

Author of "Footprints in the Snow," "A Country Sweetheart," "A Man's Frivilege," etc.

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SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I., II., III.-Hugh Gilbert and Belle Wayland are bidding each other good bye at Brigh-ton as he is about to sail for India with his regiton as he is about to sail for India with his regi-ment. Belle promises to be true and as rees to meet him that evening for a final farewell. Upon her re-turn to the hotel, where she and her mother are stopping she finds that Lord Stanmore, whose brother was the husband of Mrs. Wayland's sister has arrived and has invited her mother and her to dine with him that evening. Mrs. Wayland goes but Belle feigns sudden illness and is left apparently asleep in her r om. After dinner Mrs. Wayland discovers that Belle has gone out to meet Gilbert and is very angry. Mrs. Wayland writes an account of the affair to her sister, Lady Stanmore and the latter comes immediately to Brighton. CHAPTEB IV.-Lady Stanmore comes to Brighton

CHAPTER IV.—Lady Stanmore comes to Brighton. and has an impo:tant interview with Mrs. Wayland in which they decide Belle's future. Lady Stan-more reads a letter from Gilbert to Belle and lays her plans accordingly. She decides to intercept the letters between the lovers. Lord Stanmore be-comes deeply interested in Belle and Invites his sister in-law, Mrs. Wayland and Belle to spend a weeks at his country residence.

CHAPTER v.-Belle begins a dairy in order that she may send an account of each day to her absent lover.

CHAPTER VI.-Lady St nmore thinks over the situation. She decides that Belle is not in love with Jack. Lord Richard Probyn calls upon the party, and invites them 10 visit him at Hurst hall. He is greatly smitten with Belle. Lady Stanmore opens a letter from Hugh Gilbert to Belle and burns it.

CHAPTER VII.—Lord Stanmore becomes jealous of Sir Dick. Belle tells Lady Stanmore of her en-gagement and that lady ridicules the idea. They go to Hurst Hall.

CHAPTER VIII.—Belle's diary continued. She tells Lady Stanmore of her dream about Hugh. That lady decides to write Mrs. Bal'our.

lady decides to write Mrs. Baltour. CHAPTER IX.—Lady Stanmore destroys a letter Belle has written to Hugh Gilbert. Jack Stanmore confesses his love for Belle to his sister in-law. Mrs. Wayland falls ill and the st.y at Redvers court is prolonged. Sir Dick Probyn proposes to Belle and is refused Lady Stanmore gets a letter from Mrs. Balfour who went to India on the same ship with Hugh Gilbert-It contains the starting news of Hugh Gilbert's marriage to Miss Vane. Belle is told the rews and is greatly shocked. In taking a morning walk she breaks through the ice.

breaks through the ice. CHAPTER X. XI. —Stanmore rescues Belle from drowning. She takes cold and has a severe illness. A letter arrives for Belle during her illness and is destroyed by Lady Stanmore.

CHAPTER XIII.-Belle is convalescent. Stanmore proposes to her and in her anxiety to show Hugh Gilbert that she too has forgotten she accepts the offer. Stanmore and his sister in-law arrange matters and Belle acquiesces. The marriage is arranged for an early day.

CHAPTER XIV.—The eve of the wedding. Lady Stanmore writes to her triend in Bombay and tells her of the marriage and specially requests that the news be told Hugh Giblert whom she repre-sents as a friend only of Belle's.

CHAPTER XVII — THE ICE WOMAN. Lord and Lady Stanmore return to Redvers Court. Belle is not happy and Stanmore sees that she has not learned to love him. Sir Dick and Lady Probyn Call upon them and invite them to dine at Hurst.

CHAPTER XXXVI I.-Darkness. Belle is visited in the first hours of her bereavement by Mrs. Balfour who ympathizes wi h her and offers her a home permanently but Belle declines as she wishes to go back to England and finally sets sail to join her mother in England.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—Ccming home. Belle's anival at her former home. She is met by Lady Stan more who treats her in a most cruel and heartless manner and is about to turn her away from the house when Lord Stanmore, Belle's former husband appears upon the scene.

CHAPTER XL.-BROUGHT TO BAY.

Some moments before Belle saw him, Lord Stanmore had quietly entered the room and had remained a silent spectator of the painful scene before him; overhearing the cruel words which his sister in-law hurled at the crouching figure before her, whom he was astonished to see.

But though silent until the last insult had been hissed out, his mind was wrought to passionate indignation and just resentment against his sister-in-law; to intense pity and manly sympathy for her victim,

until no longer able to control himself, he had clutched Lady Stanmore's arm. 'You fiend.' he said, his voice quivering with passion, his eyes blazing with indig-

nation. 'Y cu pitiless fiend.' For a few seconds there was silence in the room. Belle, overcome by pain and

humiliatation, remained with her face hidden, as she shrank from the man she had wronged, the man she had never expected to meet again ; whilst Lady Stanmore was scarcely less surprised to see one who, over twelve months ago, on learning the part she had played in bringing about his marriage, had sworn never to speak to or to see her again. As for S'anmo:e, he stood there looking from one to the other, confused, angry, and scarce knowing what to

say or how to act. Lady Stanmore was the first to recover herself. She was smarting from the pain of his rough grasp upon her arm, and fur-ious that he had s en her in her true colours.

'This visit of yours is quite an unexpected pleasure,' she said ironically. 'I suppcse you two had arranged to meet here.' 'My dear Jack,' she replied, with an assumption of calmness that exasperated

him, 'you were always ready to rescue beauty in distress, and you have come at plied coolly. an opportune moment. Indeed, I can not

promise you she will give you a home until you are ready to face the world again,' Stanmore responded encouragingly. 'A home,' repeated Belle, wistfully, for the sound of that word to one who was without shelter or protection came as a blessed relief to one so wretched as she

here would have deprived you of,' Stanmore said, looking towards his sister-in-

Belle said.

Saying which he slowly advanced to where Lady Stanmore lay back in her chair, her head uplifted, her eyebrows raised, her whole manner assuming an air of indifference which she hoped would cover the uneasiness and dread she really

Stanmore looked at her critically, but without any pity; the memory of her cruelty to nerved him for the disagreeable task before him.

'There is a very serious charge about to be brought against you,' he began, speaking without passion, 'and though I hoped I might never see or speak to you kinder you should hear of it from me in the

but there was no surprise in her voice, only a lurking horror.

'Ageinst you. A few weeks ago I sent some of the family jewels to be re-set in a way my future wife desired. No sooner had the jeweller begun his work than he found the original diamonds, had been taken out and replaced by paste'.

Lady Stanmore's face had grown frigid, her eyes were full of terror, but her natural the chance effrontery came to her aid. 'Do you lessened. mean to insinuate that I have stolen the family diamonds?' she cried out with apparent indignation.

'Family diamonds to the amount of fifteen thousand pounds have certainly been abstracted from their settings and their place supplied by mock jewels,' he answered.

And do you dare to charge me with this fraud ?' she asked lo!tily.

'That is the intention of my lawyer.' 'This is monstrous, scandalous. Do

you mean to say you will allow such a charge to be brought against me ?' she exclaimed, the look of terror deepening in her face, 'against me, your brother's She must plead for pardon whilst there was widow ? ·I cannet help the unfortunate fact that

you were my brother's wife,' Stanmore re-

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cause she could readily persuade the latter not to have the jewels reset, when of course the chances of detection were considerably

But now her deliberate fraud would be ing. They were both beside her in an in. brought to light. She was at the mercy stant. of this man whom she had offended, insulted 'Poor child,' said Stanmore ; 'the wonand who would doubtless be influenced by der is she didn't taint before, considering his future wife, whom Lady Stanmore had all she has gone through in this room. spoken evil of, and who heartily detested Are you better now, Belle?" her. There was nothing before her save

'I am weary, terribly weary,'she muttered 'Ring the bell, Stanmore. I will see exposure and penal servitude, if her brother-in-law did not show her mercy. that she is put to bed at once,' said his In a few moments her attitude had comsister-in-law. pletely changed. Instead of being proud 'Very well. I will go now, but I will

and defiant, she became humble and subcall to enquire after her to-morrow.' servient. A terrible fear seized possession 'And when you call,' Lady Stanmore of her; years of life in a prison cell was said humbly, 'bring me some hope. I am a wretched woman; have pity on me.' not to be contemplated withcut terror.

and I am your brother's widow.'

'I was wrong to treat her as I did, but I

ready to do anything which might save her-

selt. 'I am willing she should live here;

no one shall ever know she was my sister's

child; I shall be as kind to her as if she

were my own; I will do all I can tor her.'

'I would strongly advise Belle not to

avail herself of this sudden change in your

'Stanmore, won't you forgive me?' she

'You deserve no mercy,' he answered.

to her,' he answered.

CHAPTER XLI .- LAST SCENE OF ALL.

That night Belle was taken suddenly ill, 'Stanmore,' she said, in a harsh, dry when nurse and doctor were sent for in voice, I have been foolish. It was I who haste. To both it seemed as if her case took the jewels, at times when I was hard was desperate, as if her last hour had come.

'Teil me-have you seen your lawyers? I haven't slept a wink last night thinking of what may be before me. I could never endure it, never. But you have some news for me; you bring me hope,' Lady Stan-more said, anxiously watchirg his face.

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'What mercy do you deserve? Think of that poor young creature whose life you have ruined.'

'We cannot undo the past; I would if I could. Tell me, tell me—is there any

Stanmore answered.

eagerness.

'I am not anxious that a scandal should be raised, neither sre my lawyers, and they

'I will do anything, rather than-than-'Than go to gaol,' S'anmore said. 'Well their plan is this: That out of the fifteen hundred pounds a year you now enjoy as widow of the late Lord Stanmore, you make over to me and to my heirs, a thousand a year for fi teen years, in case you live so long; but to provide against the contingency of your death, you must also insure your life and give me the policy, so that in case of your demise I may receive the sum necessary to cover the amount of

Lady Stanmore saw that her compliance with this suggestion would reduce her to a state that she described to herself as beggary. Fond of high living, extravagant in her toilettes, desiring to keep pace with year, and out of the sum remaining to pay heavy interests on a life insurance, would

to dress shabbily and rent small lodgings in an obscure street, where she would share the attendance of a slatternly maid with half-a-dozen other lodgers. The prospect seemed odious.

agree to them what is to become of me? My sister cannot help me; will you?' she said, her eyes appealing to him.

plied, determinedly.

an injured tone.

'But not so hard as you would have been on others.'

'Will you not forgive me and have pity on me ?' she asked.

'I may as well tell you at once I haven't the slightest pity for you; and that if you lon't ree to this suggestion of my solici

'She will do whatever I ask her, and I

'Yes, she will give you what this woman

law. 'I cannot tell you how grateful I am,'

'It is I who am grateful that Fate sent me here in the nick of time to save you from the cruelty of one who should have been the first to protect you. But before we go I must say a few words to her.'

again, yet I came here to-day thinking it

first instance.' 'A serious charge against me ?' she said,

hope for me ?' she persisted. 'There may be some loophole of escape,"

'What is it ?' she asked, with breathless

have made a suggestion.'

your frauds.'

wealthy friends, and to present a dashing appearance to the world, she was, notwithstanding her robbery of the family diamonds deeply in debt. To give up a thcu: and a leave her in a condition which she regarded

as pev rty. She would have to fall out of the circle of her fashionable friends, to live plainly,

'On your complying with these conditions you will be spared the scandal of a trial and the sentence of condemnation as a elon,' Stanmore said.

'These conditions are terribly hard; if I

'I will never give you a penny,' he re-

'You are terribly hard,' she replied, in

CHAPTER XVIII -PLAYING WITH FIRE. Sir Dick grows more in love with Lord Stanmore's wife which causes hs mother much uneasiress. Lord Stanmore also notices the young man's infatuation and warns Belle against encouraging him. They dine at Hurst and Belle is presented to Mr. Trew-laney the vicar and Sir Dicks old tutor, and his daughter Army who has known and loved Sir Dick daughter Amy who has known and loved Sir Dick Probyn from his boyhood as they have grown up together but who only regards Amy with a sist rly

CHAPTER XIX.-Sir Dick offers a diamond pen-dant to Belle but it is refused; she tells him that his confession of love must end a pleasant triend-ship and he goes home in despair. He decides that life is not worth livi g and attempts to shoot himself but his worther who had foured comething himself but his mother who had feared something and had followed him screams when she sees what he is about to do and the bullet goes through his cheek. Lord Stanmore believes Belle is to blame for encouraging Sir Dick and reads her a lecture which she resents.

CHAPTER XX .- An unforgotten face. Lord and Lady Starmore have an understanding and are better frienas. She tells him all about her inteviewed with Sir Dick. The Stanmore's get an in-vitation to a ball at Marchmont Court. They go and there Belle and Hugh Gilbert meet. After the shock has somewhat died away she enquires for his wife and learns that he has never been married.

CHAPTERS XXII-XXIII - The lost letters.' Belle and Captain Gilbert have mutual explanations in which Lady Stanmore's treachery is revealed. Lord Stanmore is introduced to Gilbert and asks him to dine with them the following day. Belle accuses her aunt of destroying her letters and the latter acknowledges her guilt but nothing of the situation is to d to Stanmore who receives Captain Gilbert very kindly and invites him to Scotland for the shooting season and at Belle's request the latter consents to

go. CHAPTER XXIV.-Gilbert hears of Belle's acciden on the lake and of Stanmore's appearance on the scene in time to save her life and the result.

CHAPTER XXV.-The whole party go to Strat-hearn and are charmed with its beauty. A row on hearn and are charmed with its beauty. A row on the lake and its result. The Marchmonts furnish their own shooting box and invite Gilbert to join them. He is inclined to do so as he does not feel at ease at Strathearn, but he and Belle discuss the matter and she requests him to stay for a tew days more.

CHAPTER XXVI., XXVI.-A stray shot. Gilbert is wounded by a shot from Mr. Marchmont's gua. Belle hears the news and almost betrays her love for Gilbert. A doctor and nurse are summoned from London and the wound is pronounced not dangerous.

CHAPTER XXVIII.-An old friend. Belle makes many anxious enquiries about Gilbert and sends him arose by Jim Marchmont. Lady Stanmore receives a letter from M s. Marchmont who is ex-pected in a day or two to stayat their new shooting box, in which she tells her that Mrs. Seymour is coming to stay with them at Glenwrath. She tells relle and wishes her to go away with her during Belle and wishes her to go away with her during Mrs. Seymour's stay but Belle declines.

CHAPTER XXIX.-Mrs Seymour. Lady Stan-more leaves Strathearn after first telling Lord Stanmore leaves Strathearn after first telling Lord Stan-more of Mrs. Seymours expected arrival. The latter comes to Scotland and Belle meets her. Gilbert makes his first appearance downstairs since the accident and is received by Belle. He is still very weak and faints away while listening to Belle reading. CHAPTER XXX.—A new fear. Stanmore and Sir John Lee discuss the Marchmonts who have called and persuaded Belle to accompany them to a pic-nic. Gilbert continues to improve and goes daily to Belle's boudoir for a cup of tea.

CHAPTER XXXI.-A spray of heather. Gilbert is able to be out again and he and Bell have a walk on the terrace. They are joined by the Marchmont girls who have come to carry Belle off to a picnic. Lord Stanmore suggests to Jim Marchmont that it is time for Gilbert to leave Strathearn and be accordingly makes preparations to go to Glenwrath for a time "That spray of heather shall lie on my breast after I am dead."

CHAPTER XXXII.—A picnic. Bel'e overhears a conversation between Mrs Seymour and Lord S.an-mora, in which the latter says he regrets the mistake he made in marrying Belle. A storm ccmes up during the picnic party, and Belle and Gilbert take shelter in a cave shelter in a cave

CHAPTER XXXIII. - More than life. Belle and Gil bert have an interview, in which their flyght is planned. Stammore discovers that Belle has left him and gone with Hugh Gilbert.

him and gone with Hugh Gibert. CHAPTER XXXIV.—Belle's letter is received by Stanmore; she tells him now that she married him through pique and relates the deceit practiced by her aunt and its awful consequences. Stanmore tells Mrs. Seymour the news. Jim Marchmont defends Gilbert. Lady Stanmore receives a call from her brother-in-law in which he accuses her of her decep-trop end they become enemies. tion and they become enemies.

CHAPTER XXXV — A n°w light. The news of Belle's flight is heard at Hurst and Lady Probyn breaks the news to Sir Dick and also tells him of Amy Trewlaney's love. Sir Dick proposes to Amy

last she had defrauded her husband a Stanmore promised. 'I shall never forget you kindness to me,' Belle said to Stanmore, as she shyly held out her hand to him. 'You acted as die,' she said, in a low, sobbing voice his heirs to the amount of fifteen thousand Between Friends. filled him with tender compassion. pounds, a sum she then saw she could 'Don't talk of dying, Belle,' he answer-"Now, Kitty, let there be no secrets beheld out her hand to him. 'You acted as ed; 'you are young, and perhaps happeni-ness lies before you. I will take you never replace. tween dearest friends. What was your life? Poor Belle !' a true friend when I thought myself for-Nor d d this, after a while, trouble her first thought after you accepted Harold 'I did not know you were so fond of her.' much. The paste was excellent, the imi- | saken and an outcast.' straight to my old aunt. She has a kind heart, and she liked you when you met, 'I did not know it myself until now. Lawver ?" 'I shall always be your friend,' he tation so like the real that none but an "Honest Injun ?" She was sweet and simple as a child, and expert could detect the difference and she answered, taking the hand she gave him, trusted her acts might never be discovered and holding it in his own. you remember, some months after our expert could detect the difference and she "Of course." through no fault of her own, her life was marriage.' "Well, then, my first thought w.s that now he could never marry you." spoilt. How helpless we seem to gu'de and master onr own fate ?' 'Tell me once more before you go that 'But[she may not like me now; she may in her lifetime. One of her reasons for wishing Stanmore to marry Belle was, be- ! you forgive me,' she said. not receive me,' Belle said, nervously.

help thinking you had made an assignation with your former w fe; your visit is so well timed.'

He looked at her with such contempt that the blood rushed to her face and ou :flamed the coating of rouge upon her cheeks.

'You are a hear 1 ss woman.' he remarked. sternly.

'Oh, indeed.' she replied, with a mocking laugh. 'That is the reason, I suppose, that I am not so inter sting as a runaway wife for instance, to men like you.'

'I will talk to you presently,' he said, s'riving with all his might to restrain his anger. 'But for the present I insist on you keeping silent.'

'You insist,' she sail contemptuously, throwing back her head.

'I think I can find a means to keep you silent if necessary,' Stanmore answered, looking her tult in the face.

'What do you mean ?' she asked defiantly. 'I will tell you presently,' he answered.

Then crossing over to where Belle had sunk into a chair, he said in a calm and

compessionate voice. 'Belle, wh n you left me I felt terribly

humiliated and angry, but when I thought over your letler and considered how you had been lied to, injured, and betrayed by that vile woman there, I could not blame you in my heart. Long ago I forgave you ter what am I to sit in judgment and condemn you ?' 'You were always kind to me,' Belle

said in a low voice.

'I could have loved you if you had let me; but that is past, and we will say no more about it. I came here to day on business and overheard the cruel words | dread.

that women spoke to you. If you were a perfect stranger to me I could not help pitying you; as it is I am ready to be your

friend, to stand between you and her persecution, to give you the shelter and home that you need.' Stanmore said, bending over the shrinking figure of the miserable

woman. 'This is quite charming,' laughed Lady Stanmore, scornfully, 'but what will Mrs. Seymour have to say to such a nice little arrangement."

'You will pay dearly for this,' he answered, turning to his sister-in-law, who, seeing the calmness of his manner and hearing the force conveyed in his voice, manner." realised that he meant what he said. As she did so, she grew suddenly pale, and a

look of fright came into her eyes as a new and terrible thought occurred to her. 'You hear what I say,' Belle.' Stanmore

went on, 'I am ready to be your friend, to stand by you now in your bitter need.' 'How can I thank you ?' she said tremb-

ling from the fervour of her feelings. 'You don't know how much your offer means to me.'

'Give me your hand,' he said, strangely moved by her words. She removed her hands from her face, and glanced timidly into his eyes, in which she read the sincere pity and manly kindliness he had express-

ed. Here was a true friend. 'You forgive me ?' she whispered.

'God knows I do. You have been teribly sinned against, and if you have erred you have suffered bitterly.'

had touched her heart, which now overflowed with gratitude.

Lady Stanmore hung her head, for the weary, that I only want to lie down and this easy means of raising moneh, until at 'I will do all in my power for you,' Lady [The End.] and is accepted. CHAPTER XXXVI —Her answer. At the Bunga-low. Hugh and Belle discuss the past and future and Belle tells him she does not regret the step she has taken in leaving her home for him. Hugh goes out for the atternoon and returns ill with an attack of fever. Belle watches beside him and prays that either he may be spared or that she be taken also. CHAPTER XXXVI.—His great desire. Hugh re-rains consciousness and tells Belle that he has arranged with the English clergyman to perform the marriage ceremony as soon as the law permits, which will be in two days. The day for their mar-riage dawns, all preparations are made; the clergy-man and witnesses are on hand, but Hugh dies be-fore he can make her his wife. and is accepted. words were an accusation against herself.

Overcoming her resentment at this repl she said, 'But you surely do not believe that I am guilty?" settings some day, but I was never able.

'I must contess,' replied Stanmore,' did not doubt that the woman who had forged a letter and burned others not addressed to herself, would be guilty of this fresh act of telony.'

'And is it because of your hostile and prejudiced opinion that I am to be charged with robbery ?' she asked, wrathfully,

By no means. I concealed my opinion, and the matter was given into the hands of has done to me,' pleaded Belle, who had the detectives.'

tween them. 'Have pity on her.' 'The detectives ?' she said, fear and indignation struggling for mastery in her will make amends,' Lady Stanmore said, voice. 'The detectives---

They are a body of men hated by those who have cause to dread them,' Stanmore remarked dryly.

'I have no fear of them,' she said angrily 'So much the better for yourself. It may interest you, however, to hear they have been very industrious.'

disposition,' Stanmore remarked. Lady Staumore drew a quick breath, but refrained from asking further questions, implo ed. tnough anxious to hear more.

'The jeweller with whom the family have dealt for years, and who reset some of the diamonds and polished up all of them at knees at his teet. 'Don't you see what is the time of my brother's marriage, is prepared to take his oath the diamonds were at that date genuine. At my brother's out, raising her eyes beseechingly to his. death they passed into the hands of the | I am ruined; I am lost. bankers, and were only brought out on my marriage. It would be absurd to think that Belle had the jewels taken out and

their place supplied by paste.' 'Oh, surely you don't believe I could do fore her, he said. 'It is scarcely in my such a thing,' Belle said, full of nervous power to save you, even it I would."

'Not for a second,' S'anmore answered reassuringly.

'Why is it absurd to think she took them out and sold them for the benefit of her lover ?' Lady Stanmore asked. 'Well, if for no other reason,' answered her brother-in-law, 'because the detectives

have found the man employed to take the diamonds from their settings and to dispose of them. He not only gives the date of the transaction, which was just two years act by which you defraud him and his son before my brother's death, but he gives a of fifteen thousand pounds.' close description of the person who brought

the jewe's to him, a description that answers to your appearance in a marvellous

Lady Stanmore saw that her identity could and would be surely proved that there was no longer a chance of her denial in confessing the robbery and pleading for me. Think of me in a goal-' and for pardon.

Some years a'ter her marriage she had plunged into a reckless extravagance with which her allowance had been unable to keep pace. When swamped by debt and threatened by her dressmaker, her millin-

er, her glovemaker, she had in an unfortunate moment sought relief from those pressing creditors by having some of the family diamonds taken from their settings and replaced by paste.

At the time she had fully intended to have had the jewels put back some day, but itstead of that she had again yielded to temptation and repeated the act. That which at first seems a serious transaction Tears came into her eyes, for his words loses someshing of its gravity every time it is repeated, and so it was with Lady Stanmore. Again and again, when pressed | Stay.'

'Poor child; hers was a wrecked life.' 'I have suffered so much, and I am so for payment of debt, she had recourse to sight.

ressed for money. I intended to retrench, In the faint grey of morning her child was to buy them back and replace them in their born dead.

A long period of unconsciousness for the Deal mercifully with me; we are old triends mother tollowed, when a faint flame of life just flickered in her body. There were times when the doctor thought her pulse 'If it were possible for me to show you mercy, your cruel conduct to this unfortuhad ceased to beat, when he listened anxnate woman would have been enough to jously for the throbbing of her heart. The make me as hardened to you as you were | morning light was shining full into the room when she opened her eves, that shone with feverish brightness, and looked around 'Forgive her; don't think of what she

'I forgave you long ago,' he replied.

She sighed heavily, put one hand to her forehead, and with the other clutched a

table near her to prevent herself from fall-

her. 'My child,' she said, in a low, tremulous listened with horror to what had passed b.voice. "Where is my child?"

'It is dead,' the nurse answered. Belle sighed and closed her eyes once more.

'Are you in pain, my dear ?' the kindly woman asked.

'No, no, I am only weary,' Belle murmured feebly.

There was a stir at the door, and Mrs. Wayland entered. Her rheumatism had prevented her from coming to see Belle Sefore; and now having been obliged to mount a flighi of stairs, she mouned over the result of her exertions.

With such a relief to your mind you are

sure to recover. You have youth on your

'I think she had better not be disturbed.'

'She is better, I hope,' Mrs. Wayland With a cry of terror she dropped on her said to the nurse.

'A little better, ma'am. before me if you don't hush up this scandal 'Unlike me. She has youth, and it is it you don't have mercy on me? she cried not racked with pain. Her constitution

was always excellent; whereas I have no appetite,' Mrs. Wayland said, pititully. Vile and cruel as she was, he could not At'racted by the voice, Belle opened bear to see her kneeling at his feet in her eyes once more, and raised them on abject misery. He raised her up and the woman she had believed to be her placed her in a chair. Ther, standing bemother, whom she had not seen for many months, during which her life had been lifted from its placid course, electrified by "What?" she gasped, her dread, if possi-

love, and wrecked by loss. ble, increasing. 'You see the family jewels cannot be

said to be really mine,'he explained. 'They would be: young people have so much in are entailed property belonging to the their favour; they have so much vitality. house of Stanmore, the representative of which has the use of them for his wife during his life time. I could not dispose speak, she only wanted rest and silence. of them it I wished ; I hold them as it were in trust for the next heir, my cousin, and

he would scarcely consert to overlook this some distance from the bed; 'a mercy for which we cannot feel too grateful, under her. the circumstances.' 'Is there no hope for me?' the wretched The invalid stirred uneasily, and sighed

woman asked. 'I cannot answer you until I have conprotoundly.

sulted the family solicitors. 'You must help me,' she pleaded: 'we side and an excellent constitution; not like are old friends; we are re'atives. I know I have acted vilely towards Belle, but think me, who---being believed, and that her only hope lay of what lies before me if you cannot save said the nurse.

the first time she broke down. 'You will help her,' Belle said softly. 'I will see what can be done,' he replied

to her; 'and now are you ready to come with me ?' 'Let her stay here; let her stay with us,

Lady Stanmore begged, feeling this would please Stanmore, and foreseeing that his calls to inquire for Belle would bring him sume, left the room in silent indignation. into more friendly relations with herself. 'I think she had better accept the hos-

pitality of my aunt,' Stanmore answered. 'Remain with us,' his sister-in-law said, turning to Belle. 'I know I have been the morning her child was born dead, and cruel, but I will make amends. It will be more natural for you to be with us during now she seems somewhat better,' Lady Stanmore explained. the time of your illness, to be near the woman whom the world thinks your mother.

"I will remain here,' Belle replied.

tors I shall let the law take its course," Stanmore replied.

'I agree, I agree,' she answered promptly. 'There is nothing else leit for me but to comply with your conditions, but I don't know what is to become of me.'

She strove to soften her hard voice that it might appeal to him, whilst her cold eyes looked into his beseechingly, but all in vain.

'A woman like you will always be well able to take care of herselt,' he replied, quite unmoved.

She turned quickly away that he might not see the anger that flushed into her face and bent her head that he might think bis words had crushed her, and so relent. Indeed, she was striving to produce some tears, when both were startled by the loud ringing of a bell, and a instant later the sound of footsteps were heard hurrying through the hall and up the stairs.

'What can it be?' Stanmore asked, in a startled voice.

'I hardly know; perhaps it is Belle,' she answered.

'Go and see,' he said, interrupting her, and he flung open the door.

She hurried up the stairs, he tollowing after a second's hesitation, and both overt.king the nurse, who being momentarily absent had been summoned by the servant she had left with the patient. The nurse hurried to the bed where Belle, with wide open eyes that were unconscious of her surroundings, was muttering some words in a low feeble voice ; but they were not so low as to prevent them being h ard by Stanmore, who remained in the lobby outside, hesitating as to whether he should enter, and seeing all through the open door.

'Ah, Belle, you are better I hear,' re-marked Mrs. Wayland. 'I thought you 'You went so sudden and so soon,' she said, 'but I knew you would wait for me. And row, my love, I am coming to you." She smiled and strove to hold out the If Belle understood her she made no arms she was too weak to raise. The reply. She was too tired and weary to nurse sent in all haste for the doctor. Lady Stanmore sank into a chair waiting 'I hear your child is dead,' continued for what might happen, and forgetting for Mrs. Wayland, who had seated herself at the moment her own misfortunes in the pathes and tragedy of the scene before-

> 'My love, my own, take me, take me,' Belle said in a whisper, for I am tired.' She gasped for breath, the nurse raised her gently, wiping the damp from the forehead which was now white ε s marble

and almost as cold. 'I never regretted it, never. How warm the day is. Oh, don't go, Hugh; I love you, I have always loved you; only

'She is sleepy, perhaps; she was always a little stolid, Well, I will go; help me they wrecked my life.' she muttered. Her breathing grew more difficult, and with an effort she moved her head, whilst her glassy eyes fixed themselves on vacancy, as if she saw some sight unseen by others. 'Wait, I will come with you, only wait for me-Hugh-Hugh-' she faltered, speaking with difficulty. A moment later she shuddered and heaved a deep sigb. Those who listened could no longer hear her breathe. The silence was interrupted

by the hasty entrance of the doctor, who bent above her and took one of her white hands in his. A moment latter, and he laid it back with guntle reverence,

'It is all over,' he said, gravely.

'Poor child ! poor unhappy child !' murmured Stanmore, the tears which rushed to to his eyes blotting the scene from his

must be kept quiet. Mrs. Wayland regarded with surprise a person so singularly wanting in sympathy, and with all the haughtiness she could as-

Later in the day Lord Stanmore called, and was met by his sister in-law. His first inquiries were for Belle. She has been very ill; the doctor thought she could not live through the night. In

'Out of danger ?' he asked.

'I think not. She is very weak.'