

**NINTH SCENE.--THE MUSIC-ROOM.**

**CHAPTER THE FORTIETH. - JULIUS MAKES MISCHIEF.**

JULIUS DELAMAYN was alone, idly sauntering to and fro, with his violin in his hand, on the terrace at Swanhaven Lodge.

The first mellow light of evening was in the sky. It was the close of the day on which Anne Silvester had left Perth.

Some hours earlier, Julius had sacrificed himself to the duties of his political position--as made for him by his father. He had submitted to the dire necessity of delivering an oration to the electors, at a public meeting in the neighboring town of Kirkandrew. A detestable atmosphere to breathe; a disorderly audience to address; insolent opposition to conciliate; imbecile inquiries to answer; brutish interruptions to endure; greedy petitioners to pacify; and dirty hands to shake: these are the stages by which the aspiring English gentleman is compelled to travel on the journey which leads him from the modest obscurity of private life to the glorious publicity of the House of Commons. Julius paid the preliminary penalties of a political first appearance, as exacted by free institutions, with the necessary patience; and returned to the welcome shelter of home, more indifferent, if possible, to the attractions of Parliamentary distinction than when he set out. The discord of the roaring "people" (still echoing in his ears) had sharpened his customary sensibility to the poetry of sound, as composed by Mozart, and as interpreted by piano and violin. Possessing himself of his beloved instrument, he had gone out on the terrace to cool himself in the evening air, pending the arrival of the servant whom he had summoned by the music-room bell. The man appeared at the glass door which led into the room; and reported, in answer to his master's inquiry, that Mrs. Julius Delamayn was out paying visits, and was not expected to return for another hour at least.

Julius groaned in spirit. The finest music which Mozart has written for the violin associates that instrument with the piano. Without the wife to help him, the husband was mute. After an instant's consideration, Julius hit on an idea which promised, in some degree, to remedy the disaster of Mrs. Delamayn's absence from home.

"Has Mrs. Glenarm gone out, too?" he asked.

"No, Sir."

"My compliments. If Mrs. Glenarm has nothing else to do, will she be so kind as to come to me in the music-room?"

The servant went away with his message. Julius seated himself on one of the terrace-benches, and began to tune his violin.

Mrs. Glenarm--rightly reported by Bishopriggs as having privately taken refuge from her anonymous correspondent at Swanhaven Lodge--was, musically speaking, far from being an efficient substitute for Mrs. Delamayn. Julius possessed, in his wife, one of the few players on the piano-forte under whose subtle touch that shallow and soulless instrument becomes inspired with expression not its own, and produces music instead of noise. The fine organization which can work this miracle had not been bestowed on Mrs. Glenarm. She had been carefully taught; and she was to be trusted to play correctly--and that was all. Julius, hungry for music, and reigned to circumstances, asked for no more.

The servant returned with his answer. Mrs. Glenarm would join Mr. Delamayn in the music-room in ten minutes' time.

Julius rose, relieved, and resumed his sauntering walk; now playing little snatches of music, now stopping to look at the flowers on the terrace, with an eye that enjoyed their beauty, and a hand that fondled them with caressing touch. If Imperial Parliament had seen him at that moment, Imperial Parliament must have given notice of a question to his illustrious father: Is it possible, my lord, that you can have begotten such a Member as this?

After stopping for a moment to tighten one of the strings of his violin, Julius, raising his head from the instrument, was surprised to see a lady approaching him on the terrace. Advancing to meet her, and perceiving that she was a total stranger to him, he assumed that she was, in all probability, a visitor to his wife.

"Have I the honor of speaking to a friend of Mrs. Delamayn's?" he asked. "My wife is not at home, I am sorry to say."

"I am a stranger to Mrs. Delamayn," the lady answered. "The servant

informed me that she had gone out; and that I should find Mr. Delamayn here."

Julius bowed--and waited to hear more.

"I must beg you to forgive my intrusion," the stranger went on. "My object is to ask permission to see a lady who is, I have been informed, a guest in your house."

The extraordinary formality of the request rather puzzled Julius.

"Do you mean Mrs. Glenarm?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Pray don't think any permission necessary. A friend of Mrs. Glenarm's may take her welcome for granted in this house."

"I am not a friend of Mrs. Glenarm. I am a total stranger to her."

This made the ceremonious request preferred by the lady a little more intelligible--but it left the lady's object in wishing to speak to Mrs. Glenarm still in the dark. Julius politely waited, until it pleased her to proceed further, and explain herself. The explanation did not appear to be an easy one to give. Her eyes dropped to the ground. She hesitated painfully.

"My name--if I mention it," she resumed, without looking up, "may possibly inform you--" She paused. Her color came and went. She hesitated again; struggled with her agitation, and controlled it. "I am Anne Silvester," she said, suddenly raising her pale face, and suddenly steadying her trembling voice.

Julius started, and looked at her in silent surprise.

The name was doubly known to him. Not long since, he had heard it from his father's lips, at his father's bedside. Lord Holchester had charged him, had earnestly charged him, to bear that name in mind, and to help the woman who bore it, if the woman ever applied to him in time to come. Again, he had heard the name, more lately, associated scandalously with the name of his brother. On the receipt of the first of the anonymous letters sent to her, Mrs. Glenarm had not only summoned Geoffrey himself to refute the aspersion cast upon him, but had forwarded a private copy of the letter to his relatives at Swanhaven. Geoffrey's defense had not entirely satisfied

Julius that his brother was free from blame. As he now looked at Anne Silvester, the doubt returned upon him strengthened--almost confirmed. Was this woman--so modest, so gentle, so simply and unaffectedly refined--the shameless adventuress denounced by Geoffrey, as claiming him on the strength of a foolish flirtation; knowing herself, at the time, to be privately married to another man? Was this woman--with the voice of a lady, the look of a lady, the manner of a lady--in league (as Geoffrey had declared) with the illiterate vagabond who was attempting to extort money anonymously from Mrs. Glenarm? Impossible! Making every allowance for the proverbial deceitfulness of appearances, impossible!

"Your name has been mentioned to me," said Julius, answering her after a momentary pause. His instincts, as a gentleman, made him shrink from referring to the association of her name with the name of his brother. "My father mentioned you," he added, considerately explaining his knowledge of her in that way, "when I last saw him in London."

"Your father!" She came a step nearer, with a look of distrust as well as a look of astonishment in her face. "Your father is Lord Holchester--is he not?"

"Yes."

"What made him speak of me?"

"He was ill at the time," Julius answered. "And he had been thinking of events in his past life with which I am entirely unacquainted. He said he had known your father and mother. He desired me, if you were ever in want of any assistance, to place my services at your disposal. When he expressed that wish, he spoke very earnestly--he gave me the impression that there was a feeling of regret associated with the recollections on which he had been dwelling."

Slowly, and in silence, Anne drew back to the low wall of the terrace close by. She rested one hand on it to support herself. Julius had said words of terrible import without a suspicion of what he had done. Never until now had Anne Silvester known that the man who had betrayed her was the son of that other man whose discovery of the flaw in the marriage had ended in the betrayal of her mother before her. She felt the shock of the revelation with a chill of superstitious dread. Was the chain of a fatality wound invisibly round her? Turn which way she might was she still going darkly on, in the track of her dead mother, to an appointed and hereditary doom? Present things passed from her view as the awful doubt cast its shadow over her mind. She lived again for a moment in the time when she was a child.

She saw the face of her mother once more, with the wan despair on it of the bygone days when the title of wife was denied her, and the social prospect was closed forever.

Julius approached, and roused her.

"Can I get you any thing?" he asked. "You are looking very ill. I hope I have said nothing to distress you?"

The question failed to attract her attention. She put a question herself instead of answering it.

"Did you say you were quite ignorant of what your father was thinking of when he spoke to you about me?"

"Quite ignorant."

"Is your brother likely to know more about it than you do?"

"Certainly not."

She paused, absorbed once more in her own thoughts. Startled, on the memorable day when they had first met, by Geoffrey's family name, she had put the question to him whether there had not been some acquaintance between their parents in the past time. Deceiving her in all else, he had not deceived in this. He had spoken in good faith, when he had declared that he had never heard her father or her mother mentioned at home.

The curiosity of Julius was aroused. He attempted to lead her on into saying more.

"You appear to know what my father was thinking of when he spoke to me," he resumed. "May I ask--"

She interrupted him with a gesture of entreaty.

"Pray don't ask! It's past and over--it can have no interest for you--it has nothing to do with my errand here. I must return," she went on, hurriedly, "to my object in trespassing on your kindness. Have you heard me mentioned, Mr. Delamayn, by another member of your family besides your father?"

Julius had not anticipated that she would approach, of her own accord, the

painful subject on which he had himself forborne to touch. He was a little disappointed. He had expected more delicacy of feeling from her than she had shown.

"Is it necessary," he asked, coldly, "to enter on that?"

The blood rose again in Anne's cheeks.

"If it had not been necessary," she answered, "do you think I could have forced myself to mention it to you? Let me remind you that I am here on sufferance. If I don't speak plainly (no matter at what sacrifice to my own feelings), I make my situation more embarrassing than it is already. I have something to tell Mrs. Glenarm relating to the anonymous letters which she has lately received. And I have a word to say to her, next, about her contemplated marriage. Before you allow me to do this, you ought to know who I am. (I have owned it.) You ought to have heard the worst that can be said of my conduct. (Your face tells me you have heard the worst.) After the forbearance you have shown to me, as a perfect stranger, I will not commit the meanness of taking you by surprise. Perhaps, Mr. Delamayn, you understand, now, why I felt myself obliged to refer to your brother. Will you trust me with permission to speak to Mrs. Glenarm?"

It was simply and modestly said--with an unaffected and touching resignation of look and manner. Julius gave her back the respect and the sympathy which, for a moment, he had unjustly withheld from her.

"You have placed a confidence in me," he said "which most persons in your situation would have withheld. I feel bound, in return to place confidence in you. I will take it for granted that your motive in this matter is one which it is my duty to respect. It will be for Mrs. Glenarm to say whether she wishes the interview to take place or not. All that I can do is to leave you free to propose it to her. You are free."

As he spoke the sound of the piano reached them from the music-room. Julius pointed to the glass door which opened on to the terrace.

"You have only to go in by that door," he said, "and you will find Mrs. Glenarm alone."

Anne bowed, and left him. Arrived at the short flight of steps which led up to the door, she paused to collect her thoughts before she went in.

A sudden reluctance to go on and enter the room took possession of her, as she waited with her foot on the lower step. The report of Mrs. Glenarm's contemplated marriage had produced no such effect on her as Sir Patrick had supposed: it had found no love for Geoffrey left to wound, no latent jealousy only waiting to be inflamed. Her object in taking the journey to Perth was completed when her correspondence with Geoffrey was in her own hands again. The change of purpose which had brought her to Swanhaven was due entirely to the new view of her position toward Mrs. Glenarm which the coarse commonsense of Bishopriggs had first suggested to her. If she failed to protest against Mrs. Glenarm's marriage, in the interests of the reparation which Geoffrey owed to her, her conduct would only confirm Geoffrey's audacious assertion that she was a married woman already. For her own sake she might still have hesitated to move in the matter. But Blanche's interests were concerned as well as her own; and, for Blanche's sake, she had resolved on making the journey to Swanhaven Lodge.

At the same time, feeling toward Geoffrey as she felt now--conscious as she was of not really desiring the reparation on which she was about to insist--it was essential to the preservation of her own self-respect that she should have some purpose in view which could justify her to her own conscience in assuming the character of Mrs. Glenarm's rival.

She had only to call to mind the critical situation of Blanche--and to see her purpose before her plainly. Assuming that she could open the coming interview by peaceably proving that her claim on Geoffrey was beyond dispute, she might then, without fear of misconception, take the tone of a friend instead of an enemy, and might, with the best grace, assure Mrs. Glenarm that she had no rivalry to dread, on the one easy condition that she engaged to make Geoffrey repair the evil that he had done. "Marry him without a word against it to dread from me--so long as he unsays the words and undoes the deeds which have thrown a doubt on the marriage of Arnold and Blanche." If she could but bring the interview to this end--there was the way found of extricating Arnold, by her own exertions, from the false position in which she had innocently placed him toward his wife! Such was the object before her, as she now stood on the brink of her interview with Mrs. Glenarm.

Up to this moment, she had firmly believed in her capacity to realize her own visionary project. It was only when she had her foot on the step that a doubt of the success of the coming experiment crossed her mind. For the first time, she saw the weak point in her own reasoning. For the first time, she felt how much she had blindly taken for granted, in assuming that Mrs.

Glenarm would have sufficient sense of justice and sufficient command of temper to hear her patiently. All her hopes of success rested on her own favorable estimate of a woman who was a total stranger to her! What if the first words exchanged between them proved the estimate to be wrong?

It was too late to pause and reconsider the position. Julius Delamayn had noticed her hesitation, and was advancing toward her from the end of the terrace. There was no help for it but to master her own irresolution, and to run the risk boldly. "Come what may, I have gone too far to stop here." With that desperate resolution to animate her, she opened the glass door at the top of the steps, and went into the room.

Mrs. Glenarm rose from the piano. The two women--one so richly, the other so plainly dressed; one with her beauty in its full bloom, the other worn and blighted; one with society at her feet, the other an outcast living under the bleak shadow of reproach--the two women stood face to face, and exchanged the cold courtesies of salute between strangers, in silence.

The first to meet the trivial necessities of the situation was Mrs. Glenarm. She good-humoredly put an end to the embarrassment--which the shy visitor appeared to feel acutely--by speaking first.

"I am afraid the servants have not told you?" she said. "Mrs. Delamayn has gone out."

"I beg your pardon--I have not called to see Mrs. Delamayn."

Mrs. Glenarm looked a little surprised. She went on, however, as amiably as before.

"Mr. Delamayn, perhaps?" she suggested. "I expect him here every moment."

Anne explained again. "I have just parted from Mr. Delamayn." Mrs. Glenarm opened her eyes in astonishment. Anne proceeded. "I have come here, if you will excuse the intrusion--"

She hesitated--at a loss how to end the sentence. Mrs. Glenarm, beginning by this time to feel a strong curiosity as to what might be coming next, advanced to the rescue once more.

"Pray don't apologize," she said. "I think I understand that you are so good



as to have come to see me. You look tired. Won't you take a chair?"

Anne could stand no longer. She took the offered chair. Mrs. Glenarm resumed her place on the music-stool, and ran her fingers idly over the keys of the piano. "Where did you see Mr. Delamayn?" she went on. "The most irresponsible of men, except when he has got his fiddle in his hand! Is he coming in soon? Are we going to have any music? Have you come to play with us? Mr. Delamayn is a perfect fanatic in music, isn't he? Why isn't he here to introduce us? I suppose you like the classical style, too? Did you know that I was in the music-room? Might I ask your name?"

Frivolous as they were, Mrs. Glenarm's questions were not without their use. They gave Anne time to summon her resolution, and to feel the necessity of explaining herself.

"I am speaking, I believe, to Mrs. Glenarm?" she began.

The good-humored widow smiled and bowed graciously.

"I have come here, Mrs. Glenarm--by Mr. Delamayn's permission--to ask leave to speak to you on a matter in which you are interested."

Mrs. Glenarm's many-ringed fingers paused over the keys of the piano. Mrs. Glenarm's plump face turned on the stranger with a dawning expression of surprise.

"Indeed? I am interested in so many matters. May I ask what this matter is?"

The flippant tone of the speaker jarred on Anne. If Mrs. Glenarm's nature was as shallow as it appeared to be on the surface, there was little hope of any sympathy establishing itself between them.

"I wished to speak to you," she answered, "about something that happened while you were paying a visit in the neighborhood of Perth."

The dawning surprise in Mrs. Glenarm's face became intensified into an expression of distrust. Her hearty manner vanished under a veil of conventional civility, drawn over it suddenly. She looked at Anne. "Never at the best of times a beauty," she thought. "Wretchedly out of health now. Dressed like a servant, and looking like a lady. What does it mean?"

The last doubt was not to be borne in silence by a person of Mrs. Glenarm's temperament. She addressed herself to the solution of it with the most

unblushing directness--dextrously excused by the most winning frankness of manner.

"Pardon me," she said. "My memory for faces is a bad one; and I don't think you heard me just now, when I asked for your name. Have we ever met before?"

"Never."

"And yet--if I understand what you are referring to--you wish to speak to me about something which is only interesting to myself and my most intimate friends."

"You understand me quite correctly," said Anne. "I wish to speak to you about some anonymous letters--"

"For the third time, will you permit me to ask for your name?"

"You shall hear it directly--if you will first allow me to finish what I wanted to say. I wish--if I can--to persuade you that I come here as a friend, before I mention my name. You will, I am sure, not be very sorry to hear that you need dread no further annoyance--"

"Pardon me once more," said Mrs. Glenarm, interposing for the second time. "I am at a loss to know to what I am to attribute this kind interest in my affairs on the part of a total stranger."

This time, her tone was more than politely cold--it was politely impertinent. Mrs. Glenarm had lived all her life in good society, and was a perfect mistress of the subtleties of refined insolence in her intercourse with those who incurred her displeasure.

Anne's sensitive nature felt the wound--but Anne's patient courage submitted. She put away from her the insolence which had tried to sting, and went on, gently and firmly, as if nothing had happened.

"The person who wrote to you anonymously," she said, "alluded to a correspondence. He is no longer in possession of it. The correspondence has passed into hands which may be trusted to respect it. It will be put to no base use in the future--I answer for that."

"You answer for that?" repeated Mrs. Glenarm. She suddenly leaned forward over the piano, and fixed her eyes in unconcealed scrutiny on Anne's face.

The violent temper, so often found in combination with the weak nature, began to show itself in her rising color, and her lowering brow. "How do you know what the person wrote?" she asked. "How do you know that the correspondence has passed into other hands? Who are you?" Before Anne could answer her, she sprang to her feet, electrified by a new idea. "The man who wrote to me spoke of something else besides a correspondence. He spoke of a woman. I have found you out!" she exclaimed, with a burst of jealous fury. "You are the woman!"

Anne rose on her side, still in firm possession of her self-control.

"Mrs. Glenarm," she said, calmly, "I warn--no, I entreat you--not to take that tone with me. Compose yourself; and I promise to satisfy you that you are more interested than you are willing to believe in what I have still to say. Pray bear with me for a little longer. I admit that you have guessed right. I own that I am the miserable woman who has been ruined and deserted by Geoffrey Delamayn."

"It's false!" cried Mrs. Glenarm. "You wretch! Do you come to me with your trumped-up story? What does Julius Delamayn mean by exposing me to this?" Her indignation at finding herself in the same room with Anne broke its way through, not the restraints only, but the common decencies of politeness. "I'll ring for the servants!" she said. "I'll have you turned out of the house."

She tried to cross the fire-place to ring the bell. Anne, who was standing nearest to it, stepped forward at the same moment. Without saying a word, she motioned with her hand to the other woman to stand back. There was a pause. The two waited, with their eyes steadily fixed on one another--each with her resolution laid bare to the other's view. In a moment more, the finer nature prevailed. Mrs. Glenarm drew back a step in silence.

"Listen to me," said Anne.

"Listen to you?" repeated Mrs. Glenarm. "You have no right to be in this house. You have no right to force yourself in here. Leave the room!"

Anne's patience--so firmly and admirably preserved thus far--began to fail her at last.

"Take care, Mrs. Glenarm!" she said, still struggling with herself. "I am not naturally a patient woman. Trouble has done much to tame my temper--but endurance has its limits. You have reached the limits of mine. I have a claim

to be heard--and after what you have said to me, I will be heard!"

"You have no claim! You shameless woman, you are married already. I know the man's name. Arnold Brinkworth."

"Did Geoffrey Delamayn tell you that?"

"I decline to answer a woman who speaks of Mr. Geoffrey Delamayn in that familiar way."

Anne advanced a step nearer.

"Did Geoffrey Delamayn tell you that?" she repeated.

There was a light in her eyes, there was a ring in her voice, which showed that she was roused at last. Mrs. Glenarm answered her, this time.

"He did tell me."

"He lied!"

"He did not! He knew. I believe him. I don't believe you."

"If he told you that I was any thing but a single woman--if he told you that Arnold Brinkworth was married to any body but Miss Lundie of Windygates--I say again he lied!"

"I say again--I believe him, and not you."

"You believe I am Arnold Brinkworth's wife?"

"I am certain of it."

"You tell me that to my face?"

"I tell you to your face--you may have been Geoffrey Delamayn's mistress; you are Arnold Brinkworth's wife."

At those words the long restrained anger leaped up in Anne--all the more hotly for having been hitherto so steadily controlled. In one breathless moment the whirlwind of her indignation swept away, not only all remembrance of the purpose which had brought her to Swanhaven, but all sense even of the unpardonable wrong which she had suffered at Geoffrey's

hands. If he had been there, at that moment, and had offered to redeem his pledge, she would have consented to marry him, while Mrs. Glenarm's eye was on her--no matter whether she destroyed herself in her first cool moment afterward or not. The small sting had planted itself at last in the great nature. The noblest woman is only a woman, after all!

"I forbid your marriage to Geoffrey Delamayn! I insist on his performing the promise he gave me, to make me his wife! I have got it here in his own words, in his own writing. On his soul, he swears it to me--he will redeem his pledge. His mistress, did you say? His wife, Mrs. Glenarm, before the week is out!"

In those wild words she cast back the taunt--with the letter held in triumph in her hand.

Daunted for the moment by the doubt now literally forced on her, that Anne might really have the claim on Geoffrey which she advanced, Mrs. Glenarm answered nevertheless with the obstinacy of a woman brought to bay--with a resolution not to be convinced by conviction itself.

"I won't give him up!" she cried. "Your letter is a forgery. You have no proof. I won't, I won't, I won't give him up!" she repeated, with the impotent iteration of an angry child.

Anne pointed disdainfully to the letter that she held. "Here is his pledged and written word," she said. "While I live, you will never be his wife."

"I shall be his wife the day after the race. I am going to him in London--to warn him against You!"

"You will find me in London, before you--with this in my hand. Do you know his writing?"

She held up the letter, open. Mrs. Glenarm's hand flew out with the stealthy rapidity of a cat's paw, to seize and destroy it. Quick as she was, her rival was quicker still. For an instant they faced each other breathless--one with the letter held behind her; one with her hand still stretched out.

At the same moment--before a word more had passed between them--the glass door opened; and Julius Delamayn appeared in the room.

He addressed himself to Anne.

"We decided, on the terrace," he said, quietly, "that you should speak to Mrs. Glenarm, if Mrs. Glenarm wished it. Do you think it desirable that the interview should be continued any longer?"

Anne's head drooped on her breast. The fiery anger in her was quenched in an instant.

"I have been cruelly provoked, Mr. Delamayn," she answered. "But I have no right to plead that." She looked up at him for a moment. The hot tears of shame gathered in her eyes, and fell slowly over her cheeks. She bent her head again, and hid them from him. "The only atonement I can make," she said, "is to ask your pardon, and to leave the house."

In silence, she turned away to the door. In silence, Julius Delamayn paid her the trifling courtesy of opening it for her. She went out.

Mrs. Glenarm's indignation--suspended for the moment--transferred itself to Julius.

"If I have been entrapped into seeing that woman, with your approval," she said, haughtily, "I owe it to myself, Mr. Delamayn, to follow her example, and to leave your house."

"I authorized her to ask you for an interview, Mrs. Glenarm. If she has presumed on the permission that I gave her, I sincerely regret it, and I beg you to accept my apologies. At the same time, I may venture to add, in defense of my conduct, that I thought her--and think her still--a woman to be pitied more than to be blamed."

"To be pitied did you say?" asked Mrs. Glenarm, doubtful whether her ears had not deceived her.

"To be pitied," repeated Julius.

"You may find it convenient, Mr. Delamayn, to forget what your brother has told us about that person. I happen to remember it."

"So do I, Mrs. Glenarm. But, with my experience of Geoffrey--" He hesitated, and ran his fingers nervously over the strings of his violin.

"You don't believe him?" said Mrs. Glenarm.

Julius declined to admit that he doubted his brother's word, to the lady who

was about to become his brother's wife.

"I don't quite go that length," he said. "I find it difficult to reconcile what Geoffrey has told us, with Miss Silvester's manner and appearance--"

"Her appearance!" cried Mrs. Glenarm, in a transport of astonishment and disgust. "Her appearance! Oh, the men! I beg your pardon--I ought to have remembered that there is no accounting for tastes. Go on--pray go on!"

"Shall we compose ourselves with a little music?" suggested Julius.

"I particularly request you will go on," answered Mrs. Glenarm, emphatically. "You find it 'impossible to reconcile'--"

"I said 'difficult.'"

"Oh, very well. Difficult to reconcile what Geoffrey told us, with Miss Silvester's manner and appearance. What next? You had something else to say, when I was so rude as to interrupt you. What was it?"

"Only this," said Julius. "I don't find it easy to understand Sir Patrick Lundie's conduct in permitting Mr. Brinkworth to commit bigamy with his niece."

"Wait a minute! The marriage of that horrible woman to Mr. Brinkworth was a private marriage. Of course, Sir Patrick knew nothing about it!"

Julius owned that this might be possible, and made a second attempt to lead the angry lady back to the piano. Useless, once more! Though she shrank from confessing it to herself, Mrs. Glenarm's belief in the genuineness of her lover's defense had been shaken. The tone taken by Julius--moderate as it was--revived the first startling suspicion of the credibility of Geoffrey's statement which Anne's language and conduct had forced on Mrs. Glenarm. She dropped into the nearest chair, and put her handkerchief to her eyes. "You always hated poor Geoffrey," she said, with a burst of tears. "And now you're defaming him to me!"

Julius managed her admirably. On the point of answering her seriously, he checked himself. "I always hated poor Geoffrey," he repeated, with a smile. "You ought to be the last person to say that, Mrs. Glenarm! I brought him all the way from London expressly to introduce him to you."

"Then I wish you had left him in London!" retorted Mrs. Glenarm, shifting

suddenly from tears to temper. "I was a happy woman before I met your brother. I can't give him up!" she burst out, shifting back again from temper to tears. "I don't care if he has deceived me. I won't let another woman have him! I will be his wife!" She threw herself theatrically on her knees before Julius. "Oh, do help me to find out the truth!" she said. "Oh, Julius, pity me! I am so fond of him!"

There was genuine distress in her face, there was true feeling in her voice. Who would have believed that there were reserves of merciless insolence and heartless cruelty in this woman--and that they had been lavishly poured out on a fallen sister not five minutes since?

"I will do all I can," said Julius, raising her. "Let us talk of it when you are more composed. Try a little music," he repeated, "just to quiet your nerves."

"Would you like me to play?" asked Mrs. Glenarm, becoming a model of feminine docility at a moment's notice.

Julius opened the Sonatas of Mozart, and shouldered his violin.

"Let's try the Fifteenth," he said, placing Mrs. Glenarm at the piano. "We will begin with the Adagio. If ever there was divine music written by mortal man, there it is!"

They began. At the third bar Mrs. Glenarm dropped a note--and the bow of Julius paused shuddering on the strings.

"I can't play!" she said. "I am so agitated; I am so anxious. How am I to find out whether that wretch is really married or not? Who can I ask? I can't go to Geoffrey in London--the trainers won't let me see him. I can't appeal to Mr. Brinkworth himself--I am not even acquainted with him. Who else is there? Do think, and tell me!"

There was but one chance of making her return to the Adagio--the chance of hitting on a suggestion which would satisfy and quiet her. Julius laid his violin on the piano, and considered the question before him carefully.

"There are the witnesses," he said. "If Geoffrey's story is to be depended on, the landlady and the waiter at the inn can speak to the facts."

"Low people!" objected Mrs. Glenarm. "People I don't know. People who might take advantage of my situation, and be insolent to me."



Julius considered once more; and made another suggestion. With the fatal ingenuity of innocence, he hit on the idea of referring Mrs. Glenarm to no less a person than Lady Lundie herself!

"There is our good friend at Windygates," he said. "Some whisper of the matter may have reached Lady Lundie's ears. It may be a little awkward to call on her (if she has heard any thing) at the time of a serious family disaster. You are the best judge of that, however. All I can do is to throw out the notion. Windygates isn't very far off--and something might come of it. What do you think?"

Something might come of it! Let it be remembered that Lady Lundie had been left entirely in the dark--that she had written to Sir Patrick in a tone which plainly showed that her self-esteem was wounded and her suspicion roused--and that her first intimation of the serious dilemma in which Arnold Brinkworth stood was now likely, thanks to Julius Delamayn, to reach her from the lips of a mere acquaintance. Let this be remembered; and then let the estimate be formed of what might come of it--not at Windygates only, but also at Ham Farm!

"What do you think?" asked Julius.

Mrs. Glenarm was enchanted. "The very person to go to!" she said. "If I am not let in I can easily write--and explain my object as an apology. Lady Lundie is so right-minded, so sympathetic. If she sees no one else--I have only to confide my anxieties to her, and I am sure she will see me. You will lend me a carriage, won't you? I'll go to Windygates to-morrow."

Julius took his violin off the piano.

"Don't think me very troublesome," he said coaxingly. "Between this and to-morrow we have nothing to do. And it is such music, if you once get into the swing of it! Would you mind trying again?"

Mrs. Glenarm was willing to do any thing to prove her gratitude, after the invaluable hint which she had just received. At the second trial the fair pianist's eye and hand were in perfect harmony. The lovely melody which the Adagio of Mozart's Fifteenth Sonata has given to violin and piano flowed smoothly at last--and Julius Delamayn soared to the seventh heaven of musical delight.

The next day Mrs. Glenarm and Mrs. Delamayn went together to Windygates House.