

Molly looked out with eyes full of pain into the garden, where Julian and Olivia stood by the old sun-dial.

'It isn't Olivia's fault,' she sighed, thinking of her idol's many perfections. 'I might have known that I wasn't half clever enough for a man like Julian.'

And she went miserably away to darn—and cry over—the household linen.

Julian was nervous. It is easy to look love into soft eyes that look love again, but a bit difficult when tender glances strike upon an unresponsive brilliancy, keen as polished steel.

Out by the old sun-dial Molly, had she but known it, was being amply avenged.

'You are good enough to tell me that you love me,' said Olivia, in her clear, rather high voice. 'I thought—your conduct amply justified the opinion—that you were attached to my cousin?'

'Jealous!' remarked Julian to himself exultantly.

'We are excellent friends, nothing more,' he replied. 'How could anyone think of her when—?'

'The first day I saw you.'

Olivia turned. Her eyes were very merciless as she faced him.

'You are mistaken in the date, I fancy,' she said quietly, 'it was from the day, wasn't it, when you and Mr. Vallett had that little conversation together that your so-called attachment began?'

'I—er—Mr. Vallett!' stammered Julian.

'That was the day when you discovered from my old friend that Olivia Waite, living on a minute income, was really Olivia Waite, a wealthy heiress, masquerading for her own pleasure. You lost no time, Mr. Benet, in changing your opinion of me.'

'And you have the effrontery to ask me to marry you; you, a man who, to gain favor in the eyes of a rich woman, have not scrupled to call hypocrisy to your aid, and add sham religious convictions to your other shams.'

Julian, livid with rage, made no reply.

'I have been fooling you and leading you on for this,' went on the girl, her tones ringing with indignation. 'I could have forgiven your rubbishy poems and your overweening conceit, but your pretence of religion was the last straw.'

Julian recovered himself with an effort.

'What Mr. Vallett may have told you —'

'Mr. Vallett and I are to be married next spring,' she said. 'You can make your complaints to him personally, if you wish.'

'And may I ask with what object you have, as you express it, led me on and fooled me?' asked Julian, hoarse with wrath.

'Because I saw that though you sought her society and sympathy, you were as selfish and insincere in your attentions to my cousin as you appear to be in everything else; and I did not wish her to mistake the paste you offered for diamonds,' answered Olivia coolly.

Julian sneered.

'Miss Creagh may not have appreciated your kind efforts on her behalf.'

'She will appreciate them, no doubt, when—as I have every intention of doing—I repeat this conversation to her,' replied Olivia, looking steadily at him with immeasurable scorn. And leaving him, she went in to Molly, sitting white and tearful over the table-cloths, knelt down beside her, and told her the whole story.

'So,' said the Squire, a day or two after, coming in with beaming face from an extremely satisfactory interview with his tenant, 'you've been taking us all in, Miss Olivia, and are not only possessed of boundless wealth, as the novel-writers say, but are engaged to be married to that good fellow, Vallett?'

'You don't object, do you, uncle?' asked Olivia saucily, pausing in her work of helping Molly to arrange a huge basket of roses just left by John Benet.

'I heartily approve,' returned the Squire, pinching her ear playfully; 'but what about the poet, eh, young lady?'

'Oh, as for him,' replied Olivia, with light scorn, 'he is nothing better than a Philanderer!'

And then, for some inexplicable reason known only to womankind, the two girls kissed each other heartily.—*Exchange.*

## SIR MAURICE BUTLER'S MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Danton was lachrymose, nervous, and a little angry. On the other hand Mrs. Butler was decidedly angry, scornful, and not in the least nervous.. It was said by her enemies, of which she had more than due proportion, that nerves didn't enter into her composition.

'Well, Adela says she won't stand it—' Mrs. Danton began.

'Bah! Adela! Why doesn't she make herself attractive?' Mrs. Butler interrupted rudely. 'I have no patience with girls like Adela. It is the fault of such girls when young men get up a flirtation with the like of that woman at the department farm.'

'Attractive!' Adela Danton's mother repeated. 'Attractive! Why Adela was one of the best-dressed girls of last season. And she doesn't need to study expense.'

Mrs. Butler sniffed.

'Oh, dressed!' she said contemptuously. 'She knows how to dress, I suppose. Most women do. Why isn't she bright and witty? She isn't. She's too lazy to try. She thinks her duty is done by looking pretty. I wonder does she know that men hate pretty, inane girls more than positively ugly ones.'

'Inane—' Mrs. Danton began. Mrs. Butler realised suddenly that she might go too far.

'I don't exactly mean that Adela is inane or stupid; but Percy has always liked bright, sparkling society. I am certain there is nothing whatever in his visits to the farm. He, naturally, is interested in all new methods of farming, seeing that all this property will one day be his.'

'Oh, Sir Maurice may marry,' Mrs. Danton said shortly.

Mrs. Butler laughed.

'Maurice marry! He may do many things, go to the North Pole or the like; but marry— No, no. He is living really in the fifth or sixth century, among the saints and scholars of Ireland's golden age.'

'He isn't really old,' Mrs. Danton persisted.

'He'll never see forty; but one can't reckon his age by years. He's far in advance of his years. And he had a disappointment in youth, I believe. Oh, no, Maurice won't marry.'

'Percy is treating Adela badly. You know he should have spoken out before now. It isn't like as if Adela was portionless—'

Mrs. Butler rang the bell for tea and mastered her temper with an effort. Didn't all the world know that Percy Butler would never have paid court to an English brewer's daughter if it were not for her fortune? Even as it was he had been dexterously led to do so by his mother. Both were notoriously in debt, and both were extravagant. Sometimes Mrs. Butler wondered what on earth they should have done had Maurice Butler not asked his cousin's widow to make her home at Glen-Butler.

Tea was brought in by a trim servant maid. If the carpets were threadbare at Glen-Butler and the furniture moth-eaten, the old silver and the delicate old-fashioned china had but improved with time. Mrs. Danton knew enough about both china and silver to appreciate her cup, saucer, and spoon.

'Couldn't you speak to Percy?'

Mrs. Butler laughed shortly.

'I'm not quite a fool. The men of the Butlers won't drive.'

'Couldn't you speak to the—person?' Mrs. Danton fully expected an angry reply.

'I have been thinking of that. The girl—she isn't quite a girl, but the more dangerous for that—seems a quiet, sensible person. She's matron or manageress of the house, so I could go to see the dairy and poultry yard. Yes, I'll say a few words to Miss —. What's her name?'

'Darragh.'