

and buried her face in the cushions. I heard her sob convulsively, and cursed myself for carrying my game to the end. Never in my life did I feel so mean, so unworthy of notice as then. Manifestly, however, there was but one thing to do, and that was to make a clean breast of the whole affair. I knelt and took her hands from her eyes. She raised a tear-stained face to mine.

“‘Forgive me,’ she said. ‘Do not think me brazen and unmaidenly. I never meant that you should learn my poor secret. But it was all your fault. You forced it from me. Forget what I have said in the madness of the moment. And now go away and leave me alone.’

“‘No,’ I said, sternly, ‘it is I who must ask pardon. It is my villainy which has caused you this. No, you must listen,’ as she tried to push me away.

“And then I told her all. She listened quietly until I had ended. Then she held out her hand to me. There were no traces of tears in her eyes then.

“‘Yes, I believe I shall forget you,’ she said, very coldly and calmly.

“‘Heaven grant you may,’ I replied, abjectly, and I turned and left her. But as I did so I heard a dry sob, half-suppressed, from the Ingle, and I knew that memory would not so easily be effaced. Such was the end.”

For some time after Wersand had finished I did not speak. I was thinking hard. At length I arose and moved towards the door. “You are a brute, Wersand,” I said.

“I know it,” he replied, “I have repented frequently.”

“But you haven’t told me her name,” I reminded him as I was about to leave. “Who is she?”

“Beth Armand,” he said, as I closed the door.

I turned quickly at the mention of that name. The temptation was strong within me to go back and denounce him—yes, even to challenge him to physical combat. But I thought better of it. For Wersand was my friend, in spite of the fact that he had, in that short summer week, broken the heart of the one girl who was ‘all the world to me.’

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