

**GEORGE  
MEREDITH**

EVAN

HARRINGTON.

VOLUME 6

George Meredith  
**Evan Harrington. Volume 6**

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# George Meredith

## Evan Harrington – Volume 6

### CHAPTER XXXII

### IN WHICH EVANS LIGHT

### BEGINS TO TWINKLE AGAIN

The dowagers were now firmly planted on Olympus. Along the grass lay the warm strong colours of the evening sun, reddening the pine-stems and yellowing the idle aspen-leaves. For a moment it had hung in doubt whether the pic-nic could survive the two rude shocks it had received. Happily the youthful element was large, and when the band, refreshed by chicken and sherry, threw off half-a-dozen bars of one of those irresistible waltzes that first catch the ear, and then curl round the heart, till on a sudden they invade and will have the legs, a rush up Parnassus was seen, and there were shouts and laughter and commotion, as over other great fields of battle the corn will wave gaily and mark the reestablishment of nature's reign.

How fair the sight! Approach the twirling couples. They talk as they whirl. 'Fancy the run-away tailor!' is the male's remark, and he expects to be admired for it, and is.

'That make-up Countess—his sister, you know—didn't you see her? she turned green,' says Creation's second effort, almost occupying the place of a rib.

'Isn't there a run-away wife, too?'

'Now, you mustn't be naughty!'

They laugh and flatter one another. The power to give and take flattery to any amount is the rare treasure of youth.

Undoubtedly they are a poetical picture; but some poetical pictures talk dreary prose; so we will retire.

Now, while the dancers carried on their business, and distance lent them enchantment, Rose stood by Juliana, near an alder which hid them from the rest.

'I don't accuse you,' she was saying; 'but who could have done this but you? Ah, Juley! you will never get what you want if you plot for it. I thought once you cared for Evan. If he had loved you, would I not have done all that I could for you both? I pardon you with all my heart.'

'Keep your pardon!' was the angry answer. 'I have done more for you, Rose. He is an adventurer, and I have tried to open your eyes and make you respect your family. You may accuse me of what you like, I have my conscience.'

'And the friendship of the Countess,' added Rose.

Juliana's figure shook as if she had been stung.

'Go and be happy—don't stay here and taunt me,' she said, with a ghastly look. 'I suppose he can lie like his sister, and has told you all sorts of tales.'

'Not a word—not a word!' cried Rose. 'Do you think my lover could tell a lie?'

The superb assumption of the girl, and the true portrait of Evan's character which it flashed upon Juliana, were to the latter such intense pain, that she turned like one on the rack, exclaiming:

'You think so much of him? You are so proud of him? Then, yes! I love him too, ugly, beastly as I am to look at! Oh, I know what you think! I loved him from the first, and I knew all about him, and spared him pain. I did not wait for him to fall from a horse. I watched every chance of his being exposed. I let them imagine he cared for me. Drummond would have told what he knew long before—only he knew there would not be much harm in a tradesman's son marrying me. And I have played into your hands, and now you taunt me!'

Rose remembered her fretful unkindness to Evan on the subject of his birth, when her feelings toward him were less warm. Dwelling on that alone, she put her arms round Juliana's stiffening figure, and said: 'I dare say I am much more selfish than you. Forgive me, dear.'

Staring at her, Juliana replied, 'Now you are acting.'

'No,' said Rose, with a little effort to fondle her; 'I only feel that I love you better for loving him.'

Generous as her words sounded, and were, Juliana intuitively struck to the root of them, which was comfortless. For how calm in its fortune, how strong in its love, must Rose's heart be, when she could speak in this unwonted way!

'Go, and leave me, pray,' she said.

Rose kissed her burning cheek. 'I will do as you wish, dear. Try and know me better, and be sister Juley as you used to be. I know I am thoughtless, and horribly vain and disagreeable sometimes. Do forgive me. I will love you truly.'

Half melting, Juliana pressed her hand.

'We are friends?' said Rose. 'Good-bye'; and her countenance lighted, and she moved away, so changed by her happiness! Juliana was jealous of a love strong as she deemed her own to overcome obstacles. She called to her: 'Rose! Rose, you will not take advantage of what I have told you, and repeat it to any one?'

Instantly Rose turned with a glance of full contempt over her shoulder.

'To whom?' she asked.

'To any one.'

'To him? He would not love me long if I did!'

Juliana burst into fresh tears, but Rose walked into the sunbeams and the circle of the music.

Mounting Olympus, she inquired whether Ferdinand was within hail, as they were pledged to dance the first dance together. A few hints were given, and then Rose learnt that Ferdinand had been dismissed.

'And where is he?' she cried with her accustomed impetuosity. 'Mama!—of course you did not accuse him—but, Mama! could you possibly let him go with the suspicion that you thought him guilty of writing an anonymous letter?'

'Not at all,' Lady Jocelyn replied. 'Only the handwriting was so extremely like, and he was the only person who knew the address and the circumstances, and who could have a motive—though I don't quite see what it is—I thought it as well to part for a time.'

'But that's sophistry!' said Rose. 'You accuse or you exonerate. Nobody can be half guilty. If you do not hold him innocent you are unjust!' Lady Jocelyn rejoined: 'Yes? It's singular what a stock of axioms young people have handy for their occasions.'

Rose loudly announced that she would right this matter.

'I can't think where Rose gets her passion for hot water,' said her mother, as Rose ran down the ledge.

Two or three young gentlemen tried to engage her for a dance. She gave them plenty of promises, and hurried on till she met Evan, and, almost out of breath, told him the shameful injustice that had been done to her friend.

'Mama is such an Epicurean! I really think she is worse than Papa. This disgraceful letter looks like Ferdinand's writing, and she tells him so; and, Evan! will you believe that instead of being certain it's impossible any gentleman could do such a thing, she tells Ferdinand she shall feel more comfortable if she doesn't see him for some time? Poor Ferdinand! He has had so much to bear!'

Too sure of his darling to be envious now of any man she pitied, Evan said, 'I would forfeit my hand on his innocence!'

'And so would I,' echoed Rose. 'Come to him with me, dear. Or no,' she added, with a little womanly discretion, 'perhaps it would not be so well—you're not very much cast down by what happened at dinner?'

'My darling! I think of you.'

'Of me, dear? Concealment is never of any service. What there is to be known people may as well know at once. They'll gossip for a month, and then forget it. Your mother is dreadfully outspoken, certainly; but she has better manners than many ladies—I mean people in a position: you understand me? But suppose, dear, this had happened, and I had said nothing to Mama, and then we had to confess? Ah, you'll find I'm wiser than you imagine, Mr. Evan.'

'Haven't I submitted to somebody's lead?'

'Yes, but with a sort of "under protest." I saw it by the mouth. Not quite natural. You have been moody ever since—just a little. I suppose it's our manly pride. But I'm losing time. Will you promise me not to brood over that occurrence.? Think of me. Think everything of me. I am yours; and, dearest, if I love you, need you care what anybody else thinks? We will soon change their opinion.'

'I care so little,' said Evan, somewhat untruthfully, 'that till you return I shall go and sit with my mother.'

'Oh, she has gone. She made her dear old antiquated curtsy to Mama and the company. "If my son has not been guilty of deception, I will leave him to your good pleasure, my lady." That's what she said. Mama likes her, I know. But I wish she didn't mouth her words so precisely: it reminds me of—the Countess, Rose checked herself from saying, 'Good-bye. Thank heaven! the worst has happened. Do you know what I should do if I were you, and felt at all distressed? I should keep repeating,' Rose looked archly and deeply up under his eyelids, "I am the son of a tradesman, and Rose loves me," over and over, and then, if you feel ashamed, what is it of?'

She nodded adieu, laughing at her own idea of her great worth; an idea very firmly fixed in her fair bosom, notwithstanding. Mrs. Melville said of her, 'I used to think she had pride.' Lady Jocelyn answered, 'So she has. The misfortune is that it has taken the wrong turning.'

Evan watched the figure that was to him as that of an angel—no less! She spoke so frankly to them as she passed: or here and there went on with a light laugh. It seemed an act of graciousness that she should open her mouth to one! And, indeed, by virtue of a pride which raised her to the level of what she thought it well to do, Rose was veritably on higher ground than any present. She no longer envied her friend Jenny, who, emerging from the shades, allured by the waltz, dislinked herself from William's arm, and whispered exclamations of sorrow at the scene created by Mr. Harrington's mother. Rose patted her hand, and said: 'Thank you, Jenny dear but don't be sorry. I'm glad. It prevents a number of private explanations.'

'Still, dear!' Jenny suggested.

'Oh! of course, I should like to lay my whip across the shoulders of the person who arranged the conspiracy,' said Rose. 'And afterwards I don't mind returning thanks to him, or her, or them.'

William cried out, 'I 'm always on your side, Rose.'

'And I'll be Jenny's bridesmaid,' rejoined Rose, stepping blithely away from them.

Evan debated whither to turn when Rose was lost to his eyes. He had no heart for dancing. Presently a servant approached, and said that Mr. Harry particularly desired to see him. From Harry's looks at table, Evan judged that the interview was not likely to be amicable. He asked the direction he was to take, and setting out with long strides, came in sight of Raikes, who walked in gloom, and was evidently labouring under one of his mountains of melancholy. He affected to be quite out of the world; but finding that Evan took the hint in his usual prosy manner, was reduced to call after him, and finally to run and catch him.

'Haven't you one single spark of curiosity?' he began.

'What about?' said Evan.

'Why, about my amazing luck! You haven't asked a question. A matter of course.'

Evan complimented him by asking a question: saying that Jack's luck certainly was wonderful.

'Wonderful, you call it,' said Jack, witheringly. 'And what's more wonderful is, that I'd give up all for quiet quarters in the Green Dragon. I knew I was prophetic. I knew I should regret that peaceful hostelry. Diocletian, if you like. I beg you to listen. I can't walk so fast without danger.'

'Well, speak out, man. What's the matter with you?' cried Evan, impatiently.

Jack shook his head: 'I see a total absence of sympathy,' he remarked.

'I can't.'

'Then stand out of the way.'

Jack let him pass, exclaiming, with cold irony, 'I will pay homage to a loftier Nine!'

Mr. Raikes could not in his soul imagine that Evan was really so little inquisitive concerning a business of such importance as the trouble that possessed him. He watched his friend striding off, incredulously, and then commenced running in pursuit.

'Harrington, I give in; I surrender; you reduce me to prose. Thy nine have conquered my nine!—pardon me, old fellow. I'm immensely upset. This is the first day in my life that I ever felt what indigestion is. Egad, I've got something to derange the best digestion going!

'Look here, Harrington. What happened to you today, I declare I think nothing of. You owe me your assistance, you do, indeed; for if it hadn't been for the fearful fascinations of your sister—that divine Countess—I should have been engaged to somebody by this time, and profited by the opportunity held out to me, and which is now gone. I'm disgraced. I'm known. And the worst of it is, I must face people. I daren't turn tail. Did you ever hear of such a dilemma?'

'Ay,' quoth Evan, 'what is it?'

Raikes turned pale. 'Then you haven't heard of it?' 'Not a word.'

'Then it's all for me to tell. I called on Messrs. Grist. I dined at the Aurora afterwards. Depend upon it, Harrington, we're led by a star. I mean, fellows with anything in them are. I recognized our Fallow field host, and thinking to draw him out, I told our mutual histories. Next day I went to these Messrs. Grist. They proposed the membership for Fallow field, five hundred a year, and the loan of a curricule, on condition. It 's singular, Harrington; before anybody knew of the condition I didn't care about it a bit. It seemed to me childish. Who would think of minding wearing a tin plate? But now!—the sufferings of Orestes—what are they to mine? He wasn't tied to his Furies. They did hover a little above him; but as for me, I'm scorched; and I mustn't say where: my mouth is locked; the social laws which forbid the employment of obsolete words arrest my exclamations of despair. What do you advise?'

Evan stared a moment at the wretched object, whose dream of meeting a beneficent old gentleman had brought him to be the sport of a cynical farceur. He had shivers on his own account, seeing something of himself magnified, and he loathed the fellow, only to feel more acutely what a stigma may be.

'It 's a case I can't advise in,' he said, as gently as he could.

'I should be off the grounds in a hurry.'

'And then I'm where I was before I met the horrid old brute!' Raikes moaned.

'I told him over a pint of port-and noble stuff is that Aurora port!— I told him—I amused him till he was on the point of bursting—I told him I was such a gentleman as the world hadn't seen—minus money. So he determined to launch me. He said I should lead the life of such a gentleman as the world had not yet seen—on that simple condition, which appeared to me childish, a senile whim; rather an indulgence of his.'

Evan listened to the tribulations of his friend as he would to those of a doll—the sport of some experimental child. By this time he knew something of old Tom Cogglesby, and was not astonished that he should have chosen John Raikes to play one of his farces on. Jack turned off abruptly the moment he saw they were nearing human figures, but soon returned to Evan's side, as if for protection.

'Hoy! Harrington!' shouted Harry, beckoning to him. 'Come, make haste!'

'I'm in a deuce of a mess.'

The two Wheedles—Susan and Polly—were standing in front of him, and after his call to Evan, he turned to continue some exhortation or appeal to the common sense of women, largely indulged in by young men when the mischief is done.

'Harrington, do speak to her. She looks upon you as a sort of parson.

I can't make her believe I didn't send for her. Of course, she knows I'm fond of her. My dear fellow,' he whispered, 'I shall be ruined if my grandmother hears of it. Get her away, please. Promise anything.'

Evan took her hand and asked for the child.

'Quite well, sir,' faltered Susan.

'You should not have come here.'

Susan stared, and commenced whimpering: 'Didn't you wish it, sir?'

'Oh, she's always thinking of being made a lady of,' cried Polly. 'As if

Mr. Harry was going to do that. It wants a gentleman to do that.'

'The carriage came for me, sir, in the afternoon,' said Susan, plaintively, 'with your compliments, and would I come. I thought—'

'What carriage?' asked Evan.

Raikes, who was ogling Polly, interposed grandly, 'Mine!'

'And you sent in my name for this girl to come here?' Evan turned wrathfully on him.

'My dear Harrington, when you hit you knock down. The wise require but one dose of experience. The Countess wished it, and I did dispatch.'

'The Countess!' Harry exclaimed; 'Jove! do you mean to say that the Countess—'

'De Saldar,' added Jack. 'In Britain none were worthy found.'

Harry gave a long whistle.

'Leave at once,' said Evan to Susan. 'Whatever you may want send to me for. And when you think you can meet your parents, I will take you to them. Remember that is what you must do.'

'Make her give up that stupidity of hers, about being made a lady of,

Mr. Harrington,' said the inveterate Polly.

Susan here fell a-weeping.

'I would go, sir,' she said. 'I'm sure I would obey you: but I can't. I can't go back to the inn. They're beginning to talk about me, because—because I can't—can't pay them, and I'm ashamed.'

Evan looked at Harry.

'I forgot,' the latter mumbled, but his face was crimson. He put his hands in his pockets. 'Do you happen to have a note or so?' he asked.

Evan took him aside and gave him what he had; and this amount, without inspection or reserve, Harry offered to Susan. She dashed his hand impetuously from her sight.

'There, give it to me,' said Polly. 'Oh, Mr. Harry! what a young man you are!'

Whether from the rebuff, or the reproach, or old feelings reviving, Harry was moved to go forward, and lay his hand on Susan's shoulder and mutter something in her ear that softened her.

Polly thrust the notes into her bosom, and with a toss of her nose, as who should say, 'Here 's nonsense they're at again,' tapped Susan on the other shoulder, and said imperiously: 'Come, Miss!'

Hurrying out a dozen sentences in one, Harry ended by suddenly kissing Susan's cheek, and then Polly bore her away; and Harry, with great solemnity, said to Evan:

'Pon my honour, I think I ought to! I declare I think I love that girl. What's one's family? Why shouldn't you button to the one that just suits you? That girl, when she's dressed, and in good trim, by Jove! nobody 'd know her from a born lady. And as for grammar, I'd soon teach her that.'

Harry began to whistle: a sign in him that he was thinking his hardest.

'I confess to being considerably impressed by the maid Wheedle,' said Raikes.

'Would you throw yourself away on her?' Evan inquired.

Apparently forgetting how he stood, Mr. Raikes replied:

'You ask, perhaps, a little too much of me. One owes consideration to one's position. In the world's eyes a matrimonial slip outweighs a peccadillo. No. To much the maid might wheedle me, but to Hymen! She's decidedly fresh and pert—the most delicious little fat lips and cocky nose; but cease we to dwell on her, or of us two, to! one will be undone.'

Harry burst into a laugh: 'Is this the T.P. for Fallow field?'

'M.P. I think you mean,' quoth Raikes, serenely; but a curious glance being directed on him, and pursuing him pertinaciously, it was as if the pediment of the lofty monument he topped were smitten with violence. He stammered an excuse, and retreated somewhat as it is the fashion to do from the presence of royalty, followed by Harry's roar of laughter, in which Evan cruelly joined.

'Gracious powers!' exclaimed the victim of ambition, 'I'm laughed at by the son of a tailor!' and he edged once more into the shade of trees.

It was a strange sight for Harry's relatives to see him arm-in-arm with the man he should have been kicking, challenging, denouncing, or whatever the code prescribes: to see him talking to this young man earnestly, clinging to him affectionately, and when he separated from him, heartily wringing his hand. Well might they think that there was something extraordinary in these Harringtons. Convicted of Tailordom, these Harringtons appeared to shine with double lustre. How was it? They were at a loss to say. They certainly could say that the Countess was egregiously affected and vulgar; but who could be altogether complacent and sincere that had to fight so hard a fight? In this struggle with society I see one of the instances where success is entirely to be honoured and remains a proof of merit. For however boldly antagonism may storm the ranks of society, it will certainly be repelled, whereas affinity cannot be resisted; and they who, against obstacles of birth, claim and keep their position among the educated and refined, have that affinity. It is, on the whole, rare, so that society is not often invaded. I think it will have to front Jack Cade again before another Old Mel and his progeny shall appear. You refuse to believe in Old Mel? You know not nature's cunning.

Mrs. Shorne, Mrs. Melville, Miss Carrington, and many of the guests who observed Evan moving from place to place, after the exposure, as they called it, were amazed at his audacity. There seemed such a quietly superb air about him. He would not look out of his element; and this, knowing what they knew, was his offence. He deserved some commendation for still holding up his head, but it was love and Rose who kept the fires of his heart alive.

The sun had sunk. The figures on the summit of Parnassus were seen bobbing in happy placidity against the twilight sky. The sun had sunk, and many of Mr. Raikes' best things were unspoken. Wandering about in his gloom, he heard a feminine voice:

'Yes, I will trust you.'

'You will not repent it,' was answered.

Recognizing the Duke, Mr. Raikes cleared his throat.

'A-hem, your Grace! This is how the days should pass. I think we should diurnally station a good London band on high, and play his Majesty to bed—the sun. My opinion is, it would improve the crops. I'm not, as yet, a landed proprietor—'

The Duke stepped aside with him, and Raikes addressed no one for the next twenty minutes. When he next came forth Parnassus was half deserted. It was known that old Mrs. Bonner had been taken with a dangerous attack, and under this third blow the pic-nic succumbed. Simultaneously with the messenger that brought the news to Lady Jocelyn, one approached Evan, and informed him that the Countess de Saldar urgently entreated him to come to the house without delay. He also wished to speak a few words to her, and stepped forward briskly. He had no prophetic intimations of the change this interview would bring upon him.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE HERO TAKES HIS RANK IN THE ORCHESTRA

The Countess was not in her dressing-room when Evan presented himself. She was in attendance on Mrs. Bonner, Conning said; and the primness of Conning was a thing to have been noticed by any one save a dreamy youth in love. Conning remained in the room, keeping distinctly aloof. Her duties absorbed her, but a presiding thought mechanically jerked back her head from time to time: being the mute form of, 'Well, I never!' in Conning's rank of life and intellectual capacity. Evan remained quite still in a chair, and Conning was certainly a number of paces beyond suspicion, when the Countess appeared, and hurling at the maid one of those feminine looks which contain huge quartos of meaning, vented the cold query:

'Pray, why did you not come to me, as you were commanded?'

'I was not aware, my lady,' Conning drew up to reply, and performed with her eyes a lofty rejection of the volume cast at her, and a threat of several for offensive operations, if need were.

The Countess spoke nearer to what she was implying 'You know I object to this: it is not the first time.'

'Would your ladyship please to say what your ladyship means?'

In return for this insolent challenge to throw off the mask, the Countess felt justified in punishing her by being explicit. 'Your irregularities are not of yesterday,' she said, kindly making use of a word of double signification still.

'Thank you, my lady.' Conning accepted the word in its blackest meaning. 'I am obliged to you. If your ladyship is to be believed, my character is not worth much. But I can make distinctions, my lady.'

Something very like an altercation was continued in a sharp, brief undertone; and then Evan, waking up to the affairs of the hour, heard Conning say:

'I shall not ask your ladyship to give me a character.'

The Countess answering with pathos: 'It would, indeed, be to give you one.'

He was astonished that the Countess should burst into tears when Conning had departed, and yet more so that his effort to console her should bring a bolt of wrath upon himself.

'Now, Evan, now see what you have done for us—do, and rejoice at it. The very menials insult us. You heard what that creature said? She can make distinctions. Oh! I could beat her. They know it: all the servants know it: I can see it in their faces. I feel it when I pass them. The insolent wretches treat us as impostors; and this Conning—to defy me! Oh! it comes of my devotion to you. I am properly chastized. I passed Rose's maid on the stairs, and her reverence was barely perceptible.'

Evan murmured that he was very sorry, adding, foolishly: 'Do you really care, Louisa, for what servants think and say?'

The Countess sighed deeply: 'Oh! you are too thickskinned! Your mother from top to toe! It is too dreadful! What have I done to deserve it? Oh, Evan, Evan!'

Her head dropped in her lap. There was something ludicrous to Evan in this excess of grief on account of such a business; but he was tender-hearted and wrought upon to declare that, whether or not he was to blame for his mother's intrusion that afternoon, he was ready to do what he could to make up to the Countess for her sufferings: whereat the Countess sighed again: asked him what he possibly could do, and doubted his willingness to accede to the most trifling request.

'No; I do in verity believe that were I to desire you to do aught for your own good alone, you would demur, Van.'

He assured her that she was mistaken.

'We shall see,' she said.

'And if once or twice, I have run counter to you, Louisa—'

'Abominable language!' cried the Countess, stopping her ears like a child. 'Do not excruciate me so. You laugh! My goodness! what will you come to!'

Evan checked his smile, and, taking her hand, said:

'I must tell you; that, on the whole, I see nothing to regret in what has happened to-day. You may notice a change in the manners of the servants and some of the country squiresses, but I find none in the bearing of the real ladies, the true gentlemen, to me.'

'Because the change is too fine for you to perceive it,' interposed the Countess.

'Rose, then, and her mother, and her father!' Evan cried impetuously.

'As for Lady Jocelyn!' the Countess shrugged:

'And Sir Franks!' her head shook: 'and Rose, Rose is, simply self-willed; a "she will" or "she won't" sort of little person. No criterion! Henceforth the world is against us. We have to struggle with it: it does not rank us of it!'

'Your feeling on the point is so exaggerated, my dear Louisa', said Evan, 'one can't bring reason to your ears. The tattle we shall hear we shall outlive. I care extremely for the good opinion of men, but I prefer my own; and I do not lose it because my father was in trade.'

'And your own name, Evan Harrington, is on a shop,' the Countess struck in, and watched him severely from under her brow, glad to mark that he could still blush.

'Oh, heaven!' she wailed to increase the effect, 'on a shop! a brother of mine!'

'Yes, Louisa. It may not last . . . I did it—is it not better that a son should blush, than cast dishonour on his father's memory?'

'Ridiculous boy-notion!'

'Rose has pardoned it, Louisa—cannot you? I find that the naturally vulgar and narrow-headed people, and cowards who never forego mean advantages, are those only who would condemn me and my conduct in that.'

'And you have joy in your fraction of the world left to you!' exclaimed his female-elder.

Changing her manner to a winning softness, she said:

'Let me also belong to the very small party! You have been really romantic, and most generous and noble; only the shop smells! But, never mind, promise me you will not enter it.'

'I hope not,' said Evan.

'You do hope that you will not officiate? Oh, Evan the eternal contemplation of gentlemen's legs! think of that! Think of yourself sculptured in that attitude!' Innumerable little prickles and stings shot over Evan's skin.

'There—there, Louisa!' he said, impatiently; 'spare your ridicule. We go to London to-morrow, and when there I expect to hear that I have an appointment, and that this engagement is over.' He rose and walked up and down the room.

'I shall not be prepared to go to-morrow,' remarked the Countess, drawing her figure up stiffly.

'Oh! well, if you can stay, Andrew will take charge of you, I dare say.'

'No, my dear, Andrew will not—a nonentity cannot—you must.'

'Impossible, Louisa,' said Evan, as one who imagines he is uttering a thing of little consequence. 'I promised Rose.'

'You promised Rose that you would abdicate and retire? Sweet, loving girl!'

Evan made no answer.

'You will stay with me, Evan.'

'I really can't,' he said in his previous careless tone.

'Come and sit down,' cried the Countess, imperiously.

'The first trifle is refused. It does not astonish me. I will honour you now by talking seriously to you. I have treated you hitherto as a child. Or, no—' she stopped her mouth; 'it is enough if I tell

you, dear, that poor Mrs. Bonner is dying, and that she desires my attendance on her to refresh her spirit with readings on the Prophecies, and Scriptural converse. No other soul in the house can so soothe her.'

'Then, stay,' said Evan.

'Unprotected in the midst of enemies! Truly!'

'I think, Louisa, if you can call Lady Jocelyn an enemy, you must read the Scriptures by a false light.'

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