

"Yes, indeed, I have," said the girl, with a faintly amused little smile. "And so has my great friend, Janetta Colwyn. Here she is: Janetta, I am telling Sir Philip Ashley that we have been expelled, and he will not believe me."

Sir Philip turned in some curiosity to see the girl of whom he had heard for the first time that morning. He had not noticed before that she was present. He saw a brown little creature, with eyes that had been swollen with crying until they were well-nigh invisible, small, unremarkable features, and a mouth that was inclined to quiver. Margaret might afford to be serene, but to this girl expulsion from school had evidently been a sad trouble. He threw all the more kindness and gentleness into his voice and look as he spoke to her.

Janetta might have felt a little awkward if she had not been so entirely absorbed by her own woes. She had never set foot before in half so grand a house as this of Helmsley Court, nor had she ever dined late or spoken to a gentleman in an evening coat in all her previous life. The size and the magnificence of the room would perhaps have oppressed her if she had been fully aware of them. But she was for the moment very much wrapped up in her own affairs, and scarcely stopped to think of the novel situation in which she found herself. The only thing that had startled her was the attention paid to her dress by Margaret and Margaret's maid. Janetta would have put on her afternoon black cashmere and little silver brooch, and would have felt herself perfectly well dressed: but Margaret, after a little consultation with the very grand young person who condescended to brush Miss Colwyn's hair, had herself brought to Janetta's room a dress of black lace over cherry-colored silk, and had begged her to put it on.

"You will feel so hot downstairs if you don't put on something cool," Margaret had said "There is a fire in the drawing-room: papa likes the rooms warm. My dresses would not have fitted you, I am so much taller than you; but mamma is just your height, and although you are thinner perhaps——But I don't know: the dress fits you perfectly. Look in the glass, Janet; you are quite splendid."

Janetta looked and blushed a little—not because she thought herself at all splendid, but because the dress showed her neck and arms in a way no dress had ever done before. "Ought it to be—open—like this?" she said, vaguely. "Do you wear your dresses like this when you are at home?"

"Mine are high," said Margaret. "I am not 'out,' you know. But you are older than I, and you used to teach——I think we may consider that you *are* 'out'" she added, with a little laugh. "You look very nice, Janetta: you have such pretty arms! Now I must go and dress, and I will call for you when I am ready to go down."

Janetta felt decidedly doubtful as to whether she were not a great deal too grand for the occasion; but she altered her mind when she saw Margaret's dainty silk and lace, and Lady Caroline's exquisite brocade; and she felt herself quite unworthy to take Mr.