

THE SISTERS

wisdom of the delay, but not seeing how much harm could happen, seeing that he had all the precious documents in his own breast-pocket; then he reluctantly granted Patty's request, and the girl went upstairs again with feet not quite so light as those that had carried her down. Upstairs, however, she subordinated her own interests to the consideration of her sister's more pressing affairs.

"Elizabeth," she said, with fervid and portentous solemnity, "this is a crisis for you, and you must be bold and brave. It is no time for shilly-shallying—you have twenty-four hours before you, and you must

"We might tumble into one of those terrible black holes," she replied, "if we were there again."

"True—we might. And when we married we must not run any unnecessary risks. We will live together as long as possibly can, Elizabeth."

She had drawn off her right glove, and slipped her hand into his. He grasped it firmly, and kneaded it like a lump of soft dough (excuse the homely simile, dear reader—it has the merit of appropriateness, which is more than you can say for the lilies and jewellery between his two strong palms). How he did long for that dark cave!

She looked a little frightened, but stood her ground. "If you wish," whispered, all the tone shaken out of voice.

"If I wish!" A palpitating silence then for a moment. Then "What do you say to to-morrow?" he suggested.

She looked up at him, blushing violently. "Ah, you are thinking of how I am," she exclaimed, drawing her hand from his.

"Do you mean that you will?" he claimed, the fierceness of his desire tempered by a still evident incredulity.

"I will," she said, "if—"

place. "Supposing, for the sake of argument that I had been of your blood—would you have had me?"

"Ah," he said, laughing, "that indeed, a home question."

"Would you?" she persisted.

"Would I?" he echoed, putting a hand under the table to touch hers. "I would, Elizabeth. I'm afraid nothing short of your having been my full sister could have saved you."

After that she regained her color—brightness, and was able to enjoy the strawberries and cream—which did help to be fresh.

in the confidence of her own ad-
daughters—she returned to her carriage
the little party following meekly at
heels. The girls were put in first—
Elizabeth, who, insisting upon detain-
herself from the assembling couple, had
submit to be conveyed to Myrtle street
and the two men, lifting their hats to
departing vehicle, were left on the foot-
path together. The lawyer was very grave
slightly nervous and somewhat discom-
forted. He had all the air of a man
a necessary but disagreeable duty to
perform.

(To be continued.)

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