## 1851 Duaw

 "Then nothing can be done?"
"I fear nothing, excepting to appris
the helr-at-law of the possible exis. the helr-at-law of the possible exiss
ence of the will made in Miss Brans combe's favor, and to warn him that
may any day be brought forward."
"Humph"" growled the rector "A "Humph"" growled the rector. "An
If ti should never turn up- 1 , as I be
gin to suspect, there has been som gin to suspect, there has been som
deep-latd plot-some rascallty of which
Master Charlle is, as usual, the hea and "Then," I replied, "Master Charlie
"ill remain in possession."
"And Nona will be begar," sald
Mr. Heathcote sadly. "Poor child, poor

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\begin{aligned}
& \text { Is Miss Branscombe at } \\
& \text { Lea" I ventured to Inquire pre } \\
& \text { "No; she and Miss Elmslie ar }
\end{aligned}
$$

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\begin{aligned}
& \text { us. Mr. Charlie's bachelor establish } \\
& \text { ment was hardy a fiting home foi } \\
& \text { her, and we thought it advisable tha } \\
& \text { she should teave the nelgiboriood a } \\
& \text { present-at all events untrl we hac }
\end{aligned}
$$

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\begin{aligned}
& \text { In the clrcumstances I should ad- } \\
& \text { vise Misss Branscombe to retire," I sald } \\
& \text { gravely. }
\end{aligned}
$$

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\begin{aligned}
& \text { "Yes, yes, exactly," assented the rec- } \\
& \text { ton. "n the clreumstances-as inow } \\
& \text { understand them-hhe must of course } \\
& \text { leave the nelchborhood." }
\end{aligned}
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\begin{aligned}
& \text { Wedrove on for some time atter this } \\
& \text { in silence. I was occupled with rose- } \\
& \text { colored dreams of a future for the dis. }
\end{aligned}
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\begin{aligned}
& \text { colored dreams of a future for the dis- } \\
& \text { possessed heiress-a future which had } \\
& \text { evidently not entered into the rector's } \\
& \text { calculations, from the same point of }
\end{aligned}
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\begin{aligned}
& \text { view at all events. } \\
& \text { "I the fellow wore nhat he is, } \\
& \text { the poor colonel's original plan would }
\end{aligned}
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\begin{aligned}
& \text { the poor colonel's original plan would } \\
& \text { have settled the dificulty," muttered } \\
& \text { Mr. Heathcote, as he touched }
\end{aligned}
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\begin{aligned}
& \text { stout cob. But he was right-he was as } \\
& \text { right, it would be a sacrifce not to be } \\
& \text { tought of not to be thought of." } \\
& \text { As he spoke we were passing the e }
\end{aligned}
$$



| down to the edge of green turf bordering the road. From one of the gladelike openings two figures emerged in front of our carriage, sauntering slow- ly along on the grass, too deeply absorbed in conversation apparently to be aware of our approach. One-a slim girlish figure, dressed in black garlike a lily on Its stalk-was, as I knew at once, Nona's: and it needed not the rector's impatient exclamation and sudden, quick Jerk of the relns to tell me that the slight, almost boyish figure by her side was that of her cousin, Charlie Branscombe. <br> In an instant the half-seotehed serpent of Jealousy was roused again and stung me to the heart. All my tik a flood. Fool that I had been ever to dream of hope in the face of what 1 had seen and knew. <br> There was something of mockery in the elaborate bow, returned by a curt nod, with which Mr. Charles Branscombe greeted the rector: and, as : fuandsome fair face in which 1 recogsized the fatal beaute de diable I had heard described. <br> A pastias sllapse of Mis Branscombe showed me a half-startled, surprised slance of reeognition-a swift, shy blush, in returs for the grave bow With which 1 ackoowledged hers. The meeting had upset the rector's equantrity as much as it had mine. He spoke so more untll we turned in at the rectory gate. $\qquad$ <br> ChAPTER XIL. <br> Nona was not is the drawing room tefore dinaer. Miss Eimalie was, and recelved me with tearful cordialty. <br> "It's a and chanss," ahe whlspered, "erpectally for the dear giri. Hut sha doesn't seess to feel it. I rally believe | should not have given Woodward credit for having a sweetheart. Yet there she was, keeplng a twilight tryst amongst the clematis and the honey. amongst the clematis and the honey- suckle, Iike any mald of elghteen. And If anything could have added to my astonishment it was the discovery that the swain whose arm was about her walst, whose head was bent down over rector's smart, new groom! There must, I decided,be something more in the middle-aged mald than met the eye, slace she had carried off the prize from all her young and pretty rivals. Possibly, I thought with a little contempt for the passion which had passed-bless the groom and as much to say in the matter as Cupid. Miss Woodward might have savinga which the shrewd Londoner had scented. The man overtook me presently an, lost in the intricacles of stable-yard and back entrance, I was trying to find my way back to the garden and lawn <br> "I beg your pardon, slr," he sald eivilly. "That path leads to the kitchen, this"-opening a sate-"wit! take you to the side eatrance lato the hall." night." <br> "Thank you," I answered. "Good <br> Good night, Mr. Fort." <br> I tooked up, surprised at the sudten ehange of tone and manber. The man's eyes met mine. <br> "Widdringtant" I hat almost exelaimed. but that his hand touche: mine on the gate lateh and checked the ward. <br> "You left this is the doe cart this Aterneos, str," he sald handias mo a letter. "I pleked it up whon I eleque the trap" the trap." <br> pasied on with agalher any and 3ty misd sas in a wild state of alormin Whatritatoth was of the trat of the |
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