

A SECRET OF THE SEA

(VOL. 1-3) (ANNOTATED)

T. W. SPEIGHT



T. W. Speight

A Secret of the Sea (Vol. 1-3) (Annotated)

*In this **enriched edition**, we have carefully created added value for your reading experience.*

Enriched Edition. Mystery Novels

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Maren Fairbourne

Edited and published by e-artnow, 2021

EAN: 4064066388188

Table of Contents

[A Secret of the Sea \(Vol. 1-3\)](#)

[Memorable Quotes](#)

[Notes](#)

A Secret of the Sea (Vol. 1-3)

[Main Table of Contents](#)

[Volume 1](#)

[Volume 2](#)

[Volume 3](#)

VOLUME 1

[Table of Contents](#)

Table of Contents

- Chapter I. In the Lawyer's Office.
- Chapter II. Miss Bellamy.
- Chapter III. The Story of the Murder.
- Chapter IV. A Broken Life.
- Chapter V. Gerald at Pembridge.
- Chapter VI. "That's the Man!"
- Chapter VII. Miss Deane Finds a New Home.
- Chapter VIII. Gerald at Stammers.
- Chapter IX. Found.
- Chapter X. In Harley Street.
- Chapter XI. In Kensington Gardens.
- Chapter XII. The Face in the Glass.

CHAPTER I. IN THE LAWYER'S OFFICE.

Table of Contents

It was a December morning, clear and frosty[1q]. The timepiece in the office of Matthew Kelvin, attorney-at-law, Pembridge, Hertfordshire, racing noisily after the grave old Abbey clock which had just done chiming, pointed to the hour of ten. With his back to the welcome fire, and turning over yesterday's *Times* with an air of contemptuous indifference, stood Mr. Podley Piper--whose baptismal name was universally shortened into "Pod"--a short, thickset young gentleman of the mature age of sixteen. His nose was a pure specimen of a pug, and his short scrubby hair was of a colour sufficiently pronounced to earn him the nickname of "Carotty Pod" from sundry irreverent small boys of his acquaintance. His nose and his hair notwithstanding, Pod was a keen, bright-looking lad, with an air of shrewdness and decision about him by no means common in one of his age.

"Awfully dry reading--the *Times*[1]," muttered Pod, tossing the paper on Mr. Kelvin's desk. "Only one suicide, and not a single murder in it. It's not worth buying. And yet there must be something in it, or so many people wouldn't read it. I suppose that by the time I'm fifty, and wear creaky shoes and carry a big gold watch in my fob[2], and have to count my hairs every morning to see that I haven't lost one overnight,--I suppose, when that time comes, I shall think as much of the *Times* as Sir Thomas Dudgeon does. But just at present I'd rather read the 'Bounding Wolf of the Prairies.'"

Hardly were the last words out of Pod's mouth, when the inner door was opened, and Matthew Kelvin walked silently into the room. In silence he sat down at his desk, after one sharp glance at Pod and another at the fire, and set to work at once at the task immediately before him. This task was the opening of the pile of post letters which had been placed ready to his hand by Pod. A brief glance at the contents of each was generally sufficient. In very few cases did he trouble himself to read a letter entirely through. Three or four of the more important documents were put aside to be attended to specially by himself; the rest of them had a corner turned up on which Pod pencilled down in shorthand[3] Mr. Kelvin's instructions for the guidance of Mr. Bray, his chief clerk. It was his cleverness at shorthand that had gained Pod his present situation.

"That will do," said Mr. Kelvin, after a few minutes of this sharp work. "Give those papers to Mr. Bray, and tell him not to come in till I ring."

Something out of the ordinary way was evidently the matter with Mr. Kelvin this morning. After making one or two futile attempts to read over for the second time, and more carefully than before, the letters left behind by Pod, he gave up the attempt as a bad job.

"I don't feel as if I could settle down to anything this morning," he said. "And no wonder. How well the secret has been kept! Even I had not the remotest suspicion of such a thing. What a strange example of the irony of events that I, of all men in the world, should have to break these tidings to Eleanor! What will my proud beauty say when I tell her? I could never have devised so exquisite a revenge. And yet it is not my hand that will drag her down. It is the hand of Jacob Lloyd that smites her from out his grave."

He fell into a reverie which lasted till he was disturbed by a knock at the door. "Come in," he said mechanically, and the head of Pod was thrust into the room.

"A lady to see you, sir. Says her name is Miss Deane."

"Olive Deane!" said Mr. Kelvin, in surprise. "Show her in."

Matthew Kelvin at this time was thirty-five years old. He was a handsome, large-nosed man, with full grey eyes and rather prominent teeth. He was already partially bald; but what hair he had left was carefully trimmed and parted down the middle, while his bushy dark-brown whiskers showed no traces of age. He always dressed well, and was very particular as to his boots and gloves and the cut of his trousers. He had studied the art of dress as carefully as he had studied many other things, and the result was a success.

For his inferiors and those in his employ, Mr. Kelvin had a brusque, imperious manner that was not unmingled with a sort of hard contemptuousness. For his rich clients and those above him in the social scale, he had a pleasant, smiling, *dégage* style, which sat upon him so easily and naturally that it was impossible to doubt its genuineness. To such people he was a man who never seemed to have much to do beyond trimming the nails of his very white hands, and sniffing at the choice flowers in his button-hole, and now and then dashing off his signature at the foot of some document which he never seemed to be at the trouble of reading.

Yet no one ever seemed to doubt Matthew Kelvin's ability in his profession, unprofessional as he was--judged by the ordinary types of provincial lawyers--in many of his ways and doings. But, then, he was a sort of second cousin to Sir Frederick Carstairs of Wemley, and that perhaps made some difference. Many people thought it did, for the Carstairs

were a very old family; and where's the use of having good blood in one's veins unless it declares itself in some shape or other?

Mr. Kelvin was fond of hunting, and subscribed liberally to the Thorndale pack. Few faces were more familiar in the field than his, and he was always nominated as one of the stewards of the Hunt Ball. Having a good voice, and being fond of singing, it was only natural that he should be a member of the Pembridge Catch Club; besides this, he was chairman of the Literary Institute. One winter he gave a couple of lectures on "Some Recent Discoveries in Astronomy," with illustrative drawings by himself; while on more than one occasion he had treated the whole of the workhouse children to an Orrery or a Panorama, and even to that wicked place--the Circus.

Matthew Kelvin lived with his mother, in the house where he had been born. His father had been dead some twelve years when we first make his acquaintance. The business had come down from his grandfather, who had been the first Matthew Kelvin known in Pembridge.

Perhaps the finest trait in Matthew's character was his love and reverence for his mother, who had been more or less of an invalid for many years. For her sake, when she was ill, and hungered for his presence by her bedside, he would give up his most pressing engagements, and sit by the hour together reading novels to her--a class of literature to which he rarely condescended at other times.

Mrs. Kelvin, who was a sensible, clear-sighted woman enough in the ordinary affairs of life, still cherished a strange preference for the milk-and-water novels and vapid romances of the Minerva Press school, such as had been fashionable when she was a girl; and it was pleasant to see her son reading out this rubbish to her with the gravest air

possible, hiding his contempt and weariness under a well-feigned interest in the fortunes and misfortunes of some book-muslin heroine, or some hero with chiselled features who was never anything less than a lord in disguise.

Of such books as these Mrs. Kelvin never seemed to tire. It may be that they carried her back for a little while to the days of her youth, when she too was young and blooming; and that when buried in their pages she forgot for a brief hour or two that she was nothing now but a grey-haired woman--old, sickly, and a widow.

There were people still alive in Pembridge, to whom the one romantic episode in the life of Barbara Kelvin was known in all its details. It was this:--The present Mathew Kelvin's father had run away with and married Miss Barbara Carstairs, an orphan niece of the late Sir Frederick Carstairs of Wemley, one of the chief magnates for twenty miles round. Miss Carstairs, to be sure, had not a penny that she could call her own, and was living the life of a genteel dependent at Wemley, when young Kelvin--who was passing backwards and forwards between Sir Frederick and his father, in connection with certain law business--persuaded her to elope. But the fact that Miss Carstairs' sole earthly possessions consisted of the clothes on her back and a solitary spade guinea in her purse, by no means lessened the magnitude of the offence of which the audacious young lawyer had been guilty. There was an outcry of horror, accompanied by a turning up of eyes and a holding up of hands, as the news spread from one country house to another; but nothing could be done save to excommunicate the late Miss Carstairs, with "bell, book, and candle," and try to forget that any such creature had ever had an existence.

Whether, when the romance of girlhood was over, Mrs. Kelvin ever regretted that she had forgotten the obligations

of caste in order to become the wife of a provincial lawyer, was a fact best known to herself; but if any such regret ever made itself felt at her heart, it never found expression at her lips. Her husband was fond of her, and never stinted her in any way, and her life, quiet though it was, was not without its consolations. It was surely better to have a husband and a home, and to be the recognized leader of middle-class Pembridge society, than to live and die in single blessedness, a wretched nobody, in her uncle's grand cold mansion at Wemley. Like a sensible woman, she made the best of her position. She had her little re-unions, her Tuesdays, when everybody that was worth knowing in Pembridge, met in the little drawing-room over her husband's office, and where her simple hospitalities were dispensed with a grace and refinement that would have done no discredit to Wemley itself. But all those things now belonged to the past. At the time we make Mrs. Kelvin's acquaintance she had seen her sixtieth birthday, and was a confirmed invalid.

This home of the Kelvins for three generations was a substantially-built red-brick house that dated from the era of the second George. It was not in the Pembridge main street, but formed one of a dozen houses similar to itself in a short retired street that opened out of the busier thoroughfare. It was the kind of house that--if houses could do such things--you would naturally expect to shrink into its foundations with horror, if ever compelled to have for its next-door neighbour anything so vulgar as a shop. The massive front door, with its lion's head knocker, opened into a good-sized entrance-hall, at the far-end of which was a tiny glass-fronted den sacred to the use of Mr. Piper; from which coign of vantage that ingenuous youth could see everybody who came in or went out, could tell this person to wait or usher

that one into his master's office, and answer all inquiries; and could furthermore refresh himself by keeping up a guerilla warfare of repartee and chaff with the clerks as they passed into or out of their office. On the left as you entered from the street was the door which opened into Matthew Kelvin's private office. On the right hand were, first, the door which opened into the clerk's office, and secondly, the door of a waiting-room. Beyond these was a door which opened on to a private staircase. The real entrance to the private part of the house was down a covered passage at the side. Such passages were by no means infrequent in Pembridge. Many of the best houses in the place opened, not from the street, but from these side entries. Behind the house was an extensive piece of garden ground, containing fruit trees and rustic seats, and any quantity of old-fashioned sweet-smelling flowers such as our grandfathers and grandmothers dearly loved, but which look so dreadfully out of place in these days of riband-gardening and floral mathematics.

"Why, who on earth expected to see you?" said Mr. 'Kelvin, as he shook hands heartily with Miss Deane.

"Not you, I daresay, Matthew," answered Miss Deane, with a blush and a little sigh, as she looked straight into his handsome face.

"Why not I as much as anyone?" queried her cousin with a smile, as he placed a chair for her at no great distance from his own. "You always were fond of change, Olive."

She smiled again, a little bitterly. "Why don't you add--like all my sex?"

"Because I was speaking to one of your sex. Had I been talking to a man, I should probably have used those very words. Olive, I'm really glad to see you, whether you come

holiday-making, or whether you come because you have left Lady----Lady----?"

"Lady Culloden. Yes, I have left her. I grew tired of my situation. Sights innumerable; one petty insult after another: my position not properly recognised: till at last I felt that I must speak my mind or die. I did speak my mind, and in a way that her ladyship is not likely to forget. We parted. I felt a longing to see Pembridge and my old friends. I wanted to see my aunt--and you."

"You know that you are always sure of a welcome here."

"But my aunt--how is she?" asked Miss Deane.

"No better, I am sorry to say; neither do I see much prospect of her ever being so. She is confined very much to her own room."

"Poor dear aunt! I am very very sorry to hear that she is no better. Does she keep up her good spirits?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Kelvin; "her spirits are, as they have always been, something wonderful."

"I believe, Matthew, that I love her better than I ever loved my own mother."

"No one can know my mother without liking her," he returned.

"And then what a gentlewoman she is!" said Olive. "There is as much difference between her and Lady Culloden as there is between a flower cut out of a turnip and a real camellia."

Olive Deane at this time was twenty-eight years old. The money which her mother--a sister of the second Matthew Kelvin--had taken as a dowry to her husband had soon been squandered in wild speculations, and it had been impressed upon Olive's mind, almost from the time when she could remember anything, that she would have to earn her own living; and she started with that idea the very first day she

went to school. Her mother died when she was ten years old, and her father when she was fifteen; and from the latter age till now she had been altogether dependent on her own exertions for her daily bread. The Kelvins would gladly have assisted her, both then and subsequently, but the girl would accept no help. She went out as nursery governess in the first instance, and had gone on, step by step, till she could now command her ninety or hundred guineas a year as finishing governess in families of distinction. Olive Deane had taken to teaching as naturally as a duck takes to water. She had had five years at a really good French school before her father's death, but everything else she owed to her own love of knowledge and indomitable perseverance. The wasteful extravagance of which she had been a witness when a child at home, had not been without its effect upon her. She grew up thrifty, self-denying, economical in every way; and now, at twenty-eight years of age, she was mistress of four hundred pounds, which her cousin Matthew had advantageously invested for her in Pembridge gas shares.

Olive's sole recreation was a visit now and then to the theatre. A classical play of the sterling old school, she delighted in. She was an omnivorous reader. Anything, from a French novel to the last philosophical essay, had an interest for her. To learn: to know: was all she asked. The quality of the knowledge mattered little or nothing. Wherever she might be, she generally contrived to have half an hour's reading of the *Times*, so as to keep herself *au courant* with the chief political movements of the day. She had a clear, hard masculine intellect, with no sentimental nonsense about it, as her cousin Matthew often declared--and he was a great admirer of Olive: in fact, he

had been heard to say that if Olive had been a man he would have made her his partner long ago.

Miss Deane was a little above the ordinary stature of her sex. She had a lithe, slender figure, and in all her movements she was graceful, easy, and self-possessed. She had clearly-cut, well-defined features, and many people would have called her handsome. But she certainly lacked colour. Her clear olive complexion--strangely in accordance with her name--was too clear and too colourless. Only on very rare occasions was its waxen pallor flushed through with the faintest tinge of damask. She had magnificent eyebrows, and eyes of the darkest brown, that looked jet-black by candlelight, with a keen, watchful look in them, begotten, perhaps, of the time when, little more than a child, she had to fight her way through the world and found a thorn or a pitfall at every step she took. Her hair, too, was black, but a dull, dead, lustreless black, without the slightest gloss of brightness in it, and very fine in quality. She almost invariably dressed in black, with white linen cuffs turned up from the wrist, and a white linen turn-down collar fastened with a simple bow of mauve or violet riband. No ear-rings, no brooch, no ornaments of any kind visible, except an inch of the gold chain that held her watch.

"I thought we should have heard the news of your wedding before now, Olive," said Mr. Kelvin.

"The news of my wedding, Matthew! You will never hear that."

"Never is a long word, Olive. Such a nice, clever girl as you are can't be destined to live and die an old maid."

Olive's black eyebrows came together for a moment, and she tapped the floor impatiently with her foot.

"It almost seemed at one time, Olive, as if you and I would have come together," went on Kelvin, while his

fingers toyed absently with a paper-knife. "Those were pleasant days--those old days on the sands at Redcar, when I was recovering from my sprain, and you did your best to nurse me. You used to read novels to me, and play to me on that vile old lodging-house piano; and out of gratitude I taught you cribbage and écarté. I have never enjoyed a holiday like that. Do you remember our long row by moonlight, and how we kissed as we stepped out of the boat on to the wet sands?"

No word from Olive: only a far-away look in her eyes, and the thin straight line of her lips looking thinner and straighter than before.

"And yet it all came to nothing!" resumed Kelvin, glancing carelessly at her. "It might have come to something: who knows? Only, two hours later, I was telegraphed for to London, and----

"And, as you say, Matthew," interrupted Olive, "it came to nothing. So much the better probably for both of us."

"Certainly so much the better for you, Olive; but whether or not for me, may be open to doubt. Why, even in those old days that now seem so far away, when you and I were girl and boy together, how fond we were of each other! Do you remember that afternoon when the swing broke down and I pitched on my head, and how you cried over my bruises as if your heart would break?"

"I have not forgotten," said Olive, in a low voice.

"Whenever I go into a chemist's shop, it takes me back in memory to your father's little surgery. How cleverly you used to help him with his drugs and mixtures! You seemed to know the contents of every gallipot and bottle almost as well as he did. If you had been a man you would have been a doctor."

"Possibly so," said Olive.

"I remember when Farmer Sinclair's dog bit you," continued Mr. Kelvin, "how bravely you bore the pain. The dog died a week after, and some people said you had poisoned it; but I scouted the idea."

"But I did poison the brute," replied Olive.

"You did?"

"Why not? It bit me in the wrist. I have the scar now. It was not fit to live."

Matthew Kelvin shrugged his shoulders, but did not rejoin.

"But why call up such reminiscences?" said Olive. "I want to hear about yourself. A rising man like you, Matthew--a man born to fight his way upward--how is it that you are still unmarried? A rich wife would do so much to help forward your ambitious schemes!"

"My ambitious schemes, indeed;" said Kelvin, with a sly twinkle in his eye. "What has a simple-minded country lawyer like me to do with ambition?"

"I know you too well, Matthew, not to feel sure that in ten years from this time you hope to be in a very different position."

Kelvin dropped the paper knife with which he had been playing, and gazed steadily at his cousin for a moment before speaking.

Her eyes met his unshrinkingly.

"You are right, Olive," he said, speaking 'gravely enough now. "I *do* cherish some strangely bold dreams. I *am* an ambitious man; but you are the only person who seems to have divined that fact. I am far richer than the world knows of; and, but that it would almost break my mother's heart, I should have given up the old business years ago. In any case, I shall dispose of it before long. I can afford now to

put it behind me. The first step in my ambition is to get into Parliament. And so you think I ought to get married, eh?"

"Yes--to a woman who could help you forward in your career by sympathizing with and comprehending the aims and objects of your ambition. No mere drawing-room doll must be your wife, but a woman fitted in heart and brain to be your companion."

"I won't say that you are not right," said Mr. Kelvin. "But in these matters men rarely do that which their friends think they ought to do. Cupid, you know, never went to school, and his problems cannot be worked out by rule-of-three."

"That may apply to a very young man, who lacks sense to know what is best for him and where to look for it; but not to you."

"That is just where you make a mistake, Olive. What will you say of my strength of mind--of my common sense--when I tell you that I have fallen in love with a simple country girl with nothing to recommend her save a pretty face and the finest eyes in the world?"

Olive Deane rose slowly to her feet. Her face grew whiter; her eyes blacker; her thick brows made a straight, unbroken line across her forehead. If looks had power to slay, Mr. Kelvin would have been annihilated on the spot. But his face was turned the other way. His own thoughts held him. He was gazing meditatively into the fire.

"And she--she accepted you, of course?" said Olive, at last, her voice hardly raised above a whisper.

"On the contrary, she rejected me."

"How I hate her for it!" Then she added, under her breath, "But I should have hated her worse if she had accepted him."

"You are the only person in the world, Olive, to whom I have breathed a word of this."

"Your confidence is safe with me, Matthew."

"I am sure of that, and it is a relief to me to talk to you. To you, Olive, I can always talk as to a sister."

"Yes--as to a sister," she said, with a slow nod of the head. Then she shivered slightly, as if with cold, and held out her hands to the blaze. "Go on, Matthew. You are sure of my sympathy in any case."

"Need I tell you any more, Olive?"

"I want you to tell me all about the affair, from beginning to end. You have piqued my curiosity, and now you must satisfy it."

Kelvin paused for a moment or two, as if to pull himself together.

"It seems strange to take even you into my confidence," he said, "and yet I feel as if I must tell some one--especially after what happened yesterday. To begin, then. I fell in love with this girl, Eleanor Lloyd--madly, desperately in love. Her father, Jacob Lloyd, was a well-to-do small landowner, whose affairs I managed for him. He seconded my suit, but, as I have said already, the girl rejected me. I am a patient man. I waited six months, and then I spoke to Miss Lloyd again--spoke more warmly and strongly than a less infatuated man would have done. Again she rejected me; this time in a way that I can neither forget nor forgive. I vowed that I would some day humble her haughty pride--and that day has come. Six months ago Jacob Lloyd died without a will. He had been speculating greatly for years, and Eleanor Lloyd, much to her own surprise and that of everyone else, found herself an heiress to the amount of something over twenty thousand pounds. When I first knew this, I thought that the day of my revenge had gone by for ever. But I was wrong. Such was the state of affairs yesterday: to-day they are very different."

"In what way are they different to-day?"

"Listen. Before administering to Mr. Lloyd's will, it was necessary that I should be in a position to prove that Miss Lloyd was really the person the world believed her to be. Jacob Lloyd left an immense mass of papers behind him, amongst which I was not long in finding his marriage certificate; but I failed to find any document having reference either to the birth or baptism of his daughter. Having some other important matters on hand just then, and there being no particular hurry in the affair, I did not prosecute my search very vigorously. I knew that about the time Miss Lloyd was born, Jacob Lloyd and his wife were travelling, either for health or pleasure, from place to place, and I had little doubt that when a proper search came to be made I should be able to find the information I wanted. A few days ago, however, there came into my hands certain documentary proofs, full and complete, of the truth of what I am now going to tell you. Eleanor Lloyd is not the daughter of Jacob Lloyd, nor any relation of his whatever. She is neither more nor less than a child adopted in infancy by him and his wife, they having no family of their own. The fortune left by Jacob Lloyd is the property of a nephew, Gerald Warburton, now living somewhere on the Continent. The woman who rejected me is an 'absolute pauper.'"

"A strange story--a very strange story, indeed, cousin Matthew!"

"Eleanor Lloyd has to come here two hours hence to sign certain deeds. She will enter this room a rich woman; she will leave it penniless!"

"And you will be revenged?"

"And I shall be revenged."

They were both silent, thinking their 'own thoughts.

"Where has she been living since the death of her father?" said Olive.

"She has been living very quietly at Bridgely, her own home."

"But has it not been her intention to take up a position in society, such as her supposed wealth would entitle her to occupy?"

"Lady Dudgeon, the wife of one of our Pembrokeshire magnates, has taken her by the hand, and has constituted herself Miss Lloyd's chaperone. Eleanor is to accompany her ladyship to London in the spring, and will then make her *début*."

"To how many people is Miss Lloyd's true parentage known?"

"Not a soul in the world knows of it except myself--and you."

"Good. And your idea of revenge is to break this news to Miss Lloyd suddenly here--this very morning--and so crush her?"

"It is."

"A man's idea--poor and commonplace. Shall I tell you what mine--a woman's idea of revenge--would be in such a case?"

"You are a clever girl, Olive, and you pique my curiosity."

"Were I in your place, I would keep my discovery a profound secret for some time to come. I would let her for a little while taste all the pleasures that wealth can confer. I would let her go on till a life of ease and self-indulgence should have become as it were a second nature to her. I would let her live on in blissful ignorance, of the thunderbolt you have in store for her till she has learned to love--perhaps even till she is engaged to be married."

"Eleanor married to another! I never thought of that," said Kelvin, under his breath.

"Then, when you think the comedy has lasted long enough, you shall go to her some day when she is surrounded by her fine friends--on her wedding morning itself, if it so please you--and, touching her on the shoulder, you shall say to her, 'Eleanor Lloyd, you are a beggar!' Her fall from wealth to poverty will then seem infinitely greater than it would do now, and yours will be a revenge worthy of the name."

"A devilish scheme, Olive, and one which only an Italian--or a woman--would have thought of!"

"You flatter me," said Olive, with a little lifting of the shoulders, and the ghost of a smile playing round her thin lips.

To say that Mr. Kelvin was thoroughly startled, is to say no more than the truth. Olive was right. There would be a refinement--a subtlety--about such a scheme which his own scheme altogether lacked. But, would it not be a mean and dastardly advantage to take of an innocent girl like Eleanor Lloyd? He got up from his chair and crossed to the window, and then walked slowly back again and sat down without a word. He was a man whom circumstances had never before tempted to step out of the beaten track of morality. The orthodox path had for him been paved with golden guineas. So far as he had seen, it was only reprobates who went astray, or were foolish enough to do anything which the general opinion of society condemned; simpletons, in fact, who could not understand that to do right--in a worldly point of view--was a far better paying game than to do its opposite. But Olive's words had found the weak place in his armour. His judgment did not fail him so utterly as to mislead him with regard to the meanness of what he

meditated, but his own wishes and desires in the matter threw a sort of lime-light glamour over it, which made it seem something altogether different from what it really was.

"I'll do it, Olive," he said at last. "Yes; for good or for evil, I'll do it! I'll crush her proud spirit to the dust. I will humiliate her as she humiliated me. She shall suffer as I suffered. I will repay scorn with scorn: insult with insult. At the moment of her greatest triumph I will strip her of love, of wealth, of friendship; and show her to the world for what she really is--a pauper and an outcast!"

"Bravely spoken, Matthew! Don't let her soft looks or winning ways melt you from your purpose," said Olive, as she pushed back her chair. "And now I will go upstairs to my aunt."

Kelvin put his elbows on the table, and rested his face in his hands. Olive stood looking down at him for a moment. There was a tear in the corner of her eye, but a smile played round her mouth. She went up to him and laid her hand gently on his shoulder. "I shall see you later in the day, shall I not?"

"Yes--later in the day," he answered, absently, without looking up.

Olive went; and presently Mr. Piper's head was seen.

"Captain Dixon, sir, has sent for you. He's been taken ill and wants his will drawn up without delay."

Kelvin roused himself from his abstraction. "Another fool who has put off till the day of his death what he ought to have done years ago." He began to put his papers together, but still in an absent-minded way. "This is a damnable thing to do. I despise myself for promising to do it," he muttered. "And yet why should she not suffer? I have only to call to mind her words--her looks--that summer evening in the garden, when for the second time I pleaded my love before

her: I have only to remember how she turned on me, as if I were a reptile, to feel my purpose harden within me, and every grain of pity melt out of my soul!"

57 Pod is Matthew Kelvin's young clerk and errand-boy. The name is likely unfamiliar today because it is a nickname; in the chapter he acts as a shorthand writer and messenger between the doctors and Kelvin.

58 Dr. Druce is the elderly local doctor who has been treating Kelvin. The text shows him as an experienced country practitioner, while other characters question whether his diagnosis is correct.

59 Dr. Whitaker is another doctor in Pembridge, younger than Dr. Druce, whom Kelvin would prefer to consult. He becomes central to the plot when he suspects Kelvin's illness may be caused by something other than an ordinary complaint.

60 A narrow street or lane in which Van Duren's premises are located. The name suggests a cramped urban setting typical of older London fiction.

61 A place in North Wales mentioned as the destination of Mr. and Miss Byrne. The spelling appears to be a fictional or lightly disguised locality, so its exact modern equivalent is uncertain.

62 Euston Square is an area in London near Euston Station. In the nineteenth century it was a recognisable city location, so the reference situates Van Duren's departure within London.

63 The 'Shipping Gazette' was a newspaper or trade paper that printed shipping news, including vessel departures and

arrivals. It would have been useful for someone planning to travel by sea.

64 Boulogne is a port city in northern France, often used in the 19th century as a seaside or holiday destination for British travelers. Here it is mentioned as a place where Mrs. Kelvin thinks Matthew could recover his strength.

65 Arrowroot is a starchy food made from tropical plants, commonly given as a bland, easily digested diet for the sick. In this passage it is served to Matthew as part of his convalescent regimen.

66 A schooner is a sailing vessel with at least two masts, and here the name identifies the ship that was said to have foundered twenty years earlier. The wreck is central to the chapter's mystery.

67 This refers to a local police officer named John Williams who takes custody of the recovered box. In a village setting, a policeman would have served as a basic law-enforcement official and messenger to local authorities.

68 A French phrase used in English to mean a social blunder or embarrassing mistake. Here it refers to a breach of social expectations that could damage a person's reputation.

69 A type of eyeglass with two lenses, often called a lorgnette or similar folding spectacle in older usage. It was a fashionable accessory for reading or inspecting people and objects closely.

70 A pre-decimal British coin worth two shillings and sixpence, or one-eighth of a pound sterling. It was a modest sum and here is used as a tip or bribe to secure a favor.

71 Van Duren uses this expression to mean that his plan has failed and he has effectively been defeated. The phrase is an idiomatic way of saying the contest is over.

72 A warrant for arrest is a legal order authorizing police or officers to detain someone. In this context, it refers to the possibility that Van Duren's enemies could have him formally seized by the authorities.

73 Euston was, and is, a major London railway terminus. Here it refers to Euston station, one of the principal rail gateways into London.

74 This refers to the formal ending of a Parliament before a general election. In British politics, a dissolution meant all seats became vacant and voters would soon choose a new House of Commons.

75 These are legal documents authorizing someone to manage and distribute a deceased person's estate when there is no valid will. The phrase here reflects probate law terminology familiar to Victorian readers.

76 Smelling-salts were pungent ammonia-based preparations used to revive someone who had fainted or felt unwell. They were commonly carried in the 19th century as a quick remedy for shock or weakness.

77 This is a reference to an old ballad or song in which a noblewoman's identity and rightful place are central themes. The line quoted in the chapter echoes that literary motif to emphasize Eleanor's true status being restored.

78 A caliph was a Muslim ruler or successor to Muhammad, especially in medieval and early modern history. Here the phrase is used figuratively, as a joking way of saying Gerald is no longer pretending to be a poor secretary.

79 A secure room or vault used to store valuables, papers, or money. Here it refers to the locked room in the house where Van Duren is trapped.

80 A common drink made by diluting brandy with water. In this chapter it is used as a stimulant or comfort drink for the seriously ill man, a practice that was more common in earlier periods than today.

81 A Bath chair was a wheeled, often hooded invalid chair used to move someone who could not easily walk. It was a common 19th-century form of mobility aid at seaside resorts and promenades.

82 The Hague is a city in the Netherlands and was, by the 19th century, an important administrative and diplomatic center. In the passage, it indicates that Miss Deane has secured employment overseas.

83 The Palais-Royal is a historic palace and shopping district in Paris, long associated with fashionable goods and luxury