

beautiful.”

She stopped, looking at him more directly than ever; and she looked at his sketch, which he held out toward her. At the sketch, however, she only glanced, whereas there was observation in the eye that she bent upon Longueville. He never knew whether she had blushed; he afterward thought she might have been frightened. Nevertheless, it was not exactly terror that appeared to dictate her answer to Longueville’s speech.

“I am much obliged to you. Don’t you think you have looked at me enough?”

“By no means. I should like so much to finish my drawing.”

“I am not a professional model,” said the young lady.

“No. That ‘s my difficulty,” Longueville answered, laughing. “I can’t propose to remunerate you.”

The young lady seemed to think this joke in indifferent taste. She turned away in silence; but something in her expression, in his feeling at the time, in the situation, incited Longueville to higher play. He felt a lively need of carrying his point.

“You see it will be pure kindness,” he went on,—“a simple act of charity. Five minutes will be enough. Treat me as an Italian beggar.”

She had laid down his sketch and had stepped forward. He stood there, obsequious, clasping his hands and smiling.

His interruptress stopped and looked at him again, as if she thought him a very odd person; but she seemed amused. Now, at any rate, she was not frightened. She seemed even disposed to provoke him a little.

“I wish to go to my mother,” she said.

“Where is your mother?” the young man asked.

“In the church, of course. I did n’t come here alone!”

“Of course not; but you may be sure that your mother is very contented. I have been in that little church. It is charming. She is just resting there; she is probably tired. If you will kindly give me five minutes more, she will come out to you.”

“Five minutes?” the young girl asked.

“Five minutes will do. I shall be eternally grateful.” Longueville was amused at himself as he said this. He cared infinitely less for his sketch than the words appeared to imply; but, somehow, he cared greatly that this graceful stranger should do what he had proposed.

The graceful stranger dropped an eye on the sketch again.

“Is your picture so good as that?” she asked.

“I have a great deal of talent,” he answered, laughing. “You shall see for yourself, when it is

finished.”

She turned slowly toward the terrace again.

“You certainly have a great deal of talent, to induce me to do what you ask.” And she walked to where she had stood before. Longueville made a movement to go with her, as if to show her the attitude he meant; but, pointing with decision to his easel, she said—

“You have only five minutes.” He immediately went back to his work, and she made a vague attempt to take up her position. “You must tell me if this will do,” she added, in a moment.

“It will do beautifully,” Longueville answered, in a happy tone, looking at her and plying his brush. “It is immensely good of you to take so much trouble.”

For a moment she made no rejoinder, but presently she said—

“Of course if I pose at all I wish to pose

well.”

“You pose admirably,” said Longueville.

After this she said nothing, and for several minutes he painted rapidly and in silence. He felt a certain excitement, and the movement of his thoughts kept pace with that of his brush. It was very true that she posed admirably; she was a fine creature to paint. Her prettiness inspired him, and also her audacity, as he was content to regard it for the moment. He wondered about her—who she was, and what she was—perceiving that the so-called audacity was not vulgar boldness, but the play of an original and probably interesting character. It was obvious that she was a perfect lady, but it was equally obvious that she was irregularly clever. Longueville’s little figure was a success—a charming success, he thought, as he put on the last touches. While he was doing this, his model’s companion came into view. She came out of the church, pausing a moment as she