

**THE ONE WHO
LOOKED ON**

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The One Who Looked On by F. F. Montrésor

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F. F. MONTRÉSOR

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TO
L. DE V. COLVIN.



THE ONE WHO LOOKED ON.

"You think God's balance tilts the loss with gain? Nay, friend—I know it."

THIS story, if it can be called a story, was not told connectedly as it is written down in these pages, but in fragments and at various times.

Susie, from whom I heard it, was no longer young when I first knew her. She was the most motherly woman that it has ever been my luck to meet.

That she never married; that she had no babies of her own, was, I think, fortunate for the many forlorn children, not her own, who had good cause to love her.

Susie was Irish, and, when she talked, her words came out as if she relished the taste of them. She was not critical, but she had a trick of observation, and her reminiscences always interested me.

To Susie the whole gist and point of the story lay in the characters of Sir Charles Bargreave and Pauline. To me the one who looked on was the most interesting.

I have a water-colour sketch of Susie that I once rescued from the dust-bin, for she was always careless about her possessions.

In the sketch she is depicted as a girl of eighteen, with a very round face; with coils of glossy red hair, and with bewitchingly soft, grey-blue eyes. She has a fresh, healthy colour, and a very merry expression. She wears a white muslin "garibaldi," and she has a bit of needlework in her hand.

"That sketch was done when I was quite a girl, before I went to Eaton Square," Susie remarked, when I showed it to her.

She did not explain why she had left her girlhood behind her in London—but I think I guessed that.

"How well I remember," said Susie, "the day I first saw Sir Charles Bargreave! It seemed to me that he brought all our troubles

with him packed in his neat new portmanteau. Nothing else was either new or neat at dear Ballymohr. Ballymohr was all the home I had; for my father and mother died before I was three years old. I never felt 'orphaned,' and no child ever had a happier childhood. Aunt Grace and Uncle Dennis showered plentiful love on me, and Charlie and Molly were like my own little brother and sister to me. Aunt Grace was never anything but an invalid after Molly's birth, and I got into the way of looking after the children. Aunt Grace always called me her 'eldest daughter,' and when she was dying she bid me take care of 'Uncle Dennis and the little ones.' There never was a kinder or more generous gentleman than my uncle, but he hadn't the ghost of an idea of taking care of himself.

"I remember that I always liked to hear him say that he 'couldn't possibly get on without Susie,' and I was proud of the fact that he and Charlie and Molly would all be quite aggrieved and doleful if I were even a day away from them.