

Nina recklessly, and for no reason save the sensation of weariness induced by tears. "And so would you."

"Yes," Morris declared vehemently. "Thankful. Look here, I'm going to telegraph to Carrol and you'll see what an enthusiastic answer he'll send."

"*La vie de Bohème* once more!" murmured the mistress of Pensevern, with more appreciation of the sentence than its truth warranted. No life of Bohemia had ever been, or ever would be, Nina Severing's, but her son knew by the phrase that he need fear no further display of emotion.

"Am I mad?" he demanded of himself outside the door with some amazement, then characteristically shrugged his shoulders and dismissed the thought.

He hated Nina's weeping, and had chosen the first means of consoling her which had occurred to him.

It was not Morris's way to envisage the consequence of his own impulses until actually confronted by them, and in the urgencies of departure both he and Nina found a salving for many things.

If, in the months that ensued, neither Morris nor Nina Severing found that a momentary common impulse was to prove an enduring link between them, the knowledge weighed lightly on Morris, to whom no enduring link that humanity can forge would ever equal the glamour of a new enthusiasm.

To Nina, the fundamental resemblance between them would hold out eternal lures, and promises of a new understanding. That these should fail as often as they should renew themselves, would never succeed in permanently disturbing Mrs. Severing's treasured conception of her own motherhood.