

be English, any day. But, on the other hand, you see, I admit a certain responsibility. My mother was treated abominably—a hard look came into his face—"just because she married my father! They practically cut her adrift.

"Now, by an odd stroke of luck, I have come into all that my mother lost. And I feel it's up to me to show that she was right, after all. She married for love, and so shall I. An English wife . . . my little Jill! But we'll have to live in Italy half the year—be Maramonte as well as McTaggart—not for ourselves but because I believe that *she* would have wished it."

His eyes had a curious far away look. Then he seemed to come back to the present.

"All the same I've felt, somehow, that a foreign title, over here, wouldn't do—rather snobbish . . ." He laughed with a shade of nervousness.

"Quite right." Miss Uniacke nodded. She liked the man more and more. But, despite her careless attitude toward the secret he shared with her, her old heart warmed at the thought of this splendid match for the girl she loved.

"You won't tell her? You'll keep it dark!"

"Of course—it's your affair, not mine."

She smiled the harshness out of the words.

"All the same," she went on, "I think you ought to tell her mother. I don't approve of Mary myself—I think her conduct to her children simply shocking——" she frowned again—"the secrecy—and this sudden marriage! Still, she brought Jill into the world—it's *her* daughter, not mine. It's paying her back in her own coin . . . but I *know* I ought to stop this folly!"

"But you won't?" His voice was very earnest. "Look here, Miss Uniacke. She's never given a thought to Jill—or Roddy either, latterly. She's bringing a penniless, idle chap into her home to live with her children. She'll have to support him—you know that? At *their* expense! For, after all, it's Colonel Uniacke's money, you know, that she holds in trust for the next generation. It means a cruel time for them under the thumb of that rotter,