

for riders only, to Croxley Village and the New Hall. The cart-road was longer and less tempting to the feet of ridden horses.

At Ashen Mow, where is what is called the Giant's Tomb, she spoke out suddenly again, "Oliver!" and he replied: "Oliver what?—Oliver why? Tell thy thought, my Lucy." He kept a yawn under, to say this.

"Did you believe—could you believe that I ever spoke those words to you? My father's death—think of it!"

He warmed to more interest. "Believe it? How could I doubt my own senses? Maybe the time and place have got wrong; but the words, girl, the words... No, no!—I heard you say the words, my Lucy, some time that night, if it was not then." He spoke with an earnestness unlike his everyday self, and she could not but believe him truthful.

"And when you came to seek me that day in the garden, you were thinking all the while that the past might—might be forgotten?"

"Not with an entire confidence, dearest! But I had had my hopes of it—yes." There was a growing tenderness in his voice; half-calculated, but half-genuine. At least, he had never known himself so earnest. It was this woman's amazing charm. He had only to picture to himself some movement of hers, some change of face, to bid defiance to repentance of his marriage, and keep it at bay. There was no one like her.

"Oh, Oliver, it was hard on you—to think that, and then to have me do as I did!" His calculations had been right; his truthfulness a good investment. His soul is in the balance now, and his two selves at grips for the mastery. Which will have the best of it?

He thought a moment what was wisest to say. Forgive his policy—was it not a good ambition to seek to seem loving, just, contrite for wrong done? He decided on: