

She looked dumbly at him, with anguish in her violet eyes. She thought he was going to discard her after all.

"I thought I wanted Hulver more than anything in the world," he said wildly, tearing the will out of his pocket, "but the price is too high. My wife's good name. I won't pay it. Annette, I will not pay it."

And he strode to the nearest bonfire and flung the will into it.

The smoke eddied, and blew suddenly towards them. The fire hesitated a moment, and then, as Annette gazed stupefied, a little flame curled busily along the open sheet.

Before he knew she had moved, she had rushed past him, and had thrust her hands into the fire and torn out the burning paper. The flame ran nimbly up her arm, devouring her thin sleeve, and he had only just time to beat it out with his hands before it reached her hair.

He drew her out of the smoke and held her forcibly. She panted hard, sobbing a little. The will gripped tight in her hand was pressed against her breast and his.

"Annette!" he said hoarsely, over and over again. Still holding the will fast, she drew away from him, and opened it with trembling, bleeding fingers, staining the sheet.

"It is safe," she said. "It's safe. It's only scorched. You can see the writing quite clear through the brown. Look, Roger, but you mustn't touch it. I can't trust you to touch