

THE THOROUGHBRED

ready: how his first promotion had seemed so insecure that he'd put off telling her about it. How, when the day came that he needed capital for buying into the business, the very ease with which he'd got it made him seem rather a fool. Feel at least that he'd look rather a fool to her, and would make her suspect that the uprooting of their former life had been less the necessity he'd painted it than a sort of temperamental brainstorm on his own part. How, finally, he'd loved it so—exactly as it was, this new life of theirs—that he had, out of sheer cowardice, put off telling from day to day the thing that would make a change.

"I knew I had nothing to be afraid of, really—that no material change, I mean, could alter the essentials of this new thing of ours. I funk'd it, really, as one does the dentist. I've paid for it—I hope you'll believe that—exactly as one pays for putting off the dentist. The longer I put it off the worse it hurt, and the worse I knew it was going to hurt. But—well, the tooth's out now!