

CHAPTER IV

IT seemed only natural that same evening as she sat at dinner with Mrs. Cheston that Isabel should speak about Silvia Ambrose.

Outwardly John Cheston's mother had gone back to her normal state. She never had very much to say. She always sat and listened to Isabel, and as on other occasions when the girl appealed to her directly she made answer in her usual hurried, hesitating way.

The fact that Mrs. Ambrose had been to see her that afternoon was just mentioned by her, nothing more; and it was not until they were quite alone that Isabel spoke of what was on her mind.

"I—I came here not only because I wanted to be with you to-night," she said, "but I thought I should like to ask your advice. Please, darling," the girl added hurriedly: "don't let me worry you. Jack would never forgive me if I did that . . . but I am a bit bothered. It's about Silvia."

Mrs. Cheston looked at her with her usual smile on her lips and said nothing.

"I had a note from Silvia this afternoon," Isabel explained. "It was sent over by hand. A good deal of it I can hardly understand for she does write so badly, but one part of it is very plain."