

With difficulty the girl spoke, she seemed confused.

"You make it very hard for me," her voice came through trembling lips and was husky, "everything is hard for me—about you, I mean," she continued enigmatically. "I did not know it would be like this."

All at once, Leslie caught her breath in what sounded like a quick, indrawn sigh. She had often noticed a queer catching of her breath lately, and at times it annoyed her greatly. She was not accustomed to "having things."

Her unerring intuitive sense warned her that this visit had to do with Algy, and her eyes contracted with pain.

"I have the certainty, now that I see you"—the girl's voice found something of steadiness—"of knowing that if I don't begin right, you will not let me finish, and all these years will have been in vain. I am rather tired and not quite well, and my brain will not work as it should. I am nervous, Mrs. Tressidar, because I am afraid."

The voice trailed off in a whisper, and once more the room was very still.

"You feel obliged to tell me?" Leslie asked, at last.

"Oh, yes!" There was the note of a wounded bird, in the cry. "Listen"—leaving her seat, and slipping to the floor beside her, the girl spoke rapidly, tensely, "my name is Sue-Leigh Harmon—you don't easily forget a name like that, do you? neither