

me as a catspaw, an under-dog. And yet . . .” He shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

Impulsively the girl crossed the room and laid her hand upon his arm.

“No,” she said, “you’re not going to leave town, you’re going to stay right here and face what there is to face—show the people that you’re not afraid to bear the brunt of their cavil and criticism.”

“Do you mean to say that you’ll forgive me—that you can forgive . . .”

“Forgive!” she exclaimed. “There is nothing for me to forgive.”

“But surely you must despise me,” he went on, his face white and set. “Fortunately, though, the town knows but little of our relations, for I took good care, while I believed in St. John, that none should know about you and myself.”

“But how can I despise you,” she murmured softly, “when I love you as I do?”

“You have said it, Dorothy; it remained for you to say it; I couldn’t even hope that you would say it.” He laughed. It was good to hear him. There were relief and joy and happiness in that