

If only people would not be so meek and gentle with me. Why don't you reproach me, Philip, with all my abominable selfishness?"

He passed his hand across his brow, and she saw his strong mouth quiver.

"It is not easy to reproach when one loves," he replied simply. "But there, I did not come to say such things, but simply to bid you good-bye, so I had better go."

"Oh, not yet. I want to ask you a lot of questions," cried Joyce desperately. "What are you going to do? Will you stay still in the settlement, and shall I be allowed to come sometimes and see Bobbie?"

"It will be better not," he answered firmly. "You must see for yourself it will be better that we should be as if we had never met. I am a strong man, and I can face most things, Joyce; but to meet you—believe me, it is impossible."

Joyce remained silent, awed, as she had never yet been by the subdued passion in his voice.

"Oh, will you ever forgive me?" she said brokenly at length. "I shall never forgive myself."

"There is nothing to forgive," he answered. "You did not deceive me, but were quite frank with me