

Chippendale furniture you could put into a mustard-seed and hear it rattle."

"Dear me!" said Susan. "That's a pity. The chairs are cased, I believe."

"Not all of them," said James. "One chair is still unpacked."

He stared boldly at Quinney, asking for a sign. Quinney rubbed his hands.

"Good," said he. "Go and fetch the chair, James."

"Fetch it here, sir?"

"At once, my lad."

Tamlin began to shake. Of all men in the world, Dupont Jordan was least to be desired at such a moment. Tamlin grew painfully moist and hot. James left the room, slightly slamming the door, a slam that sounded to Tamlin like the crack of doom. Hunsaker, meanwhile, had engaged the ladies in talk. Jordan stood beside Quinney, silent, but looking with interest at the incised lacquer screen. Quinney said to him quietly:

"Is it true, Mr. Jordan, that you bought the Pevensey chairs from Lark and Bundy?"

"Quite true, Mr. Quinney. That is why I wish so particularly to see Mr. Hunsaker's set, which I understand are like mine."

Quinney said in a loud tone: "I'm sorry."

The tone rather than the words challenged attention. Hunsaker stopped talking, staring at Quinney.

"Sorry?" repeated Jordan.

"Sorry, sir, that so busy a man should have