

THE HIGH HEART

hope her devotion will be rewarded soon, and I think it will.

I had a premonition of this as I drove along Ochre Point Avenue that night. It helped me to the joy of liberty, to lightness of heart. As I threw the things into my suit-case I could have sung. Séraphine, who was up, waiting for her mistress, being also my friend, promised to finish my packing after I had gone, so that Mrs. Rossiter would have nothing to do but send my boxes after me. It couldn't have been half an hour after my arrival at the house before I was ready to drive away again.

I was in the down-stairs hall, going out to the motor, when a great black form appeared in the doorway. My knees shook under me; my happiness came down like a shot bird. Mr. Brokenshire advanced and stood under the many-colored Oriental hall lantern. I clung for support to the pilaster that finished the balustrade of the stairway.

There was gentleness in his voice, in spite of its whip-lash abruptness.

"Where are you going?"

I could hardly reply, my heart pounded with such fright.

"To—to New York, sir."

"What for?"

"Be-because," I faltered, "I want to—to get away."

"Why do you want to get away?"

"For—for every reason."

"But suppose I don't want you to go?"

"I should still have to be gone."

He said, in a hoarse whisper:

"I want you so stay—and—and marry Hugh."

I clasped my hands.

"Oh, but how can I?"