

## CHAPTER XI

LORD MARLESFORD had seen his agent and given conditional instructions about his proposed cruise in the *Floralys*. He might go, and he might not. All depended on her ladyship's health and the doctor's orders. He sighed profoundly: the agent saw that all was not well. His lordship's solicitor came to the same conclusion when the peer ordered a codicil to be prepared for his signature. He had already made more than generous provision for his wife. Now he added a further gift of ten thousand pounds. When men did these things they were either remorseful, eager to make some sort of amends for a shortcoming, or they might be in some tender, over-anxious mood comprehensible enough in the husband of a young wife who was not feeling very strong. In order to assure himself that she must live, he made as though he himself would surely die first. Various Marlesford's schemes and ideas were construed; but no one denied that he was preoccupied, upset, and more reserved than ever.

When he went home, after the round of business calls, to dress for dinner, he asked himself how he should act toward his wife. Tessa and he had quarrelled — not as lovers quarrel, but as ne-