

"Have you had your hand told?" I asked.

"No." "Then don't do it. Go and have your hand told instead. And by an expert."

"I see you don't appreciate the niceties of my remark about the Jews."

"No, I don't."

"Well, their week begins on Saturday, and—"

"Jim, I apologise. But I don't believe it, and anyhow it's absurd. Come and have a drink."

We entered the refreshment tent and drank things. Jim tried to be facetious about my rapidly approaching engagement. He even misquoted poetry to me. Things about love and so on.

"Did you make that up yourself?" I said, wearily. "It's very bad."

"Why, it's Shakespeare, man," he said indignantly.

"O, I thought it was you."

"I don't mind having it," he said, and ordered a third whiskey.

"Kindly observe the new Swan of Avon."

"Are swans such great drinkers, then? I didn't know."

"You're in a nasty, horrid temper, and I shall leave you," said Brocklebank.

I watched him go through the door of the tent. Someone was coming up. He went up and spoke to her. "It was a lady. He came back with her and brought her up to me. Good Lord! It was Kate! "He'll give you tea," said James. "I must go. Good-bye."

He raised his hat and went off.

"It is impossible," I said.

"Well, what's the matter?" asked Kate.

"Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Go away. You're in London."

"I've just this moment come. You knew I was coming, didn't you?"

"No, I've hardly seen anyone. I've only just come myself. Why, what train—"

"Never mind the train," said Kate hurriedly, I want some tea."

We had tea. All the time I was wondering if I dared "to put it to the touch, to win or lose it all." At last I took out a penny and tossed it. If it turned tail, why then so would I. But if not—"

"Heads," said Kate.

"It is. That settles it. After all who am I to blast the reputation of a respectable and, for aught I know, and beautiful palmarist?"

"I don't know what you are talking about," complained Kate.

"Kate," I said impressively, "it is written on my hand,"—and I showed her my hand—"that I shall get engaged to-day."

"Is that what they call shorthand?"

"It's palmistry. The line of heart has done something exuberant"

"Well, I hope she'll have you," said Kate.

"Do you think she will?"

"You should ask her."

"I am," I said, and I took her hand.

"Dear do you think she will?"

"I don't know," said Kate looking down.

"Perhaps she might."

"Only perhaps? Kate, say you're sure she will."

"Quite, quite sure," said a voice.

Something in the words struck me. She looked up at me with a smile. Then I began to understand.

"Kate!" I cried.

"Isn't it a beautiful day?" said Kate.