

The Marriage of William Ashe

about the kindness of the chambermaids at Vevey and Brieg, and how one of them had wanted to come with her as her maid. "Oh! I shall find one at Florence if I get there—or a nurse. But just for these few days I wanted to be free! In the winter there were so many people about—so many eyes! I just pined to cheat them—get quit of them. A maid would have bothered me to stay in bed and see doctors—and you know, William, with this illness of mine you're so *restless!*"

"Where were you going to?" he said, without looking up.

"Oh! to Italy somewhere—just to see some flowers again—and the sun. Only not to Venice!"

There was a silence, which she broke by a sudden cry as she drew him down to her.

"William! you know—I was coming home to you, when that man—found me."

"I know. If it had only been I who killed him!"

"I'm just—*Kitty!*" she said, choking—"as bad as bad can be. But I couldn't have done what Mary Lyster did."

"Kitty—for God's sake!"

"Oh, I know it," she said, almost with triumph—"now I *know* it. I determined to know—and I got people in Venice to find out. She sent the message—that told him where I was—and I know the man who took it. I suppose it would be pathetic if I sent her word that I had forgiven her. But I *haven't!*"

Ashe cried out that it was wholly and utterly inconceivable.

"Oh no!—she hated me because I had robbed her of Geoffrey. I had killed her life, I suppose—she killed