

know that, because it will be a comfort to you and a reassurance, won't it? You must have had awful times over that."

"No, I haven't," she said frankly. "I accepted it just as I accepted the Renaissance. Looking back now, I know I questioned nothing; and I assure you I shudder at the memory of my acquiescence. I think if he'd planned a murder, I should have taken my part in it as a matter of course."

Beaudesart shook his head gravely.

"Not that, not that," he said. But as he spoke he remembered Horace's own boastful allusion to his power over Joan, and he too shuddered.

"Well, well," he went on more cheerfully, "that absurd bondage he imposed on you is now mercifully all over and done with. He regrets everything: all the selfishness, the unreasonableness and cruelty of it, and then his insane suspicion and baseless jealousy — and all that followed."

"And what did actually follow, Mr. Beaudesart?" Joan asked eagerly. "I wish you would tell me."

"Oh, we got at loggerheads, that's all," Beaudesart answered abruptly. "It isn't worth telling now it is past. I was mostly to blame, after all."

"No, it was I," Joan said. "I never ought to have come to your studio."

"That wasn't the beginning of it," Beaudesart said. "It began with all those sketches I drew of you. I couldn't help doing them. Upon my soul, I couldn't. You see —"

He broke off and stared intently on the ground.

"Oh, Mr. Beaudesart, I've made you suffer," Joan said.

"No fault of yours, no fault of yours," he said. "I knew well enough when you came to the studio, you only came because you didn't know any one else in the great