

in her own mind had eliminated the element of doubt from it. He would live for years; years that were going to be ripe and glorious and full of fine achievement. He had greatly changed, he seemed now only anxious to do all that lay in his power to atone for the sorrow of the past. Alison had met that mood with a quick joyousness, with a warm appreciation which had surprised herself, and though perhaps happiness could never come to the perfect flower between these two, so oddly mated, yet peace was theirs. And peace is no bad substitute for happiness, if indeed it is not its perfect counterfeit.

"And what are you going to do to-day?" he asked interestedly, as he watched her moving about the room with that slow, gracious step he loved.

"Oh, the usual. I must run down soon to see Edie. She was very sadly yesterday. I shall be glad when it is all over. I confess I'm a bit anxious about her, Edmund. She seems to have no stamina."

"Perhaps she'll buck up afterwards."

"I sincerely hope so," she said with a sigh. "Poor Pat can't do his work for his anxiety about her. It's the most wonderful thing I've ever seen."

"What is?"

"Why the way Pat has changed. When I lived with him he was rather a helpless sort of man, who could hardly find a shirt for himself. He never knew where anything was, and I even kept his engagement book for him."

"That was your fault, my dear. You kept him a boy long after he was a man."

"And so to keep the balance true, and make a man of him, it was necessary that he should marry a helpless wife. I wonder what kind of a wife would have suited you best, sir."

"The one I've got is the only one for me," he answered; and at that moment the nurse entered with the breakfast tray, a timely diversion for which Alison was thankful. There were moments when she