

A shudder ran through the woman's frame. Then she covered her face with her hands and flung herself down at her husband's side.

"Oh Francis, my dear, my dear!" she said. "I did it for you."

And then for an instant there was silence in the room, save for her heavy sobs. Francis lay still but patted her with his thin fingers, and looked at Caspar Brooke's wife with his large, unnaturally bright, dark eyes.

"She is a good soul in spite of it all," he said, addressing himself to Lady Alice. "And she did it out of love for me. You would have done as much for your husband, perhaps, if you loved him—but I have heard that you don't."

"Oh, but you are wrong," said Lady Alice. "I love him with all my heart, and I thank you deeply—deeply—for saving him."

"That ought to be some payment," said Francis Trent, with his wan, wild smile. "And I don't suppose they'll be very hard on me, as I did not know what I was doing. You'll speak a word to that effect, won't you, doctor?"

"I will indeed. But it would have been better for you as well as for others if truth had been told from the beginning," said Kenyon.

"It can't be helped now. Is there anything else I can do? You must have my statement taken down. And Mary, my girl, you'll have to make your confession too."

"Oh, Francis, Francis!" she moaned. "Not against you, my dear—not against you!"

"Yes, against me," said Francis steadily. "And let us finish with the formalities as quickly as may be, doctor, as long as my head's clear. I killed my brother Oliver—that you must make known as soon as you can. Not for malice, poor chap, nor yet for money—though he had cheated me many a time—but because I was mad—mad. And I am mad now—mad though you do not know it—stark, staring mad!"

And his dark eyes glared at them so strangely that Lady Alice cried out and had to be led into another room, for it was the light of madness indeed that shone from beneath his sunken brows.

It was while she sat alone for a minute or two while the gentlemen were talking in another room, that Mary Trent