

"I was dreaming about you, my dear," he said, "you and Old Sol, but I don't remember anything about it."

Rose sat down on the edge of the couch. Still lazily, only half awake, he put his arm round her.

"I have been talking to Nannie Mordaunt," she said.

"Yes? Where is our Nannie?" asked Mr. Challis.

"She has just gone home. Sydney! She told me about her journey to the Midlands, in the autumn. She told me—everything."

His laziness was gone. He pulled himself up and sat beside her. She could not read his expression.

"Well, Rose? Well?" was all he answered.

"Why did you come back so quickly?" she cried. "Why didn't you trust me? I had sent him away—Eugene Milrake—Sydney! I had sent him away."

"Hush! Hush! I believe you. I trust you. I have always trusted you. There! Don't cry."

"Why did you come back so quickly?" she repeated. "On that night when Nannie saw us together, I realised, for the first time, his utter falsehood and treachery. Sydney! Let me speak!"

He had tried to stop her, but now he folded his arms and looked at her earnestly.

"For weeks, Sydney, he had not spoken a word that you or I could have resented. On that night, in the little sewing-room, he made me talk of the old days when we were young lovers, and