

"I didn't know I was. I don't remember having said more than about two words."

"You're bluffing by your attitude. Margery has confessed that you were her lover; and Norman came here for . . . a settlement, I think he called it. This is the second time you've got his way. I asked him how it could possibly be worth his while to be hanged for murder as the price of ridding the world of you. I sent him home to think things over quietly, to decide what he was going to do. And it's time *we* decided that, Freddie, on our own account. I suppose I may accept Margery's confession?"

"I shouldn't dream of contradicting a lady." . . . He paused as a knock was heard at the door and one of the footmen entered with a tray. "Is that for me, John?" he asked. "Well, will you give it to her ladyship and bring up another one for me? . . . What was I saying? Oh, yes: you were telling me you'd checked our young friend's homicidal tendencies. What is he going to do next?"

"He doesn't know yet. . . . If he divorces Margery, will you marry her?"

"Well, you know, there's a conventional prejudice against bigamy; a legal bar, too, I believe."

"But it won't be bigamy if I'm given an opportunity of divorcing you."

"Ah, no. . . . Do you think Margery and I are likely to make a success of it?"

"I'm not a good judge. If I had been, I should not have married you."

"D'you know, I don't believe that covers anything like the whole ground: I could make a sort of seventy-five *per cent.* success of any marriage I entered on if my wife played up properly; and you could make a ninety-five *per cent.* success even with me, even at the present time, if we both played up."

A second knock interrupted them, and Gloria stood stiff and silent while the table was wheeled into the middle of the room and their breakfast was disposed upon it. The forced familiarity of consuming toast and coffee in Freddie's dressing-room added the last touch of the grotesque to a scene that in every part and at every moment brought her within perilous neighbourhood of hysteria. Under the tea-gown and lace cap she was chilled with fatigue and with the keenness of the morning air, which beat down on her from Freddie's open windows; his fresh colour and clear eyes put her at a disadvantage; and in the act of making her breakfast with him as though they were on their honeymoon