

from the first that the news should be withheld till she heard it from his lips. The more he reflected on former conversations with Margie, the surer he felt that he was acting for her happiness. "Make her happy." These words had been a law to him since first he read them. "Make her happy and good." She had needed no making good. All that was compatible with his highest duty he had done for her, and now at this critical moment—never could he recall, without an inward shudder, the arrival of Eveline Hunt in Florence—at this critical moment he was doing almost more.

So he reasoned, for the hundredth time, as he sat over his coffee after luncheon on the boulevard. Years ago, Lady Mary's warnings about nestless fledglings had frightened and greatly influenced him. In Margie's development, on her return to England, and especially of late on leaving school, he had seen the wise woman's contentions come true.