

innocent meetings, we couldn't deny that Freddie *did* dine with her alone at Newbridge, he *did* sit talking till a most disgraceful hour. And Margery *did* dine alone with him . . . very late . . . when they came in from motoring . . . after my mother-in-law had gone to bed, as the letter says. Mark you, I think Margery's unwittingly been very indiscreet; and it was abominable of Freddie to let her put herself in a false position; but, if you'd been married to him for a couple of years, you'd know that the amusement of the moment overrides everything. If *that* is what's worrying her, you'd much better persuade her to make a clean breast of it; and then tell her not to worry her silly little head over nothing." . . .

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As the ring of his footsteps on the pavement grew fainter, Gloria turned out the lights and walked wearily upstairs. To her dismay, Freddie's door stood open; and, as she passed it, he called out to her.

"I hope there's no worse news of Margery," he said, looking up over the top of his book.

If the last two years had taught her little else, they had trained Gloria to conceal every sign of surprise:

"No. . . . She's not told him anything yet, and I think that's preying on her mind . . . Freddie, I thought I knew the general range of your iniquity, but didn't even you feel a twinge of conscience about that child? She *was* a child, you know."

"I thought we'd disposed of my conscience some months ago . . . at Melby. Must we reopen the search?"

"I've not the least desire to . . . I was only . . . curious. I suppose it was a new experience to you. Years ago, before I ever knew you, I was told that you'd had an affair with a woman and that, when there was some talk of a divorce, you offered to lend the husband a car to drive to the law courts. I couldn't help thinking of that when I heard about you and Margery . . . and then remembered that you'd gone to meet Norman with a car—and a luncheon-basket, I think?—when he flew over from Brussels. . . . I want to know what you propose to do if Norman makes up his mind to divorce Margery."

"I really haven't thought. It seems rather their business."

"But if you're cited as a co-respondent?"

"Oh, I should certainly attend. Or get some one to represent me."

Hardly expecting to sleep, Gloria felt little resentment in