

few short weeks she had learned to love so dearly, and many deep thoughts were in her heart. There were some things which must be said to Fiona, and as there seemed no one else to perform the task she was ready. Indeed, Cicely Leyden had drawn very near to all in that stricken house during the last forty-eight hours.

"Of course it is necessary," she said calmly, "at least it would be better for you and Mr. Orde-Maclean to be parted for a few weeks, but you will not make the separation too long, Fiona, for obvious reasons."

Fiona lifted her heavy eyes and fixed them full on her friend's face.

"I feel as if we were parted for ever, Mrs. Leyden, as if nothing would bridge the gulf between us."

"Oh, you must not speak like that, my dear," said Mrs. Leyden quickly. "You believe that I am your true friend, do you not?"

"Indeed I do," said Fiona with quick gratitude. "Have you not proved yourself the truest and kindest of all friends during these sad hours?"

"Then you must also believe that I will only give you advice which is good and disinterested. I am a woman of the world, who has seen a great deal more than you, and who by reason of that experience am able to grasp most situations correctly. The situation now is this—you and Mr. Orde-Maclean will have to go through another marriage ceremony, of course, and it is absolutely imperative that it should not be long delayed for the sake of all concerned."

Fiona shivered slightly.

"I cannot bear it even in thought. The whole thing is unbearable. It can never be the same again."

"It is natural that you should feel so, my dear, but