

"He's never been delirious. I imagine, of course, it's that Losfontein affair that's worrying him. All the same, I don't see why he should make up his mind to die on that account. They'd have given him another chance, good man as he was. Can't—can't you do anything, Lady Violet? Pardon me if I'm impertinent, but I speak as a doctor: I have an idea, so have the nurses, it's about you he's fretting."

Violet turned on him. "About me, what do you mean? Tell me at once."

"I really hardly know. I suppose he thinks you're disappointed in him. He seems in some way to be afraid of you when you're there. When you're away, though . . ."

"Yes, when I'm away. Quick."

"He talks enough about you then, asks when you're coming back. Lady Violet, he—he—forgive me, but he's mad about you. Why, my dear lady, what on earth's the matter?" for Violet, after staring at him for a moment in silence, had turned sharply away, and was now violently sobbing. "Pray, pray calm yourself. Oh, what an idiot I was; what an . . ."

"Sir James," Violet stood facing him again, her eyes shining through her tears, "are—are you sure?" she gasped. "You're not saying it to comfort me?"

"Sure of what, that he's in love with you? Oh yes, I'm quite sure. That question, at any rate, I can answer. And of course he is. Why, do you mean to tell me you, his fiancée, don't know that?"

"No, I did not know it. I should never have known it but for you. He asks after me, you say, wh-when I'm away."

"He does. I saw him, too, kissing a handkerchief you left on his bed the other day. Silly sort of thing to do, but he did it. Then, when you come in, he turns away, hides his face from you."