

she was holding to his lips really was, she would never have been resolute enough to present it, no matter for what ultimate good.

When she and Arnold turned in at her gate Ludovic had to stop. Theodora looked over her shoulder and saw him standing still on the road. His forlorn figure haunted her thoughts all night. If Anne had not run over the next day and bolstered up her convictions, she might have spoiled everything by prematurely relenting.

Ludovic, meanwhile, stood still on the road, quite oblivious to the hoots and comments of the vastly amused small boy contingent, until Theodora and his rival disappeared from his view under the firs in the hollow of her lane. Then he turned about and went home, not with his usual leisurely amble, but with a perturbed stride which proclaimed his inward disquiet.

He felt bewildered. If the world had come suddenly to an end or if the lazy, meandering Grafton River had turned about and flowed up hill, Ludovic could not have been more astonished. For fifteen years he had walked home from meetings with Theodora; and now this elderly stranger, with all the glamour of "the States" hanging about him, had coolly walked off with her under Ludovic's very nose. Worse — most unkindest cut of all — Theodora had gone

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