

"I wish you could have heard what he said yesterday. I kissed him for it afterwards."

Sometime later she left him to find his cane. When she returned there was a sober look on his face.

He had taken a torn strip of something from his pocket, something blue and worn and soiled.

"Why did you write this, Clare?" he asked. "I carried the whole thing home that night. And then, afterwards, I tore this off and I've carried it ever since."

She took the piece of the old blotter from his hand and read her own words.

"Do you remember, Jack," she said softly, "how you told me once that father held the balance of power? He didn't. You held it all the time, the real balance of power. You held it with me and you——"

She never finished, for his arms were around her, crushing her to him, and his lips pressed tightly upon hers.

"Such power," she whispered when her lips were free, her head sunk upon his shoulder. "Such wonderful,—sweet,—maddening power. Oh, Jack," she sobbed against his coat.

Slowly they walked down the darkening paths, and the dim light dazzled their eyes with its brilliancy and the bare boughs seemed to bloom about them.

"God's bigger out here," she said reverently, and he remembered, as he looked at the great house where a few lights were already glimmering. And his mother, sitting quietly in the old library with the Colonel and Mr. McNish, remembered too, with that inward peace of those who, believing that all things mean good, see beyond the narrowing years.