

nies upon you. No: not even when I made that start. I was just trying to push in a stone-wall—specially built up, I suppose, against all the blighters who *might* behave like cads to a girl like you. No one to explain that I wasn't just one of those."

"But that's all come right now," said I, stroking his hair. "Why is it men will worry so dreadfully about things that are all over? Perhaps girls worry worse at the time." . . .

"It's now that it's over and 'come right' that I see how very easily it might have stayed all wrong," he told me, staring away across those wavy green-and-rose reflections in the pool. "We might have spent our lives with people who jarred on us and warped us; we might have. . . . Why, supposing I hadn't been a pal of Slim Grantham's at all. . . . Supposing it hadn't been Slim who picked up your Grannie that day. . . . Suppose your Grannie hadn't taken such a fancy to the fellow that she didn't mind letting you go about with him. . . . Supposing he hadn't been called off that day when he—he, not me!—should have brought you down for that walk here. . . . Supposing I hadn't looked in at the office just at that moment when it happened that he could send me off on a message to you. Supposing there hadn't been that party at Mrs. Lou's, the Sunday before, when I was introduced to you? Supposing you'd married that old Welshman of yours? You might have. Yes! He might have coaxed and argued you into it. Or supposing you had got fixed up with Slim. *He* was keen, before he