

CHAPTER IV

THE LAWYERS AND AUNT AGNES

JOHN GLIDE was unfeignedly glad to get out of the house and to put some considerable distance between himself and the place where he had been plainly shown that he was no longer welcome.

Waiting for a motor-bus at the end of the lane, he suddenly beheld Kathleen—the person whom of all others he least wished to see at the moment—coming in a slanting direction from the other side of the street. She was carrying a bag which seemed too heavy for her. He sprang forward to relieve her of it, at the same time realising that never had she looked more winning and desirable. She wore her simple clothing with an air, and the face under the smart little hat was a dream.

"Why, John, is it you? Wherever have you sprung from? Have you been at The Laurels?"

"I have just left it. I am waiting for a bus."

"And why don't you stop to supper? I suppose you have some other engagement. I'm a bit late. There was such a large and brilliant party at Mrs. Dyner's this afternoon! Such a crowd of splendid, interesting people! That is the life, John! I should like to live it always. But what makes you look so horridly glum?" she asked, suddenly struck by the gloom on his face.

"Nothing. I'll walk with you to the gate, if I may."

"Oh, you *may*," she said, with a provoking emphasis and a rather coquettish smile; "but if you have the hump to that extent, you needn't. Have they all come home?"

"All but Cyril."