

my heart sponged clean of hate and misunderstanding. How we are all caught in 'the clutch of circumstance,'” she added with a sigh.

He put his arms about her.

“He has made you sad.”

“Do the scales ever balance, do you think? The good you may have done, ever balance the harm?”

“Who knows, Belovéd?”

“What a pity that the reckoning comes at the end.”

There was a silence, which he broke with his question.

“Dear, if I asked you what he asked you, would you make me the same answer?”

“You mean?” she said, lifting her face to look at him.

“Let me go, when you go.”

“Ashton!”

She clung to him with sudden strength, she kissed him with deep feeling.

“Best beloved,—my dearest!” she cried to him brokenly.

“I may come?” he asked softly.

“No—no—no.”

“But you want me.”