

always will be, the only woman I have ever loved, and that I will make you as happy as ever a man made a woman."

When he paused, out of breath, and biting his lip to control his agitation, there was a long pause.

At the end of the pause, Pam laughed.

"You have made," she said, "a curious mistake!"

"I have made no mistake. You have told me over and over again that you will never marry; if you are afraid, now that the time has come to test your courage——"

She stopped him with a gesture. "What do you know about courage? You who are trying to run both with the hare and the hounds? I meant that loving you, I would be proud to come to you, before all the world, to be your wife in everything but the name, you to be my husband in everything but the name. I knew that I could have no friends, that no one would know me, that I should be an outcast, like my mother, but I thought our life should be like that of my father and mother's. And that seemed to me not only beautiful, but good.

"You have offered me a life of shame; of sneaking and hiding, of taking behind her back, the love you would, knowing it to be false, have sworn in a church to give to Henrietta Shanklin. So you see—our ideas differ."

"You are an absurd child," he returned angrily.

"Yes, I am an absurd child! I have been very ridiculous and very wrong; and now I know. I know that people must marry so that their daughters can bear their father's name, and—not be hurt like this."

Her voice broke, and she bent her head to the dark face of the drowsy monkey.

Peele took her hand in his. "Pam, will you forgive me? I—I beg your pardon. You were a fool, perhaps, but I was a scoundrel, and I am ashamed. I will break my engagement and then I will come and ask you to marry me."

She looked up, and saw that his eyes were full of tears.

"No," she said gently, "I forgive you, and I thank you, but I will not marry you."

"Then you do not forgive me."