

He did not imagine he should find it very difficult. Of course, in such matters, there is always the newness, and the absurdity, of the situation to get over. But Margie's heart would doubtless leap up for joy at thought of the responsibility, the timidity, rolled away from it, like a stone. She would enter the great world she dreaded, under Lady Mary's experienced guidance. Joyous and careless, as a young girl should be, in London, at Stawell, she would live the same bright life as the friends she had frequently envied, and, in time, she would marry happily. God bless her! He could never have arranged about her marriage. Often he had trembled at the thought.

He did not fear that she would dislike to see a stranger in her mother's place. She had forgotten her mother. If there was one thing in which she had disappointed his constant affection, it was her easy attainment of that indifference he had so ardently desired. For years she had never mentioned the deceased;