

'I had to keep lecturing myself, or I'd have been sorry for him. He told me it was his love for me that had shown him what a wretch he had been. He said he knew I didn't care for him two straws — and there I didn't contradict him — and that he respected me all the more for it. I can't explain to you how he worked it out, but what he meant was that I was so good myself that no one but a thoroughly good fellow could possibly have any chance with me, and that any other sort of fellow ought to be ashamed of himself for daring even to be in love with me, and that he couldn't rest until he had proved to himself that he was worthy to have loved me, and then he wasn't going to love me any more.'

"'It's a bit complicated,' says I. 'I suppose you understood it?'