

The Trippers

he is pitted against other young savages on the football field! All strangers, so far?"

Ballard nodded, and she went on.

"Then there are Mrs. Van Bryck and Dosia—I am sure you have met them; and Hetty Bigelow, their cousin, twice removed, whom you have never met, if Cousin Janet could help it; and Hetty's brother, Lucius, who is something or other in the Forestry Service. Let me see; how many is that?"

"Eight," said Ballard, "counting the negligible Miss Bigelow and her tree-nursing brother."

"Good. I merely wanted to make sure you were paying attention. Last, but by no means least, there is Mr. Wingfield—the Mr. Wingfield, who writes plays."

Without ever having been suffered to declare himself Miss Elsa's lover, Ballard resented the saving of the playwright for the climax; also, he resented the respectful awe, real or assumed, with which his name was paraded.

"Let me remember," he said, with the frown reflective. "I believe it was Jack Forsyth the last time you confided in me. Is it Mr. Wingfield now?"

"Would you listen!" she laughed; but he made quite sure there was a blush to go with the laugh.

"Do you expect me to tell you about it here and now?—with Mr. Wingfield sitting just three seats back of me, on the right?"