
THE GRAVENORS

She did not finish the sentence. Her voice seemed to choke her.

"Ah, you seem to be sad, auntie. I do not like to see you in such spirits."

"Some day, child, when you are older, you too, as I, will look down the lone pathway of the years, with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain, upon those things, large and small, which at one time or other entered so largely into your life. Besides—"

There was a momentary pause. The woman toyed nervously through the pages of her book while Muriel seated herself upon the grass at her feet. Then, in a voice trembling with emotion, she began:

"You have never heard the story of my younger life. Have you not often wondered how I came into your household?"

"Yes, often, auntie. It has been a puzzle to me. But at last I got to thinking that you had been here always."

"Ah, no, child. 'Tis a long and sad story—but I had better not tell you."

"Oh, do tell me, auntie! Pray, do tell me!"

"Since you wish to know then, I shall."

The kind woman closed the book on her lap, readjusted her eyeglasses and then proceeded.

"It is now thirty years since that awful night out in the woods. I remember it all so