

second, just a second; then—"the girl I am going to marry," he said quietly.

"Oh, Eustace!" There was no mistaking the gladness in Dinah's tone. "I am pleased!" she said earnestly. "I know you will be happy together. You were simply made for each other."

He smiled, still in that strange, half-rueful fashion. "I am doing the best I can under the circumstances. It is kind of you to be pleased. But now once more to your affairs. They are more pressing than mine just now. It may interest you to know that Scott—although under Isabel's will he is made absolutely independent of me—is willing to live at the Dower House, if that arrangement meets with your approval."

"Of course—I shall love it," Dinah said.

"I am glad of that, for it will be a great help to me to have him there. You will be able to have Billy to stay with you in the holidays and roam about as you like. Scott is making all sorts of plans. I am going to settle the place on him as a wedding-present."

"Oh, Eustace! How kind! What a lovely gift!"

Sir Eustace smiled at her. "I am giving him more than that, Dinah. I am giving him his wife and—the wedding-ring." The irony was uppermost again, but it held no sting.

"It will fit no other hand but yours, and it will serve to keep you in constant remembrance of your good luck. I can hear him coming up the path. Aren't you going to meet him?"

She sprang up like a startled fawn. "Oh, I can't—I can't meet him yet," she said desperately.

There was a curious glint in Eustace's eyes as he watched her, a flash of mockery that came and went.

"What?" he said. "Do you want me to help you to run away from him now?"

She looked at him quickly, and in a moment her hesitation was gone.

"Oh no!" she said. "No!" and with a little breathless sound that might have been a tremor of laughter, she fled away from him out into the evening sunshine to meet her lover.