

the real heir to all this, let birth say what it would. Wylde was a stranger in the home of his fathers, and though he lived here until his latest day he would always be a stranger. And the soul of him would always struggle for freedom.

Sadly enough the Colonel watched Wylde all that day. But he had come to understand that no words which Wylde could force his lips to speak would make any difference. He had chosen that this dreaded son should grow up apart from him, and now the law of circumstance was too strong. His son and his son's children would never make the old silent Manor glad again. His son would never give to him the frank loving thought that Surrey gave. As he had bent the twig at the beginning so the tree had grown—away from him. And because he knew this without hesitation it was not Wylde only who felt his heart come thickly to his throat when the Colonel stood up just at the moment when his sister was gathering glances round the table, and called Wylde to him.

It was all said in a half-dozen direct simple sentences to these neighbours who had known the Colonel in his youth. And then Wylde was hemmed in by kindly unfamiliar faces, and strong hands were gripping his, and many voices were calling him by a name that sounded strange in his ears. Surrey had looked at him in the first moment, seeing the dull flush run from chin to forehead and stay there. And after that he had not moved his eyes from Peggy.

In a little while the Colonel came through the moving crowd, speaking low in Surrey's ear.

"Where is Peggy? Did she go out before the others? I—I couldn't look at her."

"She went through the Long Gallery—to the library, I expect. And," said Surrey, bending his tall head, "I am just going to send Wylde there for that book he got in York."

"Good heavens! Are you mad? It is too soon, in any case. And you don't know——"

"I know that it is now or not at all. They are both