

"I thank you for it," she said; "I am a weak, selfish girl, and, please God, father shan't find a dull face again."

Her eyes being now opened to something beyond her own trouble, May noticed with surprise how many strangers came to see her father, and that he took them aside, as if to talk with them secretly: an Indian agent, one of the local police, and others, besides Phil Hart, who—after an inquiry for her mother and a few sympathetic words to herself—seemed strangely anxious to see her father alone. She also noticed that, after such interviews, Mr. Dent seemed harassed in a different way from the anxiety about the mother. After a dinner with which she had taken far more pains than with any meal since her mother's illness, she lit her father's pipe, and begged him to sit down quietly and rest a bit.

"You look so troubled, dear father," she said: "is it all about mother? or is there any other worry? Do tell me. Can I not help you?"

Her father took the pipe, and deliberately puffed away at it for five minutes before replying. Many men find counsel in a pipe. May thought he would not take the trouble to answer her, and was beginning to feel hurt, when he suddenly said—