

crossing of swords at all. That was none of my provocation. Share and share alike, at least! Was *he* not to blame, as well as I? At any rate, dearest, it was no fault of thine."

The sentry-scouts that flew, black across the Abbey Meadows, to tell their fellow-rooks that someone came, may have been tale-bearers, to the best of their cawing, of how the man's horse and the woman's, close abreast, had stood awhile so still the lips of either rider met the other's, and had outstayed as much as might be of a half-embrace, balked by but little distance. For these birds see and know, and tell their knowledge to those that have ears and can hear, though they waste but little speech in the telling of it.

Thus it was that the relations of this husband and wife had undergone a change in that short two hours' ride. Such a change that John Rackham, hearing their voices, as they rode up to the stable-gate, could never have guessed the strain there had been between them since their marriage a month since.

Lucinda remembered well enough Oliver's reference to his curious dream. But she remembered, too well, the occasion that brought him to speak of it. She would say nothing now to revive the recollection of that moment, and its terrible sequel.

But Oliver would not let the figure on the terrace be forgotten. He questioned all the women-servants, and could get no light on its identity. The hour fixed itself—it was when he rode up to the gate, or just before. If it was one of their own number, why not admit it? It was no contravention of any law of *his* making to go on the terrace. Why not tell the truth? But it was soon plain they *were* telling the truth. Evidently, none of them had been on the terrace, or knew anything of the matter.