

gratefully on to the nearest rock and looked up at her companion; but the light on his face checked her ever-ready tongue. She liked the boy. He was more than "a mere he-thing," and that streak of the woman in him appealed strongly to the masculine strain in herself. But protracted silence irked her; and very soon anxiety goaded her into speech.

"Mr. Lenox, how long have you known Sir Mark Forsyth? Are you acquaintances or friends?"

Maurice considered that point without removing his eyes from the heather. "Rather more than acquaintances, I should say, and on the way to becoming friends. I've known him two years on and off. But I've never yet been to Wynecombe Friars, his Hampshire place. He's crazy about it. They say you never know the real Forsyth till you've seen him there. I'm going this autumn, to be converted from Futurism and Experimental Art in general! At least that's his notion. He's a splendid chap. Chock-full of ideas. A bit reactionary, some of them. He's dead against what we should call industrial progress, and what he calls sacrificing the man to the machine. They've got a great scheme on, he and his mother and Macnair, for joining up all the scattered attempts at reviving handicrafts and guilds——"

"Oh, bother their crafts and guilds!" Miss O'Neill broke in with scant ceremony. "Sheer fads! Result of riches and idleness. I want to know is he the kind of man to take up a girl violently—you see how it's been—just to pass the time?"

"No!" Maurice rapped out the negative with unusual vehemence. "As a matter of fact, I believe he intends to offer her his heart and all his worldly goods before we get back to them."

Miss O'Neill started visibly. "What—on a fortnight's acquaintance?"