

"Did you see us?" Neither did she want nor mean to say that; but it gave her a pang to think he might have seen. Something revived in her at the image; something put aside and shamed, that protested.

"No. Please don't ask me who told me. I don't want to make you tell me; I only wanted to say——"

"But you did," she retorted, not realising the inferential admission until too late.

"Then it is true?"

"*What* is true? I'm not engaged to him——"

"No, but you did let him——" Good heavens, they were quarrelling now! Why could he not get to his own business—the letters?

"Well, if I did—I don't care; I'm not——"

"But I thought that must be why——"

"It wasn't. It was because—because—— I don't know why. Because he was going away, and he'd wanted to for years—— You talk as if you'd never kissed any one! Why should you come here and nag me about it anyway?" She was almost in tears; she felt as if they must both have suddenly gone mad.

"Because," said Chan, a great light suddenly breaking on him, so that he spoke slowly while he looked and looked again at the bewildering truth, "I wanted that kiss myself."

Lesley felt weak, almost stunned. He was looking at her again as he had looked the night before, with those new eyes that saw the woman where the friend had been; she felt that she was desirable—and now she was not arrayed for admiration; she was only herself, in her crumpled cheap blouse, and pale in the glare of noon. There was a flooding warmth about her heart, and her breath came short. Chan put his hands in his pockets, with a quick tense motion, and stood waiting, biting his lip. He could have faced the