

"I wanted it tremendously, but it wasn't enough."

"Not enough! Aren't you rather hard to satisfy?" she asked with a hint of pride that deceived but did not stop him.

"I'm afraid I'm very rash," he answered quietly. "You see, I wanted your love; I wanted you. But I was afraid to ask."

She looked at him in a way he did not understand, although her manner enforced a curious restraint.

"Now I wonder why?"

"You're so beautiful! I durstn't hope you'd come down to my level. I'd nothing to offer."

"You have unselfishness, loyalty, and unflinching steadfastness. Are these nothing?"

Foster felt embarrassed, but the sense of restraint was stronger. Alice had somehow imposed it and he must wait until she took it away. He thought she wanted him to finish.

"Then I knew my disadvantages. In many ways, Canada is a hard country, and I'm poor."

"Did you think that would count for very much? We are not rich at the Garth."

"I seemed to know that if by any chance you loved me, you would not flinch. But there were other things; your upbringing and traditions. I couldn't hope your parents would agree."

Then Alice got up with a quiet grace he thought stately and stood facing him. There was a strange new softness in her eyes that had yet a hint of pride.

"I don't think I am undutiful, but it is my right to choose my husband for myself." She paused and his heart beat fast as he waited until she resumed: "The evening I came to the orchard I had chosen you."