

that they tacitly agreed to say nothing. But there was a difference of feeling due to their positions. Challis could not live with a Tantalus cup held to his lips, and was, moreover, constantly stung with the injustice to Marianne of admission of—entertainment of—submission to love for another woman. Poor dear old Marianne, at home there by herself! So he honestly wished to fly—fly from himself if you like to put it so—from Judith, at any rate, as her beauty had become insupportable, and to his home as a haven by preference, just to live this folly down and forget it.

And as for the young woman—well!—she didn't want to lose Challis altogether. She could see no reason why a sort of affectionate friendship should not be cherished between them, not she! It was in the nature of the animal, and it may be Challis had been entirely at fault in casting the part of Estrild, whom he had certainly not portrayed as a person who would be content, like Bunthorne, with a vegetable love. It may be also that the cold-blooded faculty Sibyl objected to in her sister was part of this nature. A pleasure in disconcerting married folks' confidence in each other may belong to systems without a heart. Only, biters are sometimes bit.

Whether or not what this lady said next, after the two had walked, a little way apart, exchanging neither look nor speech, until the tea-party came again in view—for they had made the circuit of the coppice-wood—whether this had anything to do with her wish to avoid a complete separation from her literary friend or not, we cannot guess. It may have, and yet she herself may not have known it.

"Marianne has never answered my letter," she said.

"You knew I had written?"

"No," he replied. "I did not. What had you to say to Marianne?"

"I wrote to beg her earnestly once more to change her mind, and pay us a visit. We do wish her to come."

"What good would it do?" His question vexed Judith. Why could he not help her at least to shut her eyes to a change in their relation each had to know of, yet to seem, in self-defence, to ignore the other's knowledge of? He evidently had no intention of doing so.

"What good?" she repeated. "What an odd way of