

I'd get that dreadful riddle answered once and for all, so instead of saying as one naturally would, and as I'm bound to say I'd said quite a dozen times before, that of course the lead would sink soonest, I suddenly said: The feathers. And I dare say it served me quite right, because I certainly didn't in the least see how it could be the right answer, and was only pretending, which I suppose was rather hypocritical of me—but Fergus simply roared with laughter, and told everybody what I'd said for weeks and weeks afterwards."

"Sybil, Sybil, you'll be the death of me." Bertha was absolutely mopping her eyes, streaming from her unaffected merriment.

Lady Argent looked at her affectionately.

"Dear Bertie, I do like to hear your laugh again."

"It is an infectious chuckle, I believe," returned Mrs. Tregaskis; "but I've always had a huge appreciation for the funny side of things. It's helped me all through life, Sybil. I'm not an irreligious woman, though my religion is perhaps not a conventional one, but I really believe the whole of my creed could be embodied in one word: 'Smile!' I *do* believe in smiling! It cheers others, helps oneself, and does good all round. I don't mind owning to you that a good many people, one way and another, have told me they blessed my knack of smiling. I'm sure one laugh is worth ten sermons, very often!"

"Sermons are so often a little difficult to understand," said Lady Argent apologetically. "I sometimes find myself quite hazy in church—though I dare say that's mostly from the long drive, which makes me so dreadfully sleepy."

"You have to go all the way to Chepstow, haven't you?"

"Yes, and dear Ludovic is so angelic about driving me in. Not that he often allows me to go early, but then that's because he thinks it tires me, not because he minds the distance."

"Your relationship is a very beautiful one," said Bertha thoughtfully.

"Oh, my dear, it is!" cried Lady Argent very simply. "I often wonder what I've done to deserve a son like