

"It has altered a good deal," he conceded.

His voice was expressionless.

Bertha looked up sharply.

"There have been no changes to hurt her," she said quickly. "One understood—good heavens, yes! There are the two tiny plots over there under those lilac bushes, that belonged to them—Rosamund and Frances—when they were little children. Somehow I knew that by instinct—and why she always said wallflowers were her favourite flowers. This place is one mass of them in the spring. She's not sentimental, you know, but little things like that are sacred to one—afterwards. And Rosamund knows that I understand."

"Yes."

"It's curious," Mrs. Tregaskis continued meditatively, "how quickly one 'senses' things, when it's a question of a beloved child. I don't think, though I *do* say it myself, that any suggestion or change of mine has jarred on Rosamund. You see, I can share in some of the associations. I fetched them away from here as little children—and I was here with them when their mother died—and now the place, in a sense, is mine as well as hers. You see it's been a harbour of refuge for me, too, hasn't it?"

"You don't regret Cornwall?"

Bertha straightened herself slowly, and faced him.

"No," she replied, deliberately, but very decisively.

"The love of a place is a great thing—and I'm Cornish through and through, as you know—but, after all, other things matter more. Little Rosamund, for instance. Oh, it's not only that she wanted me—wanted me to mother and shield and comfort her, as only a child that's bought its own wilful experience *can* want one, but there's the need of giving in her, too. You know that. I rather fancy that you, too, understand Rosamund."

She looked at him rather enigmatically for a moment, but Ludovic was silent.

"Your mother told me once that she rather wondered if the whole thing would end in Rosamund's becoming a Roman Catholic, too. She made friends with a woman at Francie's convent. . . . But it won't. Rosamund