

sunshine somewhere even when the world is wrapped up in a thick, thick fog, but——” She broke off and then she asked a question abruptly. “Did you know my husband well before I came here, Mrs. Cheston?”

Instantly Olivia Mary seemed to shrink back into her former constraint. She spoke hurriedly:

“I—don’t think I—I have known anybody very well. I am afraid I’ve been rather selfish. I live so much alone. Ever—ever since my husband died I haven’t seemed to want other people. That is being selfish you know.”

“Perhaps so,” said Mrs. Ambrose; “but it’s mighty natural. Why I asked you about Nigel is because I’d like to know whether it is just these last few years he has changed or whether he was getting tired of the world before he married me?”

“I’m afraid I can’t tell you that . . . I have never really known Mr. Ambrose . . . I fancy he had only been settled at Garth Court just a little while before you were married.”

“Yes, I know that,” said Helen Ambrose. “I guess he’d never have come here if he hadn’t had the property left him, but——” her voice broke off and then she smiled that delightful infectious smile which wrinkled up her eyes and brought dimples in her cheek. “I don’t suppose it interests you to talk about these things.”

Olivia Mary smiled back at her.

“Everything about you interests me,” she said simply. “I like you so much. If—if I weren’t the most stupid and the shyest person in the world I should have told you that a long time ago.”

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