

Go and stay in the very house. If you do that I shall think well of you—and even better than I think now of the prospects.”

“I’ve not been invited.”

“Poor girl, she’s afraid to invite you! Write and say you’re coming.”

“She’d go away. Yes, she would. She consents to live there only on condition that I never come. She’s told me so.”

“I’m too old a woman to know your family! You upset the wisdom of ages, and I haven’t time to learn anything new.”

“I’m not the least surprised. If I were in her place, I should hate to have her there.”

“Nonsense. In a month or two——”

“If anything’s certain, it’s that I shall never go to Blent as long as my cousin owns it.”

“I call it downright wicked.”

“We share the crime, she and I. She lays down the law, I willingly obey.”

“Willingly?”

“My reason is convinced. Maybe I’m a little home-sick. But your month or two will serve the purpose there.”

“There’s a great deal more in this than you’re telling me, Mr. Tristram.”

“Put everything you can imagine into it, and the result’s the same.”

She sighed and sat for a moment in pensive silence. Harry seemed to ponder too.

“I’m going to think of nothing but my work,” he announced.

“So many young men in their early twenties succeed in that!” she murmured mockingly.

“Don’t those who succeed in anything succeed in that?”

“Not all, happily—and none would if they were your mother’s sons. My dear boy, just open a window in you anywhere—I know you keep them shut when you can—but