

coat in tweed material. The adjective "uncouth" presented itself. I saw it was a clever head under the thick mane of black hair, and wondered at his tactlessness and provincial garrulity. Nevertheless, I found myself not entirely uninterested in him.

"Do you mind my talking about her? Incandescent! I think that word describes her best. She burned from the inside, was strung on wires, and they were all alight. She was always sitting just where you are now, or upstairs in her study. I see her so clearly. Have you been upstairs?"

"As I told you, I have only been here an hour. This is the only room I have seen."

My tone must have struck him as wanting in cordiality or interest.

"You didn't want me to come up to-night?" He looked through his pocketbook for Ella's letter, found it and began to read half aloud. How well I knew what Ella would have said to him!

"She has taken 'Browans'; call upon her at once . . . let me know what you think . . . don't be misled by her high spirits. . . ." He read it half aloud and half to himself. But he could not keep off his text. "I used to come here so often—two or three times a day sometimes."

"Was she ill?" The question was perfunctory. Margaret Eldon was nothing to me then.

"Part of the time. Most of the time."

"Did you do her any good?"

Apparently he had no great sense or sensitiveness of professional dignity. There was a strange light in his eyes, brilliant yet fitful, conjured up by the