

CHAPTER XXV

BITTER HARVEST

CLARE's telegram failed to reach Glenlochan in time to prevent Kitty's letter being forwarded, and Ted duly received it one morning when it was too wild and stormy for the guns to go out on the Hexham Moors.

The party, already a little glum over continuous wet weather, was not likely to have its gaiety enhanced by Ted's receipt of such news, as they damped his spirits at once. They were in the billiard-room at the moment, trying to put in an hour or two while waiting for the storm to abate.

Cyril was playing, for billiards was one of the few accomplishments in which he had attained considerable proficiency during the years when he had been a commercial traveller.

He observed his brother-in-law's expression change as he conned the address of a certain letter. Immediately he had opened and glanced at it he left the room.

Kitty's few words of dismissal left Ted Charters in no doubt. All she had to say was written slantwise across the sheet of notepaper which enclosed the last letter he had written when he tried to clear himself with Anna Helder.

He did not care, nor did he dare, to read that letter. The very memory of it made him feel sick. He was not surprised at Kitty's indignation. No woman with a grain of spirit could do otherwise.

What to do next! He sat down on the front of his