

is kind to you, Doll. Perhaps it is kind to me. Perhaps it softens what lies below as well as what is on the surface. Don't ring for the lamps—yet!"

In the firelight he looked smilingly into her troubled face, into the eyes which shrank from and yet turned back to his. Unconsciously he had assumed a pose familiar long ago. So he had stood looking down upon her, one elbow upon the mantelpiece, upon the hearth-rug at the Doll's House in Oakley Street. And the soft glow of the embers was kind to him, obliterating the lines upon his face, softening the masterful glance of the eyes.

"Doll," he said, and his voice changed slightly, losing its remarkable inflection of power, "you don't want me, do you, but I wonder if you know how badly, how desperately, I want—you?"

She made no answer.

"I want you so badly," he whispered, "that I'll chuck this big thing, which somehow doesn't seem so very big after all, for your sake. I tried to bargain yesterday. To-day, Doll, I surrender—unconditionally. If you wish to live under a cloud, I'll live under one with you, gladly. We'll"—his voice reminded her irresistibly of the old Dick—"we'll share the same umbrella. If England doesn't suit you, we'll find another country. North, south, east, or west: it's all the same to me, if you'll let me come too. Doll"—the last rag of restraint