

She catches his hand—it is quite evident she at least finds it easy to forgive him—and stands looking at him with eager eyes.

"O'Sullivan is back, and her truth is forever beyond a shadow of doubt," he answers. "But forgiven—no, I am not that, and in all likelihood never will be."

"Nonsense!" cries Miss Hariott, energetically; "don't I know the girl. I tell you she could not cherish enmity if she tried, and then she——"

"Liked you far too well," is on the tip of her tongue, but she bites that un-riply member, and stops short.

"She is very proud, you would say," he supplements calmly. "Yes, and that pride has received a mortal wound. A far less spirited girl might find forgiveness hard."

"Tell me all about it," says Miss Hariott, drawing a chair close, and looking at him delightedly. "Where is she, and what does she say? Tell me all Mr. O'Sullivan told you."

"Rather a difficult and disagreeable task," he answers, smiling slightly. "I have grown used to extremely plain speaking within the last twelve hours. There is no epithet in Mr. O'Sullivan's vocabulary too hard to apply to me. Reine is well, he tells me; is in New York with friends of his, who will be good to her, and intends to earn her own living henceforth—by teaching, I suppose? Of Durand of course she knows nothing. Her address O'Sullivan will not give; and—that is all there is to tell."

"All?"

She looks at him searchingly.

"All. If you wish to write to her, your letters must go *via* the O'Sullivan. I think she will be glad to hear from you."

"You have written, Laurence?"

"Could I do less? I have a letter from her sister, to be given to O'Sullivan, at this moment in my pocket."

"Ah! you have been at the Stone House?"

"Just come direct from there."

"And Madam Windsor?"

"Refuses to listen to a word. Mrs. Windsor is, without exception, the best hater I know."

"And Marie—what says she to all this?"

Again her keen eyes look at him searchingly, but Longworth's face wears its most impassive expression.

"She says very little—she appears to feel a great deal. I like her better under a cloud than I ever did in the sunshine."

"And she will live with that woman after the shameful manner——"

"Ah, Miss Hariott, as you are strong be merciful—in fitting Mrs. Windsor you also knock me over, remember. What is Marie to do? It is her only home. She is a lily of the field, neither able to toil nor spin; she will only add to her sister's wretchedness if she permits herself to be cast off. She must kiss that great lady's hand and be thankful for the crumbs that fall from her table."

Miss Hariott impulsively opens her mouth, thinks better of it, and gulps down some very strong words. After all, what right has she to cry out because the world is unjust and selfish, and the innocent suffers for the guilty? It is the universal law of the world, and she is not strong enough to set the wrong right.

She has been unjust in her own way, too; she has thought some very hard and bitter things of this friend before her, forgetting that while she saw with the clear, calm, far-sighted eyes of friendship, he looked with the blind vision of love. She has misjudged him, for he has suffered, does suffer—she can read it in his face, although in that face to casual eyes there is but little change.

"Larry," she says, carrossingly, and lays her hand on his arm, "I hope you will not let yourself feel this too deeply. 'Time at last makes all things even,' you know, and this, like more of life's mistakes, is but a question of time and patience. I suppose there is no loss that has not its compensating gain; your gain in this is so thorough a knowledge of Reine's goodness that to doubt her a second time will be impossible. You know her as she is, pure and true, ready to brave more than death to serve those she loves, ready to perish rather than break her word. You will think better of all women for her sake—you will be a better and truer man