

devotion from the first, and the knowledge had swayed her more than once when, unusually weary, she had been tempted to accept the peace and security which might be hers as his wife.

She thought of this possible means of escape that night as she mounted the stairs in the House of Windows, and, as usual, when her thoughts turned in that direction, she sighed. She knew that round of thought so well. It was like a treadmill; always she came back to the same starting point. It was useless to consider it, but somehow she always did consider it when the stairs seemed as long as they did to-night.

Perhaps her step was heavier also, or perhaps someone was listening for it with keen ears, for she had not passed the second landing before a door upon the third floor flew open letting more light upon the dusty stairs, and from somewhere above her there floated a sibilant whisper, "Sister Ann, Sister Ann, do you see anyone coming?"

Tired though she was, Celia smiled. "Only the long road and the swaying grass and the dust blowing before the wind!" she answered dutifully, and the next moment she was being kissed violently upon the cheeks by a vision with yellow hair.

"I knew it was you!" said the vision. "But, of course, it might have been Tommy; and I did not want to bother coming down for him! Take hold of my arm, darling, and let me pull you up. You are late. The muffins will be spoiled. Oh, Celia, we had a visitor to-day!"

Celia's face in the dimness of the stairway grew a little whiter. "A visitor? Was it Mr. Banks, our trustee?"

"How mean of you to guess! Yes, and he left a