

"Can't you? Now I should have thought you might have done that easily."

"It goes against the grain," said Clarendon, smiting the oak table. "I'm too damn straight and too honest for politics. But with you by my side —"

"I want to be," said Bexley. "Tom, how old is your daughter now?"

"Cecilia? Nineteen, I believe. Let me look it up. I keep notes of these things. Ah, she is nineteen and two months."

"She's a devilish pretty girl," said Bexley, thoughtfully.

"Not a prettier in the country, nor a better, nor a dearer, or softer and sweeter creature in all the counties of England. She reminds me more and more of her mother. She won't let me have a secretary. She types my articles for me, and knows as much about my affairs as I do," said Clarendon, who now looked more like a father than an authority on fertilizers. "Why do you speak of her? She says you're a duck."

"Damn," said Bexley. "I hate pretty young girls to call me a duck. It means I'm past killing. But I admire her amazingly. How did she get on with my boy?"

The justice of the peace shook his head.