

CHAPTER VI

To Lord Yeoland's unspeakable and unspoken relief, Pam did not recur to the subject of Peele, nor did she visibly pine. The change in her was so slight as to be unnoticed by every one except her Grandfather and Pilgrim, and to comfort them at first by the thought that she possibly did not much care, after all.

Pilgrim, indeed, had, in her satisfaction on hearing of Peele's proposal, for a time considered everything to be in order, for according to the good woman's simple ethics, if Pam had wanted Peele, she'd have taken him. But the maid's eyes were sharper than those of many mothers, and several small signs observed by her combined little by little to teach her that bravely as she hid it, Pam had had a serious blow, and still suffered under it.

The girl lay awake at night instead of sleeping, and her eyes, more like the monkey's than ever, were heavy. She was very cheerful, reading aloud to Dick Maxse, who was a little better, playing cards with him, and trying in a boyish way that was not without a shade of pathos, to do for her aunt various little things that had always fallen to Evelyn's share.

Every morning she read the *Times* to her grandfather, and he once saw how, after reading with unfaltering voice a letter on the South African Commission in which much was said of James Peele, every bit of colour left her face.

The old man shook his head as she went on to the next article; it was, after all, then, as serious as he had at first thought, but he did not speak of it.

A week had passed, after the wedding, and Ratty had gone back to Oxford, after a final interview with his cousin in which his attitude had been one of despair mixed