

But Lady Caroline smilingly refused to decide anything until she had herself interviewed Miss Polehampton. She asked her husband to order the carriage for her at once, and retired to summon her maid and array herself for the journey.

"You won't go to-day, will you, Philip?" said Mr. Adair, almost appealingly. "I shall be all alone, and my wife will not perhaps return until tomorrow— there's no saying." "Thank you, I shall be most pleased to stay," answered Sir Philip, cordially. After a moment's pause, he added, with something very like a touch of shyness—"I have not seen—your daughter since she was twelve years old."

"Haven't you?" said Mr. Adair, with ready interest. "You don't say so! Pretty little girl she was then! Didn't you think so?"

"I thought her the loveliest child I had ever seen in all my life," said Sir Philip, with curious devoutness of manner.

He saw Lady Caroline just as she was starting for the train, with man and maid in attendance, and Mr. Adair handing her into the carriage and gallantly offering to accompany her if she liked. "Not at all necessary," said Lady Caroline, with an indulgent smile. "I shall be home to dinner. Take care of my husband, Philip, and don't let him be dull."

"If they are making Margaret unhappy, be sure you bring her back with you," were Mr. Adair's last words. Lady Caroline gave him a kind but inscrutable little smile and nod as she was whirled away. Sir Philip thought to himself that she looked like a woman who would take her own course in spite of advice or recommendation from her husband or anybody else.

He smiled once or twice as the day passed on at her parting injunction to him not to let her husband be dull. He had known the Adairs for many years, and had never known Reginald Adair dull under any circumstances. He was too full of interests, of "fads," some people called them, ever to be dull. He took Sir Philip round the picture-gallery, round the stables, to the kennels, to the flower-garden, to his own studio (where he painted in oils when he had nothing else to do) with never-flagging energy and animation. Sir Philip's interests lay in different grooves, but he was quite capable of sympathizing with Mr. Adair's interests, too. The day passed pleasantly, and seemed rather short for all that the two men wanted to pack into it; although from time to time Mr. Adair would say, half-impatiently, "I wonder how Caroline is getting on!" or "I hope she'll bring Margaret back with her! But I don't expect it, you know. Carry was always a great one for education and that sort of thing."

"Is Miss Adair intellectual—too?" asked Sir Philip, with respect.