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VOL. 4656

AFTER THE VERDICT

BY

ROBERT HICHENS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. 2

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ROBERT HICHENS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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BY

ROBERT HICHENS

AUTHOR OF

"THE GARDEN OF ALLAH," "THE CALL OF THE BLOOD,"

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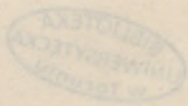
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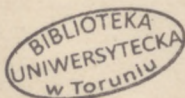
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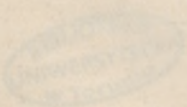
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XVII

ON the following day the improvement in the baby's health seemed slightly more noticeable. The Nurse said decidedly that after an unusually good night he was stronger. There was more stillness in him, and it seemed to be the stillness of an infantine serenity. His pale eyes, wide open, with an inward expression, looked calmly at the ceiling. He was dressed in a christening robe and lay with crumpled hands ready to be made a child of God.

The ceremony was to be at two o'clock. Mrs. Denys, Mrs. Baratrie and Robert Martin came to Chester Street to lunch with the Father and Mother at one. Archie was coming later. Mr. Denys could not be there. He was out of London on business connected with the Bank. Bob Herries could not arrive till two. His wife was coming with him. No one else was expected. The baptism was to take place in the drawing-room, which was modestly decorated with a few white flowers, lilies and roses.

It was a warm and beautiful summer day, kindly and beneficent and wonderfully calm. Even in London one could feel on that day the wide calmness of nature. The two Mothers-in-law and Robert Martin had of course been told of the apparent improvement in baby's health, and his new serenity

had given them confidence. There was in consequence no tragic anxiety to mar the intercourse in the small dining-room.

Vivian at one end of the table, Clive at the other, looked earnest and rather grave. But both were self-possessed and showed no special signs of emotion. Clive had managed to get rid of the mask-like look he so often wore as a defence against the eyes of the world, persistently watchful and inquiring when turned towards him. If he were making any strong effort he succeeded in concealing it. Vivian was stamped with the touchingly expressive humanity of the young Mother. Even her few quiet gestures were those of a Mother, not of the eager athletic girl she had been. Robert Martin was, as always, just quietly himself, calm, intelligent, absolutely devoid of self-consciousness, ready to talk or to listen, and doing both with entire simplicity. Mrs. Denys, a little like him in her complete naturalness, sat on Clive's right in a pretty dark blue dress and unostentatious, but becoming, hat, and showed him a gentle, yet almost eager, friendship which touched him. She had not forgotten their vigil together, nor the man kneeling by the window and showing his emotion to the dying May night cool with the coming of dawn. Now she loved his love for her daughter.

Opposite to her sat Mrs. Baratrie, striking a slightly bizarre note in this intimate gathering of quiet people. She was dressed in dove grey, and had the look of one specially attired for an unusual occasion, although she did not seem to be bothering about her appearance or giving a thought to her dress. The withered aspect still marked her, with its sharp contrast of a vivid, almost feverish vitality, quicksilver running in a sapless envelope. Her hair, quite grey now and rapidly going to white, stuck out from under a three-cornered grey hat. Her clever eyes were bright, and glanced rapidly from one to another as she talked. When she was silent they looked if possible even more alert than when she was talk-

ing, as if then absolutely the whole of her was concentrated in observation. There was a very faint touch of red high up on each of her cheeks. Vivian had never seen such touches of red on her Mother-in-law before, and wondered about them. Then she thought of her baby. All this was for him and he did not know it. How much was he destined to know before the inevitable darkness which waited for him, as for every child of woman?

Just after lunch was finished the door-bell sounded, and Archie and Mr. and Mrs. Herries came in together. They had met by chance on the doorstep. Archie looked uneasy and self-conscious, a not very happy godfather anxious to seem genial and at home in an unwonted situation. Bob Herries and his wife radiated kindness and sympathy. Bob's "feather" was in evidence, and Mrs. Herries was dressed anyhow in black with an awkward and badly planned note of white, a thoroughly home-made note, which caused Vivian to love her more than ever. That note, too, was for Baby.

After a moment of talk they all went upstairs to the drawing-room.

Archie was nervous and showed it. He had a finger in his Prayer Book at the Service of Baptism for Children, and now asked Bob Herries in an undertone where he was to stand. Bob laid a hand on his shoulder and told him. The water was in a silver bowl on a table covered with white at one end of the room near the screen with the dancing figures. There was a moment's hush. Then the Nurse, a thin woman with kind and intelligent brown eyes, and a narrow head covered with fluffy brown hair, came in looking official with baby in her arms. All eyes turned to her. She went solemnly to Vivian and gave baby carefully to his Mother. As Vivian took him she glanced from him to Clive, and saw Clive looking at her with a strange expression, intense and, she thought, humble like one silently beseeching for pardon. As their eyes met he smiled quickly and looked away.

Baby lay still in her arms. His tranquillity was really remarkable. His eyes were open and held a remote expression, as if, though physically there, he was spiritually far away. His silence, his bodily peacefulness, suddenly communicated to his Mother a feeling of disquiet. She had been distressed, even secretly terrified, formerly by his writhings, his screams, his convulsions. But now this continuous calm began to stir in her fear. It seemed to her not quite natural, and she longed to hear the lusty cry of a male child in the room. But Bob Herries had put on his surplice, was taking his place by the improvised font. His dark, wistful eyes glanced at her. She moved. The little gathering fell into place. The service began.

The child was named Clive and signed with the sign of the Cross. When the water touched his forehead every one instinctively looked more alert for a moment, waiting for his cry of protest and alarm. But no sound came from his tucked-up lips. It was as if he had not felt the cold drops on his forehead, the drops which transformed him, in the view of the Church, into a little Christian.

The short service was at an end. Bob Herries went to take off his surplice. Archie's face, which had reddened, looked relieved as he thrust his Prayer Book into his trousers pocket. Robert Martin, who had made his responses in a firm, tranquil voice, from which he had excluded any legal sound, took off his small spectacles, smiled and looked towards Vivian benignantly. The women gathered about the baby, and for once Mrs. Baratrie gave way to a bromide. She said:

"How good little Clive was!"

"He *is* a good child, Ma'am," said Nurse, rather defensively.

Mrs. Baratrie recovered herself.

"We know that all babies are good, remarkably well grown for their age, and unusually clever into the bargain,"

she said briskly. "But really little Clive has behaved like an angel to-day."

When this was said Vivian looked quickly at Mrs. Herries and met her friend's eyes, and before either had time to be wary, as even the dearest friends are wary in many intimate moments, each had sent to the other a thought. And between those thoughts there was scarcely the shade of a difference.

Mrs. Denys wiped her eyes. This drawing-room service had moved her very deeply. To her baby was quite different now, strangely, beautifully safe and consecrated. And she went up to him and touched him with loving, and also reverent, lips.

And again Mrs. Baratrie's voice was heard in the room speaking of "little Clive." It seemed that she could not weary of uttering the name which marked baby out from the other babies in London.

The silver gifts of the godparents were looked at. Bob Herries came back and talked for a little while with Robert Martin, Clive and Archie, while the women stood together. Then baby was carried away, and suddenly things seemed more ordinary. A few minutes later Mrs. Baratrie said she must go. Archie immediately said good-bye to his sister and gave her hand a tight squeeze. Bob Herries, invited by Mrs. Baratrie, accepted a seat in her car as far as Knightsbridge. His wife said she would stay on for a little while with Vivian and Mrs. Denys.

The small party broke up. And the drawing-room in Chester Street became just a pretty room in a house in London, on a warm summer day of the season.

As Robert Martin was at the front door about to go away he said to Clive:

"Can you look in on me some time to-morrow afternoon, after four, at Paper Buildings?"

Clive looked at him sharply.

"Is it about my case?"

"Yes."

"I'll come certainly."

He seemed about to say much more, but after a look at Martin, which was returned, he only added:

"Thank you for being godfather. Good-bye, Martin."

"Good-bye," said Martin.

The thought which had passed through the minds of both men had been:

"Not to-day."

To-day was Baby's day. The day of his Father would come later.

XVIII

FOUR days later, after a period during which the strange calm of little Clive persisted, the convulsions he had suffered from suddenly returned. Under their attacks the small amount of strength he had failed; his resisting power ebbed away; on the sixth day, towards evening, he died.

He was buried in a country churchyard, at the village of Mayling, in Surrey, not very far from London, where Vivian's parents had a cottage to which they often went from Friday to Monday in summer. It had never been Vivian's home. They had taken it since her marriage. But she wished her baby to lie in the churchyard there. She could not bear the thought of burying him in a crowded London cemetery. The churchyard at Mayling was surrounded by green sloping meadows, and leafy woods. Flowers grew in the tangled hedgerows. The soft Surrey hills kept watch not far off, seemed to keep the busy world out with quiet steadfastness, warders of nature set there to guard from disturbance the long sleep of a little child, who had opened his eyes upon life but had not been destined to know it.

At the funeral, which was held by the clergyman of the village, an old man who had lived there for nearly forty

years peacefully doing his simple duties, this prayer of the sixteenth century was said, by Vivian's desire:

"O Lord, support us all the day long of this troubelous life, until the shades lengthen, and the evening comes, and the buisy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work done. Then, Lord, in thye mercy, grant us safe lodgeing, a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

When Vivian asked Mr. Bainbridge, the old rector, to say this prayer at the graveside, he looked at her mildly for a moment before replying in his weak, gentle voice, which was like the voice of some ethereal old woman:

"That is a beautiful prayer. I know none more beautiful. But do you think it is quite suitable to offer it up at the funeral of a little child?"

"My Baby won't hear it," she said. "But his Father and Mother will. I want you to say it for us, if you don't mind, for his Father and—and me. We need that prayer."

She stopped speaking, then added:

"I know Roman Catholics pray for the dead. I may be wrong, but I feel as if the dead didn't need our prayers. But perhaps—it may be so; I can't tell—prayer can help the living. Anyhow, I do feel that I want that prayer to be said by my baby's grave, if you don't mind."

"I will gladly say it," the old rector replied.

And when he began to speak it, standing by Clive's side, and looking down into the hole in the Surrey earth where Baby lay under flowers, Vivian whispered it with him. Clive, rigid, and gazing before him into the green summer which circled them with its happiness, caught fragments of the prayer from her lips: "this troubelous life—world is hushed—safe lodgeing—peace——" Birds were singing. Grasses moved in the light breeze, quivered as if they were endowed

with the life which Baby had resigned so swiftly. The sky was blue and had a look of depth. Vivian lifted her eyes from the grave and instinctively raised them to the sky. And immediately a day of the past was with her, the day of Clive's acquittal, and she was standing by the window in Mrs. Baratrie's house in Knightsbridge, and looking at the sky over the Park. To drift in that blue and to sink away—how would that be? Falling, falling, falling through immeasurable blue; dying away from the world and this life in blue! What strangeness, what release! She had dreamed for a moment at that window, when the fate of Clive hung in the balance. And the blue was still there above her. But a little more than a year had passed, and Clive and she were husband and wife, and already their child had gone from them. And she seemed to see little Clive, like a far-distant white speck, fading from them in blue.

“Amen!”

It was over. She touched Clive's hand. And his hand was terribly cold. She took her hand away quickly.

Always afterwards when she thought of that day she thought of a far-distant white speck fading in blue and of the icy cold of Clive's hand.

XIX

CLIVE'S action for slander against Sir Aubrey Sabine was down to come on in the High Court, London, after the Long Vacation, before a Judge sitting with a special Jury. The preliminaries had already been got through. Robert Martin had sent the following letter to Sabine:

“SIR,—

“It has come to the knowledge of my client, Mr. Clive Baratrie, that recently before a number of people at Lord Dartree's villa near Cannes, you made a statement to the

effect that you, and other members of your family, were certain that Mr. Baratrie was guilty of the murder of the late Mrs. Sabine, your Aunt. And you further added that Mr. Wilfred Heathcote, the well-known actor, and others, held similar views. At the time of making this statement you were well aware that our client, after a full and searching inquiry, had been declared 'Not Guilty' of the said unfortunate lady's death. And I can only assume that the above statement was made with the malicious intention of damaging my client socially and otherwise.

"My firm has been instructed to take proceedings in respect of the above.

"Yours obediently,

"ROBERT MARTIN"

In reply to this communication a letter had come from Sir Aubrey, evidently written in haste, and without consultation with a solicitor, in which he had endeavoured to treat the whole matter as an absurdity; and had stated that in general conversation with a number of friends he might possibly have made use of some unguarded words with reference to the sad death of his Aunt, of whom he had been very fond, but that he of course accepted the decision of a Judge and Jury as to Mr. Baratrie's entire innocence of the crime of which he had been accused. He had added that though he could not remember saying anything about Mr. Baratrie which was in any way actionable, he would gladly send Mr. Robert Martin's client a full written apology for any careless words he might possibly have uttered, if such an apology would "straighten things out."

As to Mr. Wilfred Heathcote, whom Mr. Martin had mentioned, there was some mistake. That gentleman's name had certainly not been brought up in the conversation alluded to. He, Sir Aubrey, was quite certain he had not touched on Mr. Heathcote, who, so far as he recollected, had never said

one word to him about his Aunt's sad death, or the accusation brought against Mr. Baratrie in connection with it. Anything he could do to put matters right, etc., etc.

It was, as Robert Martin had observed to Clive, the letter of a coward in a funk, hasty, ungrammatical, and totally unconvincing. In answer to it Martin had sent a communication stating that no apology would be accepted by his client, and requesting to be put into communication with Sir Aubrey's solicitor. Another, more pressing, and if possible more ungrammatical letter, had come from Sir Aubrey, who eventually, evidently realising that it was now impossible to "straighten things out," had gone to his solicitor for advice.

Since then Clive had issued an ordinary writ of summons, setting forth his grounds for bringing action by simply claiming "Damages for Slander" from Sir Aubrey Sabine. The writ had been personally served upon Sir Aubrey, ordering him to appear thereto within eight days inclusive of the day of service upon him. Sir Aubrey had appeared, whereupon Clive, through Robert Martin, had issued a summons for Directions, pursuant to Order XXX as to the Pleadings in the action, returnable before the Master in Chambers for a certain date. This summons had been served upon Sir Aubrey's solicitor, Sir Layton Thompson, and heard before the Master in Chambers, in the presence of the solicitors on either side, after which an order had been made directing Pleadings in the action as follows:

"Statement of claim to be delivered by the Plaintiff within twenty-one days."

"Defence to be delivered within twenty-one days."

"Place and mode of trial," etc.

In Clive's Statement of Claim the nature of the Defamation he complained of had been set down, with full particulars, and damages had been claimed. The defendant in answer had delivered his Defence in the action, denying that he had used the scandalous words imputed to him. There-

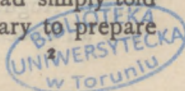
upon Clive had instructed Counsel to advise on evidence, and had been advised to apply by summons before a master that Interrogatories be delivered by the Plaintiff to the Defendant, to be answered by the Defendant within ten days.

On this occasion Clive had seen Sir Aubrey Sabine for the first time, and a sense of dull wonder had crept through him. Why was this man his enemy? Why had it been put into the power of this man to cause him acute and prolonged mental misery? He had seen a tall, well set up, smart young fellow, very fair, very well groomed, with a little brushed-up golden moustache, a pair of shallow light blue eyes, a slightly retreating forehead, a nervous, uncomfortable manner; a man obviously without much intellect, or any mental or temperamental power, yet also obviously a gentleman, and probably what most men would call "a thorough good fellow." How was it possible that such an ordinary type of human being had been able to cause so much misery? And Clive had gazed at him, the dull wonder persisting. And Aubrey Sabine's shallow blue eyes had met his for a moment, and he had seemed to see in them the reflection of his own wonder. But perhaps that had been imagination. And almost instantly the eyes had been turned away, and a brown hand had gone up to the little golden moustache and had pulled at it nervously.

The answers to the Interrogatories put on behalf of Clive had been filed by Sabine, and a notice of trial had been served upon him. The action had been set down for hearing by Clive, as Plaintiff, who had applied to have the trial before a Judge and a special Jury, he agreeing to pay the extra costs.

It was the end of July when the ground was cleared at last for the action. Then came the great pause, the interval of the Long Vacation, which began on the first of August.

Clive had gone through all these legal preliminaries with scarcely a word to Vivian about them. He had simply told her that Martin was doing all that was necessary to prepare



the way for his action. As she had not been going anywhere during that spring and summer, she had not been in the way of hearing any of the gossip of London. And since the morning when she had read in her newspaper that ugly paragraph about a forthcoming sensational case, she had not looked at another paper. Then Baby had come and Baby had gone. Her brief period of Motherhood had passed almost like an acute dream of the night. And now suddenly there was a strange emptiness, a strange, stark interval of calm, through which a girl in mourning had to live somehow, before the autumn came with its inevitable burst of horrible sensation.

Well, there would be no outrage on Baby. He had slipped away from it all. And she thought of him as one making haste to get away from the evil day that was coming. For though she knew that Clive would win his case, the thought of it was horribly repugnant to her, especially now, after all she had passed through so swiftly. And she dreaded the day of the trial almost as she had dreaded the day when Clive's trial for murder was to begin. All this was to her like a resurrection of Evil, like a buried horror forcing its way up again into the light of day, almost like the thrusting out of its grave of a corpse.

And the corpse was the corpse of a woman.

For August and September Clive rented a small, but pretty, house on the Hog's Back in Surrey, backed by chalk cliffs above which were fir-groves, and fronting a big view over rolling country bordered by distant blue hills. The house was within a comparatively short distance of Guildford. In a car hired for the two months Clive could get to the station in a quarter of an hour. He went up to business five times a week. So Vivian had many hours by herself. She wished for this solitude at first, and told Clive she preferred not to have any, even the most intimate, visitors. But towards the end of August Archie came down to stay with them. There was an excellent hard tennis court in the garden, and one

of grass. And Clive persuaded Vivian to begin playing tennis again. She had not had a racquet in her hand since the autumn tournament at King's Club, and she felt an almost invincible reluctance to play—why she did not exactly know. But when Archie was there she agreed to go on Court, chiefly for his sake. And they had some singles together. And after three or four days of play Vivian was surprised to find some of her enthusiasm for the game she excelled in stirring in her once more.

Clive must have noticed a change in her, slight though it was, and one day he said to her:

"Ask Gordon to come down for a week-end and play. We never see him now. Why's that?"

"Jim!" she said, and looked at him as if startled.

"Yes. Why has he dropped us? Why didn't he come to see us when he came back from the South of France?"

It was true that Jim had never been to visit them. He had written to Vivian a very warm, touchingly warm, letter of sympathy after the death of the child, but he had not called in Chester Street. Immediately after his arrival in England he had gone away into the country. He had returned for the Wimbledon tournament towards the end of June, in which he had played, but without his usual success. At that time Vivian had of course been completely engrossed in the cares of motherhood, which almost immediately afterwards had abruptly come to an end. Then he had vanished again. There had been communications between Robert Martin and him with reference to Clive's action for slander. But even Clive had not seen him.

"I think probably Jim feels uncomfortable since he wrote you that letter," Vivian said, in answer to Clive's question. "He had to write it, of course. But I dare say he feels very bad about it."

The mask-like look came into Clive's face, which seemed to set into a hard fixity, devoid of any definite expression.

"I wish you would ask Gordon down," he said, "or get Archie to write to him for you. He did me a good turn when he wrote to me. I don't want him to think I am ungrateful."

"Very well, I will ask him," she said, but rather doubtfully. "But if it's for tennis we shall want a fourth."

"I'll play. Of course I am not up to your form. You are all first class. But if you can put up with me——"

"Clive!" she said, with a sudden rush of tenderness, that seemed to her incoherent.

"Well?" he said, still keeping the mask-like look.

"I'll write to him."

"Do, dear."

And he went out of the room rather stiffly.

Vivian told Archie of Clive's suggestion, and Archie's face brightened up as if a flash of sudden sunlight had fallen on it.

"Oh, Vi, that's good. I've been wanting to say a word for old Jim ever since I came—long before too. But I didn't dare."

"Dare—Archie?" she said, reproachfully.

"Yes. You've been in such trouble, and have got such a lot more to go through. I felt I couldn't bother you with anything else. But now—I say, do write at once! Send it to Cork Street. Jim will get it. I don't know where he is at the moment."

"I will."

Archie's face looked graver, as if the sunlight died away.

"And I say, if Jim comes, and you notice anything, try not to show it, will you?"

Instead of answering Archie's question, Vivian said:

"Do you think Jim will come?"

"I should say so. Why not?"

"You said 'if.'"

"Well, how can I know what he is doing?"

"He hasn't been playing in any of the country tournaments lately. Is he going to Eastbourne?"

"I don't believe he is. Fact is, he is very much off his game. Write to him, Vi, and beg him to come. Tell him I'm here, and want him as well as you."

"Very well," she said, gravely, "I will."

To Archie's delight Jim accepted Vivian's invitation, and on the Friday following his acceptance he arrived at Monk's Hill in the afternoon. Clive had not come back yet from the City, and Vivian and Archie were alone in the house.

It was now about eight months since Vivian had seen Jim, and she marked at once change in him. He had put on flesh. She had always known Jim as a strong, sinewy, fine-drawn athlete, trained to a hair, keen, wiry, with an alert body and a thin, almost fiercely energetic face. Now the face had broadened out. The cheeks, especially near the eyes, looked puffy. The body was heavier and seemed to have much less youthfulness in it than formerly. And the eyes, which had been so steady, watchful and determined, the eyes of the true athlete, now looked self-conscious, sometimes—and that seemed incredible in Jim—sometimes even furtive. There was no ugly redness in the complexion. Jim's face was still brown, still kept a certain out-of-doors look. But the hair about the temples had grown greyer, and his movements were less light, less springy than they had been.

Nevertheless Vivian was struck harder by the change in his manner, indicating inner, mental change, than by the alteration in his figure and face.

Jim looked a dreary man.

When they met he smiled. He gripped her hand hard. There was a sound of real gladness in the voice that greeted her. But, the first moments of intercourse over, he seemed to slip—and she felt that it was a slipping back—into a dreariness, in which preoccupation was obvious, that she guessed to be habitual. It was as if a film had grown over

his whole nature, concealing its light. She thought of eyes afflicted with cataract when she thought of him. It was always difficult to Vivian to play a part, because it was natural to her to be sincere. But she tried at first to play a part with Jim. She made it her aim to seem unobservant, to hide from him that she had noticed change in him. Archie helped her vigorously. Clive would not be back till the evening. The day was brilliantly fine. Archie suggested a game of tennis after tea. None of them cared to play a triangular game, and Vivian said she would stand out and umpire for her brother and Jim.

"I'm awfully out of form," Jim said, the furtive eyes turning towards Vivian, then glancing away. "Archie saw me on the Riviera and at Wimbledon. I don't know what it is, but something's put me completely off my game."

"Never mind," she said. "There's no gallery."

Jim went up to put on his whites.

In Jim's game Vivian saw the new dreariness she had detected in his look and manner . . . the cataract film . . . faintly reproduced. Jim could not play actually bad tennis. He knew too much about the game, was too accustomed to it for that. His eyes were trained, and could not in a few months lose their training. He had the habit of the game in his blood and showed it now. His experience, his supreme knowledge of court-craft, enabled him to beat Archie with something, though not much, to spare. But he was no longer the Davis Cup Jim who had triumphed with Vivian in many Mixed Doubles before crowds of spectators. His swiftness was abated. There was a certain perceptible effort in his play. Vivian felt that he could no longer "last" as he had been able to last in the old days.

But after he had played two sets with Archie she resolved to put him to the test, and said that she would put on her shoes and have a match with him. She went off, assuming his assent, and came back in a moment, racquet

in hand. Jim was sitting in a garden chair smoking a cigarette. He got up when he saw her, rather heavily.

"I'd rather play with you than against you, Vivian," he said, throwing the cigarette away. "If I thought there was a chance of tournament play with you again, I——"

He broke off and picked up his racquet.

"Would you buck up *then*, Jim?" she could not help saying.

She saw Archie's eyes turned on her anxiously.

"Come along!" she said. "You'll beat me, of course. A first-rate man can always beat a woman. But I'm going to give you a good match."

And when she was on the hard court—she deliberately chose the faster game—opposite to Jim she put forth all her powers. She felt strangely eager, strung up, as she had not felt since that fateful day at King's Club, when she and Jim had played, and lost, against Jennie Littlethwaite and Kemmis, the young Californian. She did not want to beat Jim. She wanted him to beat her, to smash her completely, as he could have smashed her when he was in his prime as a player, perfectly trained, harmonious, with all his powers of body and mind at their zenith. But she tried her hardest to beat him, because she wanted to force him to come up to the scratch, wanted to make sure that he had not really gone to pieces, longed to see again the old Jim of whom she had often been proud, whom, from her early girlhood, she had thought to be the perfect athlete, Archie's trainer, her mentor, encourager and friend.

Archie, watching the match, saw again the athletic sister whom he had missed when he came home from the South of France. The child had vanished. And to-day it seemed to him that the mother of the child had vanished too, and that the old Vivian of the Courts was with him once more. And presently he remembered the great match he had seen at King's Club, and Lord Dartree's overheard remark, "Some-

thing damned odd about this game. What is it?" and his own mental acquiescence.

This match, too, Vivian against Jim, was a damned odd game. An unusual tension in the two players communicated itself to him. He felt conscious of a strife which was more acute than the normal strife of even the most ardent tennis players, of a hidden, subterranean strife which he could not quite understand. And presently—for Vivian drew ahead—he found himself being traitor to his sister. For with all his force of will he wanted Jim to win, to "buck up," to carry the thing through with the iron determination which used to be characteristic of his friend. And when Jim did make an effort (when it was almost too late though), and equalised and at last went out a winner by two games, ten to eight, Archie thrilled with a sense of triumph which he did not fully understand. He understood it better that night when he was alone for a moment with Vivian outside her bedroom door, and she said to him in a low voice:

"I tried hard to beat Jim to-day."

"I know you did, Vi. And you played almost in your old form."

"Yes. But wouldn't it have been awful if I had beaten him?"

Then Archie fully understood.

"Awful!" he said, soberly.

"Archie, we must get old Jim back to what he used to be. We simply must!"

"It's in your hands, old girl, not in mine."

Vivian looked at him for an instant strangely. Then she said only:

"Good night, Archie boy. Life's difficult—difficult."

She went into her room and shut the door.

Clive and Jim, the two men who loved her, whom she knew loved her, were together downstairs in the smoking-room. When her door was shut she went over to the window

and pulled up the blind. Then she switched off the light and sat down close to the window. A starry night, but no moon! She felt a dimness of blue in the night. She sat still and tried to receive into her the great peace of nature. But her mind was horribly restless and at work. People were in it, the living and the dead: herself, Clive, Jim, Sir Aubrey Sabine, Clive's enemy, Wilfred Heathcote with his piercing detective's eyes, Mrs. Dews the great actress, who had tried to pursue Clive after that evening at the theatre, but whom Clive had obstinately avoided, little Clive with his pale, remote gaze and his puckered lips, and a woman whom she had never seen—Mrs. Sabine.

What were Clive and Jim talking about downstairs? Did they hate one another secretly? Their meeting, when Clive came home, had seemed cordial, but there had been a hint of determination in their cordiality. They were both resolved to be cordial, were carrying out their resolve like two men at work. She had felt their common effort. Now they were freed from watching eyes and, if they were acting, were acting for one another. She believed they were talking about the case, about the imminent resurrection. How tragic Jim's love for her was, a ruinous love! And yet she knew that if it were lifted out of his heart, if it were utterly gone, she would feel very sad. She wanted it gone for Jim's sake, but not for her own. That, no doubt, was woman in her. She could not help it. But Clive would hate the knowledge of that truth in her, she supposed. It was not unfaithfulness. It was just woman—the innate desire for love, and intense, secret value woman sets upon all faithful love.

The stars over Surrey were bright. Suddenly Vivian found herself thinking of African stars. (So she called them to herself.) And with the thought there came an abrupt realisation. She got up and stood by the window.

She could go with Clive to the *endroit du bonheur*. The obstacle to that journey, to the fulfilling of that intense longing

of Clive's, was removed. Baby was gone. Tears came into her eyes. Ever since Baby's death she had suffered terribly and had instinctively hidden her suffering. For she did not know what Clive's feelings about that death were, whether he at all shared her sorrow in his, man's, way. Her will, so it seemed to her, had been cancelled out by little Clive's death. Fate had fallen in with Clive's will. She could not talk about that with Clive. But she could do something to make him, perhaps, happier for a short time than he had ever yet been with her. And she would do it.

Her mental restlessness was now companioned by a restlessness of body. She felt like one on the edge of a long journey, and already travelling in mind. A conviction came to her that she would, before very long, be isolated with Clive as she had never been isolated with him yet. How would it be then?

She moved about the room. She would tell Clive at once, that very night, that she would go with him to North Africa, would go out in camp with him above the plain of the gazelles, would visit the villa by the sea with him. Then he could look forward to the peace with her, which he had yearned for, through the coming days of misery and scandal.

She looked at her watch. It was five minutes to twelve. She wondered if Clive would be very late in coming to bed.

As she was wondering the door opened, after a soft knock which she did not answer, and he came in.

"Still up!" he said, looking at her with surprise in his eyes.

She realised that she had not taken off her gown. Since she had come upstairs she had not had time to think of the ordinary things.

"Yes," she said. "I was wondering when you would come. I want to tell you something."

He had shut the door and now came up to her. She noticed that his face looked hot and his eyes feverish. The

mask-like expression was gone. She wondered what had been happening downstairs, and could not help saying quickly:

"There's nothing wrong between you and Jim, is there?"

"Why should there be?"

"You look as if——"

She stopped. He went quickly up to a long glass that stood in the angle of the room, looked into it for a moment, then turned round.

"My face gives me away. That's what you mean, isn't it, Vi? I'm off guard for once and didn't know it till you told me."

He stopped. She said nothing, and after a moment he went on:

"Gordon and I have been talking about the case. It had to be done some time or other. He told me exactly what took place at Lord Dartree's, gave me all the details he could remember. He'll be my principal witness at the trial. Seems damned odd, doesn't it, that Gordon should be dragged into my life like this?"

"Yes," she said.

She went to sit down close to the window. He followed her, and stood by the window, leaning with one arm on the sill.

"I thanked Gordon again for telling me, and giving me a chance to stamp out once for all the infernal rumours that have been going about since my trial. By the way, I ran across Wilfred Heathcote to-day."

"Where?"

"In the Bath Club. I went in there for a minute before coming to the station. He came up to me, but I turned my back on him. A lot of men saw it. We've had a letter from him denying flatly that he ever said what Aubrey Sabine attributed to him. But I know he did say it."

"How can you know?"

"He's got the face of a fellow who always believes the worst. He did say it and I cut him to-day. He'll have to

go into the witness-box and lie at the trial. Perhaps that will teach him to be more careful in the future as to what he says about other men. Do you remember that evening at the theatre?"

"At his theatre—yes."

"I knew that night I was going to have trouble with Heathcote. I felt it, and I was right. Well, Gordon's done me a good turn, and so I told him. I'll put my foot on this nest of wasps and make an end of as many as I can. But, my God, Vi . . . the stings!"

"Clive!"

She reached up and took hold of his hand, and he dropped down beside her.

"Just before you came up I was looking at the stars, and they made me want to do something."

He turned his head and looked out of the window.

"What was it?" he asked.

"Baby hasn't stayed to prevent me," she said, in answer.

He remembered at once. She knew that by the expression in his eyes.

"Little Clive!" he said. "He couldn't bear the burden you put upon him."

"I?" she said, suddenly on the defensive, as she had been once before when there was a question of the child. "I put a burden on my baby?"

"Didn't you give him my name?"

She put her arm round his neck.

"Did you love him at all?" she said.

"Yes. I didn't know whether I should. But when I saw him I did."

"I wasn't sure. There are many things connected with you that I'm not sure about. There's something very strange in you, Clive. Perhaps when we go away I shall understand more."

"Go away?"

"Didn't you understand what I meant when I said that Baby hadn't stayed to prevent me? But you did. I knew by your eyes."

"Do you mean Africa?" he said, in a low voice.

"Yes."

He put his arms round her in a strange, rough, almost brutal way.

"Do you mean the *endroit du bonheur*?"

"Yes."

"It's waiting for us. It's expecting us. I can see the oleanders by the stream. They were happy there—those two. Perhaps their happiness there has prepared the way for ours. You say it was the stars made you want to get away?"

"I think it was. I was looking at them and then thought of those places."

"The white house by the sea too—near Sidi Barka among the palms!"

"Yes."

His arms tightened about her.

"But then—do you mean that we shall be away for a long while?"

"Just for a holiday."

"Then it can't be the house by the sea. To go there would mean taking it . . . if it is empty, if it is free."

"I only thought of it because you told me about it."

"But you thought of it. You can't get away from that. When I passed it that day with Campbell I had an odd intimate feeling about it that I've never had about any other house that I've not been in. We didn't stop. We just ran by. But I *felt* that house. Perhaps that meant something, Vi."

"We could only go away for a little while," she murmured.

She tried to make her voice obstinate, but she remembered how she had longed to submit her will to Clive's in some

great way, some way that would make up to him for all that he had endured, was enduring still because of her will to which he had yielded in the past. And she felt weak in his arms. Should she give in? Baby was gone. She had only Clive left. He had suffered far more than most men are ever called upon to suffer. A recrudescence of misery lay just ahead of him.

"I think this last business is worrying my partners a great deal," she heard Clive's voice saying above her. "They're good fellows. They don't say much. But, Vi—Vi, are you listening?"

"Yes"

"But I don't think they'd be very sorry if my name went off the firm's letter-paper, off the plate on the door in Austin Friars. All this scandal, all this newspaper fuss, all this hum of ugly talk and wonder, doesn't do a business firm any good. I don't think they'd be very sorry to get rid of me."

"But they stuck to you before," she forced herself to say.

"Yes. But they didn't anticipate a revival of my scandal. They didn't expect to have the whole world talking about me again. You haven't been going about, Vi. You've been hidden away for a long time. You don't know what people are saying. You don't realise what a first-class sensation I am wherever I go now. Every day in the train up I have to run the gauntlet. Guildford hasn't had such a celebrity on its platform for many a year. That's all very well for Guildford. But a reputable, old-established stockbrokers' firm, with a great reputation among the county families, isn't keen on that sort of thing. They'll never tell me so. They're too good fellows. But I know in my bones that if I were to resign my partners would sing a *Te Deum* in the office. And small blame to them."

Vivian thought of her Mother's outburst when she had been told the news of Clive's coming action, and she believed Clive had spoken the truth. Decent, quiet English people

hate to be connected with any public scandal. She realised what Clive's partners were enduring. They had played the game well in the past when Clive had been indicted for murder. But no doubt they had had more than enough of the game. She understood suddenly, as she had not understood before, what Clive had to endure in the City. He had not hinted at it to her till now. She was cloistered in the peace of Monk's Hill. But he was, as he had just said, running the gauntlet five days a week in London. And even journeys to and fro must be terrible.

"I understand, dear," she said, still in the low voice.

"Think it over!" he whispered.

And she felt his hot lips on hers in a burning kiss. And the kiss asked her, entreated her, to do what she had once refused to do, the thing she had thought she could never do even for him.

And, as she felt it, felt the long, subtle and intense pressure, which was so much more intimate, so much more human than speech, she was no more sure of herself.

The death of little Clive—his removal by Destiny—seemed to have somehow loosened the foundations of her character, to have weakened her will, even to have confused her sense of right and wrong. She was terribly doubtful of herself. For in the great question of the child it seemed as if Judgment had been pronounced in favour of Clive and against her.

Clive lifted his lips from hers. She felt him turn and loosen his arms from about her. She looked up and saw a sharp, watchful expression in his face, as if he were listening intently.

"What is it?" she said.

"I heard a footstep outside in the garden."

As she looked at him she was surprised to see a sort of dusky pallor creeping over his face. He let her go entirely, got up, and stood in a strained attitude listening, with his face turned towards the open window.

"I wish you'd put out the light, Vi," he whispered.

Wondering, she got up and switched off the light. Then he went to the window cautiously and looked out. For an instant there was dead silence in the room. In it she distinctly heard the sound of a slow footstep outside on the terrace which ran along the front of the house.

"Who is it?" she asked, going towards the window. "Can you see?"

Clive turned round. He was smiling. She could see that in the dimness that was not dense darkness.

"Yes. It's only Gordon," he said.

He lifted his hand and pulled down the blind. Vivian felt her way back to the switch, and turned the light on again.

"Why were you smiling?" she asked.

"Was I?" he said.

They stood opposite to one another for a moment. Then she said:

"I wonder why Jim is out there."

"He doesn't feel sleepy yet, I suppose."

"Why did you smile?"

"I didn't know I was smiling. You must have imagined it. How could you see?"

"But you saw it was Jim."

"It was a man, and I know it was Gordon by the walk."

Suddenly an impulse took hold on Vivian and she yielded to it, as if it were irresistible.

"May I help Jim if I can?" she said.

"Gordon! Why?"

"Jim needs help. May I try to help him?"

"You don't need to ask me such a thing. I want you to be free in your love for me."

"Do you? Do you really?"

He looked down.

"Yes," he said, still looking down. "If I didn't I should be—not wicked; there might be something big in being that

—I should be the supreme cad, after all that's happened. Don't think it necessary to ask me such things. Gordon's your friend. Help him, if you can, and if he needs help. And now, Vi, you must go to bed. After your tennis you must be tired."

He went into his room, which opened out of hers. She waited for a moment uncertainly. Then she began to unfasten her dress.

Clive was free during the next two days, Saturday and Sunday, and on both afternoons they played tennis, Clive being the fourth. He was a fair average player, but not in the same class as his wife, Archie, and Jim. Vivian knew that he felt at a great disadvantage when playing with them, that he was making a sacrifice to please her. And she loved him for that. In four sets he was Jim's partner, and in each of those sets they were beaten by the brother and sister. After a final beating on the Sunday, Clive said, as they came off the court:

"I ruined the set for you, Gordon. Sorry! I've really no business to play with cracks like you. We ought to have got a good player down. But we aren't having people at present."

Jim said something pleasant, and added:

"I'm horribly out of form myself."

He put his racquet into its press and screwed the press down.

"Your wife nearly beat me in a single the first day I came."

"She's a wonderful player. Vi, we're praising you."

She felt effort in his manner and voice.

"You ought to go back into tournament play some time," Clive continued, in a firm, rather loud voice. "Why not enter for the hard-court tournament at King's this autumn? Some time in October, isn't it?"

Vivian looked at him in surprise. Had he forgotten their mourning?

"It's always in October," she said.

"Send in your name. By the way, it will begin about the time my action against Sabine comes on, I suppose. I shall win that. If you win at King's the same month, we shall deserve two laurel crowns."

His eyes went quickly from her to Jim Gordon, and back to her.

"I should like to see you and Gordon in the Mixed Doubles at King's," he said. "Think it over. Now I'm off to have a bath. It's awful for a duffer playing with cracks. I feel quite done out."

He went off to the house. Archie followed him in a moment, and Vivian was left with Jim.

"Did your husband mean that?" Jim said to her.

"I suppose so," she said, in a rather cold voice.

"Are you angry?"

"Angry! No, Jim. But I can't forget my little baby."

"I'm sure women often think us brutes," was his unexpected answer. "And I suppose we are brutes. But Baratrie didn't mean to hurt you."

"I know he didn't. Clive would never hurt me intentionally."

She waited a moment, as if turning something over in her mind, and then said:

"I know why he wants me to play at King's."

"Yes. He thinks it would cheer you up, give you something to get into form for, tune up your health and spirits, occupy your mind."

She sent him a look, not wholly unlike the look a woman sometimes gives to a child, half whimsically pitying, half tender, and not devoid of a soft superiority. But she said nothing, and Jim continued:

"I don't forget what you have been through, Vi. And —and there's more to come."

"Yes."

"But you played at King's once before under evil circumstances. Don't you remember?"

"Yes, I remember."

"People talked then. But you didn't care. If they talked again, would you care?"

She knew exactly what was in his mind, and what had been in Clive's mind when he had made the suggestion which for a moment had startled her. The whole situation was clear to her. Clive had been subtle. Jim was not being subtle. His eagerness leaped to the eye. It was pathetic. And how completely he had misunderstood Clive.

"You mean that you want me to enter for the tournament at King's three months after my baby's death?" she said, quietly:

Jim looked desperately uncomfortable.

"I don't say that," he said.

"But that is what you meant."

She looked away across the rolling country, with its fields, its woods, its nestling villages, to the distant shadowy blue hills in the distance, above which were massed heaps of burgeoning white clouds, woolly and close-packed, like the backs of newly washed sheep. And, as she did so, she remembered how she had looked at the stars on the previous night just before Clive came up. The stars and the clouds! And Jim?

"Jim," she said, "if, in spite of Baby's death, I did enter for the tournament at King's, and played with you, would you pull up?"

"But, Vi . . . how do you mean?" he stammered.

"Oh, Jim, don't let us pretend to one another. I know how it is with you. You aren't what you were. You are going to pieces. I hate that. Archie and I—we used to be very proud of you. Jim, if I were to enter for the tournament at King's I should do it for you. Probably Clive's

case will be coming on just about then. It may possibly be over. I don't know. If it isn't, it will be close upon us. I did play at King's on the day the verdict was to be given on Clive. Many people must have thought me heartless then. I wasn't heartless. I think I played for Clive that day as well as for myself. But this time, if I did it, I think it would be only for you. For I'm not the girl I was, Jim. I feel different now. Something's gone. I don't know quite what it is. But I can't do certain things as easily as I could once. I don't mean physical things, but things that need moral courage, moral determination. Sometimes I seem to want a long rest from moral effort. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"But I should like to do something for you, if it would be any use."

"It would be, Vi."

"Perhaps—but how much?"

Jim looked at her and looked down. His face quivered slightly near the jaw.

"I want you to take a real pull on yourself before it's too late—if it's ever too late to pull up. Let's say, before it's too difficult. Will you for me as well as for yourself?"

"If I thought you cared——"

"I do care tremendously, but only as a friend."

She paused, then added:

"The word 'only' is a beast of a word when it's a question of friendship. I mean a great deal by the word friend. But we must have it all clear between us. We shall never be anything but friends. Can I help as just a friend?"

"Yes."

"If I play at King's with you in the tournament this autumn, will you pull up absolutely? Will you—there are six weeks—go into strict training, and do yourself justice?"

"I'll try to. I won't do anything—not a thing—that would get in the way."

"Then I'll send in my name for the tournament and play in the Mixed Doubles with you. Let people say I am heartless. They don't know. But, Jim, that would be only the beginning. I may not be able to go on. But you must. I am trying to give you another start. That's all. And if I drop out again——"

"Drop out? What do you mean, Vi?"

"I can't tell you. But you mustn't depend on me for your salvation. Oh, Jim"—she laid a hand on his arm—"you and I—we don't believe in whining. But I've had a lot to go through. And there may be a lot more—I believe there is—ahead of me. Don't add to it your degradation. Don't prove to me that I've done you harm, wounded your life, driven you down. Don't do that."

"All right, Vi. I'll—I'll try not."

"Promise me King's shall be the beginning of better things for you—whatever the effort costs."

"All right. I will."

"Give me your hand on it."

Jim stretched out his hand and she grasped it.

That hand-clasp was seen by Clive from the window of his bedroom. He was not spying on his wife and Jim Gordon. He was incapable of that. But, having got out of his tennis flannels and put on a dressing-gown before going to the bathroom, he happened purely by chance to look out of the window just as those two hands met. Instantly he looked away. He went into the bathroom, turned on the cold-water tap and let the water run into the bath. And while it was running he sat on a narrow, hard chair and stared at it, and said to himself:

"She doesn't know it, but she ought to have married Gordon!"

When he got into the bath he lay back, and just before he let the water close over his head he had a queer thought:

"Suppose I didn't lift it up again?"

The will to suicide, the will to pass on, or go down into dust and nothingness! He had only to get hold of that will, and use it, and in less than five minutes Vivian would be free of him. Would she, in spite of her love for him, feel any, even the faintest, sense of relief if he went that way? She herself couldn't answer that question. Simply she didn't know. That was his honest belief. If he went that way, the place he had once spoken of to Vivian would be empty. And—Gordon was there.

He felt an exquisite stab of jealousy. He saw those two hands meeting, clasping. Some bond had been sealed out there. He hated himself for his jealousy, and held himself in contempt for it. But it was part of him, as much a part of him as his love, as much a part of him as the fear that no one knew of.

No, no; he wouldn't go just yet. Those clasping hands would keep him in life if nothing else did.

And he went under, and came up again with the cold water streaming over his head and face, and said to himself: "I'll live!"

XX

AMONG Vivian's comrades of the Courts there was general surprise when her name appeared in the list of players for the Autumn Covered Courts Tournament at King's Club, and perhaps those who knew her best were the most surprised. Rumours about the coming slander action were all over London. Not only the tennis world, but all the world of society and, beyond it, those less known, or unknown, circles which ring it round, were discussing the extraordinary case, unique, some said, in legal history, which promised to provide all newspaper readers with a really first-class sensation to liven up the depression of the autumn. Photographs of Vivian, of Clive, of Sir Aubrey

Sabine, of Wilfred Heathcote, Lady Dartree, Jim Gordon, Mrs. Lorrimer, and others who, it was thought, might appear in the trial, were being published in the numerous picture papers with appropriate comments. They stared down at travellers above the big bookstalls at the principal railway stations, and looked out upon pedestrians in the streets from many shop windows. And one well-known weekly, to be found in all clubs and most country houses, brought off a *coup* by using as a frontispiece a photograph, hitherto unknown to the public, of "The late Mrs. Sabine," in a coat and skirt, a smart little black hat and white gloves, with a pair of race-glasses slung over her shoulder, which had apparently been taken on the course at Newmarket. Further on in the same paper there was a whole-page picture of Clive, underneath which was printed in large letters: "Mr. Clive Baratrie, who will be the plaintiff in the forthcoming sensational slander case."

It was not, however, the slander case which made Jennie Littlethwaite, Mrs. Charlesworth, Lord and Lady Dartree, and many others, wonder about Vivian Denys choosing this moment for her reappearance before the tennis-loving public. They knew Vivian's courage. They remembered her defiance of opinion on the day when her lover's fate was hanging in the balance. What she had done she might well do again, when once more Clive Baratrie's name was being buffeted about on the eager lips of the crowd. But her child had only been put under the earth in July, and here she was coming out again in a contest for championships in October. The fact seemed to point to a certain hardness of nature. Hadn't she loved her child? Or was she so keen on her game, so eager to assert herself in public before the winter put a stop to the English tournaments, that she simply couldn't hold in till the usual period of conventional mourning was at an end? Or was she, perhaps, trying to drown an intense grief in activity? After all, that was rather the

modern way. People went about very soon in these days after the deaths of those who were supposed to be dear to them. Conventions had gone by the board since the war. Women had begun to realise that it was no good sitting at home and giving way to grief in a world which had become persistently tragic. But somehow one had not looked for that type of modernity in Vivian Denys. Though athletic and full of will, she had never struck people as hard. Jennie Littlethwaite felt rather sorry about it. Mrs. Charlesworth, who said very little—she was a rare woman of few words, and at no time a gossip—could not quite make it out. Mrs. Lorrimer, who was up to the neck in the sensation of the slander case, and had ordered a really wonderful gown for her appearance in the trial, thought it was almost indecent of Vivian Denys to show up in a tournament, what with a baby in the grave and a husband in the High Court almost simultaneously, as you might say. And even some of the men, Lord Dartree, Bob Murray, and old Madding among them, hadn't quite "thought it" of Vivian Denys.

But anyhow it was certain to be a godsend to the authorities of King's Club. Not even the Lenglen would be a greater "draw" than Vivian Denys at such a moment as this, when her name was in every one's mouth in connection with her husband's attack on that young fool, Sir Aubrey Sabine. The man at the King's Club turnstile would certainly take more money than had ever been paid there before during the Hard Court Championships. Mrs. Lorrimer said that Vivian ought to demand a percentage, which would come in handy for the payment of law expenses in case Aubrey Sabine wasn't condemned in costs.

Vivian had entered, of course, for the Mixed Doubles. She was only playing for Jim. He knew that. And Archie knew it, though he had not been told it. Clive did not actually know it, but he was practically sure of it. Had not he "put Vivian up to" going in for the tournament?

Why had he done that? Now he scarcely knew. He had acted on one of those strange impulses of the suffering man who reaches out in his misery after more suffering. But when he found that in addition to entering for the Mixed Doubles Vivian had entered for the Ladies' Doubles he began to wonder whether he was wrong in supposing that she was sacrificing herself for an old friend's sake. He did not ask to be enlightened, and Vivian gave him no explanation.

The fact was that she had deliberately chosen not to make herself conspicuous with Jim on account of Clive. And if she had only entered for the Mixed Doubles, people might have talked even more than they were talking now. During the weeks that elapsed between Jim's visit to Monk's Hill and the opening of the tournament she went into training and practised assiduously, getting professionals to play with her and Archie. Towards the end of September Clive and she returned to London. Then she and Jim began practising together, with first-class players as their opponents. And in those hard games the old Jim began to come back. Day by day she saw the subtle improvement, the hard-bitten, resolute athlete rising slowly as it were towards the surface out of the gulf in which he had been sinking. Her hand was helping him up. Well, the knowledge of that helped her too, helped her to dominate sorrow, helped her to control anxiety, helped her to face the wonder of those who didn't understand why she was doing a thing that seemed to them both heartless and sensational. And the game helped her. For it forced her to live much in the body and to keep the mind in subjection. During this period Vivian lived tremendously, at high tension. And always the tension was increasing, as the days went away swiftly, as if in a hurry to be numbered with the past, and the tournament and the trial drew nearer. And always in the tension she had a strange feeling that she was going towards a vital change,

that this steady crescendo of which she was perpetually conscious would end not in a fury of sound but in a great silence.

One day Clive told her that the hearing of his action was fixed for a date at the beginning of November.

"So you can play through the tournament in peace," he added. "The trial won't come on till the tournament is over. I'm glad of that. I shall come to see you play, at any rate on Saturday. And I may get away once or twice in the week."

"Can you take any interest in such a thing in the midst of all you are going through?" she asked him, earnestly.

"Yes. You and I—we're in the arena again just now. We mustn't show the white feather. My Mother is coming to see you play too."

"Mum! But she doesn't care about lawn-tennis."

"Not very much. But she cares about you, and she cares about pluck."

She felt just then, as he said the last word, the strain of the effort he was making. Was it a final effort? Would it be followed by a profound yielding to needs in his nature which had nothing to do with pluck? And she too? She had told Jim that she was no longer the girl she had been; she had told him that she found it more difficult now to do things requiring of her moral courage, a moral effort, than formerly she had found it. And that was terribly true. The child had perhaps taken something from her away with him. But this last effort she would make.

And then?

She resolved that she would not look forward beyond the tournament, beyond the trial. She would get through them gallantly, and leave the further future on the knees of the gods.

The man at the turnstile of King's Club, a quiet person, well acquainted with all the British champions of the day,

and one who spoke with respectful familiarity of the Renshaws and Dohertys, was wellnigh taken aback by the torrent of eager people who thronged to the autumn tournament.

"Anyone'd think Suzannah was playing against that there Mrs. Mollar," he remarked to a pal.

"It's Miss Denys—that's to say, Mrs. Baratrie—as 'as done it," said the pal. "The public do love 'er and no mistake! Besides, she's just lost 'er baby, and 'er 'usband's been tried for murder, and now 'e's goin' for a Baronet as says 'e *is* a murderer whether or no. 'The People' 'ad three columns about it only last Sunday. No wonder the public takes an interest!"

"Good for us, anyhow," said the man at the turnstile. "Here's two more motors!"

Inside the Club building the galleries were crammed, and in the space behind the larger gallery, at the end of Court Number One, rows of people were standing packed tightly together. It was a Saturday, and the Final of the Mixed Doubles was set down for the afternoon. Vivian and Jim had come through to the Final, and would have to play it out against Mrs. Charlesworth and Bob Murray, who was great on wood, though he had been beaten two years before by the Indian, Pandit, in the Singles at King's. But Bob was a far better player in Mixed Doubles than in Singles.

Every one was talking about the "come back" of Jim Gordon, who was now almost up to his best game. He had gone down in the Singles, but old players said that he hadn't put forth all his strength in them. He was reserving himself for the great match with his old partner, Vivian Denys, now Mrs. Baratrie. All through the Mixed Doubles he had been playing finely, and so had Mrs. Baratrie. An extraordinary girl to be able to face it out as she had been doing! But when a woman is put to it, by Jove she can give any man points and a beating!

Clive and his Mother were sitting amongst the crowd in

the members' gallery. Their appearance there had been the sensation of the day. Mrs. Lorrimer, who was with Lord and Lady Dartree not far from them, had dropped her eyeglasses as they came in with the hot whisper:

"The murderer man and his mother!"

"*Anne!*" murmured Lady Dartree in reply. "Will nothing ever teach you discretion?"

"Well, but it is! And she's got peacocks' feathers in her hat."

"Proves she ain't superstitious anyhow," muttered Lord Dartree. "Here they come!"

Jack Carrington, a famous umpire, climbed into his high seat, a scoring book and pencil in his hand. The linesmen took their places. The ball-boys stood ready, looking alert and full of suppressed larkiness. Mr. Harry Poel, the tall secretary of King's, pushed his way into the gallery and stared inquiringly around.

"Not an inch more room, Poel!" old Madding cried out to him. "Are there any more trying to get in?"

"Heavens—yes! And—and"—he whispered two famous names, of a Royal Prince and an elderly Statesman—"have just driven up. I must put them downstairs behind the linesmen. Luckily there's nothing going on in Number Two. One minute! I don't want them to start till the Prince is in!"

He slipped away. Vivian and Mrs. Charlesworth, in their white dresses and coloured bandeaux, were just walking on to the Court, followed by Bob Murray and Gordon. A murmur went through the throng upstairs, and many people stood up in their places and craned forward to stare at the white figures moving over the pale-green floor with its strongly marked lines. Clive put a hand quickly up to his face, then down to his collar. His Mother glanced at him with the intense observation, the leaping look, which was characteristic of her. Vivian and Mrs. Charlesworth now stood by the net talking together, each with her tennis-mask on. Gordon

was speaking to the umpire. Bob Murray, pale, slim and delicate-looking, with an anxious expression and intellectual dark eyes, was examining his racquet.

"Why don't they begin to knock up?" said someone.

"I believe they're waiting for——"

But the answer was left unfinished, for at this moment the linesmen got up quickly from their chairs, and those in the front row of the gallery rose to their feet also.

"What is it?" said Mrs. Lorrimer, hastily putting on her eyeglasses.

"The Prince!" said Lord Dartree, getting up, as a slim, fair boy in a tweed suit, holding a bowler hat and a stick in one hand, with a pair of gloves, walked rather quickly and energetically to the far side of the Court, followed by a tall, thin, elderly man wearing a double eyeglass, and accompanied by Mr. Poel and two other men belonging to King's, one of them Mandeville, the celebrated referee. After a moment's pause, during which some basket chairs were hurriedly brought in, the Prince sat down, with the elderly Statesman, who was a lawn-tennis enthusiast, on his right hand, and Mandeville and the other King's man on his left. Mr. Poel slipped away, and after the usual preliminaries the four players took their places and the match began.

As it was a Mixed Doubles, victory would go to the side which won two sets out of three, and, when the match started, there seemed no reason to suppose that it would be a very prolonged affair, although the four players were all high-class, and considered by connoisseurs—now that Gordon seemed definitely to have regained his form—to be very evenly matched. But all the calculations of the connoisseurs—even including old Madding, who was supposed never to go wrong about anything connected with lawn-tennis—were set at naught in the extraordinary contest which took place. As someone—probably either Lord Dartree, or his almost inseparable tennis chum, Brett Stanley—said, when it was all over except

the shouting: "Seemed as if, having got such a gallery, and the Prince there into the bargain, they all made up their minds to show us what a Mixed Doubles can be on the grand lines!"

The first set showed some very good tennis, but nothing sensational. Mrs. Charlesworth was the best of the four, playing with an almost inhuman steadiness, punishing every loose ball that came her way, cool, determined, inexorable, keen-eyed and swift at the net, or lobbing from behind the base line with uncanny precision. There was something machine-like about her play. Her face was set, as Anne Lorrimer audibly remarked, "like one of those stone walls in Ireland that need an Irish horse to negotiate them." Bob Murray was up and down. He always took time to settle to his best game. His style was perfect, but he was often inaccurate, and showed signs of nervousness. On the other side Vivian and Jim were uneven, sometimes playing beautifully, sometimes letting one another down rather badly.

"They're too anxious," was the verdict of old Madding, heard distinctly by Clive and many other people—for old Madding had a penetrating voice in his skinny throat—"they're altogether too keen to run away with it. Mrs. Charlesworth's showing 'em how tennis should be played. Nobody like the old stagers, whatever they may say. Just look at the way she put that ball past Gordon. Don't tell me," etc.

Clive clenched his hands as he heard the old man's thin, wire-like voice. Too anxious! Yes, it was true. Vivian was too anxious to play well for Jim—Jim was too keen to play well for her. Each was thinking too much of the other. And he, Clive, saw two hands stretching out and clasping and gripping, and felt a mental pain, spear-like, go through him, cutting through a nature that quivered. And a sudden, fierce resolution at that moment was born in him, "When this is all over I'll take her away."

The first set went to Mrs. Charlesworth and Bob Murray at six to three.

When it was over the Prince got up, went to the side line, shook hands with the players and said a few words to them. On his arrival, perhaps fearing to delay matters, he had not spoken to them. Meanwhile the crowd stared at Clive and his Mother, craned their necks to see whether the Prince was taking much notice of Vivian, and exchanged comments on the play.

The general opinion, led by old Madding, who was very emphatic, was that the match would go easily to Mrs. Charlesworth and Murray. Archie, standing at the back, tingled with anxiety and resentment as he looked and listened. The worst of it was that he secretly agreed with the general opinion. Vivian was not playing as she had played at King's on the day of the verdict. Then she had seemed inspired. It was Jim who had let her down. But now—there was something wrong. Jim and she were not combining too well. There was a screw loose somewhere. They didn't seem at home with each other. He gave up the match for lost.

But five minutes later he was full of excitement and hope. For a brusque change had come over the game. Something had happened in Vivian, one of those curious transformations which make human beings often wonder at themselves, at the powers they carry within them, the sleeping powers that awake and manifest themselves sometimes unexpectedly, as if whipped into strong activity by some unseen force.

Suddenly she began to play like a different woman, a woman who meant to win, who believed intensely that she had the capacity to win. The change in her almost immediately transformed the game from a display of merely good tennis into a battle royal. Jim Gordon woke up, startled by his partner's determination, keyed up by the fierceness of her attack, which subtly called to him to be as pugnacious as she was. He seconded her with all his might. Both played their most brilliant aggressive game, the game of hardy, almost intemperate youth, throwing away, as if with contempt,

all defensive tactics, going all out for the decisive, winning stroke.

Before Mrs. Charlesworth and Murray had had time to realise thoroughly what was happening, they had lost four games to love, and old Madding was exclaiming that by Jove they were going to be "smothered."

But Mrs. Charlesworth was an "old stager," and had a supreme knowledge of the game into the bargain. She steadied down after the first surprise. And Bob Murray as well as a perfect style had a gallant heart for a contest. They began to find their feet. They were not going to allow themselves to be volleyed out of the Court before the biggest crowd that had ever watched a Final at King's. And they put their backs into it. They won a game and drew a burst of encouraging applause.

"They're coming up!" cried old Madding. "Trust Mrs. Charlesworth!"

The crowd laughed sympathetically. Excitement took hold of it. This was going to be worth seeing. A burst of sensational volleying by Vivian and Jim brought them another game. Five to two.

"Never saw anything like it!" said Lord Dartree. "Impossible to put a ball past 'em!"

"You wait a bit!" murmured Brett Stanley behind him. "Look at Mrs. Charlesworth's face. What about bulldogs, eh?"

"Bob Murray's got the most perfect style of the lot," said Lady Dartree. "But Jim Gordon's found his Davis Cup game at last. Vivian inspires him. She's really the Svengali to his Trilby, sexes reversed."

"Just look at the murderer man!" whispered the incorrigible Mrs. Lorrimer. "He's mad with excitement, but he doesn't half like it. I'm perfectly certain——"

Another burst of applause drowned her voice. A marvellous drop-shot by Mrs. Charlesworth had won another game for her side. Five to three.

Archie stuck his hands deep in his pockets.

"Go it, old Jim! Go it, Vi! Give it 'em!" he muttered, not knowing he was moving his lips. "Beat 'em out of the Court! Send 'em to Kingdom-come!"

Five to four.

"What did I say? Trust Mrs. Charlesworth!"—from old Madding.

Five all!

"This is going to be *some* game!" said a man's voice behind Clive. "I believe they're only beginning."

Clive looked round sharply, met some curious eyes, and turned again towards the Court.

"Mrs. Charlesworth and Bob'll run right out now," came old Madding's thin, penetrating voice. "See if they don't!"

But they didn't. The man just behind Clive was right. The match was only beginning. At five all, the four players settled down to it with an obstinate resolution which, to one spectator, seemed to hold something infernal. Given four players of fairly even skill, victory is apt to go to the side with the strongest will to victory. Now Mrs. Charlesworth's will to victory was notorious. She had proved it in a hundred great contests, and time had not weakened it. Bob Murray, once he was thoroughly roused, and had conquered his nerves, was a devil of fire and swiftness. He had every stroke in the game, and used them all with the grace and ease which made him a model for style. He was thoroughly roused now. All his brain was at work. His thin body seemed of whipcord and quicksilver. The spectators were gone from him. He was living purely for the game. And opposite to these two—bulldog and greyhound, Brett Stanley called them, meaning no impoliteness to Mrs. Charlesworth, whom he admired without reserve—were set the two younger wills of Jim Gordon and Vivian, tuned up to concert pitch, or above it, by a secret understanding of which the crowd knew nothing.

When they had lost the first set Vivian had been suddenly filled with the conviction that Jim's fate was hanging in the balance. If his long run of ill fortune turned now, if he came out a victor, if his "come back" proved so definite, in the sight of all the fine players sprinkled through the crowd up there in the galleries, that all sporting London would be talking of it on the morrow, she believed—she even felt she knew—that Jim would be set firmly on his feet again, that he would not go back. He would be reinstated, not only in the eyes of his pals, rivals and opponents, friends and comrades too, but in his own estimation. And she would have done something worth while. But if they went down he would think it was his fault, that even for her, even with her, he couldn't get back to what he had been. She felt she knew Jim just then through and through, had an insight at that moment such as she had never had before, might never have again. She knew what people had been saying, knew that friends whom she valued were wondering at her action in coming back before the public just after her bereavement, and in the midst of the squalid hubbub caused by the sensational case which was close at hand. The greater part of this crowd had been brought there because of her. That day she was a sensational figure, and not simply because she was a champion. She hated that. She hated the knowledge that many who really cared about her were thinking her strange and heartless. She suffered under the distant eyes of the crowd.

Well, she must see to it that her suffering was worth while. And if they lost, she and Jim, would it have been worth while? They must not lose. The first set meant nothing. She was going to set a pace that must bring them through to victory.

Such was Vivian's will now, with Jim's added to it. For he had caught the strong flame of her decision and felt it blazing in him. And the conflict of the two sets of wills

produced the "some game" which tennis players were to talk of for many a day.

The set went to sixteen games all, and then Vivian and Jim got home somehow,—“with scarcely a rag to their names, though,” in the cryptic gospel according to old Madding,—amid a tumult of applause such as had seldom been heard above the green floor at King’s.

The Prince drew out his watch and whispered something to the elderly Statesman, who was applauding with hands and stick like a schoolboy.

The Statesman bent forward, looked surprised, pained, drew out his watch, raised his eyebrows, pursed his lips, whispered something in reply.

Evidently the Prince had an engagement, and evidently the Statesman wished that engagement at the Devil, as he was technically in attendance for the afternoon.

Mrs. Charlesworth was sipping something from a glass which she had left under the umpire’s high chair while she was playing. Bob Murray was wiping his neck with a towel. Vivian and Jim were standing together by the net-pole. After a moment’s hesitation the Prince, who had been speaking to Mandeville, got up and went over to them. From the gallery he was seen talking to them, taking out his watch, smiling, then laughing. He tapped the watch with his forefinger, evidently drawing their attention to the time.

“He’s telling them to be quick, because he ought to go,” said Mrs. Lorrimer. “Vi Denys—Baratrye, I mean—is shaking her head. There’s Mrs. Charlesworth actually laughing. But Jim Gordon looks like cast iron. I wonder if—no, the Prince is sitting down again.”

“I should think so!” said Lord Dartree. “I wouldn’t say much for anyone—even for a Royal Highness—who could go without seeing the end of this match. They’re changing over. Now for the finale!”

“I’ll bet you five sovereigns to two Mrs. Baratrye and

Gordon pull it off," said little King, the South African player, to old Madding.

"Won't take you! Won't take you! Never bet except on a certainty," said old Madding. "I stick to it that there's no living Englishwoman who can play like Mrs. Charlesworth. But Mrs. Baratrie's a youngster, and Gordon's a good eight years younger than Bob Murray."

"And youth does tell, eh?" said little King, not without good-humoured malice.

"Court-craft tells more in the long run, my boy, and I'd have you know that——"

But at this moment Jim Gordon served the first ball in the final set.

In the beginning a certain reaction was noticeable in the players. The last set had been really tremendous, and had left its mark on all of them except Vivian. Bob Murray began like a man a little tired, who was obviously feeling the strain of an arduous match. Mrs. Charlesworth, though steady—when was she not steady?—was a trifle less quick than she had been, less nippy at the net, less forceful in her drives to the corners and down the lines. She kept also just at first not quite such a perfect length as in the two previous sets. Jim Gordon, too, showed a marked diminution in force and swiftness.

He was feeling his lack of training. He had kept his word to Vivian. Since that promise made in the garden of Monk's Hill he had trained with all his might. He had not touched alcohol. He had dropped smoking even. He had lived to get into form. But he had only had a few weeks in which to repair the ravages of months of folly and secret dissipation. And now suddenly he felt as if his body were "going back on" him. The last set had tried him. He hadn't played up like this, hadn't been able to, for over a year. And now, just in the crisis which would decide which pair would hold the title of Mixed Doubles Champions of London on covered

courts during the coming year, he felt that probably he wouldn't be able to stick it out after all. His service was weak in the first game. The sting had gone out of it. He tried hard but he didn't seem to have the force for a cannon-ball service. Luckily the other side was also feeling the strain, and didn't punish his weak service as they ought to have done. But soon Mrs. Charlesworth began to recover. She never "let down" for long in any important match. And Bob Murray, who, though he looked so delicate, had an immense amount of nervous strength and endurance, settled down to his easy and brilliant game. And Vivian—

But she had not turned a hair. Of the four she was the only one who showed in the opening games of the final set the resolution and force which had marked all the play in the set just decided. And now, as she picked up three balls for her service—two games had gone to Mrs. Charlesworth and Murray rather easily—she whispered to Jim:

"Play up!"

Nobody heard that whisper but Jim. There was an intensity, even a fierceness, in it which startled him. It was as if the lash of a whip had been laid across him by Vivian. And the lash had been meant to hurt. The intention had been at all costs to rouse him thoroughly, to force him into the spurt that would carry them past the winning-post as victors. A dark flush went over his face as he took his place at the net.

Could he play up? Had he still got it in him to come up to the scratch even for her sake? Vaguely he saw the figures of the Prince and those sitting with him at the side of the Court; vaguely he was aware of the line of people leaning over the bar of the long, narrow gallery on his left. A very tall old lady protruded beyond the rest, so eager that it seemed as if she must tumble over into the blank. Opposite was the crowd in the members' gallery, a dark mass of intent and excited spectators. The linesmen, the ball-boys were there.

He was aware of them all vaguely, saw the smart, thin umpire looking down, heard his loud, decisive voice calling the score. And all the time he was searching in the mystery of himself, searching for the will that had the power to drive his body to the goal if only he could find it. He must find it—for Vivian. He would find it.

But he lost the next game for her. She served splendidly, giving him openings, and he threw them all away at the net. He heard a long murmur from the galleries. The disappointment up there was severe after the excitement of the set just over. The murmur made him look up. This was absolutely against his rule, often repeated to Archie, "never pay any attention to what the gallery is thinking, but keep all your mind on the game." But somehow he couldn't help doing it. He looked up and, in the midst of the throng, he saw Clive's eyes fixed upon him.

"Play, up!"

That settled it. In that moment, in the midst of the mystery he found the will to victory, the will that governed in the body he had treated so badly because he had suffered in the soul. He joined that will to Vivian's for him. They seemed for the time fused together, making a perfect harmony. And they prevailed. Vivian and he won a sensational set, the match and the Mixed Doubles Championship, going out at twelve games to ten.

"I congratulate you, Jim. It's a real come back."

Mrs. Charlesworth's rather deep and lingering voice sounded in his ears. Then the Prince, who had stayed, defying his watch, said some cheery words. People crowded round. Just before he escaped to the dressing-rooms Vivian said to him:

"Thank you, old Jim."

And that "put the lid on." For the first time since he had played in Championships Jim felt like breaking down. He just looked at her, said nothing, and got away.

That evening Clive told Vivian that he had decided to resign his partnership in Maynard, Harringay, Baratrie and Co. All the sensation about his name, raked up by the coming slander action, was doing the firm too much harm, he said. Of course his partners knew he was going to win. There was absolutely no doubt about that. It would be impossible to lose such an action. But their clients were mostly members of old county families, who didn't care for scandals and sensations. The firm had lost several good clients lately, and certainly not for business reasons. He felt it his duty to his partners to drop his connection with the firm.

Vivian did nothing to dissuade him.

She was very tired that night. Just then there was no more power for effort in her. She wanted to rest.

And she saw by the look in Clive's eyes that he had absolutely made up his mind.

BOOK III
THE HOUSE BY THE SEA

I

ON a day in February in the following year, Mimi, the well-known donkey of Hammam Chedakra, was walking along the road that leads from the Hôtel de la Cascade to the station, drawing a luggage-cart much larger than herself. For Mimi was a very small donkey, really a midget of a donkey, and the average dressing-case of a travelling American was nearly as big as she was.

Mimi walked very slowly, for she was extremely old. According to Rabah ben Mohamed, *elle avait au moins quarante ans*. Rabah was her driver, and was now strolling along beside her with a flower in his mouth, occasionally cracking a small whip close to Mimi's right ear, which took no sort of notice of the outrage, but remained peacefully pointed in the direction from which the morning train from Robertville would shortly puff into view.

The morning was fresh and sunny. There was plenty of bright blue sky to be seen. But above Djebel-Debar, and Djebel-Taza to the North-West, great banks of clouds were assembled, fleecy and white at their edges, but bellying with darkness towards their centres. On the vast slopes of the hills which closed in the view towards Sidi Barka, nearly ninety kilometres away, many great shadows lay like dusky thrown-down mantles. And on the flanks of the nearer hills, beyond the Chedakra, the olive groves looked almost

wintry pale in their silvery whiteness, blown backward by a light wind sweeping over the bed of the Bou-Hamdam, the Grand Cascade, and the orange groves of Monsieur Anatole Rivier, towards the distant lands of the South. A touch of sea in that wind, but no real coldness for all that. Otherwise Rabah ben Mohamed would have covered up the mouth that carelessly held the flower, and Mimi would probably have laid back her ears and shown signs of discouragement. For she was thoroughly African in temperament and strongly objected to cold.

They crossed the iron bridge with its stone piers above the smoking stream, where Arabs were washing sacks below the dam and massaging them with persistently stamping bare brown feet, made their way slowly up the serpentine road between the olive trees, and came to the farm of Monsieur Anatole. A fine-looking farm this, strongly built, covering a great deal of ground, with the living-house, one-storeyed and white with yellow and grey shutters, barred windows, and a huge yellow door set in an arch of stone, facing the olive grove and the Grand Cascade, long outbuildings stretching out to left and right of it, and an immense closed-in courtyard behind, bounded by red-tiled stables, cow-houses, a forge, a carpenter's shop, dairies, granaries, and a gigantic ground-floor cellar filled with rows upon rows of vats. Before the tall yellow door Arabs were lounging. From within came the sound of men at work in the forge, mingling with the persistent and all-pervading murmur of the waters that flow everywhere in Hammam Chedakra, the voices of the Djenoun, or subterranean demons, linked with the voices of Bou Hamdam, of Bou-Said, El-Aioun, Ben-Ali and Oued-Zidda. And as Mimi and Rabah mounted the little hill, by the bank of periwinkles which suggested a sort of front garden to the farm-house, and came into the straight flat road which led to the station, behind them a grated window was lit up by the leaping flames from the forge, and a loud

French voice was audible singing a lilting song of Provence. For the man who owned the land hereabouts, and the ample and handsome farm, was from Avignon, and loved to have Avignon men about him in this remote land chiefly peopled by Arabs.

But Rabah ben Mohamed cracked his whip, and Mimi slightly accelerated her delicate pace, and the song and the beat of the forge died away. And the silence of the great pastoral upland, guarded on all sides by a calmness of hills, set well away, and leaving ample room for this African Arcady to spread its luxuriance among the tinkling magic of its waters, fell around the Arab and his charge. Even the voices of the streams and the runlets were inaudible here. Nothing was to be heard but the tap-tap of Mimi's tiny hooves on the empty road, and the faint creak of the luggage-cart wheels.

The small station, cream-coloured, with a red-tiled roof, and *H. Chedakra* painted upon it, stood solitary in the midst of a group of eucalyptus trees, planted to keep away fever, and when Mimi and Rabah entered the small space in front of it not a human creature, not a four-footed beast, was in sight. But soon after the donkey had paused, and apparently fallen asleep, near the little gate which gave access to the platform, there came a rolling of wheels, a beating of hooves upon the road, and an omnibus drawn by three horses abreast, two greys and a brown, and driven by a big Arab in European clothes and a chechia, threw Mimi and the luggage-cart completely into the shade.

The French station-master, short, authoritative, with enormous dark moustaches, which stood far out on either side of his face beyond his large cheeks, stepped out upon the platform, and stared with a masterful eye at three dirty Arabs who were hanging vaguely about. His personnel was not very large or very smart, but he meant to keep it in strict control. A whistle sounded in the distance. A column

of dirty smoke rose up, and the train from Robertville came into sight and drew up alongside the platform. From the third class several Arabs got down carrying mysterious bundles. But the porters gathered instinctively before a first-class carriage, from the window of which almost immediately a man's hand and arm stretched down to pull up the movable bar that helped to fasten the door. Below the Arab porters began to scuffle, each one trying to beat the two others off that he might secure the prospective prize. And Vivian and Clive stepped down from the train into a miniature turmoil. But in a moment the luggage ticket had been given to the now smiling station-master, the hand baggage had been bestowed in the hotel omnibus, and Clive was telling the Arab coachman that he and Madame would walk to the hotel.

When they were out of the space that served as a station yard, and on the pale yellow road, Vivian stood still for a moment and looked all round her. She and Clive had arrived at Robertville from Marseille the evening before. She knew nothing yet of North Africa. The few steps she had just taken from the station had seemed to her like steps taken from an old life into a new one. And now she was looking on the new world Clive had brought her to after much tribulation.

Very calm and empty it looked, spacious and rich, not at all sad yet, to her eyes, strangely remote. She felt at once: "I should never meet anyone I know on this road. I should never see anything familiar from the tops of those hills." A little way off two rather weedy camels were slowly advancing on the highway loaded with bulging black sacks. A very old Arab in a green tunic with brass buttons, a turban and burnous, and wearing dark-coloured spectacles, went by talking loudly to an extremely dirty friend. A harsh cry came from the throat of some hidden stranger beyond a plot of unfenced land green with young corn. It was repeated

three times, a very un-English cry. And to Vivian it emphasised the soft, not at all harsh, strangeness of this pastoral land, with its olive groves in the distance climbing up the slopes, its green bare flats, its long yellow road leading to emptiness, its calm enclosing hills with their vast and shadowy flanks.

The weedy camels lay down in the highway at a little distance. Their mysterious black sacks were for the station. The roll of the omnibus wheels sounded among the eucalyptus trees. Vivian and Clive walked slowly on. They were passed immediately by the omnibus, which quickly disappeared, dipping down by the farm into the depression at the foot of the Grand Cascade. There was nobody inside. Their luggage was on the top. Mimi and her waggon had evidently gone to the station in vain, on the chance of many arrivals and an overflowing amount of trunks. Clive had glanced quickly into the omnibus as it went by, and now he said:

"Not many people here, I should think!"

"I hope not," Vivian answered, in a low voice.

The faint tap of Mimi's hooves came to them from behind.

"Shall we let them pass?" said Clive.

"Yes."

They stood still again, and Mimi went slowly by with Rabah, who remarked, "Bon soir."

"Bon soir," answered Vivian, though it was morning.

Rabah smiled and pointed at Mimi with his whip.

"Elle est très vieille—elle a au moins quarante ans!"

Vivian smiled and nodded.

"Bon soir!" repeated Rabah, and continued on his way.

A brisk breeze stirred the short blades of corn. In the distance the olive trees looked strangely pale. The clouds above Djebel-Debar were spreading slowly, covering each moment a little more of the blue. Now Mimi and Rabah had vanished, and in front of Clive and Vivian there was no one

on the road. And as Clive looked at Vivian, and she looked back at him, the same thought was in both their minds:

“We are alone in Africa.”

They came to the brow of the little hill, and saw the Arabs lounging before the high yellow door of the farmhouse, the tangle of trees below, the sharply curving road, the blown smoke from the boiling waters of the Grand Cascade, whose white, cream-coloured and yellow-brown tresses showed through the branches of the trees. And now their ears were full of the sound of waters, of the hot and shining waters falling over the steep rocks of the cascade, of the dwarf waterfalls, bright as polished silver, falling over the dam beyond the silent, dull-green pool, of Bou Hamdam in its deep ravine smothered in trees and shrubs, olive trees, palms, terebinths, the lebbek, the ilex, and the wild oleander, and of the runlets which slipped over white, brown and cream-coloured floors, between edges of concrete, towards the white bath-house of the Arabs.

They descended and crossed the bridge, and always as they went on Vivian felt farther and farther away from her old life. She saw now on her right the flat plateau above the Grand Cascade veiled in driving smoke. In front new country came into view. There was a little lonely house on the roadside not far off.

“That is the post-office,” said Clive. “I remember it, when I passed here with Campbell long ago.”

Beyond was a far-off mountain, purple and green and grey, not steep, not forbidding, with immense enfolding slopes over which the shadows of clouds were drifting.

“What endless walks on those slopes!” Vivian thought. “What endless walks everywhere!”

Clive turned to the right. The plateau, from which the white smoke was for ever rising and trailing away in the breeze, was bounded by a grove of old olive trees growing on a rising green slope, and at the top of this slope in cheer-

ful isolation stood the Hôtel de la Cascade. As they walked into the large open space round which it was built a great sturdy palm spread its feathery crown above them, and Vivian stopped by its corrugated trunk for a moment.

"A tennis court!" she said.

And she looked at Clive in surprise. Somehow she had not expected to see a tennis court there. Near it stood palms and orange trees covered with red gold fruit. On its further side was a group of orange and lemon trees, with fragments of Roman remains and a pool of water among them. A runlet of water, like a riband, marked off this species of garden from the road in front of the largest wing of the hotel, which had an upper storey with bedrooms opening on to a large corridor shut in with glass. Below a second row of bedrooms opened on to a paved arcade. Under the trees by the water were Beehive and long chairs, little green chairs, and tables sheltered by striped red and white umbrellas. Beyond at right angles stretched a raised terrace backed by a long, low building in which were the public rooms of the hotel, with a few more bedrooms. Opposite, beyond the little orange and lemon grove, was a third building with a small raised garden and arcade, containing rooms generally occupied by Jews and well-to-do Arabs when there were any taking the baths. These rooms were now empty. And no one moved in the garden under the pepper trees. To the left, making the square of buildings complete, was a small dwelling-house with a pillared front and a deeply recessed entrance door with shuttered windows on either side.

The omnibus was drawn up at the foot of the terrace. The luggage had already been unloaded, and now the sturdy, smiling landlord and his wife, both from Provence but settled in Hammam Chedakra for over twenty years, came forward to greet their new guests.

"I wrote for rooms," said Clive, speaking French.

"What name, Monsieur?"

"Claude Ormeley."

"Yes, Monsieur. They are ready. Upstairs rooms opening out to the corridor. My wife will show you. There are no letters for you."

"Thank you. We weren't expecting any. Have you many people here?"

"About twelve, Monsieur. The season is not very good. We expect to have more next month."

"This way, Madame, if you please," said his wife.

And she led the way upstairs, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Ormeley.

That night, before going to bed, Vivian went out alone, leaving Clive in their little improvised sitting-room reading before a log fire. For it was still cool, almost cold, after nightfall in Hammam Chedakra. As she was going to put on a fur coat he looked up quickly and said:

"Are you tired? Are you going to bed?"

"No. I'm going out for a little while. Stay there by the fire. I won't be long."

"Shan't I come with you?"

She leaned down and put a hand on his forehead.

"You're so cosy here. I want to realise things."

"And you can only do that alone?"

There was something anxious in the sound of his voice.

"Absolutely to grasp something don't you think one sometimes needs complete isolation, even if only for a few minutes?"

"Ah! You mean this place? Hammam Chedakra?"

"I won't be very long."

She bent down and kissed him. As she did so he held her for a moment. She heard him sigh. The sigh was long, seemed to tremble all through him. She waited quite still—till he let her go.

Outside it was not quite dark. There was a young misty moon. Many clouds were in the sky, but through gaps in them the stars showed brightly. Lights shone from the public

rooms of the hotel, but there was no one on the broad terrace. It was too cold to sit out, and the few travellers staying at the hotel, three middle-aged Englishwomen, the French wife of a mining engineer whose husband was supervising some work in the mountains not far away, an Algerian couple from Constantine, a thin semi-Egyptian man from Port Said, and a Belgian family, mother, daughter and son, were gathered before a fire in the drawing-room, playing bagatelle and reading picture papers. Under the glass roof, which projected from the end of the arcade to the terrace steps, Vivian turned to the right and went down towards the baths. But when she reached the two olive trees, beyond which the path forked to the left, she stood still for a moment.

The bath-house lay below her. She could see the steps that led to it. It was shut up now for the night. Before her was the darkness of the olive grove. Here and there an electric lamp fixed on a high pole threw a ray of almost white light into the darkness. By the wire fence which hemmed in the plateau above the Grand Cascade, at the edge of the olive grove, there was a little uneven path, partially overgrown with grass, and dim at times with the smoke-wreaths which floated from the boiling springs. Vivian made her way to it. Through the trees she could still see two or three glimmers of light from the back of the hotel; nevertheless on this path she had a feeling of isolation with nature. And the wide rustle of water everywhere created an atmosphere of musical solitude in the night. The misty moon, the murmuring olive trees, the smoke blowing over her from no fire, the mingling voices of many waters, all combined to lift from her the hotel feeling, to give her the momentary release which she wanted.

She stood by the plateau, listening to the cry of the cascade. She walked at the edge of the olive grove towards the open, untenanted country which stretched away in the

darkness to the fringe of those vast mountain slopes. She returned—then turned again.

So it had come to pass! She was in Africa with Claude Ormeley, she who had gone down to Tyford, and wrestled for the soul of her beloved one in the deep woods and, as she thought, won through. (For to Vivian then the soul had seemed lost if courage was lost.) It had come about—the impossible for her! It had had to be. And she did not rebuke herself now. She felt that she would have trodden the way of selfishness if she had not done what she had done. That will of hers—the will of an Egoist?—she had had to subordinate it to Clive's in the end. The woman in her had felt the overpowering need to give in to the man. Perhaps she had been very tired. Little Clive, in his coming and going, had changed her surely in some very essential way. She had willed a great thing. It had happened. And almost immediately God had struck with His hammer. And since then she had felt, "What am I? What can I really do? What does my will amount to after all?" And since then, too, she had had a quite new feeling about life; she had sometimes felt it as a dream. Even now, as she walked in the dark encompassed by the voices of the waters, she remembered the words of a poem by a man who had died very young, which once she had thought lovely but a little morbid, had admired greatly, yet almost reluctantly. And she thought, "Aren't they, perhaps, quite true?"

"They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate:
I think they have no portion in us after
We pass the Gate.

"They are not long, the days of wine and roses;
Out of a misty dream
Our path emerges for a while, then closes
Within a dream."

Out of a misty dream! The white smoke drifted over her as if to say, "It is true. You have come away from the mists, but only for a very little while. They are waiting for you. You will return. You will disappear in them."

If so, must she not use her little while in the best way of love, to make the man she loved happy? She looked back at the past and she wondered at her own rigidity. Even when Clive had come to her from the dock she had held to her principles in the face of his suffering. How had she been able to do that?

But since then she had seen him suffer again, had actually witnessed his torment. For she had been present in the High Court during the hearing of his slander action against Aubrey Sabine. Clive had not wished her to be there. He had begged her not to go. But she had insisted on going. He was to be the attacker. She had felt that she would be a poltroon not to be in Court with him, she who so lately had stood before a crowd on a tennis court with Jim Gordon. She had braved the eyes of the public for Jim. She could not stay in hiding when Clive had to face eyes more curious, more greedily eager than any that had gazed down from the galleries of King's Club. And she had insisted, had made Clive yield to her desire.

His Mother, too, had been there, his strange Mother, whom Vivian now believed she would never fully understand. Clive had won his case and got very heavy damages out of Sir Aubrey Sabine: five thousand pounds. As he had said, it was practically impossible to lose such a case. The Counsel who had defended him in his trial for murder, Sir Meredith Hall, had led for the prosecution. Lord Justice Mansfield had tried the case with a Special Jury. Everything had gone in Clive's favour—as how could it not? Jim had given his evidence, and been unshaken in cross-examination. Then a procession of witnesses had gone into the box, people who had been in Lady Dartree's drawing-room at Cannes when

Sir Aubrey had made his monstrous attack on Clive. Vivian had sat by Clive's side, with Mrs. Baratrie next to her, and had seen Lord Dartree, Jennie Littlethwaite, Mrs. Charlesworth, old Madding, Gerald Bowyer and Mrs. Lorrimer in the box, had had to listen to their statements about what had happened on that horrible day in Cannes. And she had seen and heard Wilfred Heathcote, who had absolutely denied having ever said a word against Clive in connection with the death of Mrs. Sabine. And while she had listened to his denial she had felt positive that he had said he believed Clive to be guilty of the murder of Mrs. Sabine, and that he was self-possessedly lying in the box.

Sir Aubrey Sabine's Counsel had not called his client, but had contented himself with putting in, in mitigation of damages, a letter of apology from Sir Aubrey, and in making a speech for the defence. The Judge had briefly summed up and after a short retirement the Jury had given their verdict and had named the damages already mentioned. It had not been a long case and Vivian had never really been in doubt about its conclusion.

Nevertheless it had been far more horrible to her than she had anticipated that it would be. During it, and after it was over, she began at last to understand what a man on trial for murder has to go through. She had thought that she already understood that, believing that love had brought such understanding to her. In the High Court she had found out that it was not so, that imagination, prompted and helped by love, had not enabled her to realise the ordeal of Clive.

What the eye does not see the heart does not feel.

But she had seen now.

She had seen human nature stripped by curiosity and showing its nakedness unabashed; crowds of men and women gathered outside the Law Courts, pressed together, struggling, fighting even to get in to the Court where the man accused

and acquitted of murder was to be seen once more at grips for his reputation. She had seen women, and not of the so-called lower classes, frantically trying to force their way past the doorkeepers. She had heard their shrill voices raised in violent altercations.

She had personally experienced the soul stirring sensation of being "mobbed." Yes, she and Clive had been mobbed. She shivered slightly under her fur at the edge of the olive grove as she thought of that in the night. For somehow her mind had gone back to those horrible days in London, perhaps trying to find an excuse for the yielding which had resulted in the present fact—that a woman who called herself Vivian Ormeley, Mrs. Claude Ormeley, was standing alone in the darkness of the February night by the boiling springs of Hammam Chedakra.

A great crowd had fought to get a sight of her and of Clive. She would never forget the expression she had seen in the eyes of that fighting crowd of human beings in the nude, dead for the moment to everything but the desperate lust of curiosity. Those eyes of the stripped had made her feel stripped. Their momentary complete degradation had made her feel degraded. She had felt sunk, with them, in depths of abject humiliation.

(An owl called in the olive grove, and was answered by another from the ravine of Bou Hamdam calling across the water, across the floating smoke-wreaths.)

Helped by the police, she and Clive had got into the Court, to face the passionate stare of another crowd. And that stare had lasted for hours. And all those eyes had been at work trying to undress their souls—the souls of Clive and of her. That had been their business.

Oh, the human being that is at work trying to undress a soul is ugly, horribly ugly!

On the day of the verdict, in that shadowy room in Knightsbridge, Clive had said to her that always in the future, wherever

he went, there would be men and women to look at him and think, "Is that a murderer I'm looking at?" She had seen that question in the eyes of the crowd outside the Law Courts; she had seen it in the fixed stare of the quieter crowd inside the Court. And in the eyes staring at her she had seen the question, "Is that woman married to a murderer?" And she had felt a sort of sickness of rage. But what was the use of rage? Humanity is like that; nothing will ever change it. The animal must be fed. At the appointed time it roars for sensation. Shovel in the red meat under the bars! Give it what it wants, the raw misery of one of its own kind, of some bleeding man or woman!

In her suffering then Vivian had begun to comprehend at last what Clive had suffered, and a new tenderness had been added to her love, increasing it. And it was partly that new tenderness which had set her there by the boiling springs under the olive trees of Hammam Chedakra.

Partly—but not wholly. For the man who had said to himself, "When this is all over, I'll take her away!" lived fiercely in the man sitting upstairs alone by the burning olive-wood. And Vivian was intensely aware of him.

Clive's face when he had looked at Jim giving evidence! She would never forget that. But that was direct vision. She saw. More mysterious, but scarcely, if at all, less definite, had been the messages from Clive which had come to her silently all the day long under the stare of the crowd, messages which had seemed to ooze out from him into her. The agony of shame which he had suffered had come upon her; but it had surely been shame for her. "That you should be involved in all this because you have loved me! That you should go through this vileness, this horror, because you are linked with me!" Love outraged! It had been as if he had writhed with a sense of guilt by her side, had felt guilty because through him she was suffering as she had never suffered before.

For it had indeed all been far worse than she had expected, or she was far more sensitive than she had known herself to be hitherto. Face a thing boldly and it seems diminished. But it had not seemed so to her that day. She had known Clive writhing and she had been tortured to the quick through that knowledge. For she had said to herself that in a way it was her fault. He had begged her not to come to the Court and she had insisted on coming. And by coming she had made it all tenfold worse for him. Once again an assertion of her will over his desire had brought him an intimate misery.

Would it be wonderful if he learnt to hate her?

That, too, had as it were given her a push in the direction of a new life, a life to be definitely lived for Clive.

The resurrection of Mrs. Sabine had been horrible. As again and again her name had been mentioned in Court, each separate mention seeming to emphasise and define more sharply and aggressively her former intimacy with Clive, the grave had seemed to give up its dead. For the first time Vivian had *felt* the dead woman to whom Clive had once belonged.

It had been terrible sitting there by Clive under the watching eyes of the crowd, and hearing his name coupled with the name of that dead woman, and knowing that every one, man and woman, in that Court crammed with humanity, was thinking of Clive's liaison with her. All those joining thoughts had seemed to Vivian at last to become one immense thought, a thought possessing a terrible and concentrated power, the power to recall.

Could the dead woman, dead to this world but living surely somewhere else, keep away from that crowded Court, from the great concentrated thought of Judge, Jury, Counsel, solicitors, witnesses, onlookers, of Clive, of Clive's Mother, of herself? And outside, but flowing in perpetually to increase the power of the thought, were the thoughts of the innumerable mob waiting to know the result and to see, if it might

be possible, Clive and herself, and the miserable, flushed, harassed Aubrey Sabine, come out.

As the case wore on, and the name of Mrs. Sabine was perpetually uttered in the Court, Vivian had begun to feel a strange, creeping jealousy of the past, a jealousy that humiliated her, and that she had never felt in that vital, quivering way before.

It was as if the departed had returned, drawn by the magnetic power of concentrated thought, to persecute her and Clive.

(Now she looked round her in the night, at the dim clouds of smoke, at the darkness of the olive trees, and she listened to the many voices of the waters, each one calling to its brother, Bou Hamdam to El-Aioun, Bou Said to Ben-Ali, the Grand Cascade to the Chedakra, little runlet to little runlet, and to the subterranean voices of the demons chained in that place by magic since the days of Solomon the King, and she felt blessedly remote from all that horror. It had been right to come away. It had been necessary to come away. Clive must rest, and she must rest with him. And Mrs. Sabine surely was very far away from here.)

Her jealousy had been horrible to Vivian. Clive had been aware of it. She knew that. For they were silently telling each other things, against their wills, all through the trial. He had felt the presence of Mrs. Sabine as she had felt it. She was positive of that. Once she had seen him lift his head suddenly and look round, as if he were looking for someone. And she had known—"He is looking for her!" Afterwards she had seemed to realise the unnatural condition she had inevitably been plunged into by emotion, and she had tried to be critical of herself; to laugh at the folly of her own imaginings on that day.

But they had left a deep impress. She could not forget them. She could not even quite feel their absurdity, though sometimes she believed she was near to feeling it. And she

remembered the assertions of the spiritualists, so numerous and so ardent in this nevertheless strongly materialistic phase of the world's history. They believed that the departed could come back under certain conditions. Was it possible that all the concentrated thought of that multitude, on the day of Clive's action, had had power over her who had once been Mrs. Sabine, and that she had really been compelled to return from the place where she was, drawn irresistibly by that cable of thought? Such a theory no doubt would be smiled at by all orthodox spiritualists, but were they not really working in the dark, as she, Vivian, was working in the dark? At any rate, Vivian knew that on the day of the slander action she had felt Mrs. Sabine as she had never felt her before, as she had never felt her since. It had been as if Mrs. Sabine were still vital and near, horribly vital, horribly near.

And ever since then Vivian had known the inner meaning of retrospective jealousy. Did Clive realise that? She did not know. Since the day of the trial great gaps of silence had been between her and Clive, in spite of their nearness to each other. The trial had brought knowledge and had created those gaps of silence.

She ought not to have gone to the Court. Clive had been right when he had begged her to stay away. Evidently he, although a man, had intuitions which she lacked. She must trust those intuitions more in the future. She who had dared to think for him in great matters must let him think for her —if she could.

Perhaps he was thinking for her now.

At any rate, she had done one big thing for him, and in the doing of it she had hurt others whom she loved very much, her dear, simple but courageous Mother, her Father and Archie. For she had been frank with them. She had not pretended. She had told them that once in North Africa, if Clive wished it, she would call herself Mrs. Ormeley. And

she had asked them to wait, not to write to her as Mrs. Clive Baratrie, until she knew for certain that Clive wished, what he intended in going away. Their passports of course had been made out in their real names. But when the frontier of France was passed passports were no more asked for. And since then she had written saying that her letters must be addressed to Mrs. Claude Ormeley.

She remembered Archie's face when he had said good-bye to her, an accusing face. Poor Archie! And she had had to say good-bye to Jim too. She thought Jim had been very fine in that last short interview. He had held himself in. He had shown true grit. Since she had made her sacrifice for him in coming back to Championship play so soon after the death of her baby, he had taken a real pull on himself. She thought he would win through without her now because of what she had done. There was fineness in Jim. He was a real man. She felt that he was going to try to live up to the conception of him she and Archie had had when he had trained them,—how long ago it seemed—had given them drastic lessons in the whole art of lawn-tennis. Jim had been their perfect athlete then. Surely he would be again what he had been, in spite of her and because of her. When he had bade good-bye to Clive the latter had said, rather awkwardly, but very firmly too:

“Good-bye, Gordon. We're going away for a bit. We want a rest after all this beastliness.”

And Jim had said:

“Rather! I quite understand. Sorry I had to write that letter. But it seemed the right thing to do.”

That had been all. And then Clive and Jim had shaken hands, and the two powers in the two men who loved her had separated.

For how long?

Clive had given the damages paid to him by Sir Aubrey Sabine to Bob Herries to distribute as he thought fit. Bob

Herries would render him an account. He had said that he must insist upon doing that. And Clive had said "Very well." He had been in haste to get rid of that money. He had seemed to hate it as if it had been blood-money. There had been no sense of triumph in Clive because he had won his action. She had specially noticed that. When the verdict of the Jury had been given he had sat quite still staring down, with his hands clasped tightly together. And his face had looked like the face of a man in great agony. He had had to bring the action. It was over and he had won it. But what a miserable, sordid triumph it was. That had quite evidently been his feeling about it. And then his one thought had been to get rid of Aubrey Sabine's money as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Dews, the actress, had been at the trial, and had managed to push her way up to Clive as they were struggling out of the crowded Court, and had congratulated him on the verdict. Others, too, had congratulated him and her. And in the midst of it all Vivian had looked at Mrs. Baratrie, and had been struck with amazement. For in her face Vivian had counted upon seeing the joy and exultation which Clive did not show. But instead she had seen again the withered old woman with the bitter, observant eyes who had lived for so many months the life of a hermit in Knightsbridge. She had been startled, she had laid a hand on her Mother-in-law's thin arm, and had whispered:

"Mum—aren't you glad? He's won. Clive's won!"

And Mrs. Baratrie had stared at her for a minute and then had answered:

"Of course I'm glad. Five thousand pounds damages! That is surely enough to shut the malicious mouths. Of course I'm glad."

And then her lips had twisted into a horrible smile, that seemed compounded of intense satire and tragic humour. And the smile had been prolonged till for one moment Vivian

had thought that Mrs. Baratrie was going to break into a fit of laughter. But the press of the crowd had forced them a little apart just then, and she had not seen whether the smile developed or died.

Since then Mrs. Baratrie had returned to her solitary life, shutting every one out. And when Clive and Vivian had told her they were going away "for a time" she had shown no surprise, no regret. She had received the announcement as if she had been expecting it. Even when they had bade her good-bye she had shown no special emotion. Her last words, said briskly, had been:

"Well, I hope you will have a good time!"

An extraordinary woman! Vivian would never understand her. A woman who was apparently miserable after her son's acquittal, happy, exultant even, in the prospect of his attack on his enemy, and who, when that attack succeeded, and the enemy went down into the dust, relapsed into her former state of solitary and defiant wretchedness! For that Mrs. Baratrie was wretched not all her defiance could conceal. What was the true meaning of her? Vivian often wondered. She wondered now. But she no longer believed that she would ever find the key which could unlock her Mother-in-law's mystery. Whether Clive had found it she did not know. Clive scarcely ever spoke of his Mother now.

One face which she had seen in the crowd of faces, before the mob outside and the foggy November evening had swallowed her and Clive up, she had not forgotten. She could see it before her now in the darkness of the olive grove by the Cascade; Wilfred Heathcote's face, with a flickering light of bitter amusement in the eyes, as if he were secretly laughing at the displayed follies and the hidden sins of men.

She was sure he had lied in the witness-box; she was

sure he had said that he believed Clive had murdered Mrs. Sabine.

It was difficult for her not to hate him. Yet she did not hate Aubrey Sabine. He looked so empty-headed. And Clive had triumphed over him, had put his foot on that wasp and had crushed the sting out of it.

The crowd outside in the November evening had fought furiously to get a sight of them. But the police had helped them and at last they had got away. And presently they had been together in the silence of their little house in Chester Street, leaving the newsboys to shout the result of the trial through London.

How tired they had been that night, physically and mentally! But the physical weariness had been as nothing in comparison with the weariness of mind.

Well—all that was over. Now the new life was beginning. How would it be and how long would it last?

Again the dead poet's words ran through her mind, as the water ran by in the narrow channel at her feet:

"They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate——"

Then why agonise, why allow the mind to bring torment, why brood over the problems of existence, why stiffen the clutching, desperate hands? Why not quietly, courageously and simply take things as they come, and wait calmly for the unknown end, known as death, but unknown otherwise?

"Our path emerges for a while, then closes——"

And now her feet were set upon the African path, were treading a new country. Love and desire were with her on that path, but surely not hate. She considered that question in the night. During most of her life she had considered herself incapable of hatred. But on the day of the trial she had felt a fierce and angry thrill when she had caught sight

of Wilfred Heathcote's face near the door of the Court going out. And sometimes in thinking of Mrs. Sabine and Clive she had been conscious of an intensity of revolt against the past which had almost frightened her. But surely it is not possible to hate the dead. And Mrs. Sabine was dead. But Clive was not dead. He lived with all his memories, with all his intimate knowledge of Mrs. Sabine and of his life with her. There are things death does not abolish. There are things that do not die. Was Mrs. Sabine really so far away from this African solitude?

"Vivian!"

Someone had called her.

"Vivian!"

She knew now. It was Clive of course. But she did not answer. She was held in silence. She looked into the dimness, searching the night, but she did not see anyone. The voice had not been very loud, not very personal. But it must have been Clive's. He had come out to look for her. And she waited. He would find her. And then, while she waited, held in that curious silence—and perhaps against her will, she was not sure—she realised how her life was bound up with his. Surely the lives of few women were bound up with the lives of the men who loved them, as hers was bound up with Clive's. For pain and sacrifice knotted them together, unusual pain and peculiar sacrifice. There was something extraordinary in their connection. It could never be ordinary, never be "the usual thing."

Now at last she saw a tall shadow emerge from the shadows under the olive trees. It came towards her, defined itself as Clive.

"Vivian!"

"Yes!"

He came up.

"I've been calling. I was getting anxious. You've been out such a long time."

"Is it?"

"You didn't hear me?"

"Yes, I did."

She saw surprise in his eyes.

"I couldn't answer just at that moment. I don't know why. Do forgive me."

"Of course. But—what was it?"

"I seemed to be held in silence," she said. "Perhaps it was—it's all so strange here after the way we've lived, all we've been through. I must have been sunk in the strangeness without knowing it, I think. The waters seemed all over me, and in me, when I heard you call. I seemed for a moment drowned in strangeness, in the smoke, and the waters, and—and the misty dream of it all." (She was quoting from her poet, but he did not know that.) "It was like momentary paralysis, and somehow I couldn't answer."

He did not speak for a moment, then he said:

"There's rain coming. I can feel it."

"Rain—in Africa!"

"I was speaking to the landlord just now. He says they've had weeks of rain, that it has kept people away. But he has quantities of letters for rooms for next month. There's a motor here. Shall we run over to Sidi Barka the first fine day and see whether that house is still there?"

"The white house by the sea?"

"Yes."

"Oh, how strange all this is, after that day in Knightsbridge, after that day in the woods at Tyford!"

"Aubrey Sabine brought it about," he said, in a low voice.

Again that ever-following name! But little Clive was free of it.

A patter of rain sounded among the leaves of the olive trees. Cold drops touched their faces.

Clive drew Vivian's arm through his and they went through the shifting smoke towards the hotel. As they came under

the cover of the glass roof which connected the arcade with the terrace Vivian said:

"We have come so far. Let us leave that name behind us, Clive, the name you said just now. There are things I want to forget."

She said that, felt she must say it, but she knew it was absolutely useless to try to forget.

II

CLIVE and Vivian had come to North Africa without any definite plan that was known to both of them. Just before the trial had come on Clive had resigned his partnership in the firm of Maynard, Harringay, Baratrie and Co.; after it was over it was understood between him and Vivian that soon they would go abroad for a time. She saw the absolute necessity for a change in Clive's face, discerned it in his whole demeanour. With the winning of the case he had for the time being come to the end of his resisting power. She knew he must have a long rest. She felt, too, that she needed complete rest. He and she had passed through enough stress and emotion. It would be dangerous not to "let up," dangerous certainly for him if not for her. There were not a few signs in Clive that worried her. The profound yielding which she had feared, a mysterious yielding in the most secret part of man, was taking place in him. It was the inevitable reaction, not to be stopped, not to be evaded. She must take him away.

But it had been impossible to go away at once. Clive had to "settle up" innumerable matters now that he was going to change his way of life for a time. Till they could get out of England Vivian's people had lent them the cottage at Mayling. They had been living there for nearly three months close to the churchyard in which little Clive was buried. Now, however, everything had been arranged. The

house in Chester Street was let furnished for a year, and they were facing a time of idleness and freedom such as they had never yet known together.

Vivian had supposed that they would first make for the *endroit du bonheur*, about which Clive had told her with such enthusiasm, when he had tried to win her over to his view of the ideal life for two lovers. But Clive had explained that it was much too early in the year to camp out so far to the North. They could not depend on the weather. And the weather reports from Algeria were persistently bad. May was the month for the *endroit du bonheur*. Till then they must go somewhere else. She had thought of the desert, of the far South. But she had left the decision to Clive without mentioning her thought. She was resolved to yield herself to his will. Her faith in her own was not what it had been. The girl of strong convictions, of prompt decisions, of the almost defiant sense of what was right and what was wrong, had given place to a girl-woman, who often doubted, and who had now made a secret resolution to leave the power over her life in the hands of another, instead of keeping it in her own.

And Clive had suggested that they should take a ship to Robertville, and from there go first to the quiet, out-of-the-way little place which she now knew as Hammam Chedakra. He had told her that he had been there with his friend, Campbell, and had motored from there to Tunis, passing on the way through Sidi Barka. But he had said nothing more just then.

Now she understood fully what had been in his mind. He was drawn by the remembrance of the white house by the sea, the hiding-place among the palm trees which he had once half seen and had never forgotten. And she remembered his leaping eagerness on the night when she had confessed that she had been thinking of it as she looked at the stars over Surrey.

Ever since then his mind must have been fixed on that

house. And that was why he had brought her to Hammam Chedakra. She knew he was perpetually uneasy in hotels, always fearing lest someone would recognise him. The last tremendous publicity he had had to face had bred in him an overwhelming desire for absolute privacy. He wanted to be in some place where no one would know him, where no one would ever suspect who he was. It was quiet enough now in Hammam Chedakra, but the landlord had mentioned that he was expecting many travellers in March. Vivian had seen Clive's face harden when he had repeated the remark. And now his mind was dwelling on that hiding-place by the sea, quite off the beaten track of all travellers. She was sure that they would not stay long at Hammam Chedakra.

On the following morning she heard Clive inquiring about the motor and mentioning Sidi Barka. The landlord answered that he had a motor, but it was under repair and could not be ready for a week or ten days. He would put it at Monsieur's service directly it was in good order. But in any case the roads were almost impossible for traffic just now on account of the tremendously heavy rains. If, however, Monsieur was in a hurry to go to Sidi Barka, which was really not at all an attractive place, if he, the landlord, might venture to say so, there was a train every day at midday reaching Sidi Barka at three-fifteen in the afternoon. Monsieur could stay the night at the Hôtel de l'Orient, and be back the next day. There was really very little to see, practically no real Arab quarter, only a few Roman remains outside the town, and a modern church on the hill which was supposed to contain a portion of Saint Augustine's body in a casket. The inhabitants of Sidi Barka affirmed that the portion was the saint's heart. But Monsieur knew that the saints had all possessed more hearts than the average man, and that such hearts were distributed rather widely among the churches of Catholic countries.

Clive agreed, and begged Monsieur Larot to let him know when the motor was fixed up.

Till then, apparently, he did not intend to go to Sidi Barka, for he said nothing more to Vivian about it at that time. All their things were unpacked; their books and writing materials were put out in the little sitting-room. Evidently Clive meant to be quiet till the motor of Monsieur Larot was in order. A telegram was sent to London giving Hammam Chedakra as their address for letters. They had agreed not to have any English newspapers sent to them.

"Let's give the papers a rest, shall we?" Clive had said.

And Vivian had answered: "I feel that I never want to look into a paper again."

They were two refugees seeking an asylum far off the beaten track of modern, civilised life. They wanted peace, what they thought of as peace; they wanted emptiness; they wanted a long silence from the strife of tongues; they wanted remoteness from the eagerly prying eyes of strangers who knew much about them but about whom they knew nothing. Vivian was at one with Clive in that wide-flung desire. Where she secretly differed from him, but subordinated her will to his, was in respect of the taking of a name not theirs. She hated that, but she did not combat it. She understood now so well what a refuge Claude Ormeley must be to Clive Baratrie.

So they tried to sink down in the new life of peace among people who did not know them and who knew nothing about them.

That was strange.

Just at first—and he acknowledged it—Clive was attacked by a feeling of extraordinary fatigue, which seemed both mental and physical, and which he said he had never felt before, even in the days immediately following his acquittal, even when he was up in Scotland with Marriot. At Tyford

he had said to Vivian: "What I want is peace with you, not peace alone." Now he had it at last and he was tremendously tired in it.

"It is the peace that allows me to be tired," he said. "I didn't dare to be tired before."

And suddenly he looked more tired than she had ever seen him look in England; exhausted.

He slept a great deal at first. Directly after dinner, which was at seven, they went to their sitting-room and sat before the log fire. And often by nine, or soon after, Clive was asleep in his chair.

Many times Vivian sat by the drowsy flames watching him as he slept there, with his slim, tall body stretched out in the low, rep-covered chair, and the full white lids hiding his eyes. In those moments she knew the great pathos of sleep, and Clive's unconsciousness touched something that seemed at the very springs of her heart. To see him not suffering there so close to her made her think in a strangely deep way of all he had suffered. But indeed was it true that he was not suffering there in the firelight? Even in sleep there was a look of distress on his face. His subconscious mind was alive and at work. And it knew all that he had suffered, would never let the memory of the suffering go. But for the time he was at least partially free from the bondage of pain. When she saw him sleeping there, how she longed to make him happy! Something in her ached to give him happiness, to smooth into calm that face which she loved, as she loved no other face. The fire burned low, yet she did not stoop to put on another log, lest she might disturb him. Why did she feel all the unexplained sadness of life, the great mystery of the sadness of life, in the contemplation of this man whom she loved, asleep? In looking at him she felt not only his pathos, but her own, and the pathos of others. And sometimes, going far as women who love will, she looked at Clive's face in sleep and imagined

it in death. So little a change and the vastness of it! Clive had a very silent sleep. His face was very still in sleep. But he was there. In death the face would surely look very much like the face that slept. Only he would not be there. And that tremendous and terrible fact would be somehow apparent to her in his face. Oh, how we should strive to be happiness-bringers to the very few we love during the short time we are allowed to be with them! "They are not long the days"—and then, too soon, the pathway closes within the dream of death, leaving one to sit alone with the terrific reality of separation. As she looked at Clive sleeping by the olive-wood fire Vivian resolved with intensity to dedicate herself to the task of making him happy, of trying so far as she could to pay him back with her love for all the horrible misery he had endured. He had been selected for suffering. She would try to give him a happiness such as many men never know. She would seek in herself for a selfless devotion and give it all to him. To find that and to give it she knew that she must root out utterly her secret jealousy of a dead woman. She realised that she had made a sacrifice in marrying Clive. Life had already taught her that. It was no easy fate, this fate of hers. She felt that increasingly. She did not sit there by Clive while he slept and avariciously number her gifts to him. She just knew that she had resigned practically everything that had counted in her life before she had met and married him. And now she had resigned what she had hitherto regarded as virtues. But he needed these resignations; he needed all she could give him and surely much more. The pathos of his face in sleep seemed to tell her that silently.

When her watch pointed to ten o'clock she would touch him gently, regretting the necessity of disturbing him. Then restlessness suddenly showed in him. He moved, opened his eyes, looked with a startled, yet inward, expression at the fire, the room, at her. And then the distress of his life, like

a stream, welled up in him, and he tried to hide that with a quick smile at her.

"Time for bed? Isn't it awful my falling asleep like this? But I can't help it. The absolute change of my life here acts on me like a drug. Haven't you been reading?"

"No. I've been sitting and looking at the fire."

She did not add "and you." Few people care to know that they are watched when asleep.

"It's so quiet here"—perhaps she would add—"even when we are shut in I can feel how far away we are, I can feel the emptiness in the dark all round us."

"Yes. And in some mysterious way I believe I feel that too, when I'm asleep—that and other things."

And soon they would go to bed.

That year there was an unusual amount of rain in Algeria. At Hammam Chedakra winds often came with the rain. Between the storms there were sudden bursts of bright sunshine. Snatches of summer, these seemed, startling in the gold and blue of their warmth. And once there came a magnificent African day, still, hot, almost blindingly full of light from morning till evening, a day such as Vivian had never seen before, a day for out of doors and the absolute ignoring of houses.

Clive and she took a straw pannier of food and started out early. They had no aim. Their steps were bent towards no goal. Simply they were wanderers through the marvel of that day. Leaving the hotel behind, they went to the left, skirting the long line of closely planted cypress trees, which guarded the orange groves of Monsieur Anatole Rivier, crossed some rough ground, and came to a vague and uneven pathway. Probably the feet of Arabs had made it, for it wound along at the edge of the Chedakra and they go there to bathe in the warm waters which flow secretly beneath the branches of trees and shrubs innumerable. But there were no dark men bathing that day. The continued rains had

made the waters too cold under the dense growth of myrtles, terebinths, ilexes, oleanders.

Two pointers from the hotel had joined them when they started, and eagerly accompanied them, a black and white and a white and tan. These ran on ahead as if anxious to show them the way, leading them into Arcady. Great slopes rose on their left hand dotted with ancient olive trees; on their right was the hidden stream whose perpetual murmur came to them through the dense bushes. Beyond rose more slopes, olive-covered, or sometimes bare, showing the rich brown earth ploughed up to be put under cultivation. Crowds of small birds, put up by the dogs, flew away, forming delicate living patterns in the luminous air. In the distance were delicious calm hills closing the view like a dream softly guarding reality. Here and there the ground rose abruptly in small cliffs which showed orange and red and gold through the trees. Once on the flat plateau at the top of one of these cliffs they saw an Arab boy standing surrounded by goats. He wore a tattered burnous, the pointed hood drawn over his head. At his lips was a flute of reed from which came to them a thin trickle of music such as Vivian had never heard before, a monotonous, often-repeated, quick melody, which seemed to mount up and abruptly to cease in the sunlit air, only to begin again on a low note, and again to mount up and cease, like a spray of music flung up, a shower of melodious drops, by a careless and insouciant hand. Delicate smoke-wreaths, very thin, swiftly melting away, rose where tiny boiling fountains bubbled out of the earth and slipped into the waters of the Chedakra. Now and then, under the shadows of a tangle of leaves, an oval pool showed like a dulled mirror in which no face was reflected.

And there was no one, no one on the way. Only the little goatherd had sent them his greeting, and that had died away long ago. They were alone with nature, as they had never been alone together before. And Clive looked calmer, happier,

than Vivian had ever seen him look till that moment. There was something of peace in his face when they stood among the wild oleanders to listen to the flute of the goatherd, and that peace deepened as they trod softly on, with no aim except that of going further and further into Arcady.

When the sun was hot, perhaps an hour after midday, they sat down by the stream and ate their lunch, talking very little, strangely calm and at peace. The dogs sat beside them, gazing at the food and at them pathetically till they, too, were fed. Then Clive stretched himself on the grass, his back against a low rock, and lit his pipe. He had pulled his soft hat low over his eyes. He lay very still, but sometimes plucked idly at the grasses and little wild flowers—some of them anemones—which stirred in the light breeze all about them. And they both listened to the silence. And Vivian remembered another silence, in the clearing of the deep wood at Tyford, when Clive had been with her like that, and she had felt jealousy in him. Now he had taken her away from everybody. Perhaps he had always meant to do that some day. Perhaps he had made up his mind to do that whether with, or against, her will. She longed to ask him. But she did not ask him, fearing to spoil the wonderful hour they were having together in Arcady. She belonged to him now, and had done what he wished, the thing she had refused to do. Had she been weak? Possibly. Perhaps a love that was absolutely strong must hold some cruelty. And after all that had happened she could not be cruel to Clive because of a principle. She could not be courageous for two any longer without verging on hardness. It was surely better to be tender and unselfish in despite of principle than to be hard with the man she loved. She could no longer hold him in torment.

But—when they went back?

Clive looked up and met her eyes, and that question was in them. She could not expel it at once, and for a moment

she had a feeling of guilt. But she looked away again quickly. Perhaps he had not understood, had not read what was there in her eyes. That sunlit day was his triumph, a golden day he must have decreed, as she had decreed the child; if we can decree anything!

They stayed there by the stream for a long time, sometimes talking quietly, often keeping silence and dreaming. And in the dreaming they were perhaps more nearly at one than they had ever been before.

At any rate, on that day by the Chedakra the dead woman seemed really to rest in her grave.

III

WHEN they reached Hammam Chedakra just before twilight, pleasantly tired after their long walk, with their bodies full of sunshine, and their minds rather drowsy after their banquet of air and of silence, they found a Rolls-Royce car with a big limousine body drawn up before the terrace. The top of the bonnet was up, and a chauffeur in a dark blue livery was bending down and doing something to the machine.

"Some new arrivals!" said Vivian.

She saw Clive frown as he looked at the car. His face had completely changed. The unwonted expression of calm, almost of peacefulness, had disappeared from it, and as he turned to go under the arcade to the staircase which led to their rooms it hardened, set suddenly into the mask-like rigidity which she knew so well and longed to banish from it for ever. She knew what was in his mind. He feared to meet travellers from England, people who might possibly recognise him.

Directly they were in their sitting-room, and she had rung the bell for tea, he sat down rather heavily in one of their two armchairs. The wood-fire was lighted and burning well.

He stared into it with his head slightly turned as if he were listening. She went into the bedroom to take off her hat and boots. The bedroom opened into the sitting-room, and at the back of it, divided from it by a striped curtain which hung across an archway, there was a dressing-room with a window looking on to the olive grove by the Grand Cascade. Leaving the bedroom door open, she went into the dressing-room. When she came back into the bedroom she heard Clive's voice talking in French to Raoul, the valet de chambre, who with his wife supplied all their wants in their own rooms.

"Many people come to-day, Raoul?"

"No, M'sieu, only five; three by the morning train and two more just now with a chauffeur. They came from Tunis, a long day's journey."

"What nationality?"

"This morning they were French, M'sieu."

"And those who came by car?"

"They are English, I believe, M'sieu, or Americans; a lady and gentleman."

Vivian heard the faint click of china. Then Clive said:

"Is the Patron in the bureau?"

"I expect so, M'sieu."

"Do you think he would mind coming up here for a moment? I want to speak to him about that car he's having repaired."

"I'll go and tell him, M'sieu."

She heard Raoul go out. A moment later Clive called to her.

"Tea is ready, Vi!"

"I'm just coming," she answered.

In a minute she joined him in the sitting-room.

"D'you mind if the landlord comes up here for a minute?" he said, directly he saw her. "I want to find out whether that car's been repaired. They've been fiddling over it for

ages, ever since we came. I want to go over to Sidi Barka. If the car isn't ready yet, I think I shall take the train there to-morrow morning."

"Don't you want me to come with you?" she said.

He looked at her for an instant, as if he were in doubt. Then he said:

"Not if I go by train, Vi. I shall have to stay the night."

"Well?"

"Sidi Barka isn't a very attractive town. You might get a bad impression."

There was anxiety in his eyes. He added, in a lighter tone:

"Let's have some tea. I'm thirsty after our walk. It's been a grand day, Vi, the best we've ever had together, I think. Perhaps I've loved it too much."

"How could you?"

He moved in his chair abruptly.

"I don't know. Hullo! That must be the Patron!"

A heavy step sounded in the corridor, and the short, burly figure of Monsieur Larot appeared at their French window. He lifted his big hand and knocked.

"Come in, Monsieur Larot!" said Clive.

"Good evening, M'sieu—Madame. What can I do for you?"

"I only wanted to know about that car of yours. When can it be ready to take me to Sidi Barka?"

"I expect it to be in perfect order by Saturday, M'sieu."

"Saturday! That's three more days."

"Yes, M'sieu. But I've been obliged to order a new carburetter and——"

"That's all right. Thank you very much."

Monsieur Larot looked from Clive to Vivian with his large, honest grey eyes.

"Will you have the car on Saturday, Monsieur—Madame?"

"Well—I'm afraid I can't wait quite so long. I'm afraid I shall have to take the train."

"There's really nothing much to see at Sidi Barka, M'sieu. It is quite off the——"

"Oh, I know—I know. I've been there."

"Bien, M'sieu."

He paused, and raised his big bushy eyebrows.

"That's all. Thank you very much. I'm sorry to have disturbed you."

"Delighted, M'sieu! Anything I can do!"

His heavy steps sounded again in the corridor. When they died away Clive said:

"Sidi Barka is nothing much. But the coast round there is beautiful. I remember it well. Besides, the landlord of a hotel in one place always runs down all the other places near. That's only natural. He wants to keep the travellers where they are. Will you mind very much if I go over for a night to Sidi Barka?"

"No, not a bit."

"I want just to have a look at the white house I told you of."

"I said I would go there with you. Don't you remember?" she said, gently.

His face reddened slowly.

"Suppose——" he said. "Suppose by a lucky chance I found that house was to let—I don't in the least suppose I shall, but if I did—would you mind very much if I took it for a little while? It would be a wonderful place to rest in."

She remembered just then the look on his face asleep, and her thoughts about death and about the bringing of happiness to those whom we love.

"Dearest," she said, "don't you know? All I want is to help you to be happy, and to be happy with you in your happiness. I want that terribly. We—we are here for such a short time——"

She stopped. She could not go on. When she could speak again she only said:

"Anywhere with you! I will go anywhere. Don't ask me. Just do what you think will rest you, bring you happiness."

"I wish I could pay you back, Vi," he said, and his voice was husky just then. "But I never can. I try to comfort myself with the thought that a nature like yours never does anything for payment."

"You can pay me," she said.

"I don't see how. Even love isn't enough."

"There are so many things that ought always to go with love, to be part of love—but that generally, or very often, are not."

He looked down and said nothing.

"Pay me with all those things if you can," she said. "I am sure we both know what they are."

She did not explain or insist and Clive made no rejoinder. When tea was finished he got up restlessly, and said he would put a few things into a bag.

"For Sidi Barka?"

"Yes. I think I'll be off there to-morrow, just for one night."

"Do go," she said, gently.

As the time for dinner drew near his restlessness seemed to increase. He had packed his bag, but was unable to be still. At a quarter to seven he said:

"I wish there were two or three more servants here."

"Why?" she asked.

"Well, now and then we might dine quietly up here by the fire. It would be cosy to-night after our long day out."

"Yes. But poor Raoul and his wife have too much work as it is."

"I know—I know," he said, quickly, almost with irritation.

At seven the bell sounded in the distance.

"Dinner!" she said.

"Yes."

He stood as if in hesitation, then said, with a change of manner:

"Let's go at once and get it over. I'm longing to settle in here by the fire."

And he opened the French window.

She understood the reason of his restlessness, and was troubled by it, for it indicated to her a growth of fear in solitude, an almost devastating reaction in Clive. And it gave her a horrible sensation of being in hiding. For a moment he communicated to her something that seemed to partake of furtive criminality. And her nature rose suddenly in rebellion against it.

"We aren't fugitives, Clive," she said.

"What?" he said, in a startled voice.

"We aren't fugitives."

"Who said we were?"

"No one. But don't let us—I mean I——"

She broke off. At that moment she felt afraid of herself. A great moral confusion swept through her, filling her soul with a sort of ugly dizziness. But she made a great effort and mastered it.

"Come along," she said.

And she went quickly out into the corridor. She felt her heart thumping, a heat of anger all through her.

"What are we coming to?" she thought. "How will this end?"

A slight breeze blew through the orange and palm trees and touched her face, stirring her thick, short hair; she heard the murmur of the Grand Cascade in the distance, and felt instantly calmer.

"Forgive me, Clive," she said, turning to him.

"What for, dearest?"

"I spoke—I didn't mean to speak like that."

He took hold of her arm and pressed it.

"It's all right," he said.

"I'm horribly impulsive sometimes."

They went up the steps, crossed the terrace and entered the dining-room. Clive looked round it quickly. But only the usual people, the people they knew by sight, were there. They went to their table and sat down.

At half-past seven, when they had eaten three courses, and Clive was beginning to look a little less preoccupied, Vivian, who was sitting with her back to the door, facing him, heard people coming in behind her, and the sound of a strong, deep voice talking. She looked round, and saw a pretty, painted woman, very well dressed, walking down the long room, accompanied by a tall, clean-shaven, middle-aged man, with a powerful, intelligent and very self-possessed face, and a pair of intensely keen steel-grey eyes. She knew that face, knew it well, but for a moment she could not remember where she had seen it. It was vitally connected, she felt, with some exceptional episode in her life. She had seen it, she had gazed at it surely, in an hour of pain or of acute mental agony. The man and his companion were shown by the waiter to a table on the opposite side of the room, parallel with the Baratries' table. As they sat down the man looked, with a sort of coldly indifferent inquiry, all round the room. And the keen grey eyes, in their travelling, came to Clive and Vivian. And directly he looked at her Vivian knew. He was the famous K.C., Marshall Phipps, who had defended Sir Aubrey Sabine in the slander action! She saw that he recognised Clive, though his face scarcely changed. Surprise was evidently foreign to that abominably self-possessed creature. Almost directly he bent forward over his table and spoke to the painted lady, who turned her head quickly and looked with a glittering curiosity at Clive, then from him, greedily, shifted her eyes to Vivian.

The naked stare, the stare that tried to undress and make naked—it was there at work in Hammam Chedakra.

Clive began to talk eagerly. He did not stop talking till the waiter put the wonderful oranges of Hammam Chedakra,

and the dates, on the table. He talked with pressure, with obstinacy, and his eyes never shifted towards the left, to that table on the other side of the room. But as soon as the fruit was there, golden red and silky brown, he said:

"Shall we be off?"

"Yes," she said.

They got up and walked down the room, followed by the fascinated stare of the painted lady.

"So they've hidden themselves here!" she said.

"Yes. Damned odd our running into them!" said the K.C. "He didn't like it. D'you know, Chick, of all the cases I've had to do with this——"

He talked sonorously, while she listened eagerly, devouring him with her determined Siren's eyes, and holding her lips, painted till they looked like a wound, fixed in a sensual smile.

In their little sitting-room Clive and Vivian were silent. He had made no allusion to the arrival in their solitude of the man who had led for his enemy. And directly they were shut in behind the green persiennes he filled and lit his pipe and took up a book, while she, because of him, sat down at her table in a corner and began to write a letter. It was a rather long letter to her Mother, and she wrote slowly on purpose. Behind her she could hear now and then Clive turning a page. Was he really reading? One of those gaps of silence which saddened her lay between them, dividing them, and she did not know how to make the effort which would enable her to cross it. She was held back from that effort. At last, however, her letter was finished, put into an envelope, and addressed. She sat still for a moment, then got up from the table and turned round. She saw a patch of red on Clive's face, a large, uneven patch on the cheek which was turned away from the firelight. And immediately she saw him standing before her in the drawing-room at Knightsbridge on the day of the verdict, when he had just come through the cheering crowd from the Old Bailey.

"Clive!" she said.

He turned, looked up.

"Why don't you speak? Why do you keep this horrible silence?"

"But——"

"I know who that man is."

He made a dull gesture with his left hand.

"Marshall Phipps, the K.C., here!"

"Is that his wife?"

"I dare say. I don't know. I know nothing about his private affairs. He knows all about mine—damn him!"

There was a sort of harsh misery, a sort of rasping fury, in his voice.

"My God! Where is one to go for a little peace?" he added.

"Probably they will leave to-morrow," she said.

"Others will come."

"But if they do——"

He got up.

"I simply can't stand it," he said. "That's all. I'm at the end of my tether, and I can't stand any more of it!"

He began to pace the little room.

"It's all very well to talk of courage, and innocence, and holding your head up, and facing the world like a man, and the rest of it," he went on. "Let them—those who talk and think like that—let them just go through it all as I have, and then let them mouth out their platitudes again if they dare."

He stopped behind the table that held their small library of books and a vase of mimosa.

"I didn't tell you that when we arrived here Larot gave me one of those beastly forms to fill up. State your name, age, profession, where you were born and all the rest of it. Well, I put Claude Ormeley for my name, and Vivian Ormeley for yours. But what's the good of that, or of anything else?"

The man who actually led for Sabine against me drops on us like this. And anyone may turn up to-morrow."

"You see, Clive, how useless it is for us to pretend," she said.

He did not seem to hear her and went on, still standing behind the table with his hands pressed down on the books:

"We had one splendid day. I felt it was too good. The sunshine and peace of it made me afraid. Don't you remember I said perhaps I had loved it too much? That was because I *knew* something was going to happen, because I *knew* that car we saw outside had brought trouble for me."

"But how can——"

"It's all inside, it's in here." (He struck his breast, as if angrily.) "I suffer under these abominable staring eyes of people who know about me. I've had too much of eyes like that. It's come to this, that—that I can't stand them. If I could do something, if I could resent it—their staring at me like that, knock that fellow over there down, teach him a lesson such as one man can teach another in certain circumstances, it might be different. But all I can do is just to sit still and let all the beasts try to pull the clothes off me with their eyes."

"I know—I know."

"I call them beasts. But I don't know why. For human beings are more cruel than beasts."

"What will you do?" she said.

"I'll go to Sidi Barka to-morrow and see. There may be a chance."

And on the morrow he went by the morning train, leaving Vivian alone.

Marshall Phipps, K.C., and the painted lady were still in Hammam Chedakra when Vivian went down into the garden on her way to lunch. She saw them coming up the steps from the direction of the Grand Cascade, and they followed her into the dining-room. While she was eating she felt that

the woman's curious, searching eyes were upon her, and she understood Clive's almost desperate hatred of such eyes. As soon as she had finished her meal she went out, and took a long solitary walk past the post office, towards the far-off purple and green and slate-grey slopes of the mountain that bounded the view towards the east. She was beset by an ugly feeling that the woman who had arrived on the previous evening—Mrs. Phipps, or whoever she was—would try to find an opportunity of speaking to her, of making acquaintance with her. She was resolved to avoid that if possible.

As she walked she thought of her walk with Clive the day before beside the Chedakra. The weather was still splendidly fine. The sky was gloriously blue and luminous. The marvellous light of North Africa threw magic on the mountain slopes, on the olive groves, on a far-off solitary white farmhouse keeping watch at the edge of a vast green lawn, on the brown brushwood hovels of the Arabs clustering here and there in nooks of the hills, on a pale sulphur-coloured road—like a carelessly flung out riband—winding away through green loneliness to some far-off destination among the oak woods of Tunisia, or at the edge of the tideless sea. But the feeling of remoteness had died out of Vivian, put to flight by a couple of people travelling in a Rolls-Royce car. And she knew that Arcady was Arcady only when she and Clive were in it not necessarily alone but unrecognised. Directly they were known for what they really were, Clive Baratrie, the man loved by Mrs. Sabine and accused twice of her murder, and Clive Baratrie's wife, formerly Vivian Denys, the tennis player, Arcady was blotted out for them, was utterly destroyed.

She was alone now on this pale yellow road in Africa, alone among the silver olive trees, the streams and the hills, under the luminous blue sky, bright blue after the long rains. Looking all round her, she could see only a distant horseman on a white horse moving slowly towards the West, two Arabs

bending over something hidden in the plain beyond a barrier of mauve whitethorn bushes, and two tiny children, gnome-like from where she stood, playing in front of a brushwood hovel on a green hump a little to her right. Only five living beings in all the wide landscape, and they were Arabs!

Yet staring civilisation was with her out there in Africa, London was with her, the Law Courts were with her, Mrs. Sabine was with her. And she knew something of Clive's feeling of desperation, something of the fugitive's sense of the uselessness of flight from anything in this small world, shrinking every day as facilities for easy travel increase. And how useless and absurd that changing of a name. She felt hot as she thought of the change always hated by her, and the uselessness of it.

At last she felt that she had walked far enough and turned back. And immediately she felt anxious, almost apprehensive. She was walking towards those eyes. It seemed to her that she was being led towards them to be tormented. The charm of Hammam Chedakra was destroyed for her by two strangers.

She walked on slowly. And it seemed to her as if Mrs. Sabine, unseen but subtly felt, was with her in the way, leading her back to the eyes.

When in the distance the small post office came in sight at the left of the road, with the broken ground, the rocks of the *Mariage Arabe*, the rising smoke from the springs, and the trees which hid the hotel beyond it, Vivian saw two figures coming towards her slowly. As they approached she saw that they were not Arabs, and although she could not actually recognise them she knew who they were.

Without meaning to do it, she stopped. Perhaps they were going to the post office, would turn in there. But they passed the little house and came on towards her. On her right was a sort of green common, strewn with what she and Clive called "The Tarbush" rocks, small cone-shaped rocks.

She had only to take a couple of steps and she could wander away into solitude towards the ravine of Bou Hamdam, and avoid those approaching figures. She longed to do this; her body, she felt, was trying to do it, but was resisted by something stronger than it was. *She* was refusing its violent appeal. And she conquered, and went on, tingling with a sort of exasperation which seemed mingled with something like defiance.

She met Marshall Phipps and his companion on the road, and, as she passed them, she looked at them with a steady indifference. She saw them lower their eyes under her gaze, and was satisfied with her little bit of courage. It was all for Clive. She did not think she had shown the defiance which must have exposed the acuteness of her feeling to those two people. She hoped not. But she was not quite sure. When she was in her room—curiously deserted it looked to her now Clive was no longer there—she longed to shut herself in till the Rolls-Royce car slipped away with its owner and his companion. She had no fear of Mr. Phipps trying to make her acquaintance. Being a man, she was quite sure he would not do that, given the circumstances. But she was equally sure that his companion had made up her mind to seek satisfaction for her eager curiosity, and that no refinement of feeling would hold her back. And she was right.

When she went downstairs to go to dinner she came upon the woman in the arcade at the entrance which led to the staircase, and immediately heard a too sweet voice say:

"Will you forgive me for speaking to you?"

She stopped.

"I'm a tennis player, though not a very good one, and I've seen you play at Wimbledon and Hythe."

"Yes?" Vivian said, meeting the eager, glittering eyes.

"It was such a surprise to find you in this funny little place. I thought you wouldn't mind my speaking to you. I am one of your many ardent admirers."

"Thank you."

"Isn't this a sweet little spot?" continued the woman, with a sort of genteel obstinacy. "My husband—he's a hard-worked lawyer—thinks it quite ideal, the very place for a rest-cure."

"It's very quiet. Are you staying long?"

"Unfortunately no. We have to go on to-morrow to Constantine and Batna. We are on our way to Biskra."

"I hope you will have a good journey," said Vivian, preparing to go on to the terrace.

"Who knows? 'Chi lo sa?' as the Italians say. Do forgive me for speaking to you. But you're quite one of my heroines, both as a sportswoman, and, if I may say so, *for other reasons too.*"

"Thank you very much."

And then Vivian got away from the greedy stare of the unnaturally glittering eyes. That evening she hurried through her solitary dinner, and then shut herself up in their sitting-room. As she closed, and then locked the persiennes, she knew a feeling of disgust, and almost of dread, that was new in her experience, in spite of all she had gone through in England since the accusation brought against Clive. In England she had endured what she had expected to endure; out here, in Hammam Chedakra, she had been surprised by the unexpected.

That night she understood the danger of flight from the battlefield.

IV

EARLY next morning Vivian heard the sound of a motor-car being "tuned up" outside. She lay in bed listening. The noise rose into a threatening roar, then subsided. There was a pause. It was followed by a musical cry, a chord of three notes, which travelled, grew soft, grew faint, died away.

Marshall Phipps, K.C., and the painted lady had started on their journey to Biskra.

Vivian was pained by the sense of relief which she felt. It was too acute. It frightened her, because it seemed to give her the measure of her own weakness. Where was her courage? She wondered. Was this new life in the wilds going to sap the virtue which she admired more than all other virtues, the virtue without which men and women, in her view, were unworthy to enjoy the gift of life, were deprived of all claim on the respect of their fellows?

In her relief she was restless. She looked at her watch. It was only seven, but she got up, put something on, and went out to the bath-house, where Madame Guy, the masseuse, who had come for the season from Vichy, was already established for the day, with her pet rabbit, Titi, and her tiny yellow dog, Fritz, who had, so she said, been through the Great War with the German army, and been captured by the French on the battlefield before Verdun. He now spent the greater part of his time peeping with one shining eye out of a minute basket, under the table at which Madame sat to receive her few clients.

"Madame wants a hot bath?"

Vivian shook her uncovered head.

"Mais non! Mais non! Une douche froide, très froide."

Madame Guy looked at her rather keenly.

"Je vous la donnerai, Madame. Et, n'ayez pas peur, elle sera bien froide."

And indeed it was. The water that in a few minutes poured over Vivian's head, and rushed over breast and back, seemed to have been sedulously iced for her benefit. She shuddered, tingled, but endured. And as she stood upright under the glorious castigation of the water something within her knew: "This is good. This is what I wanted. This is what I was made for. Not for the warm water that gives off smoke in the Grand Cascade." And then a rough towel,

the rougher the better, and the splendid reaction; a glowing body and a mind that seemed suddenly purified and fitted to face anything.

Madame Guy seemed surprised by the change in Vivian as, just before, she had seemed surprised by the ardent cry for cold water.

"Madame est une vraie Anglaise!" she said. "Mais moi aussi j'aime assez l'eau froide."

"Il n'y a que ça!" Vivian assured her, pressing a tip into her expressive hand, the hand of a first-rate masseuse, sensitive and capable.

Then she bent down, stroked the small yellow section of Fritz's narrow head that was free of the basket, rubbed gently the ever-twitching nose of Titi, and went out into the African morning.

The weather had definitely changed at last to "set fair." The earth of the tennis court was hard and dry, and Vivian had breakfast out of doors under an orange tree with the two pointers to keep her company. The relief which had frightened her when she woke and heard the departing motor persisted, but now she was at ease with it. Perhaps it was the glory of the blue weather which helped to banish her moral pain; perhaps she was entering into the happy servitude of the sun. In that hour with the blinking dogs under the orange tree, encompassed by the soft freshness of the beginning day, she certainly felt Africa as she had not quite felt it before. It seemed to embrace her. She was conscious of its power. She thought of it definitely for the first time as a land of forgetfulness. Clive had longed to come here. Perhaps he had known more than she had, known that only out here far away from the life to which they were both accustomed they could find an anodyne for the tragic memories that persecuted them.

But they must be safe from "people" if Africa was to have its full chance of helping them into happiness. And

again, under the orange tree, Vivian heard the travelling chord of soft music dying away in the distance. The keen-eyed lawyer and the painted lady had taught her a lesson which even Clive's agony had not taught her. Only now she knew that Clive had been absolutely right about solitude. And it seemed to her as if these two people had been sent to Hammam Chedakra in order to force her to understand absolutely what Clive and she needed.

She expected Clive to come back from Sidi Barka in the afternoon about five. But just before lunch she had a telegram from him: "Not returning to-day kept by business am at Hôtel Orient any news best love Clive." She kept the little bit of blue paper beside her while she lunched, and as soon as her watch pointed to two o'clock she went up the road to the post office.

Behind the counter she found a swarthy girl of about sixteen, with coal-black hair and eyebrows, and intensely sharp black eyes, who was speaking through the telephone in a high singing voice to Sidi Barka. Vivian had meant to telegraph, but now she decided to try and speak to Clive, and she begged the young lady to hold on to Sidi Barka, and put her through to the Hôtel d'Orient. This was done, and she asked if Mr. Claude Ormeley was in the hotel, and whether she could speak to him. In a moment she heard faintly Clive's voice greeting her.

"They have gone," she said. "When are you coming back?"

"To-morrow or the day after," he replied. "I am trying to get the house."

"Is it empty then?"

"Yes, but only till July. May I take it if I can arrange matters?"

"But you said you were trying to get it."

"Yes. But I want to know if you mind."

"Take it," she said. "I want to go there."

In the still faint voice that answered she detected a note of relief.

"I'm glad. I wanted to know. And they are really gone?"

"Yes—to Biskra."

"I'll try to be back to-morrow."

But three more days went by before he returned by the evening train, and she met him among the eucalyptus trees.

When she saw him getting out of the train she knew how long the time had seemed without him. But she knew something else too, how calm she had felt in the empty days. She had thought that calm was given to her by the African solitude, by the golden beauty of the weather, and perhaps also by the removal of those people who had brought with them the shock of an ugly surprise. But when she saw Clive, when he joined her, when they were together in the road by the stone on which was cut the inscription, "Rokina 15^k, Jemmapes 49^k," she realised that it had come out of his absence. Although she loved him so much there was something in him which could not allow her to feel calm when she was with him. The knowledge of that struck home to her inexorably as they walked in the golden afternoon towards the farm and the Grand Cascade. The peace of untarnished nature was about them; love was with them, deep and intense; but something in Clive troubled the waters of life for her, and even now when he had brought good tidings, and was obviously reaching out eagerly towards what he thought of as happiness.

His tale was soon told.

As soon as he had reached Sidi Barka he had asked for information about the white house on the bluff overlooking the sea some twenty minutes' drive from the town, and had been told that it was the property of a rich French engineer, who had lived in it while he was building the harbour of Sidi Barka some ten years before, but who had long ago gone back to France, and given up occupation of it. His furni-

ture, however, was still in the house, which he let, through an agent in the town, from time to time when a suitable tenant offered. At the present moment the house was unlet, but it had been secured by an Algerian landowner of Constantine for the bathing season, which began in July. It was free, therefore, for only four months.

Having ascertained this, Clive had driven out to look at the place, and had gone through the grounds, but not into the house, which was shut up and looked after by a gardener who lived with his wife and family in a lodge perched on a high terrace of the garden, and who was forbidden to show the house to anyone without a special signed order from the owner's agent.

The delay, which had kept Clive so long in Sidi Barka, had been caused by the temporary absence of the agent in Tunis. On his return he had signed an order for Clive to see the inside of the house, and finally an arrangement had been come to—but only after prolonged haggling, for the agent was an Algerian Israelite with pronounced business instincts—whereby the house had passed into Clive's possession as tenant till the last day of June.

"Is the house actually yours now?" said Vivian, when Clive had finished telling her what had happened.

"Ours!" he answered. "Ours! Isn't it wonderful? We can go in to-morrow if we like."

They had walked very slowly along the road, absorbed in their conversation, and were now close to the tall rocks called by the Arabs of Hammam Chedakra *Le Mariage Arabe*. The legend attached to these rocks is that long ago a wealthy young Arab chieftain fell in love with his own sister, who was the most lovely Arab girl of Algeria, and insisted on marrying her. On the wedding day there was a great Fantasia by the hot springs, and at its close, when the bridegroom was about to lead his bride to his tent, the wrath of Allah overtook the guilty couple, who were turned into

stone. And to this day they stand in the grass near the Grand Cascade, within sound of the voices of the subterranean demons, symbols of Allah's watchfulness over the doings of His created.

Vivian stood still on the road by these rocks. The evening was falling. The white farm-house, far off on the long sloping hill, had already the magical look—the heavenly mansion look, Vivian called it—which distant white buildings assume in the evening light of North Africa. To the right the olive trees were grouped in a shadowy mass with the white smoke drifting over them. There was gold in the sky, and gold seemed dripping from it over the mountains, the woods, the waters, over the road in which Vivian stood by Clive, over the incestuous lovers in stone. The cry of the waters sounded unusually loud in the silence of the golden evening. Vivian's eyes were fixed on the far-off white house, shining mysteriously at the edge of the long green slope which lay in front of it, and backed by the naked grey mountain which closed in the view towards the sea.

"What are you looking at, Vi?" asked Clive, putting his arm through hers, his hand on her hand.

"That solitary white house far away over there. The light makes it so wonderful, like a house where only happiness can enter, doesn't it?"

His eyes followed hers.

"Yes," he said.

"And our house is white?"

"Yes."

"Let us take happiness into it. I want to make you happy in our white house."

He pressed her arm, her hand, but said nothing.

"Clive," she continued, moved to speak out of her heart, though she scarcely knew why, "there are things we must leave outside when we go into the house by the sea."

"What things?" he asked.

"Reserves that are unworthy of lovers, I think, and jealousies."

"Jealousies!" he said, and she knew by the sound of his voice that he was startled.

"Yes; your jealousy and mine."

"But—but have you ever felt jealousy in connection with me?"

"Yes—horrible jealousy. It is loathsome to feel like that. Don't ask me to explain why. Let us leave the bad parts of us behind when we go into the white house. Look at the shining, Clive!"

She stretched out her hand.

"Isn't it like a heavenly mansion—that lonely farm—in the evening light?"

"Yes. White houses often look magical in Africa. I noticed it when I was over here before."

"It's the gold falling on them. Light is everything out here. Leave out the light and Africa would be nothing. Don't let us leave our light outside when we go into the house by the sea. I only wanted to say that. I felt I must say it."

Then she walked on with her arm through his.

Only afterwards, long afterwards, did she remember that she had been moved to stop and say those words by the cold grey rocks of the *Mariage Arabe*, within sound of the voices of the demons chained under the earth in that place. Childish imaginings of the superstitious dark men! Yet she remembered them, as women remember trivialities and endow them with fatal meaning, when love and despair are at grips.

V

Two days later Clive and Vivian said good-bye to Hammam Chedakra. Clive was in haste to be gone. But Vivian

felt rather sad at leaving the little sequestered place. She found that she had already learnt to care for it as she cared for few places. The honest, broad-shouldered Provençal landlord and his wife, Raoul and Madame Raoul, Madame Guy, Rabah ben Mohamed, the pointers, Mimi the donkey, Titi and Fritz—these seemed now like old friends, homely and intimate. And the peace of it all, suddenly and sharply felt, woke in her wonder whether in the white house by the sea there, she and Clive, would find a greater peace.

As they left in the omnibus she leaned out to look once more at the smoke from the Grand Cascade drifting away among the olive trees. Then she turned, at a bend in the road, and gazed towards the grey mountains that made a barrier seaward. She was saying farewell to the lonely white farm-house which in the sunset hour had looked like a heavenly mansion. She was remembering what she had said to Clive in the golden evening. They must take their light with them into the white house by the sea.

The landau rolled heavily over the unevenly paved highway along the wharves of Sidi Barka towards the hilly country beyond the outskirts of the town. Italians, Maltese, Arabs, negroes, were at work among the warehouses. Hundreds of barrels lay massed beside the oily and discoloured waters of the harbour, where some haggard ships, which looked as if they had braved stormy seas in out-of-the-way corners of the world, lay wearily at anchor. This harbour held no gay yachts, no brave and majestic steamers, no prettily painted pleasure-boats. Under the grey sky it had the aspect of a place dedicated to commerce, to the necessities of man rather than to his pleasures. Here and there the sound of hammering, of tremendous blows struck on iron, rose out of hidden places. Dirt, disorder, the squalor of industry, were everywhere apparent. Children, who looked mostly like uncared-

for cross-breeds, the spawn of mongrel men and women, ran hither and thither, or stood in knots, many of them in tattered garments on bare feet, staring inquisitively with knowing eyes at the passing carriage. On the left of the road, the side furthest from the sea, was a line of miserable wooden shanties, where cheap drinks and coarse food were dispensed to the workers of the wharves by indescribable women, swarthy, fat, with disordered, or too elaborately arranged, dark hair, bold eyes, and dirty hands covered with false jewels. Fowls pecked about in front of these shanties. In the verandah of one of them an apathetic goose lay under a chair with a broken seat. Dogs of no recognised breed snuffled in the gutters for garbage. Goats tripped here and there with flopping ears. In tiny cages broody birds moulted, or trilled hectically, among mouldy plants in pots. Tattered and discoloured curtains blew out in the cold wind of the morning. Far off at sea a steamer sounded a hoarse note that seemed to issue from a gigantic throat threatened with laryngitis.

To Vivian, who had travelled little, and only to Paris, the Riviera and Switzerland, until this African journey with Clive, there seemed a forlorn atmosphere hanging about Sidi Barka. Although it was a busy town of some twenty-five thousand inhabitants, it seemed to her almost incredibly out of the world, a lost sort of place, inhabited by a degraded-looking population, not racial but mongrel. She looked at the blousy women of the cabarets, and could not tell what country they sprang from, what traditions they had. Those upper lips darkly tinged by incipient moustaches—did they come from Spain, from Malta, from Sicily, from less known islands of the Mediterranean? She thought vaguely of Corsica, Sardinia. How these women had let themselves go! Degradation at the gallop showed in them, in their animal eyes, their rolling wealth of dusky fat, in their slatternly gait, their coarse, protuberant attitudes. Could any men love such women? Could even their own children love them?

Perhaps they had black blood mingled with their European blood, perhaps many of them were half-castes. And she felt a strong repulsion from the unholy mingling of blood—as she thought it—though she had felt no repulsion from Rabah ben Mohamed, and the few Arabs she had seen in Hammam Chedakra.

The Maltese driver cracked his whip violently. With a bump the carriage rolled off the paved road by the wharves into a sea of brown and yellow mud, mingled with mud which was red. The strung-out cabarets still showed on the left of the road for a short distance, but the carriage had now passed the last of the warehouses, and was rolling by some seedy, low barracks, where native troops were quartered at the edge of the sea. Dark men were drilling in the moist ploughed-up earth of an open space. A bugle sounded. The sea came full into sight. The wind, as if it felt that it was no longer impeded by the habitations of men, rose in a strong gust, and went travelling inland towards the lines of low hills. And just then some drops of cold rain began to fall.

“This seems much further away from England than even Hammam Chedakra,” said Vivian, “in spite of there being a town here.”

“That’s because it’s entirely off the beaten track of travellers,” said Clive.

He looked at her anxiously.

“I know you hated the town—and no wonder! It’s a mongrel place with a mongrel population. And besides, the weather was all against us. But wait till we are out in the country over the hill there.”

He pointed towards some rising ground in the distance ahead.

“If only we could have a gleam of sunshine,” he added. “It would make all the difference.”

“Light—yes. Africa needs light tremendously.”

"We shall have it, heaps of it, never fear!"

"And our own light too, the light we are bringing with us," she said.

The carriage wheels on the left-hand side sank deeply into a sort of small pit. The horses, encouraged by the Maltese driver, strained violently at their collars. The wheels rose grinding against some stones. Mud flew up in a shower. The driver turned round, grinning under his enormous moustaches, and remarked in bastard French:

"The roads are only fit for the devil to travel on since the war."

"Since the war!" echoed Vivian. "Everything that goes wrong now, from the morals of men and women to the holes in the road, is scored up against the war."

"And yet not half the tale is ever told or even hinted at," said Clive. "If the world knew how much hidden evil, evil that's past and that's in being at this very moment, is due to that great orgy of abominations, due solely to that, perhaps there might be a chance of a long peace. That is, if human beings in the mass are capable any more of being shocked at anything, of recoiling from anything. God, how I hate war!"

Vivian was amazed by the sudden and intense violence in his voice, a strangely personal violence, which seemed to boil up out of depths incandescent. Clive seldom spoke of the war, never of the part he had played in it. She was startled to realise the fierceness of his feeling about it. But before she could say anything he added quickly:

"But don't let us be fools. Don't let us spoil our peace. That's what men and women generally do. They won't let their own happiness alone. Look over there, Vi. The sky is brightening over the sea. This rain isn't going to last. Allez un peu plus vite!" he added, raising his voice in a call to the driver. "The horses haven't much further to go. It's no distance really to the house. But the difference be-

tween the town and the place where the house stands! You'll see almost directly. I know exactly what you're thinking. But wait just five minutes. If only the sun would come really out, instead of pretending and tricking us!"

There was exasperation in his voice.

"The sun will come," she said, putting her hand on his. "If not to-day, then to-morrow. You're afraid I'm going to be disappointed, aren't you?"

"It's all such a terrific sacrifice for you."

"No, it isn't. I'm with you, and we are going to be very happy here."

She kept her hand on his and they were silent, as the horses mounted the hill.

The road now wound upwards along high ground at the very edge of the sea. The last shanty had disappeared. Not a house was in sight. On the left of the road pine trees showed climbing to the crest of a hill. A fisherman with bare feet and frowning brows over hawk-like eyes went by, meeting them, with a great pannier of straw hanging from a hairy brown arm. Out at sea a fleet of sixteen fishing smacks spread their sails to the wind. Above them was a widening rent in the grey of the sky through which Vivian saw a patch of deep blue. It was a day of changing weather, uncertain, tremulous, now dark and threatening, now only pale, with suggestions of hidden radiance ready to break through and be kind to the world if the power were given to it.

The hill grew steeper. The road was still very bad, and the little, active grey horses which drew the heavy landau had hard work to plough through the mud. On the right the bank descended precipitously to the shingle that edged the sea, which broke on it with a heavy, muffled sound sending up a mist of white spray. The cry of gulls was faintly audible in the wind.

Clive stood up in the carriage, holding on with one hand to the rail behind the box-seat.

"We shall be at the top in a moment. Then the road turns sharply and we shall see the trees in our garden."

"Our garden!" The words sounded strange in Vivian's ears. She could scarcely believe that she was driving to a house which she must learn to think of as "home." She got up too, and stood by Clive looking over the horses' heads. The carriage breasted the hill, and came to a point of land below which some rocks stood out above the sea. Here the road turned at an acute angle, and a wide view came into sight, a view of curving shores, of sands, of distant houses scattered along the edge of the sands, of pine-woods, hills, a long promontory far off running out to protect this part of the African coast with a lighthouse set prominently on a point. To the left was a great bastion of yellow stone, perhaps twenty feet high, with a low wall above it, and a climbing wilderness of trees and shrubs; great spreading pines, ilexes, palms, orange trees, lemon trees, mimosa, lebbek trees, pepper trees, bamboos, laurustinus, oleanders. Over the wall of the bastion of stone geraniums streamed down, a tangle of green tresses with as yet but a very few pink and red flowers. And the sound of the wind from the sea in these masses of trees raised high above the road, and mounting upwards steeply to the crown of the hill, was deep and sonorous, a romantic world-music which suggested eternity and ultimate things. Vivian detected the romance in this sound even as they drove by under the leaning crowns of the pines. She was to know it well, to think of it as a *leitmotif* in her life in the future. But now quickly she forgot it, for a white house came partially into sight, high up, a snow-white house, with cup-like cupolas, and terraces, and pillared little balconies, and arched windows, peeping through the masses of foliage.

"There it is!" said Clive.

His face was flushed as he turned it to her, and his eyes were shining eagerly.

"The white house by the sea!" she said. "How strange that we should have come to it at last!"

She let go of the rail and sank back on the seat. The driver pulled up the horses carefully at the edge of the precipitous cliff. And she saw a tall iron gate between stone posts, close-shut against intruders.

"I'll get down and open it," Clive said to the driver.

And in an instant he was out of the carriage and had the gate open. He stood holding it while the driver turned the horses' heads. The whip was cracked sharply; the horses started forward. Vivian called out, "Attendez pour Monsieur!" But the man on the box did not heed her. The horses broke into an uneven canter, and up a steep, narrow drive, between two walls of trees, she was carried alone to the white house by the sea.

Vivian was beginning to realise the strangeness of being out of the world. She remembered someone—she had forgotten whom—saying to her once, "We live quite out of the world now." She had sometimes seen the phrase in print. But she had not experienced what the words stood for. Now she knew that they certainly stood for life in the house by the sea. And the strangeness, the full meaning of a life totally disconnected from all those small experiences, those innumerable daily events which had hitherto made up in their totality "life" for her, stole over and into her gradually. And it seemed to her that she had never till now had full time to think deeply, to notice acutely, to feel thoroughly, to weigh, to penetrate, and to wonder.

This comparatively silent life, emptied of many voices, of many faces, of activities, of the stir and the clamour and the crowding desires of men, of insistent calls upon her attention and demands upon her time and her energy, was not a thin life; it was full, mysteriously full, but she felt

it purged and because of that almost terribly clear. There was something stark about it, as if the clothes of life were gone, and the naked body of life began to show itself to her.

Already the house in which she was living with Clive, the garden surrounding it, the outlook from that garden, seemed familiar to her as nothing had ever seemed familiar before. The setting of her present life had become one with her life, had sunk into it and mingled with it. Nevertheless in the familiarity, the oneness, there was strangeness. Clive had once told her that in passing quickly by the white house, which had been named by its not very inventive owner *Villa du Soleil*, he had felt it. Perhaps touched by suggestion from him, she, too, felt the house and the garden in which it stood. They seemed to have been waiting for her, to have been intending that she should come to them and belong to them.

The house was fantastic. It was not an old Arab house, but modern. Yet it had an Oriental fascination about it. For the architect had caught something of the furtive subtlety of those Eastern builders who knew how to fashion beautiful hiding-places which turned blind eyes to the world. There was something secretive about the rather complicated architecture which peeped out, or kept away from sight among the trees. Small, cup-like cupolas, blindingly white, were divided by sections of flat roof which served as oddly secret terraces. One entered through a narrow arched doorway from the garden, went up a tiled stairway of shallow steps, came into a small room with low-set windows sunk deep in thick walls, and lo! there was another garden high up with flowers blowing almost on a level with the windows. For the house was built upon different levels, so that rooms which were upstairs were found to be also on a ground floor, while yet other rooms, to which one descended, opened upon pillared balconies, or tiny red-tiled terraces lifted above the ground and commanding through the crowding trees glimpses of

the bright sea. Everywhere delicate and intricate patterns of plaster-work broke the monotony of the snow-white and cream-coloured interior walls, and the pure colours of Moorish tiles, azure, emerald green, deep orange, pale yellow, purple and mauve, lit up the shadowy recesses which seemed constructed for dreaming. The rooms under the cupolas were domed, and in the domes were tiny window-slits of glass that glowed in the sun-rays like narrow jewels. The other rooms, too, had high ceilings, a concession to modern hygiene; and though most of the doorways and the short staircases were narrow, and most of the windows were small, the house was a deliciously cool house, nearly always full of air and of the breath of the sea.

There was one outside staircase. This led from a shady open space in the garden immediately on the left of the steep and curving drive, but well below it, to a sort of flat, consisting of two adjoining bedrooms, one large, looking right over, and almost into, the sea, the other smaller with windows to the more sequestered part of the garden. A lobby, or little hall, divided them, and they were cut off from the rest of the house, their only access being to the staircase, and to a small, square terrace, with a low white parapet, raised high above the drive, and commanding a view of it, and of the country beyond and below the villa towards the promontory on which stood the lighthouse. A window from the bigger of the two bedrooms opened on to this terrace, two other windows at the end of the room looking down on to the sea. Vivian and Clive had taken possession of this flat as their sleeping quarters. They both liked the privacy of it, the silence of it, cut off from the rest of the house in which sometimes the voices, the shuffling footsteps of servants were audible. And they enjoyed mounting up to it by the staircase out in the sea-wind. The rainy season was over, the warmth of the African spring was increasing every day in the air. They had little to fear now from the

elements except, perhaps, an occasional shower of rain quickly passing, or a brief storm blowing up from the sea. And if any steady bad weather did set in, which was unlikely, they could easily shift their quarters to the main portion of the house, and as Clive said, "creep in under the cupolas and lie snug till the evil was past."

The furniture of the house was not remarkable. The engineer who had built the harbour of Sidi Barka was evidently a man of no great knowledge or taste. But he had had a care for comfort. The beds, for instance, were excellent. There were many deep and well-cushioned divans covered with native stuffs. Some not valuable, but decidedly decorative, Oriental carpets and prayer rugs were laid on the tiled floors. Here and there stood a few bits of pottery vivid in colour. There was of course nothing of English luxury, but there was nothing of French stiffness. The house was on the whole rather bare, but it had no glaring notes of bad taste, and it was easily "run" with a staff of three servants, a French Algerian cook from Constantine, an Italian woman who had been in Tunis, but whose family now lived in Sidi Barka, and a Kabyle valet de chambre who announced himself as Bakir ben Yahia.

To Vivian the house was a perpetual delight, a sort of conjurer's box full of surprises. Although it had a touch of mystery, there was absolutely no melancholy about it. Its radiant whiteness was enticingly cheerful. Its up and down subtlety was entertaining, even amusing. Its fragmentary cleverness, a cleverness of morsels, was totally unlike anything to which she was accustomed. And, at any rate for her, a new-comer in Africa, it had a savour of romance. When she stood on one of the bits of flat roof between the cupolas, and saw their round whiteness, almost like the round whiteness of a beautiful woman's breasts, rising on left and right, or forming a curving barrier in front of her, she often had a queer little thrill of emotion, as if the

far-away had come near to her, were trying to enfold her in its strangeness, to form her into a woman quite other than the athletic English girl she was. When from a distant nook in the garden she caught a glimpse of gleaming white through the trees, perhaps a tiny pillared balcony peeping between parted tresses of Bougainvillæa, or a low terrace wall with a square small window above it, or a section of flat façade with pale blue shutters set back against it, she was stirred by an emotion both vague and vital, such as no building had given her before. She came to think of the house as an individual, complex, furtive, gay, pure, endowed with both humour and mystery, hiding and laughing in the shadow and the sun. And the sound of the sea was a voice in the house, seemed sometimes to Vivian to be the very voice of the house, now murmuring, purring, contented or drowsy, now deep with dreaming or desire, now mystical with a withdrawn intensity, wide and frail, yet holding sounds of eternity, sounds that called, that summoned, that hinted at the nothingness of the human life in the world.

Vivian always thought of the house as African; she thought of the garden as Mediterranean.

When she had been on the Riviera playing tennis in the old days that seemed already so long ago, she had known many beautiful sea-gardens. The garden of the *Villa du Soleil* reminded her of them with an added charm coming from the other side of the sea. And this combination of the South and the North, the South of France and the North of Africa, blending together harmoniously made the garden Mediterranean. The many pine trees in it, some of them giants with mighty crowns, recalled the Riviera. And there were the olives, the orange trees, the lemon trees and the palms, all to be found on the shores of France. The cypresses, the ilexes, were perhaps Italian-Mediterranean. The mimosa, the oleanders, the laurustinus, the acacias—these were not specially African. But though Vivian had of course seen

many palms in Riviera gardens, the palms in the domain of the *Villa du Soleil* seemed to her finer, more definite, and far more thoroughly in place and at home than those in Lord Dartree's garden at Cannes, or in the grounds of her other acquaintances and friends at Cannes, Nice, Menton and Monte Carlo.

"Palms belong here!" she often thought, as she wandered through this African garden. "On the Riviera they look like luxury trees belonging necessarily to rich people. Here they are natural companions."

And with them she put the lebbek trees, the pepper trees, and the enormous bamboos. But the palms were her special favourites. She loved to look through the palms to the little white cupolas. She loved to sit under their tufted heads and to listen to the swish of the wind in their shining fan-like leaves. She loved to hear the creak of the tall, bare, slate-coloured stems of the three or four cocoon palm, as they swayed when the sea-wind blew strongly, bending this way and that with a marvellous suppleness that knew how to give and to resist. Quite near to the house there was a long palm walk, running from a circular space with garden seats, where Vivian and Clive often sat to drink coffee, or, in the afternoons, to have tea at the sacred hour of England, to the pleasure of spring where, in carefully laid out beds, bloomed hyacinths, daffodils, tulips, and masses of big purple violets. The palms on either side of this walk, a path strewn with shining, honey-coloured sand, had fat, deeply wrinkled trunks which reminded Vivian of pine-apples. They spread a roof of magnificent fans overhead, through which the sunlight trickled, but which gave many patches of shade. Vivian called this path, "Little Africa," or sometimes, "The African Walk," the pleasure beyond it, "Little England" because the flowers there recalled to her Surrey gardens, and April moments at home. Often she strolled or sat in "Little Africa," and with eyes half closed, or sometimes shut, listened to the

voice, the special voice, which the wind gave to the palm-leaves. There were many voices in the garden and gradually she came to know them all: the voices of the pines, most mysterious and beautiful of all, the reedy voices of the feathery bamboos, the rustling voices of the tufted palms which lifted their small, proud heads on high, above most of the other trees, the hushed, sometimes almost dulled voices of the ilex and lebbek trees, the murmuring whisper of mimosa.

But in after-time, when she thought of days and nights in the *Villa du Soleil*, of sunny, of twilight, of moonlit, and of deep, dark hours in that Garden of the Sea, her memory was always flooded with the sound of wind in the pine trees, and she knew that the dominating voices about her there were the voices of the pines.

The garden was rather large, and had been cleverly laid out in a series of terraces, of different lengths and widths and shapes. Only one was fully exposed to the sea. This was the very long and narrow terrace which stretched itself out by the low wall at the bottom of the garden above the great stone bastion which Vivian had noticed from the road. At the end of this terrace farthest from the house there was a solitary room built against a wall of rock. Completely hidden from the house, and at a considerable distance from it, this room could only be reached from the terrace. Why it had been built there, what special purpose it had served, Clive and Vivian could not guess. It was large enough for a studio, but there was no north light, and the one window to the sea was small. The walls were whitewashed, the ceiling was lofty; there was a wide doorway through which plenty of light could enter when the door was set open. In the room were a large plain writing-table, a revolving chair, a bureau with many drawers, and a deep divan. Possibly the engineer had retired to this solitary room to study, or work out his plans, when building the harbour. The floor was strewn

with rugs. An electric lamp hung from the ceiling above the writing-table.

Clive and Vivian called this lowest terrace "the sea terrace," and often walked there at the hour of sunset. Looking over the wall they had a wonderful view. The whole of the prospect towards the promontory beyond the house was hidden from them by the sharp turn of the road near the gate of their drive, but they could look across the arm of the sea which ended in the port of Sidi Barka to a long line of hills and mountains, at whose feet lay yellow sands washed by the waves of the sea. Fold upon fold these distant mountains, not repellingly high, not cruelly severe, seemed almost to float into the distance of the sea. Often they looked like a wonderful painting tenderly washed in by a brush steeped in dark colours between the blues of sea and sky. Yet the yellow sands curving along their base for mile upon mile were clearly discernible from the garden of the *Villa du Soleil*. Towards sunset these mountains bloomed against the sky, as if heavily dusted with a marvellous plum colour. At dawn they usually looked paler, dim blue. They were always exquisitely beautiful. The intricacy of their outlines somehow miraculously made in the net result an impression of delicate, sometimes of breathless, calm. When Vivian stood gazing across the sea at them she often found that she was instinctively holding her breath. And they too, like the white half-hidden house, like the terraced garden on the hillside, seemed to mingle with her life at this time, to become almost one with it.

She kept away from Sidi Barka; seldom she even thought of it, or sharply realised how very near it was, with its mongrel population, its barracks, its wharves, its discoloured shanties and dingy commercial bustle. She saw from the garden steamers going towards it, sailing ships drawing into its harbour from Mediterranean voyages; she saw nearly every day the fleet of fishing boats coming out from it to

their business in the deep, or tacking at evening after the labour of the day to regain it before the dark set in. She saw the winking eye of the lighthouse on the mole which guarded the harbour entrance. But nevertheless there was a curious atmosphere of remoteness, not of wildness but just that—of remoteness, about the little domain of the *Villa du Soleil*, which penetrated Vivian and allowed her to forget, or to ignore, things at enmity with it.

It seemed to her a white hermitage of the sea, far away from all beaten tracks, hidden away from the eyes and the voices of men, from the generally cruel notice of humanity, full of sea scents and sea noises, intimate yet ceaselessly romantic, lonely, Mediterranean. Along the winding road at the sea edge few vehicles came. Now and then a cart went slowly past, with a swarthy Maltese, Sicilian or Arab half asleep above a team of mules. Now and then a carriage drove by containing some bourgeoisie of Sidi Barka out for an airing. Very seldom rose up the purr of a motor-car breasting the hill. Generally about the white house there were only the voices of birds—the garden was full of birds—sea voices, and voices of trees played with by the winds.

If exterior peace can bring to the birth interior peace, if natural beauty can bring about joy in human hearts, if extreme remoteness from places connected with pain in the human memory can lay to rest, or cause absolutely to die, the ache that memory, when in activity, keeps alive, then, though Clive and Vivian had not gone out into the wilds by the stream, under the tawny precipices above the plain of the gazelles, surely they had at last reached their *endroit du bonheur*.

VI

ABOUT a fortnight after Vivian and Clive had settled down in the *Villa du Soleil*, in the afternoon, a short, thin

man, with dark hair and eyes, a wrinkled face and a yellow complexion, walked up the road by the sea from the direction of the scattered houses which lay along the sands between the villa and the promontory, opened the tall iron gate, and made his way to the entrance where there was an electric bell. He rang. Bakir ben Yahia answered the summons, and was asked briskly in French, spoken with a strong English accent, for his master, Mr. Claude Ormeley. At the same time he was given a card on which was printed: Mr. Frederick Beake, H.B.M. Consul, and an address in Sidi Barka. Bakir took the card in his sleepy and gentle way—he was always gentle and nearly always seemed sleepy—and went into the house, leaving King George's representative standing on the grey marble step.

Clive happened to be out walking, but Vivian was reading in the garden, and was speedily discovered by Bakir, who solemnly gave her the card, saying in a slow, thick voice, "Monsieur le Consul Anglais pour Madame."

As Vivian heard the words and looked at the card she had an unpleasant, startled feeling, as of one unexpectedly discovered when lying in hiding. She stared at the card, uncertain what to do. Until this moment she had not known that there was an official representative of England in Sidi Barka. She was disagreeably surprised by the knowledge, and immediately her mind fastened on the invented name she and Clive had assumed. Could this man's visit have anything to do with that? Could he have found out who they really were and——

"Did you tell the gentleman I was at home?" she asked Bakir.

"Yes, Madame. I said you were here in the garden."

Vivian got up from her chair and went towards the house.

"Bring the gentleman into the salon, please, Bakir," she said.

She went into the house from the lower terrace, and

waited for a moment in the little salon which served as a drawing-room. Here they had put out a few of their books, and on the writing-table stood the large photograph of Clive which had formerly stood on Vivian's writing-table in Pont Street, the photograph of the trouble-maker.

"Monsieur le Consul Anglais!" announced Bakir, solemnly, and the short man with the yellow complexion stood before Vivian.

He looked at her, she thought, rather eagerly with his dark eyes as she held out her hand.

"I hope I am not disturbing you," he said. "I'm the British Consul here, and hearing that the villa had been taken by English people, I felt it my duty, and pleasure, to call, in spite of the foreign fashion which prescribes—ah!"

"Thank you very much. Do sit down."

"Thanks. It's a very rare thing for English residents to settle here. This place is rather off the beaten track. And to tell the truth, although I have been here now for over seven years, I have——"

"Yes?" said Vivian. "Yes?"

The little man had suddenly broken off again, but now, at her question, he rather confusedly continued, with an uncertain manner:

"I have never known any English to settle here except for business purposes, in connection with the wine and tobacco trades. Are you staying long?"

He looked at her in an oddly surreptitious and searching way, she thought, then quickly looked away.

"We have taken this house till the end of June. We—my husband has had a great deal to do lately and needs a complete rest. We hope to get it here."

"Oh, you will, you will! No one ever comes here. It's a real exile, I can assure you. Since my wife died three years ago I have been trying to get transferred, but up to now I haven't been successful."

"You live in the town?"

"Yes, in a flat. But to-day I've been out at Ain-Touta having a swim. I'm a very persistent bather. Even in winter I sometimes go in. But——"

Again he sent the oddly surreptitious and searching look to Vivian and broke off.

"Yes?" she said, this time with insistence.

The feeling had grown upon her, while she had been with Mr. Beake, that since he had seen her there was something on his mind, and that she had better know it, though she was sure the knowledge would be unpleasant to her.

"What is it?" she added, as he was silent.

"Well—excuse me . . . but do you play tennis?" he asked, abruptly.

"Tennis! Why should you think so—though nowadays most people play?"

"The fact is, my last leave in England coincided with the Wimbledon Tournament. That was the year before last. I'm a keen tennis player, though only in a small way. I've no pretension to be a crack player. And I—I—do forgive me, but haven't you ever been told that you're astonishingly like Miss Vivian Denys, the famous champion? She won the Mixed Doubles with Gordon, you know, last October at King's Club, and married——"

"I am—or rather I was Vivian Denys," said Vivian.

Mr. Beake started violently, stared; his yellow complexion slowly reddened, as if with difficulty; he put up a thin yellow hand to his small, bristling moustache.

"But—but—I understood that your name was Ormeley, Mrs. Claude Ormeley!" he said. "I know this house was taken in the name of Ormeley. As British Consul I——"

Suddenly his eyes, shifting uneasily about the little room, fixed themselves on the large photograph of Clive which was close to his chair. He leaned forward staring.

"That is my husband," said Vivian.

"I have seen other photographs of him in the papers. But——"

"His name is Clive Baratrie."

"I knew that you married Clive Baratrie—that is that Miss Denys——"

"Almost every living Englishman and woman does know that, I suppose," said Vivian, quietly. "Circumstances have combined to make our name notorious. That is why, for a little while, we have taken another name, the name of Ormeley. That is why we are living here for a few months. My husband has gone through a very terrible experience, Mr. Beake. If he hadn't a strong nature it might have brought about a catastrophe. For there's a limit to all human endurance. What the future holds for us I can't know. But I hope you will let the present alone. Will you?"

Mr. Beake looked very excited, very "strung up." Both hands had now flown to his moustache, and he shifted in his chair like a fidgety boy.

"I'm sure, Mrs. Baratrie, that I haven't the slightest wish to—— Are your passports in order?"

His voice had become suddenly official.

"Of course we took out passports in our own name, the name of Baratrie," said Vivian, trying to keep the ice out of her voice, to speak simply and naturally.

"Right! Right!"

He was now again looking at her with the oddly furtive and self-conscious expression which she had already noticed.

"It's a most extraordinary thing——" he began.

He stopped.

"What is most extraordinary, please?"

"It's a most extraordinary thing, but I am a very distant relative of the late Mrs. Sabine."

Vivian felt that she stiffened in her chair.

"Really!" she said.

"Yes. Mrs. Sabine was my Mother's cousin, her third cousin on her Father's side. But I never even saw her."

He paused. Vivian said nothing.

"Very odd— isn't it?" he added, "that in this out-of-the-way place——"

"I don't think anything is odd," Vivian interrupted. She had become unusually pale, and her steady eyes were stern. "It seems to me that the unexpected happens more often than not."

She looked quickly round the little room, listened for an instant to the intimate voice of the sea which pervaded it. It was absurd—she knew that—but she felt just then as if Mrs. Sabine had followed them to Africa, as if this little yellow man, with the stubby moustache and the excited dark eyes, were a connecting-link between those who had tried to escape and this following individuality, mysterious, hidden, but potent. And she seemed to see a thin, barely visible cord stretched out between the dead woman, who lived horribly in her life, and herself, fastening them the one to the other.

"Mr. Beake," she said, "you know the phrase about throwing oneself on another's mercy. I don't want to do that. My husband and I have nothing to be ashamed of, as you know if you have followed what has been made public about us in the newspapers. It—it has all been the persecution of an innocent man. But I want to tell you how it is with us just now. It is no use my talking to you as a stranger, and I'm not going to do it. I'm going to be unreserved with you for my husband's sake."

She was forcing herself through a quickset hedge of natural reserve. She felt that thorns tore her, that a network of closely woven together obstacles, making an almost impenetrable barrier, tried stubbornly to oppose her progress to frankness. But she got through, found the way obstinately, helped by the fixed purpose, which was becoming the passion

of her life, to make things easy for Clive. And she told the little man something of how it was with the man she loved; told him that Clive must have rest, peace, freedom from the intolerable, flaying knowledge and anxiety which had persecuted him for so long. And she asked him to join with her in keeping a secret from Clive—the fact that he knew now who Clive was, the other fact about the distant relationship to Mrs. Sabine. And he listened, understood—or so it seemed—and promised to do what she wished. And he went away thrilling with excitement, and half in love with this wonderful girl, who had confided in him and with whom he was sharer in a plot, a plot of silence and hidden knowledge. His lonely and dreary life lifted itself on wings that day. Suddenly brought face to face with the bitter romance of life, suddenly taken into it for a moment by this girl, heroine of the tennis courts, one of the central figures in a great scandal, Frederick Beake, H.B.M. Consul at Sidi Barka, walked home to his ugly little flat in a condition of tense mental energy that finally left him tired. Sidi Barka seemed suddenly central, instead of a town toppling off the edge of the world into nothingness. An extraordinary day! Extraordinary! One never knew what might happen next, when one might be drawn into a current of strange events. If Catherine—the dead wife—had been here, how interested, how excited she would have been! But then he remembered his pledge to Mrs. Baratrie. For it had been a pledge, nothing less. He would not have been able to tell Catherine. So perhaps it was as well that—he lay back in his chair and lit an Algerian cigar.

From that day Vivian had a secret from Clive. She hated having a secret. It seemed to her as if circumstances were conspiring together to force her into paths where she had never thought to set foot. When Clive came back from his walk she told him that she had had a visitor, and who the visitor had been, and what sort of little man he was.

But she said nothing more. Even the bit of news which she gave seemed to irritate and upset Clive severely.

"An Englishman here!" he exclaimed. "And claiming the right to call on us! Where can one go to get away from the everlasting interference with one's life? And now I suppose—did he leave a card for me?"

"Yes."

"Where is it?"

"Here," she said, holding the card out.

He looked at it with angry eyes.

"I don't think I shall return it. Why should I? What's the use?"

"Why not drive in with me one day during business hours and just leave your card at his flat? He is sure to be out at the Consulate."

"But he might come here again."

She said nothing. She thought that quite possible. Clive still held the card and was staring at it, almost as if fascinated.

"This beastly little bit of pasteboard has made me feel quite different about our home here," he said. "Quite different!"

He laid the card down on the writing-table near his photograph, then raised his eyes to the photograph and frowned.

"Did he see that?" he asked.

"No doubt," said Vivian, feeling horrible, unnatural, almost guilty. "He looked about the room."

"I wonder if——" He broke off, changed the subject, and soon went out alone into the garden.

It was immediately after this unforeseen occurrence that Clive began to show an interest in the solitary room at the end of the lowest terrace of the garden. He made Bakir ben Yahia go down with him to it, had the room dusted and brushed out, the furniture moved so that light fell on the writing-table when the door was shut, a blotter, letter-paper, envelopes and pens arranged upon it, a rack for pipes

fastened against the wall, a small bookcase fixed up over the divan.

"It seems a pity to waste that room," he said, in explanation to Vivian. "Besides, I like being so close to the sea."

His eyes were self-conscious as he said this, and his manner was slightly uneasy. She knew that it was the Consul's visit which had drawn his attention to the room. He had thought of it, was thinking of it now, as a hiding-place. Evidently in their solitude the morbid passion for complete isolation was growing on him. Already she could scarcely believe that he had had the strength, the courage, to endure all that he had endured for so long in England. For he was quite evidently a super-sensitive man, more sensitive even than she had suspected. Or—it might be that—he was perhaps being swept along on the wave of a great reaction, greater than she had foreseen. Having faced the curious world bravely for nearly two years, perpetually stared at, whispered about, criticised, the victim of an intense and universal inquisitiveness in Law Court, drawing-room, Stock Exchange, in theatres, in the streets, on the tennis courts, wherever men and women congregated or went by, it had come to this—that now literally he wanted to hide like an animal that creeps into a hole. And she thought, could not help thinking, of the room on the sea terrace as a hole.

This development in Clive was horribly painful to her. Sometimes she could scarcely bear it. Sometimes she blamed herself secretly for having come away from England with him, called herself a coward in her tenderness, a recreant in her unselfishness. Sometimes she wondered whether she was not actually in process of helping to destroy the man whom she loved. Was he not sinking into weakness, losing his manhood? Ought she not to combat his apparently growing determination to live hidden away? But then she remembered that they had come out to Africa under a name not theirs merely in order that he should have a rest from notoriety,

a period of peace from the torture he had endured for so long. And she knew herself for the time powerless to protest against a way of life which might possibly lead to disaster, to a complete sapping of Clive's power to resist if, as seemed inevitable, he had to take up his burden again.

For Vivian knew that they could not live in hiding for ever. She always looked upon this African time as a period of rest between two periods of energetic, and even tragic, struggle. She was perhaps too young, and certainly too naturally courageous and honest-hearted, to contemplate a perpetual secrecy as possible for her and Clive. To hide for ever would be fatal to the characters of both of them. And she knew that there was something unconquerable in her which could not endure that even because of love. Beyond the love even, far down in the depths of her, there was something moral which was *her*, something untamable which would have to have its way in the end even in defiance of love; and that something would never consent to a perpetual exclusion brought about by something not unlike fear.

In the house by the sea she came to know that absolutely. It was one of the many things made strongly clear to her in this new way of life.

She said nothing to dissuade Clive from making the sea room his sitting-room. On the contrary, she added to its comfort with one or two touches, and filled it with flowers from the garden and branches of flowering mimosa, giving the rein to her tenderness. If this was indeed only a period of calm and comparative happiness between two periods of struggle and difficulty, as she believed, even felt sure, she longed to make it as perfect as she could. So she hid from Clive the fact of her knowledge of his fear, and assumed, with him, that the sea was the attraction which had drawn him to the solitary room.

About a week after the Consul's visit they drove in a hired carriage to Sidi Barka, in business hours, and Clive

climbed the stairs of a new building let out in flats on the outskirts of the town, near a piece of waste ground called "Le Stadium Anglais de Sidi Barka," and rang at a door *au troisième* which had Mr. Beake's name on it. A Jewish woman-servant, in loose slippers and a pointed black cap bordered with a fringed scarlet handkerchief, answered the door, and said that the Consul was out at his office. Clive left his card.

"That's over, thank God!" he said, as he got into the carriage. "And now let's be off. I hate this town, don't you, Vi?"

"I don't hate it, but there's nothing attractive about it except the setting. I love the mountains beyond the harbour, and the country inland with the hills and pine-woods must be beautiful, I think. But the town—no!"

"It's off the beaten track. That's its only merit. I'm longing to get back to our garden. I hope the little yellow man won't take it into his head to call again. I dare say he's bored to death here and would find us a resource if we let him. But I can't have that. I shall tell Bakir. We haven't come here to——"

He broke off. They had passed the warehouses, and the strong breath of the sea, green and foam-flecked that day, came to them with its healing touch. Vivian saw Clive shut his eyes. Then he took off his soft hat and the wind ruffled his hair. His face was burned by the sun, but the upper part of his forehead was white. She looked at this white bit. Distress seemed to be made visible on it. Now that he had shut his eyes, because of that, she felt the ache of his longing for calm. He was trying just then to give himself up to the cooling and beautiful inhumanity of the sea wind, to draw nature into his soul. His shut eyes were strangely pathetic to her. She felt about him then as she had felt in Hammam Chedakra when she had watched him asleep by the olive-wood fire.

He opened his eyes and met hers, smiled faintly, and put out his hand to hers.

"*You* are worth it all!" he said, with a sudden vehemence. "If it hadn't been for you——"

And suddenly he began to speak with exceptional reserve about that night in Chester Street when she had lain for a time in danger of death, and told her, with minuteness, what he had endured as he waited, with her Mother, to know whether she would live or die. He had spoken of this before, but never with such complete and detailed frankness and impetuosity, almost like an intense boy driven by the heat of his love.

"That night taught me exactly what you were to me," he said, at last. "I thought I had known long before. I thought I knew when I told you that day in Knightsbridge that I couldn't love you in an ordinary way, when I warned you, Vi—yes, it was a warning and I meant it for that—that neither my giving, nor your taking, could be in the usual way of such happenings. I told you there was danger. I told you. And now you've experienced it—some of it. You've suffered tremendously through me, because of me."

He stopped speaking for a moment. She didn't deny what he had said.

"And we've both suffered because of each other," he added.

This time she spoke.

"Little Clive?" she said.

"What? Oh—yes—little Clive!"

"Do you ever miss him?"

"Sometimes I do. Poor little chap! I can see his eyes, the shallow and yet inward look of them. But I don't miss him as you do."

"No."

"If he had lived longer I feel I should have missed him much more. But he was taken away. If he had lived and you had died! But I won't let such a horrible thought stay

in my mind. Thought can be such a terrific curse. We ought to learn somehow to control thought. It can be done, I believe. I'm told it can be done."

After that day Vivian felt that she realised even more acutely than before Clive's intense dependence on her.

Nevertheless he was often away from her.

When the room on the sea terrace had been made ready, he sometimes disappeared to it, and stayed there for a long time. At first she wondered what he did there. But one day a large parcel of books arrived from London, ordered by him—she presently learnt—when they were in Hammam Chedakra. Bakir conveyed the load to the solitary room, and one day Vivian found them arranged in the bookcase above the divan.

"Books!" she said.

"Yes. That's one advantage of living out of the world. A man has time to do some serious reading."

She went to stand before the bookcase, and looked at the volumes ranged in it. She did not know exactly what books she expected to see, whether history, biographies, travels, philosophy, or poetry. She saw Pascal's "Pensées sur la religion," Bunyan's "The Pilgrim's Progress," Spinoza's "Ethics," Masefield's "The Everlasting Mercy," Lombroso's "L'Homme Criminel," and Dostoyewsky's "Le Crime et le Châtiment." These stood together. Underneath them were several modern works on thought-control, self-hypnotism, psycho-analysis, and new thought.

"Rather a mixed bag, isn't it?" said Clive, as she stood silently looking at the books.

"Yes."

"Spinoza says that true freedom depends upon the extent to which man shakes off the yoke of his passions and identifies himself with God by contemplation. I wonder whether he ever found true freedom."

"I wonder," she said.

The sound of the sea was very definite in the room. She could hear each separate wave break softly on the rocks beneath the point on the far side of the narrow high road. Looking through the doorway, she saw only the long terrace stretching away, the wall that bordered it, the end of the terrace opposite to Clive's room. A plantation of pine trees, many of them leaning towards the sea, concealed the house entirely from her. There might be no house—only the trees, the solitary room, the sea.

She looked again at the books, and her eyes rested on the title "L'Homme Criminel," Cesare Lombroso's famous treatise. It was a tall, grey-paper-covered book, much bigger than all the other books. Vivian had never heard of it, though she had heard of Lombroso, knew that he had been a clever Italian, a Professor, or Doctor, or both, that he was now dead, and that he had interested himself in the study and analysis of crime and criminals. Now, moved by a sudden impulse, she stretched out her hand to the tall grey book.

"Is this interesting?" she asked.

She heard a wave break on the rocks.

"I believe so. I haven't studied it yet."

She looked at him, and almost immediately afterwards went away.

Religion, crime, thought-control! By his books shall you know a man? She felt that she had just had a glimpse into a part of Clive's mind which she had never yet explored.

Hitherto he had not found very much time for reading while they had been living together. Life had eaten up his time as moths eat a garment. The fight had strained his nerves almost to the snapping-point. And how can a man study quietly the thoughts of students and devotional recluses and philosophers when all his being is braced up to hold his own in a struggle against tremendous odds? But now Clive had time. And he had sent to London for those books, had

chosen them—because of a mental process—had been waiting for them, perhaps eagerly, and was now hiding in that distant room with them for companions.

“What a lot of things we never speak about! What a lot of things we don’t tell one another!” Vivian said to herself, as she went up into the shadows of the garden.

The sound of that wave which had broken on the rocks below the sea terrace as she had put out her hand towards “L’Homme Criminel” was still in her ears. She felt that she could differentiate that particular sound from the soft noise made by any other breaking wave. She did not know why that was. She had stretched out her hand—and then she had looked at Clive—and then she had gone away.

Now as she mounted among the trees she came to one which was noticeable among its fellows. This was an exceptionally big pine tree, which grew on a steep bank and leaned markedly towards the sea, as if drawn by a persistent desire to give itself to the element whose winds called forth from it and its comrades eternal music. Round its trunk, perhaps half-way up, was clamped a broad bracelet of iron. From this bracelet extended a taut chain which united it to a second bracelet fastened round a branch of the tree. And this branch seemed to be pulling away from the pine trunk in a determined effort to escape, and to be held back by the two bracelets and the tightly stretched cable of iron. Vivian had named this pine branch “The Slave.” She glanced at it now on her way to the higher terraces of the garden; she stopped on the path and contemplated it. And, as she did this, she thought of Mrs. Sabine and Clive, of Mrs. Sabine as the tree trunk, of Clive as the branch. It was a grotesque thought, perhaps, but it came, it stayed in her mind.

“She won’t let Clive go! He can’t get away from her!”

Iron clamps and a chain and imprisonment. She seemed to see iron round Clive at the end of a chain which held him prisoner to his past. He was not free. Some Power had

decreed that he should not be free of that old autocracy which had nearly ruined his life. Some Power had decreed the iron bracelets and the chain.

Presently she went on and hid herself in a high part of the garden, in a nook among oleanders and bamboos by a bed of primulas which looked down upon "Little Africa." Beyond, over the maze of trees in the garden, and far below where she was sitting, she saw the sea, and away to the right the intricate maze of calm hills and mountains, the yellow sands at their feet. But the road and the sea terrace and Clive's room were hidden from her.

That day she was peculiarly aware of the vast distances of sea and land set between her and those whom she loved, and whom she cared for as friends in England, of her isolation with Clive. Not only that; she was oppressed by a feeling of loneliness. She loved Clive so much that isolation with him had never before been felt by her as loneliness. Sometimes she had missed her family, her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Herries, Jim Gordon, and a few others. Sometimes she had wished that she could take a tennis racquet in her hand and step on to a court with some of her cheery comrades. But this was the first time in Africa that she had experienced the strange, and almost terrible, feeling of being alone.

Clive lived in and through her strangely, perhaps even abnormally. Without pride she knew that. And yet surely he was stretching away from her. She could never bind him arbitrarily to her. He had bound himself to her of his own free will, and she knew that he clung to her as few men cling to their wives. But that day she seemed suddenly to know that he was reaching out after something which she could not give him, which he knew he could not get from her, which was even far away from her—beyond her.

But what was it?

She thought of the books, those books sent for from London, carried away to that solitary room. There were books about

religion, about religious experiences, among them. But there were books about crime too—and thought-control.

She continually remembered the look in Clive's eyes when she had asked him about "L'Homme Criminel," when she had stretched out her hand towards it. It was that look surely that had sent her away from the solitary room by the sea. Why had——

Deliberately she turned her mind away from that look. She made a conscious effort, and for a moment her mind seemed quite empty. Then, abruptly, she found herself thinking of Clive's strange Mother in Knightsbridge.

What was the truth of her?

She wrote now and then rather short, brisk, impersonal letters, full of intelligence, strangely lacking in intimacy as a rule, yet with an occasional touch (to Vivian) of almost fierce tenderness. She never mentioned the state of her health, in these letters, yet Vivian suspected that she was slowly withering in a lonely, frost-bound old age. Her brief period of defiant exultation was over. She had sunk back into the terrible apathy—a feverish apathy, if such an apparent contradiction can be—which had come upon her after Clive's innocence had been established by the verdict at the Old Bailey. Vivian saw before her in Africa Mrs. Baratrie's lips twisting in a smile, her eyes, set far apart, gleaming with a bitter sarcasm behind which lay surely the sources of tears. His Mother loved Clive very much. Vivian could never forget her condition on the day of the verdict, could still see the trembling fingers trying to put the latchkey into the door at Knightsbridge, the bending figure in the hall not daring to go upstairs, could still hear the hoarse cry of "Vivian!" coming up from below, an almost animal cry imperative in its pain.

How that poor Mother had suffered through her son! But there was a mystery in her suffering.

And Vivian saw three women joined together in suffer-

ing because of love for Clive: Mrs. Sabine, Mrs. Baratrie, and another woman who was still almost a girl. Clive was destined, it seemed, to make the women who loved him suffer.

Below Vivian the many shining fans of "Little Africa" moved perpetually in the wind from the sea. She looked right down upon them from her eyrie. But they were so dense that she could not see the pathway beneath them, could not see if anyone were walking on the path. But of course there was nobody there, no intruder in their hermitage.

Nevertheless, in her now acutely realised loneliness, she became uneasy. Although she felt so specially far away from all those in England that day, there was someone from whom she did not feel absolutely separated.

Death generally seems to make an end of things on earth. There lies its terror—in its awful power of bringing to an end. A sigh, a closing of the eyes, or a fixed stare under still lifted eyelids, a dropping of the jaw, and the end of how many things—passionate, sweet, cruel, intimate, beloved! The finality of death has struck innumerable mourners with terrific force even through all their armour of faith, of hope, of aspiration, of prayer, of attempted resignation to the Divine Will. But does Death always make an end of what seem to be, and are called, earthly things?

Vivian felt with her coldness of loneliness another coldness, more strange, more repellent—a coldness as of companionship.

She looked down on the quivering roof of "Little Africa" and she got up brusquely. She went quickly down by a winding path and came to the mouth of the long tunnel of palms. She stood still and looked along it.

She saw only the shining and dull sand, sunlit and shadowed, the perspective of wrinkled trunks, the vista of garden beyond, near the house. No one was pacing, or resting, in this secluded place. There were no footmarks on the sand, which had been freshly raked by the gardener.

She waited where she was for some time, held there, watching, listening. But she heard only the wind among the palms, birds twittering among the bamboos, the orange and lemon trees. And at last she turned away. Although she had only recently left Clive, she now felt drawn back to him, and she went towards the sea terrace.

As she drew near to it under a trellis of Bougainvillæa she felt surreptitious. Such a feeling was entirely foreign to her who was always so frank and open. But just then she was not self-consciously aware of what she was feeling, was not noting the softness of her own movements, the deliberate lightness of her step, the precaution of her approach.

She reached the far end of the terrace and saw in the distance the solitary room against the rock. Its door was set wide open. She could see that, but she could not yet see into the room. She wanted to see. She wanted to see what Clive was doing. If he were reading, as she supposed, she wanted to see what he was reading.

She went along softly towards the room. From the road a fisherboy saw her bust gliding along above the edge of the wall, her profile set towards the room sternly. He stared at the "Inglese," as the neighbouring fishermen, Italians from Naples, already called Vivian among themselves. Presently he saw the gliding bust stop, with the face in profile still set towards the room. It was motionless for what seemed to the boy a long time. Then it turned and came on above the wall. This time he saw the "Inglese's" full face. For she moved her head suddenly and looked out to sea.

"Perchè guarda così?" he muttered to himself.

It seemed to him that there was a strange expression on that face staring seaward.

When Vivian had looked into the room she had seen Clive sitting bent over the writing-table, with his cheek resting on his left hand, immersed in the study of a large, grey-paper-

covered book. She could not see the book's title from where she was standing. But by the format, the grey-paper cover, she knew that it was Lombroso's "L'Homme Criminel."

VII

At the end of March the coldness which the long season of rains had brought vanished, and the warmth of the African spring stole into the air. A heat as of summer in England came with the April days, and one morning Clive spoke of bathing in the sea, and told Vivian that there was a bathing house on the sands near by which belonged to the inhabitants of the *Villa du Soleil*, and that the gardener had the key of it and had offered to hand it over to them.

"Would you like a dip?" he added.

Vivian was a good swimmer and loved being in the water, but when Clive spoke of bathing the little yellow man immediately came up in her mind. He had said that he was very fond of a swim, was a persistent bather. On the day of his visit he had been at Ain-Touta bathing. If they went down to the bathing house, if they got into a habit of bathing, they might easily chance to meet him, and if they did meet him she would of course have to introduce him to Clive. She dreaded an encounter between the two men because she felt almost certain that if they met Mr. Beake would somehow betray the fact that he knew who Clive was. Or if he did not actually betray it Clive would surely divine it. The long habit of misfortune had trained Clive in suspicion, had rendered him horribly alert and clear-seeing. She often thought of his mind as bristling. Might he not even discover that she had a secret understanding with the Consul? For a moment she wished she had told him the whole truth; for a moment she was even inclined to tell it to him now. But she knew that to do that would make him uneasy, or actively

miserable, would certainly increase his irritability of mind, which the calm and isolation of their present life had not yet laid to rest. And she resolved always to keep silence about the matter she had discussed with Mr. Beake.

All this had flashed through her mind on Clive's question. Now she looked up and said:

"Yes. I should love a swim."

"Then I'll go and get the key," he said.

But he did not go at once. Instead, standing still, he looked at her and then added:

"Are you quite sure you would like it?"

"Yes. You know how I love swimming."

"All right. Then I'll get the key."

And he went off towards the gardener's lodge. But she noticed that the eagerness which had been in his face when he had made the suggestion of a bathe had died out of it. It seemed that he had caught her uneasiness, although he must be in ignorance of its cause.

Mr. Beake had not called again at the villa, had made no attempt to get to know Clive, though he must be full of curiosity about the notorious new-comer into his district. Vivian appreciated his delicacy and tact. But she was sure that if chance brought them together again he would be unable to restrain his eagerness for a little society, his desire to know a man about whom the whole world had been talking. She had not forgotten the odd light, like a flaming of pride, which had come into his eyes when he had revealed to her his vague connection with the dead Mrs. Sabine. At that moment he had certainly been warmed by a feeling of unexpectedly finding himself thoroughly "in it." And his announcement of his fourth cousinship to the dead woman had been practically a boast.

But his duties no doubt kept him at his office in Sidi Barka every morning in the week except on Sunday. She resolved never to bathe late in the afternoon, and to avoid

bathing altogether on Sundays. Then probably they would not come across the little yellow man who was so oddly troubling her life. Clive had evidently not thought of the *plage* between the villa and the promontory as she knew he thought of Sidi Barka. It had not occurred to him that it was a place to avoid. She wondered now whether by accident she had conveyed the suggestion to his mind.

How horrible, how humiliating all these under-things were, poisoning what should be a perfect communion. For a moment an almost brutal longing came to her to be perfectly frank, to make a "clear table." But if she did that, she would have to say many things, to speak of matters totally unconnected with Mr. Beake. For in the house by the sea, although the naked body of life did seem to be coming into her view, to be deliberately, though slowly, unveiling itself, fold upon fold of secrecy seemed falling softly between her mind and Clive's.

And she began to be tormented, though she did not know exactly why, could not have explained precisely what was the cause of the mental misery she often felt now and carefully concealed from Clive. It had come to her with the thing he had longed for—complete isolation. With the cessation of all her ordinary activities and distractions, with the vanishing from her of child, of parents, brother, friends, familiar places and occupations, it had come upon her like a foe which had been biding its opportunity.

It was as if at last she had time to be tormented, and had not had time before. The leisure of her life out here was tremendous. Sometimes her mind seemed to be standing alone in a vast empty space. And she realised how stifling is the effect of the ordinary life upon the mind, how it continually blankets the mind. And she remembered the saying of Spinoza which Clive had quoted to her, that true freedom depends upon the extent to which a man shakes off the yoke of his passions and identifies himself with God by contempla-

tion. She had certainly never been a contemplative in England, had never even thought of being one, or wanted to be one. Life had been activity to her, and activity had meant to her rather the activity of the body than anything else. The body, she now knew, had played a predominant part in her life, though always, thank God, a healthy part. But now in the house by the sea fate was offering to her the leisure for contemplation, was even forcing it upon her like a gift that she could not refuse. But she was certainly not identifying herself with God by contemplation.

Clive came back presently with the key, and they got their bathing dresses and set off for the sands.

The bathing house of the *Villa du Soleil* was some ten minutes' walk away. It stood on the beach, underneath a steep bank, with a grove of pines and a sandy road running inland behind it. It was really a little house raised up six feet, or so, from the ground on cemented columns, one of which supported its centre, the others its four corners. On it was painted in large black letters "Villa du Soleil." There was a wooden, ladder-like staircase at the side to go up by, and in front was a broad verandah facing the sea, and close to it, behind which was the door giving into the house, which contained two rooms side by side. In these rooms were rows of pegs, a few drawers, two tables and some wicker chairs with red and yellow cushions.

Vivian and Clive undressed and bathed, swimming a long way out side by side in the calm sea. They were the only bathers, for the "season" did not begin till the first days of July. When they came in to shore and had dressed they sat out on the verandah, warming themselves in the sun, and listening to the soft sucking murmur of the tiny waves along the edge of the curving sands. A profound peace lay over this seaside world. Although they could see many other bathing houses and huts, these were all shut up and untenanted. No one strolled or sat on the near yellow sands.

They heard no traffic passing by on the road behind them. Only in the far distance were some little moving figures of children playing, almost drowned in the quivering light of the sun, phantom-like and yet gay little creatures of the gold, fitting here and there fantastically over the gold of the sands.

"This is a real find!" said Clive presently. "I feel more far away now than I have felt since we have been in Africa. No one comes here."

"Except perhaps on Sundays," Vivian said. "I expect on Sundays a good many of the Sidi Barka people come out and picnic on the sands."

"I don't think so—not so early in the year. I haven't heard carriages driving by on Sunday mornings."

"But do you know when it is Sunday morning and when it isn't? Do you keep strict count of the days?"

"Oh yes—I know. How I love the sea. It takes one away from things. We'll come here often, Vi. This African sea! I revel in the knowledge that Europe lies far away on the other side."

He caught hold of her hand impulsively and pressed and held it. She felt the pathos of his obvious warming sense of security, knowing what she knew. His ignorance made her long to protect him. But would that be possible?

It happened that the day was a Saturday, and on the following morning, which chanced to be brilliant and luminously clear, Clive, who seemed to be in unusually good spirits, suggested another bathe.

Vivian demurred, said something about feeling lazy and preferring to stay in the garden. He looked disappointed, hesitated, then said:

"Will you mind if I run down and go in? I won't be long. But I feel so binged up by yesterday's swim that I'm longing to have another."

Immediately the protective sense stirred in her. It was absurd, no doubt, but she felt that if he would go she must

be with him. The feeling was strong upon her that the little yellow man would be on the sands that day. She did not wish Clive to meet him alone. Yet if they did meet what good could she do, what prevent or minimise? She might even be not merely useless but harmful, gnawed as she was by the painful sense of having a shared secret from Clive. Nevertheless she could not let him go down to the sea and that possible encounter by himself.

And she said:

"I'll go too. Swimming is a mighty tonic, and we don't get too much exercise here."

"Don't you miss your tennis terribly?" he asked, and a sudden, painful look of anxiety changed his face.

"No. I don't think about it often."

And that was quite true. Somehow her mind seemed too full in Africa to leave room for many regrets about tennis. She ran up the outside staircase to their flat to fetch her bathing dress and towels. She would go hatless in the sun. Clive remained below. He had left his things at the bathing house.

When Vivian was in her room alone she felt oddly nervous. Her bathing dress was laid on the sill of one of the windows with a weight upon it. She removed the weight and picked it up. Then she stood still for a moment with it in her hand. She wished very much that she could prevent Clive from going to the beach that day. She was convinced that Mr. Beake would be there, that, if they went, they would meet him there, that the result of the meeting would be unpleasant if not disastrous. What to do?

Her room was full of the sound of the sea, was full, too, of the delicate freshness of the sea breeze. The sun was shining brilliantly. It was a real African day. The trees of the garden were stirring gently. Clouds of small birds flew twittering among their branches, darted from terrace to terrace, from bower to bower brimful of life and business.

They, she and Clive, were remote from the world that had troubled, even tortured, them both. And what was the good of it all? Even here she was apprehensive. Even here she had reason for anxiety. The burden had not been laid down. Where could they go to get rid of it? The conviction came to her that to try to travel away from a sorrow, or a great difficulty, was utterly useless, that she had been right in her original determination imposed upon Clive to stay where they were, and just simply to go on with their ordinary lives, that to seek for an *endroit du bonheur* was like the madness of one who would make his home in some exquisite mirage. They were even now in a place that, if described, would seem to others like a corner of Paradise, but the burden was with them there. And at this moment she felt as if it were weighing her down.

"Vi! Aren't you coming?"

Clive's voice came up to her from below. She did not answer, but she went down, and they started for the sands.

"You see!" Clive said, when they reached the grove of pines and looked down from a little height on to the beach, "I was right. Although to-day is Sunday there's hardly anyone about. Look!"

She looked along the beach. She saw only a few people; some children not far off playing, making holes in the sand, raising sandy edifices, running and crying out at the edge of the sea; some women sitting near them in the shadow of bathing huts; two or three rough-looking men lying stretched out in the sun smoking and enjoying their rest after probably a week of labour. No one was bathing.

"What do these few people matter?" he added. "They won't disturb us. We don't know them and they don't know us."

"No."

She glanced up the sandy road that led from the beach inland between the pines.

"Why do you do that?" Clive asked, almost suspiciously she thought.

"What?"

"Look along that road."

"But why should I have any special reason?"

"No, of course not. I wonder where it leads to?"

"Into the depths of the country, I suppose. How blue the sea is to-day."

"Yes. I am longing to go in."

He took hold of her arm and they went down the bank.

"The blue water seems to wash so many things away," he said, eagerly. "Thank God we are close to the sea."

"You wouldn't rather be among the oleanders in the *endroit du bonheur*?"

"Would you?"

"How can I know? I've never seen it."

"But haven't you realised it?"

"I wonder whether I have. I believe I thought I did in the wood at Tyford. How long ago that seems!"

They were now at the foot of the wooden staircase which led to the verandah. As they went up it she noticed the noise their mounting feet made on the wood, a hard noise. When they stood in the verandah she added:

"I wonder whether there is, whether there can be, an *endroit du bonheur* in this world."

"But why not? A place where one has been absolutely happy!"

"I don't think it is ever the place that makes the happiness," she said. "I think it is the happiness we carry with us to any place which makes that place seem the *endroit du bonheur* to us. It's we who fill the place with happiness. It isn't the place that fills us with happiness."

"That's a sort of application of your theory about carrying light with us. Don't you remember? You said, 'Let us

carry our light with us to the white house by the sea.' But surely a place can help very much. Look at that sea!"

The blue sea was shining in the distance with gold. It was very calm. At the edge of the sands it just curled over, showing a silvery sheen, and broke with a liquid note, like a voice saying "Hush!"

"It's beautiful," she said.

And she went to undress.

They had finished their swim, and were half sitting, half lying in the wicker chairs on the verandah, when a short figure appeared on the sandy road between the pines, walking briskly towards the sea. It was Mr. Beake, the Consul. A short pipe stuck out from under his stubby moustache. A dark blue one-piece bathing costume and a rough towel lay over his left arm. In his right hand he carried a stout stick with a heavy knob. The sand in the road muffled the sound of his footsteps. Although he was keenly anticipating his swim, he was feeling lonely as he walked along. Since his wife's death, life in Sidi Barka had been exile to him. He wondered whether he would be able to "stick it" much longer. But there was the money. He had no children to provide for. But a man cannot live on nothing. And his savings were very small for Catherine, dear thing, had been remarkably fond of new hats, and had found much consolation for the lack of society in clothes. And all this consolation had cost him a pretty penny. He was tied to Sidi Barka until he could get transferred to some other post. And there seemed no immediate prospect of that. If only that charming girl at the *Villa du Soleil* and her notorious husband would take pity on him! It seemed almost unnatural that the miserably few decent English people in this out-of-the-way place should not foregather. Yet he had not quite liked to repeat his visit to the *Villa du Soleil* without an invitation. Mr. Baratrie had called personally on him to be sure. He knew that from his Jewish servant. But still

he scarcely cared to push it. There had been something in Mrs. Baratrie's manner, as well as much in what she had said, which made him think that he wasn't wanted up there in the white house with the cupolas. It was a pity. It would have been such a resource if he could have looked in now and then on a Sunday; yes, especially on a Sunday. Besides, he was simply longing to see Clive Baratrie, the hero of one of the greatest scandals of the twentieth century. He had heard such a lot about him. He had followed the great trial with such interest. And then there had been the extraordinary libel action in which his own cousin, four times, no five times removed, had been the defendant. It really seemed very hard that he should not get a sight of Clive Baratrie and, if possible, have speech with him.

But here was the sea and he was going to have his bathe.

Mr. Beake possessed a very small and modest bathing hut about a couple of hundred yards from the more important house belonging to the *Villa du Soleil*. And he now took out his key, entered, undressed, put on his one-piece bathing costume, and tripped down to the empty sea in which no bathers were visible. He was well accustomed to having the sea to himself, but as he ducked and swam out he could not help wishing for company. A man's pleasures are the pleasanter for being shared. But anyhow he loved swimming and must make the best of his holiday.

Clive and Vivian, resting on their verandah rather drowsily in the sun, did not see the dark round head of Britain's representative sporting in the deep, did not observe his eventual return dripping to the shore. Since her bathe Vivian had lost her feeling of nervousness. The sea had lapped her in physical well-being, and for the time her mind was nearly asleep. Clive was smoking his pipe. His eyes were half shut. His brown face was calm. He was in shirt-sleeves, but the sleeves were rolled up exposing his brown arms to the sun. As he listened to the soft breaking of the

tiny waves, gleaming with silver, on the sand just below them he dreamed of Pacific Islands very far away, of Islands of forgetfulness. This place now seemed to him delightfully remote. But they, Vivian and he, might go much further, might go right away into distances of the Tropics. And his imagination drowsily roamed among Royal palms beside seas where few ships ever came. The sea touch had brought to him a sense of exquisite physical well-being, and, because of that, his mind was lulled as by the influence of an opiate.

In that moment he was almost happy.

Mr. Beake dried himself energetically with the rough towel, put on his clothes slowly, then felt in a pocket and produced a paper bag containing some biscuits which he munched with relish. He then proceeded to light his pipe. When he had got it going he stretched, spread his bathing costume out in the sun to dry and stepped out on to the sands. His habit was to take a gentle stroll in the sun after bathing, sometimes towards the promontory, sometimes in the direction of the *Villa du Soleil*. To-day, perhaps because his thoughts were still busy about the pretty girl with the short hair and her notorious husband, he walked in the direction of the villa, keeping however to the sands. But presently he stopped abruptly and stood still. His eyes had been attracted by two dark objects hanging over the railing of the verandah of a bathing house near by. They were bathing dresses put out to dry in the verandah of the house belonging to the *Villa du Soleil*.

Then——

Mr. Beake felt excited. He could not from where he was see into the verandah. The bathing dresses hung over the rail at its end and he was still at a good distance from it. But he had little doubt that the very people he was longing to meet were sitting somewhere just beyond those clothes. Should he seize the opportunity presented to him? Should he mount those wooden steps and say "How d'you do?" to

his fellow-bathers? He hesitated. Something inside of him informed him that he would not be wanted on that verandah. But he disregarded the voice. After all he was a British Consul, and Mrs. Sabine had been his fourth cousin, and his life out here was infernally dull and lonely, and Mr. and Mrs. Baratrie and he were a confraternity of early bathers.

He stepped briskly forward in the direction of the drying clothes.

VIII

"WHAT'S that!" exclaimed Clive, starting up in his wicker chair.

He had been half asleep, lying back in the sunshine which poured in under the sloping roof of the verandah, with eyes not quite shut seeing faintly, as if in a dream, the blue and the glitter of the sea. Neither Vivian nor he had spoken for a very long time. The spell of the sea and the sun, the spell of remoteness, and of the silence made musical by the rhythmical soft breaking, at regular intervals, of the tiny waves upon the sand, had been potent upon them, giving them an hour of ease such as they had scarcely known since they had linked their lives together. The ordinary world and its sorrows had slipped away from their ken, even from their remembrance. They had been touched by enchantment. But now the hard sound of feet in thick boots treading heavily on wood broke harshly through the magic, and in an instant the dream was shattered and gone.

Clive was really startled, and for a moment did not realise what the ugly noise was. But Vivian knew at once that her premonition had been well founded. The row which recalled them to earth was caused by the boots of the British Consul mounting into society.

After putting his quick question Clive sprang up, and when the little yellow man, hatless and sandy, but beaming

from the sea, and with eyes beaoning curiosity and eagerness, came round the corner, he was confronted at once squarely by the man he was so anxious to know.

"I beg your pardon!" he said, and paused uncertainly, for Clive did not show him a welcoming face.

But then he saw Vivian, kissed by the sun, delicately brown, with ruffled brown hair, just beyond the tall, lean man whose troubling eyes seemed to ask an indignant question, and he felt a little safer.

"Oh, Mr. Beake!" she said, getting up swiftly. "Claude, this is Mr. Beake, the British Consul, who kindly called the other day. My husband—Mr. Beake."

The two men shook hands, and the Consul noticed a definite attempt at social cordiality in the startling face looking down on him. Yes, it was a startling face—something quite out of the common in it; handsome no doubt, but a face it would surely be difficult to live with, restless, penetrating, and defiant. The face troubled him, but he remembered his position and, gathering himself together, he said:

"I hope you'll forgive me. I've been bathing, and taking a stroll up the sands afterwards I noticed your costumes laid out to dry, and couldn't resist just looking in to pass the time of day with my fellow-bathers."

He turned definitely to Clive, with a sort of determination, as of one who had made up his mind to throw off all diffidence and be forthright and self-possessed.

"I am so sorry I was out when you were kind enough to call the other day, Mr. Ormeley. My servant told me. There's so little society here. None practically. You can imagine how glad one is to come across unexpected neighbours."

"Do sit down," said Clive.

And he bent and pulled up a chair. As he did so he glanced at Vivian. Mr. Beake sat down. All this was very interesting, but he did not feel quite at his ease. However, he puffed at his pipe and made conversation. He talked about North

Africa, in which he had lived for the greater part of his official life, about the French capacity for colonisation, about the relations existing between the Arabs and their conquerors, about the condition of the tobacco and wine trades, about sport, the climate, his experiences in Algeria during the war. In fact he did his very best, and was ably seconded by the wonderful girl who played such extraordinary tennis and had made such an extraordinary marriage. Several times in the midst of the discourse he took care to utter the name of "Ormeley." This he did in order to reassure the wonderful girl, to show her, in a subtle and yet perfectly natural way, that he had not forgotten their compact and that he was a man of the strictest honour. Now and then he could not resist casting a glance at her, a glance in which there was just a hint of intimacy and tactful understanding, carefully veiled of course lest the notorious man should notice anything. And all through the conversation his mind was alertly busy about Clive Baratrie and his fourth cousin. It was very extraordinary to be sitting here in a bathing house with the man who had been—that was undoubted, and had indeed been publicly acknowledged—who had been the lover of his own cousin. And he remembered details picked up from the papers about Clive Baratrie; how he had fought in the war and had been severely wounded, and after a period in hospital in France had been removed to England, and cared for in the very smart and luxurious hospital for officers which Mrs. Sabine was "running" in Mayfair. It was in this hospital that they had met for the first time. Their meeting had been one of the innumerable romances of the war in which love and death had been at perpetual grips. For the fourth cousin of Mr. Beake had fallen desperately in love with the good-looking young officer. In fact her love had amounted to an obsession, one of those strange and terrible obsessions of which women are sometimes the victims in middle age.

How often Mr. Beake had thought and wondered about that young officer! And there the very man sat in a wicker chair with a pipe in his mouth, and they were actually talking together, on the sands of North Africa. And the man didn't know that his guest was aware of his identity. He believed that he was happily covered and concealed by the name he had assumed.

Mr. Beake could not help feeling exceptionally knowing and "in it" as he flowed on about things in general, bent on making good with his host and hostess in order that they might realise that here was a man well worthy, apart from his official status, of being received into the intimacy of the *Villa du Soleil* and livening up the quiet existence there. But he was very careful not to make any display of this warming sensation, and flattered himself that few men could have matched him for subtlety in discourse and lively carelessness of manner. Mrs. Baratrie—whom he frequently addressed as Mrs. Ormeley—must surely feel that she had put her trust where it was respected and cherished, and her husband—

But Mr. Beake was not so sure about him. "Claude Ormeley" was civil but he was perhaps hardly cordial. He spoke little, did not help on the conversation. But probably he was by nature a man of few words, like so many Englishmen. And as to his manner—well, many Englishmen seemed rather cold and distant on a first acquaintance. Catherine had always said that her Charley was exceptionally vivacious for an Anglo-Saxon. He must not expect a similiar vivacity and command of language from all other men. We cannot all possess the same talents, and at any rate Mr. "Ormeley" seemed an excellent listener and seldom took his eyes from his visitor's face. Curious eyes they were, and rather troubling in their luminous fixity. Now and then Mr. Beake, in spite of his determined self-assurance, felt uneasy under their gaze. For they seemed somehow to keep

him away and at the same time to penetrate him, seemed to say silently, "You shall not know me, but I know every bit of you." And that was really rather ironic considering what Mr. Beake knew about "Claude Ormeley." Difficult for a man not to smile inside at the thought of that! Why, what didn't Mr. Beake know about the man opposite to him in the wicker chair? He knew that——

"I'm awfully sorry to seem inhospitable but I'm afraid my wife and I must be off to the villa, Mr. Beake. We lunch at one——"

The words broke through the torrent of the Consul's information about tobacco-growing in the vast plain beyond Sidi Barka towards the south. Mr. Beake stopped like a shying horse, recovered himself and got up.

"I'm afraid I——"

"Not at all! Awfully good of you to look in on us."

They were both on their feet. Vivian held out her hand.

"Good-bye!" she said.

"Good-bye," said Mr. Beake, bending.

He drew himself up. His eyes sought hers. It seemed to him that her eyes avoided his purposely, and that he discerned a curious something, as if under the brown which the sunrays had set on her cheeks a pallor were creeping. Could anything be wrong? Had he——

He hesitated, hoping for a few more words—something, he scarcely knew what, an invitation, perhaps, a suggestion that they might meet again. But she only repeated "Good-bye," added a conventional "Thank you for coming," and smiled up at him.

"Good-bye! Good-bye!" he repeated jerkily.

Suddenly he felt confused and as if something had gone very wrong while he had been on the verandah. He lifted his hand to take off his hat, but there was no hat to take off, and he dropped it again, feeling more confused.

"Well, good-bye, Mr. Ormeley, and thank you very much for my—for our—for a pleasant visit."

He was now going towards the wooden stairs accompanied by his host.

"There are so few people here that it isn't every day one— Good-bye, good-bye!"

Again there was the sound of heavy boots treading on wood, then a sort of flop as the Consul dropped down on the sand. A faint and muffled patter followed. And then Vivian heard only the sound of the breaking waves. Clive was out of sight just then. He had gone round the corner of the bathing house beyond the verandah to see their guest off, and must be standing and watching his departure along the beach. It seemed to Vivian that he was away for a long time. But at last he reappeared smiling.

"Poor little chap!" he said, "one can't help being sorry for him. How he wanted us to invite him up to the villa for lunch. His eyes were like a dog's when it sees a bone held up out of reach. Come on, Vi! D'you know that it's one o'clock."

He stretched out a hand and helped her up out of the low chair, and continued talking cheerfully as they walked across the beach and up the bank. But when they reached the highway he paused and stared at the sandy road which led inland between the pines.

"I'll bet you that road leads to the town," he said. "It's a short cut to the town. That's the way little Beake comes when he wants a swim."

His face was grim as he said the words, but immediately afterwards he began talking cheerfully again.

Soon after lunch he went away to his room on the sea terrace. He stayed there till tea-time. They had tea in the shaded open space at the entrance to "Little Africa." When it was over, after some apparent hesitation and fidgeting about, Clive walked vaguely into "Little Africa." Vivian

watched him going over the sand under the shining fans of the palms. He walked very slowly as if in deep thought till he reached the end of the tunnel. Then he turned to the left and was hidden. But though he was hidden Vivian had the absolute conviction that directly he had got out of her sight he had begun to walk fast.

She knew that, and a great uneasiness came upon her. She felt that Clive must be deliberately playing a part to her, must be acting in order to deceive her. In all their married life, in all the life of their love before their marriage, she had never before been beset by a similar cold and hideous conviction. Often she had been conscious of mystery in Clive. But this was different. This separated them, put a gulf between them, made them strangers to each other, almost enemies.

Had he guessed anything about Mr. Beake? Did he know—could he have divined—the shared secret?

Suddenly she felt plunged in tragedy. But how had they come to it? Why was it? What had really happened?

She got up and walked into "Little Africa." She knew what Clive had done. He had retreated to his hole at the bottom of the garden. With a sickness of the heart she knew that. Once out of her sight he had hurried away like a man fleeing. But from whom had he fled? A wave of heat went over her. She felt that her body flushed right up to her temples. There was no one in that garden to flee from but herself.

She walked up and down the long tunnel on the sand, hearing the breeze in the fans overhead, feeling a loneliness that was tremendous, a dread that seemed to enfeeble her. Even her limbs felt weak and shaky, like the limbs of one who had been ill. After walking for a few minutes she stood still struck by a sudden self-accusation.

If Clive were playing a part to her she had played one to him. Ever since Mr. Beake's visit to the *Villa du Soleil* she had

been playing a part. Her intention had been good. Tenderness had prompted her. But—she had not been quite honest.

She wondered about Clive. Even now she did not know whether or not he had realised on the verandah of the bathing house that there was a secret understanding between her and Mr. Beake. When he had looked at the sandy road running inland between the pines he had surely been thinking that an enemy had come upon him by that road. At that moment she had felt that Clive knew the Consul had discovered Clive Baratrie in "Claude Ormeley." But directly afterwards he had seemed quite cheerful, quite unconcerned. And—she had not been sure. She was not sure now.

If he had guessed something of the truth she now knew that she would be afraid.

That was horrible, the new consciousness of the possibility of fear coming into her life. Courage meant so much to her. To fear seemed to her such a degradation.

All the garden seemed suddenly changed to her, to be full of strange noises which filled her with uneasiness, to be full of hiding-places in which ugly things might be lurking. She left it and went up to her bedroom.

It was now between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, and the sun was less hot. Evening was drawing on. She pulled a chair out on to the little terrace which commanded the view over the sands towards the promontory and sat down in the open air. She was perplexed, did not know what to do. A natural impulse prompted her to try to get rid of her fear and misery by action, to go down to the sea terrace and "have it out" with Clive. That would mean being perfectly frank, telling him about her compact with the little yellow man, explaining her reason for making it and keeping it secret, asking Clive to forgive her for the subterfuge which was surely innocent enough. She had only done what she had done for him, to spare him annoyance, to protect him in his hermitage from another cold breath from

the outside world. It was a trifle. She reiterated that to herself, that the secret between her and the Consul was only a trifle. There was nothing to be ashamed of in it. And yet she was afraid of Clive's knowing it, was afraid to go down to his room and tell him of it. For there was something incalculable in him. She felt that now. She believed she had felt it for a very long time. And it had become more obvious to her here, in this lonely house hidden among trees far away from the world.

The naked body of life was rising into view. She was getting to know things of whose existence she had not been definitely conscious till she came into the loneliness of Africa. It was as if she had seen clothes but now began to look on the form they had hidden.

Should she go down to Clive? But if she were wrong, if he had not been acting a part, if he had not suspected, or divined, the secret understanding between herself and Mr. Beake? By telling him she would only trouble his peace, make him miserable, cause him intense irritation, perhaps even make him wish to go away. As he had fled to the sea room he might want to flee from the *Villa du Soleil*. And she remembered their flight from Hammam Chedakra. For what had their going been but a flight?

It was hateful—all this secrecy, this fear of recognition, of discovery, this hiding away under an assumed name. She would never be able to forget her internal writhing when Mr. Beake had asked about their passports. And now she had stooped to secrecy and was being punished for it. She felt like one entangled in the meshes of a net. But it was not too late for escape. She knew that she could not follow for long the path of secrecy and pretence. Her whole nature would rebel against such a pilgrimage. Therefore she ought to stop now, at once; she ought to go to the sea terrace and have a complete explanation with Clive.

She got up intending to go to him, but she did not leave

the terrace. She did the feeble thing. She put off. He might be reading, be deep in some book; he might hate to be disturbed. Possibly he was still studying Lombroso. She remembered his absolute absorption when she had stood on the terrace watching him as he sat by the table with his head on his hand. He had not known that she was there. He did not know now that she had been there. (That was another secret.) If she disturbed him, perhaps startled him, it would be an ill preparation for what she had to say. She decided to wait till he came back to the house. Then she would tell him all about her conversation with the Consul and ask him to forgive her for having kept it from him.

They were going to have supper at nine. But no doubt he would come up long before then. She fetched a book and returned to the terrace. The afternoon waned and died; the evening fell; but Clive did not come.

When the daylight faded the weather became absolutely still. Nearly always there was a breeze stirring among the trees in the garden. Now it had gone and the trees stood motionless, voiceless, along the terraces. The fans of "Little Africa," no longer shining, lay dark and mute above the pale sand of the tunnel. Death seemed to have stricken the pines which murmured no more of the things eternal. It was a breathless evening deepening into a breathless night. Even the sighing of the sea beyond the empty highway was scarcely audible.

Sunday evening in Africa!

Vivian, still on the terrace of her bedroom, with the shut book on her lap, saw the yellow eye of the lighthouse on the promontory wink in the gathering darkness. Far out in the distance of the sea another yellow eye was watching for ships. Much nearer a red gleam mysteriously glowed and faded, glowed and faded. There were no church bells as in England, and yet Vivian felt—not merely knew—it was Sunday evening. Her Mother had probably just come back from evening

service, after offering up prayers for the far-away daughter and Clive. Vivian could imagine the sadness and trust, strangely mingled, of those prayers. Her Mother had suffered through her. And that other strange Mother in Knightsbridge, what was she doing? She had certainly not been to church. Apparently she could find no consolation in religion. Probably she was sitting alone, hunched up, reading some book in the lamplight. And Archie? And Jim? And Bob Herries and his wife?

They were all very far away from Mrs. Claude Ormeley.

It was growing dark now. Vivian sat very still in the windless night, and watched the coming and the going of those three lights, like eyes, in the darkness of the sea. She did not know the hour. She had not looked to see what it was. But she felt sure that it was long past supper-time. And still Clive did not come.

At last she heard a soft step on the outside staircase and a thick, soft voice calling, "Madame."

She answered.

Bakir ben Yahia shuffled across the bedroom and stood in the frame of the window.

"It is nearly ten o'clock, Madame."

"I'll come down. Where is Monsieur?"

"I have not seen him. Shall I go to the room on the terrace and tell him——"

"No; don't go. Monsieur will come when he is ready."

She felt impelled to let Clive have his will just then. Perhaps pride was awake in her. Anyhow she could not summon him to come to her. She preferred to eat alone. And she went to the little white room with narrow arches and a dome which they used for their meals, and sat down to supper. An electric light in an Oriental lamp with coloured glass and hanging tassels shed a not very strong glow over the table. Bakir had closed the windows, and drawn thin, short curtains of coloured silk across them. The

sound of the sea did not penetrate to this room that night. And the silence in it seemed to her dead. She sat there and tried to eat. She poured out a glass of white wine. She had sent Bakir away.

Why did not Clive come? What could he be doing? She had refused to let Bakir go to him, but if he did not come soon she would be forced to go herself. Perhaps he was expecting her to come?

She turned her head towards the door and listened.

At last she got up from the table and went out to the garden, to the open space at the edge of "Little Africa." There she sat down under the still trees and waited.

After some time—perhaps half an hour; she did not know—she heard a slow step in the garden, saw a dark figure coming out of the darkness and moving towards the house.

"Clive!" she said.

"Hulloh!"

The figure stopped abruptly.

"I'm here," she said.

He came towards her, stood by her.

"It's late. I've had supper."

She looked up at him.

"Have you? Yes, I know it's late. I got interested in something I was reading and missed supper-time. I'm sorry. I'll just go in now and have something to eat, and then I suppose it will be bedtime, eh?"

He spoke in an ordinary, quite cheerful voice, but there seemed to her to be a dark glitter in the eyes looking down on her. She wanted to offer to go in with him, to sit with him and keep him company while he was eating. But somehow she couldn't do that. So she only said:

"You'll find me out here when you have finished."

"Right!"

He turned away and went into the house. She sat where she was and waited. She was trying definitely to decide what

she would do when he came out to her. Either she must at once tell him the truth, or she must make up her mind never to tell it, and let the thing go assuming that he had not suspected anything. Mr. Beake would certainly never call again at the villa. She felt quite positive of that. And she felt equally positive that after what had happened that day Clive would never suggest their bathing again on a Sunday morning. If only she could know whether Clive suspected something or not. If he did it was evident that he did not mean to say anything about it. His voice in the darkness had sounded quite ordinary. His manner, she thought, had been ordinary too. And yet there had been something—a strange, even hostile, look in his eyes, she fancied. And he had not asked her to come in and sit with him while he ate.

There was something between them, dividing them, an impalpable something. And surely it had been put there by him, whether deliberately or not deliberately she could not tell.

How quickly even those who are closest to each other can be separated. How quickly solitude can descend like a cloud on the human being. She wondered whether Clive in the house felt as lonely as she did outside in the night.

While she was still undecided what to do, whether to speak or not, she saw his dark figure relieved against an interior light of the villa. He was standing in the doorway. She saw a spark. He had lighted a match which burned steadily in the windless night. It moved; then she saw a red-yellow glow. He had lit a cigar.

Suddenly she felt reassured. Those little familiar doings suggested a comfortable man, one who had enjoyed his evening meal and was now bent on developing, prolonging his pleasure. It was strange, it was almost ridiculous, how that lighting of a cigar by Clive helped Vivian towards happiness at that moment.

"It's all right," she thought. "I made a mistake. There is nothing between us, separating us."

And for a moment she believed that the whole thing, her suspicion that Clive was acting a part, and her subsequent misery, fear and sense of loneliness, had been caused by an irritation in Clive brought about by the disturbance of their delicious dream on the verandah of the bathing house. Clive was abominably sensitive, and he certainly was one of those human beings who carry with them an atmosphere which powerfully affects other human beings. Mr. Beake's abrupt appearance had upset him. He had chosen to conceal that fact from her. But she had felt it nevertheless, and all the more because he had not been open about it.

Believing this she called out almost gaily:

"I'm still here, Clive. Do you want coffee although it is so late?"

He came towards her, the end of his cigar glowing in the darkness under the ilex and lebbek trees.

"No, I won't have coffee, thanks. I don't want to lie awake to-night."

He remained standing.

"Aren't you going to sit down?" she asked.

"Well——"

He seemed hesitating.

"Or shall we take a stroll through the garden?"

She got up.

"Let's do that. How marvellously still it is to-night."

"Yes; isn't it?"

She put her hand through the crook of his left arm. His left hand was thrust into the pocket of his jacket. His arm felt hard, unyielding, unsympathetic, as if it resented her touch. She was chilled. Her happy feeling, her sense of reassurance, disappeared. But obstinately she kept her arm through his, laid her hand on his wrist.

"Shall we walk in 'Little Africa'?"

"Very well."

They walked slowly to the opening of the tunnel. It was very dark under the palm trees, much darker than in the open space they were leaving. And when they had reached the opening and were facing the greater darkness they stopped. Vivian did not know which had caused the other to stop, or whether they had stopped simultaneously, moved by a dual disinclination to go forward under those still, dark trees.

A chill ran through her, like a trickle of ice-cold water. She felt as if someone malign were waiting for them under the palm trees.

"Why do you stop?" she said, in a low voice, to Clive.

"But you stopped!"

"Did I? What shall we do?"

"Anything you like."

Suddenly she felt that she could not bear it any longer.

"What's the matter, Clive? What has come between us? Are you angry about something?" she said.

As she spoke she felt as if someone were listening in the darkness under the palms.

"Angry—no, of course not! What is there to be angry about?"

"What is the matter?" she repeated, taking her arm away from his, and turning till she stood at right angles to him. "Why have you been away from me nearly all day? Why have you hidden yourself?"

"Hidden myself! What would be the good of that?"

"We came here to be happy together. Do you wish to be alone?" she asked, feeling a sudden despair.

"No—no—no!" he said, with violence.

"Clive, you must tell me what is the matter. I can't go on like this. We have come away from every one, from our country. We have broken away from all the ties. If we—all my happiness depends absolutely on you. You must know that. And you are making me terribly unhappy."

"What is there between you and that chap—the Consul?"

Suddenly she was back in the wood at Tyford and saw Clive's jealousy like a living thing apart from all the rest of him.

"You surely don't think——" she began.

She stopped. Pride and indignation prevented her from saying anything more for an instant. But she overcame them and said quietly:

"Please tell me what you mean."

"There is an understanding of some kind between you and Mr. Beake."

"Yes."

"And you don't want me to know what it is."

"I've been divided about it. I've been wanting to tell you and——"

"But you haven't told me. That's the fact. And though you say you've been wanting to tell me, unless I had shown you by keeping away that there was something—the truth is you had begun to suspect I had guessed there was something between you and that fellow, Beake. Hadn't you? Hadn't you?"

"I didn't know. I couldn't tell. But I wondered."

"Exactly. Is that confidence? Is that love? Is that nearness to each other? Is *that*——"

He broke off. In his voice there had been a savage intensity of feeling.

"I know—I understand," she said, gently. "You——"

"Of course that chap, Beake, knows who I am," he interrupted. "I cottoned on to that directly I saw him. And you knew that he had found out. You knew it before ever I met him, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Ah! Was that why he called at the villa? Did he come there to tell you he knew I wasn't Claude Ormeley?"

"No. He only found it out when he was with me."

"How did he find out?"

"He recognised me. He had seen me playing tennis at Wimbledon."

"That was it! And then—you and he made a compact, didn't you, that I was not to be told anything about it? I was to be kept in the dark, wasn't I? I was to be fooled."

"I wanted you to be happy here."

"How could deceit from you make me happy?"

"No. I was wrong. But I was only thinking of you. You don't know how I have been longing to keep any more trouble and misery away from you, Clive."

She thought of those evenings when he had slept, and she had watched him asleep, by the olive-wood fire. And tears came into her eyes.

"They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate——"

"Clive," she said, "there's an ache in me, an ache to make you happy. That's my fault—that I have wanted too much to keep trouble away from you, to surround you with peace. That was why I said nothing about Mr. Beake. He told me, when he was here, that I was amazingly like Vivian Denys—Baratry—the tennis player. When he said that I felt I had to tell him who I was. I couldn't act a lie. I was bound to tell him. And then of course he knew who you were."

"That was it! Now I know!"

"But there's something else."

"What?"

She hesitated. Again she had an uneasy feeling that someone was hidden near by in the darkness of the tunnel listening, waiting, hoping for evil to befall her.

"What is it—the something else?"

He had bent down and was looking closely into her face.

"Mr. Beake is a distant cousin of——"

"Well? What's the matter? Whom is he a cousin of?"

"Of Mrs. Sabine's."

Clive sprang away from her. His movement was like that—a springing away. Then he stood quite still.

"Clive—that's all. There's nothing else. That's the whole secret, except that I told Mr. Beake how you needed rest and peace and freedom from the everlasting curiosity of the world, and begged him—I begged him not to let you know. In doing that I was wrong. But you understand my reason?"

She stopped and waited for a word from him. At last he spoke. He said:

"It's no use. We can't get away from her."

"Clive! But——"

"I tell you it's no use, not a bit of use. It's a pursuit. We are pursued."

"But this is only a quite natural thing, a thing that might happen to anyone," she said.

As she spoke she looked into the darkness of the tunnel.

"Quite natural!" she repeated, lowering her voice.

"She was always persistent," he said. "She couldn't leave go. She just couldn't. It was will carried into mania, will developed into an obsession. Her will was like a machine that couldn't be stopped once it was set going."

There was a fatalistic sound in his voice. It was like the voice of a man giving up, a beaten man who had no more fight in him. It frightened Vivian, but it also roused her. She was not going to sink down under an impalpable spell emanating from the darkness of this African garden standing breathless in the windless night. She had an impulse to assert herself, to attack something within herself at once, boldly, and to conquer it.

"Come into 'Little Africa,' Clive!" she said.

And again she took his arm.

"Why?"

He looked back at a gleaming light somewhere in the house.

"It's getting late," he added, still in that beaten voice.

"Please come."

She felt his hesitation. Perhaps she had caught her strange, almost occult fear from him.

"At any rate I shall go!" she added, firmly.

"Why do you want to go there?" he asked.

She did not answer, but let go of his arm and walked into the mouth of the tunnel.

"Vivian!" he said.

She went on. Then he followed her quickly, caught her up, and brusquely put his arm round her shoulder in a roughly protective way.

"It's crazy, I know," he said. "But I have a horrible feeling as if she were somewhere about here."

"That's nonsense!" she said.

"Have you never——"

"This is nothing but the reaction after all you have been through. It began when we came away, only then. It began with your always being so tired in Hammam Chedakra. I often watched you when you were asleep."

His hand dropped from her shoulder.

"Watched me!"

"Yes. You looked so tired, almost broken with it all. You are terribly tired still, and you can't see things in a commonsense light, see them just as they are. Your imagination distorts them because you are so tired, because your nerves are worn thin. It's all much more physical than you know. Look! We are in 'Little England'!"

They were out of the tunnel now, and among the beds of spring flowers. The scent of violets came to them in the darkness. She drew him down on a garden seat beside her, held his hand closely in hers, and said:

"The fact that the Consul here is a very distant connection of—of the Sabine family is a pure coincidence, an

absolutely commonplace fact. There's no significance in it at all."

"Yet you hid it from me! And you told him—a stranger—to hide it from me too."

"Yes; because I knew the state of reaction you were in. I knew your condition wasn't sound."

He said nothing.

"Have you forgiven me for keeping that secret, for asking Mr. Beake to keep it?" she asked.

"Forgive! Don't talk to me about forgiving you! My forgiving! That would be too monstrous!"

"But, dear, you were angry with me. You attacked me. You spoke to me almost as if you hated me."

"Because I love you too much. I can't bear your—I'm horribly jealous of you, Vi. It's abominable, I know, but I can't help it."

"But you couldn't be jealous about Mr. Beake!"

"When I guessed you had a secret understanding with him, something kept from me, something you knew with him and that I was not to know, I hated him. I can't help it. I hated him."

"Did you hate me too?"

"I felt desperate. That's why I kept away this afternoon and to-night. You don't know—there are things you don't know."

"Yes. Since we have been here alone, in this remote place, I have come to realise that as I didn't realise it in England."

His hand moved under hers as if he were going to take it away. She closed hers more firmly on it.

"One day I came to the terrace," she said. "It was the day when I saw those books for the first time. I went away, and after a time I came back—softly."

"Softly!"

"Yes. I didn't want you to hear me."

His hand moved again.

"Don't! I must tell you. I stood quite near the door looking in. You were reading that book of Lombroso's. I stood there and you never looked up. You didn't see me. You didn't know I was there. I felt then, while I was looking at you, how much I didn't know. Isn't this true, dear, that in our love you keep much more hidden from me than I keep hidden from you?"

"It's not my fault! It's not my fault!" he said, almost in a whisper.

"I have been jealous too!" she said.

"But there's no reason——"

"Women can be horribly jealous of the past. It may seem degrading, humiliating, but it is so. I have sometimes felt horribly jealous of *her*. And it has seemed to me as if she still had power, even as if she still lived in a terrible way, which I could never explain or describe, in my life—through you."

"Through me!"

"Yes, because you were so close to her in the past, because you loved her."

"I didn't!" he said, in a low voice but with violence. "I didn't!"

"That day when we were together in the Court," she said, going on as if forced to speak by some driving, imperious impulse, "and every one was thinking about you and her, it seemed to me as if all the concentrated thought in that room called her back, as if she had to come. I have felt horribly jealous."

She was silent for a minute. Then she said, very simply:

"Now I have told you. And I feel cleaner."

He shivered.

"I say, Vi—isn't it getting rather cold?" he said

"But it's so still! There isn't a breath of wind. It's as if the trees and even the sea were struck lifeless."

"They're not lifeless, only quiet. Life doesn't go out of things so easily. There's something terrifically persistent about life, some property, quality—I don't know what to call it—that we don't understand. Perhaps what has once lived can't die—only change in form, or essence, or—— Come, Vi!"

He made her get up and they went towards the house.

When they reached it all the lights were extinguished except one. That burned in Vivian's bedroom.

"I'll just tell Bakir to lock up the house," said Clive.

"Very well. I'll go up."

He went into the dark house while she mounted the outside staircase to their rooms. She passed through her bedroom and went out upon the terrace. From there she could just hear a faint murmur of the sea. The three lights, two yellow, one red, were gleaming and ceasing away in the darkness of the sea, and she stood by the parapet and watched them till she heard the sound of a heavy footstep climbing the stairs.

Clive was coming to bed.

IX

SHE heard him cross the little hall which divided their rooms and come into her room.

"I'm out here," she said, turning from the dark sea and the gleaming and disappearing lights, to the room behind her.

Clive was standing just on the threshold in the doorway. She was startled by his appearance. It recalled to her that of the man she had seen in the Knightsbridge drawing-room standing in the evening light near the window which looked on to the Park. That man had just passed through a tremendous ordeal, and somehow that fact—the fact that he had been tortured as few men are tortured—was impressed upon him, like a seal upon wax, upon his face, his figure, was shown in the look of his eyes, of his hands, even in his attitude. Now nearly two years had passed, bringing free-

dom, satisfied love, fatherhood, bereavement, and now remoteness from the curious gaze of the world, a great peace of nature, beauty, a chosen place to dwell in—and the man still looked tormented. The seal was still there, as deeply impressed as ever, marking him, branding him a victim. The glance Vivian sent from the terrace, a swift movement of the eyes taking place in a fraction of time, told her a whole story of uselessness. Everything was useless, her devoting of herself and her life to Clive, their struggle against the world culminating in the won action against Aubrey Sabine, their pilgrimage across the sea in search of an *endroit du bonheur*, their seclusion in this little Paradise of trees—it was all utterly useless. Something tremendous and absolutely inexorable stood barring the way to happiness. Clive was as unhappy, as tortured, as on the day of the verdict, when he had not had time to recover from the ordeal he had just been through; it even seemed to her now, as she looked at him standing on the threshold of the lighted room, that he was more unhappy, showed more definitely than ever before the impress of the seal.

Perhaps for the first time in her life she knew the meaning of despair. All the fight then, her fight and his, had been useless. Their mutual prolonged effort had been in vain, had accomplished nothing. And suddenly she felt as if she could not fight any more.

She went into the bedroom.

"What's the matter?" he said.

She thought his voice sounded startled.

"You look so unhappy to-night—beaten down by unhappiness. Seeing you standing there I just felt that it's no use."

"But what? I don't understand."

"Everything—no, wait!" She was silent; then she said: "What I felt was that—I suppose women are like that, can't help being terribly personal—what I felt was that I have been no good to you, can't be any good to you."

"But that's not true!"

"Oh yes, it is, it is!"

She pushed up the mosquito curtain that hung down from a bar in the ceiling over the bed, and sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Yes, Clive, it is. I'm not deceived. I can't be deceived any more. I'm no good to you."

She had folded her hands in her lap. Her head drooped. Her whole body looked full of humiliation. But suddenly she lifted her head. Her fingers drew in to the palms of her hands. Her face reddened. Her eyes shone and at the same time looked hard.

"It's she! She fights against me. She makes everything I do useless. You spoke about her will just now in the garden. You said her will was carried into mania, was will developed into an obsession. You said that her will was like a machine that couldn't be stopped once it was set going. You were right. You knew her. I never did. You loved her. I never even saw her. But I know of my own personal experience you were right in what you told me. You are right. Her will hasn't stopped acting. It's active now. It's been active ever since she died. I feel it at this moment. It's ruining my life."

"I won't have you say that. I won't have you——"

"But it's true. And you know as well as I do—no, much better than I do—how true it is. And you've always known it. And that's one of the things you've kept hidden from me, or tried to keep hidden. She's what men call dead. But she's living in my life and ruining it. Oh, I know you have been jealous of Jim. You always behaved well. You played the game about old Jim and I loved you for it. But Jim has never come into your life and influenced it and set about to wreck it. No. If either of us has had reason to be jealous I am the one. Jim was only a friend. He's never been anything but my friend. He never could be.

But *she*—she was never your friend. And she's always been my enemy. And she's ruining everything for me. I feel her right down in my life, burrowing in it, like a thing under the skin, right down in the flesh."

It seemed to Vivian that a terrible thing had happened, and absolutely without preparation, unexpectedly. A woman—a powerful identity—had suddenly escaped out of her, and was exposing an inner life—which she herself had lived semi-unconsciously—to herself and Clive, ruthlessly, without shame or pity. And she had no power to stop her. This woman was aflame with jealousy, was licked by the flames of that ugly and irresistible passion. And she was standing naked in the fire, and showing it, and telling about it.

"You said just now that we were pursued, that we couldn't get away from her. And I argued against that, I know. Because you were influenced by such an absurd thing, a chance coincidence that meant nothing, the fact that poor little harmless Mr. Beake happens to be a very distant relation of hers."

She spoke with keen contempt as she said that. But her voice completely changed as she added:

"The truth is that *I* am pursued and can't get away. Women are always hard on other women, they say. Women have often told me that. But I haven't been able to see it because most of the women I have known have been very kind and staunch to me. But now I begin to understand thoroughly what they meant when they said that about hardness. Wasn't she very hard to other women? Wasn't she?"

Clive looked down.

"Tell me!" she insisted.

"Yes. She was sometimes."

"I know that. She never saw me when she was alive, but she knew about me, and I feel that she hated me."

"She did see you!" Clive said, speaking as if the words were forced out of him.

"When? We knew none of the same people."

"You forget that thousands of people have seen you, stared at you, perhaps for hours, whom you have never noticed."

"Tennis playing!"

The familiar words—with such a train of happy associations behind it—uttered by her own lips, seemed to strike her a soft, but intentional, blow. And with the blow the woman standing in the flames and telling her ugly, pitiful story, faded, grew dim—returned whence she had come. Tennis! That was Vivian Denys's word, the healthy, athletic, hopeful girl's word, the word of a very English girl. "Typically English!" She had often been called that. But what did it mean? What real signification had it? Vivian knew she was not typical now. She was an individual, totally apart from all other individuals, complex, solitary, capable only of her own horribly individual suffering, which was different from every one else's suffering, as a face is different from every other face.

After that exclamation she sat still. Suddenly she felt tired, faded, empty almost. She leaned sideways on the bed towards the pillow, supporting herself on her right arm. And just then an uneasy sound, surreptitious and yet pervasive, broke through the stillness of the night. She heard it, and did not know for an instant what it was. Then she heard Clive's voice say:

"Rain!"

He crossed the room and stood at the window looking out.

That was what the strange stillness had meant—the approach of rain. The sky was black. All the stars were blotted out. But no breeze had arisen. The rain fell into stillness; fell into the oily sea, upon the deep white dust of the lonely road in front of the house, upon the massed trees of the garden. It pattered upon the fans of "Little Africa," and began to make the earth dark and soft and odorous about the violet roots in the beds of "Little England." And it

filled the night with a delicate uneasiness, surreptitious and sinister. For it was not yet the heavy rain that sometimes comes abruptly in Africa, but a small rain light in its falling, furtive in its penetration to the hidden places of the garden. On the terrace outside Vivian's bedroom it made a slight and continuous rustling sound, which gave to her a feeling that multitudes of very small things were moving in agitation all about her in the darkness. Beyond the terrace rain she discerned the different noise of the rain among the near-by trees that grew closely round the house. And these sounds of the rain were melancholy in her ears. Her depression, her anxiety, and now her sense of impotence and even of despair, had been waiting it seemed for a finishing touch. And now nature supplied it. The rain seemed to be softly and inexorably beating on her heart, on her very life, to be drowning her in coldness, to be gently pushing away from her the things which had made, or seemed to make, such happiness as she had had. Suddenly, unexpectedly, the fine weather which she had expected to last had come to an end, and with it had gone not merely any ease she had had in the present, but any hopes she had had for the future. With the break-up of the weather had come the break-up of her life. And yet what had actually happened? Scarcely anything. But to her now the impalpable seemed tremendously definite, the things invisible concrete and menacing, and all that was hidden more real than anything that was frankly revealed.

"Rain!"

She looked at Clive's back framed in darkness. For a moment she considered him with a sort of extraordinary detached coldness and definiteness, which rose in her from some depth where the under-things, contradictory and perplexing, lie mingled in hiding.

That was Clive.

She looked at the head with its very thick brown hair

closely cut, at the brown neck showing above the soft collar, at the broad but not heavy shoulders, the hollow back, the narrow hips, the muscular but not very big-boned arms, the long legs. The face with the disturbing eyes, wilful, determined and emotional, was hidden from her, but she imagined it, visualised it in her imagination.

Why had that combination of bones and flesh, of muscles and nerves, of brain and heart, the power to make her suffer so much that all her life seemed to hang upon it in utter dependence? Why must one human being have another to cling to, and thus increase the sad chances of life?

Clive stood quite still looking at the rain. It was strange—his stillness. It seemed that he was absorbed in contemplation of the darkness in which he could just see the falling drops near the lighted window, and the lights revolving in the distance. She wondered if he was thinking of her just then at all as she was thinking of him, whether he was wondering why the combination which was herself should mean so terribly much to him. It was odd how the rain had snapped their tragic conversation just when they had spoken of the dead woman with an intimacy unknown between them till now.

Mrs. Sabine had seen her, no doubt with hatred, and she had never suspected it.

Clive turned round and looked at her with an intense scrutiny, and immediately her feeling of detached and ob-servant coldness was gone.

"It's going to rain all night. It's setting in for rain," he said, after a pause. "Shall I shut the window?"

He did not wait for an answer to his question, but drew the two halves of the window inwards and turned the handle. Then he looked at Vivian again. There was something very strange in his gaze, she thought, something of deep, even tremendous inquiry, combined with a determination which had in it a hint of the sinister. Never had she felt the

least personal fear of Clive, even when she had realised that there was mystery in him, something incalculable. She did not feel personal fear now. But she did feel a certain anxiety, a wonder what that look meant, what he was going to do, or say.

And just then she remembered that she had been afraid of his discovering the secret between her and the Consul, and had hated herself for that feeling. There was something hidden in Clive which she longed to understand, because in that understanding she would surely regain the full courage which was now impaired in her.

When Clive saw the doubt and inquiry in her eyes he said: "It's getting very late. I'll just——"

He stopped, then turned again to the window, pulled the curtains across it, and went out of the room. She heard him cross the little hall and go into his room; he did not shut the door.

She waited a moment. Then she began to undress. She could hear Clive moving about in his room softly.

When she had finished undressing she got into bed, and lay there wondering, and full of anxious expectation. She did not know what she expected, but she felt that the events of the evening were not yet finished. But it was night now. She suddenly remembered that. Then the night would bring something. Clive would come in presently. He had not said good night to her. But when he came he would not merely say good-night, kiss her and go away, leaving her to sleep. She was certain of that.

Lying in bed she could just hear the falling of the rain outside.

At last Clive came back in his pyjamas. He shut the bedroom door behind him and came up to the bed. She had pushed away the mosquito curtain from the upper part of the bed. All the lower part was shrouded in it. Clive came to the bedside and stood there in silence looking down

on her. She noticed that he was trembling slightly. It was indeed almost imperceptible—the trembling, but it frightened her. She sat up quickly.

“Are you cold?”

He shook his head, caught hold of a chair, sat down by the bed, leaned over and gripped her round the shoulder.

“Why did we ever come to this place?” he said.

He drew her closely up against him.

“We ought not to have come here.”

“But why not? You so longed to.”

“Ignorance! We never know when we stretch out our hand for something that the possession of it won't bring damnation on us.”

“Are you miserable here?”

“I wanted solitude with you. D'you remember my saying once—‘I want solitude with you, not solitude alone’—something like that?”

“Yes.”

“We've had it here till to-day.”

“Yes, and poor Mr. Beake won't come again.”

“Just for an hour after our bathe things seemed almost right. That was purely physical—the sea—the body took possession then. Things seemed almost right that day by the stream in Hammam Chedakra too. But there is always the unexpected waiting to get in its blow. Those two people, the lawyer and his wife—and to-day the Consul.”

“You are thinking that it is useless to try to escape from the chances of life. It is, of course. But why did you say that we ought never to have come here?”

“Don't you know why?”

His eyes seemed to be searching her for truth. And suddenly she was moved to put a question to him.

“Do you think I was right in wishing you to face things, to stay in the world that knew you under your own name? Do you think I was wrong in at last giving in to you, and

coming away with you, and living as we are living here, under a name that isn't ours?"

"You may have been right. Anyhow it's all useless. This place has proved to me the uselessness of it all."

"Then do you wish to go back, to leave here and go back to London?"

He did not answer, but held her closer and kissed her neck. His lips were hot and dry. And there was something in the feel of them that frightened her. Somehow they did not feel like Clive's lips.

"Don't!" she said.

He pressed her against him and went on kissing her. She struggled. She had to struggle. For suddenly she knew why Clive had not said good night to her, and had come back to her. She was his wife, and she loved him, but this mingling of mental and moral misery with physical desire shocked something in her, disgusted something, made her feel like a prey, or like a mere means of escape, as if through her he were seeking a momentary forgetfulness of that which was becoming intolerable to him. And that was not love as she understood it, but something much less, indeed almost the profanation of love. But to her surprise and horror Clive did not at once yield when he felt her rebellion, as she had expected. His arms did not loosen. He was far stronger than she was, and now he used his strength, compelling her to remain in his embrace. And suddenly she remembered the strange look he had cast upon her after he had shut the window, a look of mingled inquiry, and a determination which had had in it a hint of the sinister. He had made up his mind just then, at that moment. She knew it.

She managed to free one arm, and turning in the bed she pressed her hand with all her strength against Clive's right shoulder, trying to force him away. And as she did so she heard herself saying:

"No! No!"

A voice replied, "You must!"

And then strangely it seemed to her that the struggle was a contest between their two jealousies, the one fighting to possess because of an obscure but powerful jealousy, the other to elude for the same dreadful reason.

Mrs. Sabine was in that struggle. Vivian felt her in it. For Clive was trying to escape from Mrs. Sabine, and she, Vivian, had been chosen by him as the means of escape. He was pursued. He had always been pursued ever since Vivian had known him, and death had not put an end to that persecution. And he had looked upon her, he was looking upon her now, as a refuge. The sea room—and her! What was she but a hiding-place? And she had believed that she was something so different. Jealousy, disillusion, bitterness, took in that moment complete possession of her. She felt as if she realised things, saw clearly, for the first time. And she revolted from Clive.

Perhaps this interior revolt added to her strength, or perhaps he felt it mysteriously and was affected by it. However it was the angry strength, the obstinate, fierce determination, the animalism, seemed to lessen in him. And after a brief further struggle she freed her other arm and pushed him away from her. He fell back into the chair by the bedside panting, with his eyes fixed upon her. And there was a silence between them.

"Please go away!" she said at last.

She tried to speak quietly. The horror of what had just happened was upon her like a nightmare, but she was trying for self-control. She felt dreadfully humiliated, ashamed, as if her womanhood had been dragged into the mud. At that moment she hated being a woman, and hated Clive for being a man, and her whole being wanted, demanded privacy, absolute seclusion. She looked down, saw that part of her bosom was exposed, and swiftly covered it with trembling fingers.

"Please go away!" she repeated. "I want to be alone."

"Why?" he said, still keeping his eyes fixed upon her, and breathing hard.

"I can't bear it. You are trying to use me to get away from her."

"That isn't true."

"Yes, it is. It isn't love, it's—it's—— You are looking for a hiding-place."

"What do you mean?"

She sought for, and found, the summing up of the whole matter as it presented itself to her.

"You are treating me as a hiding-place, not as your *endroit du bonheur*."

And with these last words suddenly there came before her imagination those two lovers, of whom Clive had told her, who had hidden their joy from the eyes of men in the gold of the African summer among the wild oleanders by the stream.

She felt that she could not bear it.

"Go away, please!" she said, holding on to the bed-clothes, lest he should see the trembling of her hands. "I must be by myself."

He got up and stood by the bed. He seemed to be hesitating, to be on the verge of something, but uncertain. At last he said:

"You are wrong."

He was not looking at her now. His eyes were down-cast. Still looking down he added after a pause:

"I could so easily prove to you that I have loved you far too much. That's been my great fault. There was no measure—I couldn't——"

He did not finish the sentence, but turned away from the bed and went slowly out of the room.

When he had gone Vivian got up and put on a dressing-gown. She knew that after what had happened sleep would not come to her. To lie still in bed would be intolerable. She must be up. But when she was up she did not know

what to do. There were books in the room, but she could not read. Perhaps for the first time in her life she felt driven. There are mad people who cannot be still, who have a mania for movement. She felt like one of them.

She went to the terrace window, drew the curtains back, turned the handle and pulled it wide open. The rain had become heavier. It was pouring down on the tiles. The air was full of damp breaths and odours which came to her like living things out of the dense blackness of the night. These breaths and odours and the noise of the rain gave her a momentary relief. What Clive had done, their horrible, humiliating struggle, had made her bedroom a place of tragedy to her for the moment, worse than a prison. She could not escape from it that night, but she could let in nature and the night to cleanse it. And she went over quickly to the two small windows which looked out to the trees of the garden and opened them too. And it seemed as if more night poured into the room, dark, damp, and odorous, and the sound of the rain increased strongly giving her companionship.

She stood by one of the small windows. From it she could not see the revolving lights. A wall of blackness was before her against which she could distinguish the branches of a lebbek tree which grew close to this part of the house. She leaned out of the window, let the rain fall on her bare arms, touched, grasped, the nearest leaves of the wet tree. She had a crazy longing to go out into the garden and bathe in the rain under the cloud of trees. But she could not do that. Clive would hear her footsteps in the lobby. When he left her he had shut her door, but she did not know whether his door was shut and believed that it was open. She did not know why she believed that. But she had a conviction that his bedroom door was not shut.

When the night was over, how were they going to meet on the morrow after what had happened? How could they take up their common life, how be at ease together in their

complete isolation? Each depended absolutely on the other in this African life. It was terrible to contemplate the morrow.

She tried to convince herself that she was mentally exaggerating, was enlarging into monstrosity an event which though disagreeable was small. She tried to persuade herself that in many married lives there were doubtless such incidents, such moments of disharmony, as had intruded into hers, and that, in spite of them, those lives were not unhappy. Even love must carry its burden, have its hours of failure and distress. She told herself this, but it was all of no use. Clive and she were not ordinary people, or, if they were, fate had decreed that their connection should not be ordinary. She had given up and endured so much for Clive, and he had clung to her, she knew, with such desperation through the difficulties of his strange life, that their connection could never be ordinary. It might be glorious, it might be tragic; commonplace it never could be.

Perhaps that was why she now felt appalled at what had just happened, and did not know how she would face the morrow.

And presently she began to blame herself.

She had drawn in her arms, wet with the rain. She dried them with a handkerchief, pulled a chair close to the window from which she had been leaning out, sat down on it and tried to force herself to be still.

Mrs. Sabine! When Vivian, seeking an excuse for the man she loved, began to blame herself, she again met Mrs. Sabine in the way. There had been moments, morbid no doubt and absurd—all ordinary people would say so—when she had seemed to be aware of the dead woman as a haunting personality, troubling her life and Clive's as a malign individual might have troubled them, when she had felt that the departed had returned, unable to bear what was happening to her former lover on earth, driven to attempt an occult interference in his life with another woman. The truth no

doubt was just simply this: that the dead woman lived merely in the intense consciousness that Vivian and Clive had of her and could not get rid of. Vivian said that to herself now. She and Clive forced Mrs. Sabine as it were to live, and even to be active, by their preoccupation about her. It was not she who would not let them alone, but rather they who would not let her alone. She, Vivian, pulled at the dead woman with her horrible jealousy of the past. Yes, that was it. And to-night, just now, surely that jealousy had risen suddenly to a climax, had demanded of the dead woman an intense activity. When Clive had wanted her Vivian had as it were invoked Mrs. Sabine, almost as Saul had called up the Witch of Endor. Had not that been abominably perverse?

She saw herself as one of those miserable women who lay hands on their own happiness and try to destroy it.

She had accused Clive of trying to avoid the persecution of Mrs. Sabine by placing her in the dead woman's path, as a sort of barrier behind which he could take refuge. And she had accused him of something else, of seeking to forget the dead woman momentarily in abandonment to physical passion, of trying to use herself as the instrument of that snatched-at forgetfulness.

It was a cruel accusation if untrue. And perhaps it was untrue.

The feeling of intense restlessness increased in her. She did not know what to do. She got up and moved aimlessly about the room, went to the edge of the terrace, stood there listening to the now heavy and torrential beating of the rain upon it, watched the hazy gleam of the yellow and red eyes, returned to the window by the lebbek tree, sat down on the chair she had drawn up by it, got up again and stood irresolute. A deep tenderness for Clive was invading her. She had never been unkind to him before to-night. Certainly she had withstood his will more than once, had made her will

prevail over his, had persuaded, or induced him to do what he had not wished to do. But all that had been for him. There had been no selfishness in it. In all that she had been prompted solely by her love for him, and sometimes by a fierce desire to give him a higher place in his own esteem, to give him back fully and entirely to his own manhood.

To-night had been different. She had resisted him, struggled violently against him, sent him away from her coldly, even with a sort of disgust. And when he had gone she had not even sent a kind word, a loving or gentle look with him. A dreadful hardness had governed her.

That, too, had come from Mrs. Sabine.

A terrible feeling came to her that she was beginning to fall under the dominion of the dead woman, that her character was being twisted from its natural bent by a character that was totally unlike hers, and that she detested, that she was being subtly induced to make the life of Clive wretched by one who had formerly persecuted him herself and who could not bear that he should have any happiness. She knew, the world knew, that Mrs. Sabine's love for Clive had been the type of love, peculiar to a certain type of woman, that gives in passion and gets in persecution. It had been, it must have been, distorted and defaced by a monstrous egoism. There had been in it nothing of that unselfishness which is the mark of every love that is great in woman.

"But that's not my love. And that's never going to be my love!" Vivian said to herself.

The tenderness grew in her, a sort of bitterness of tenderness, full of self-accusation and desire to atone. She recalled Clive's look as he sat staring at her after she had freed herself violently from him, a look of awful frustration, but of far more than merely physical frustration; she remembered the sound in his voice when he had said: "I could so easily prove to you that I have loved you far too much."

Why had she not melted then? Why had she not asked

him for the proof of which he had spoken? Not that she needed any greater proof than Clive had given her long ago. And she recalled many moments in which he had shown even fiercely his passionate love for her. Yet—that proof!

She began to wonder about it, to ask herself what exactly it was. She remembered now that there had been a sound of extraordinary significance in his voice when he had spoken of it. He had not looked at her when he was speaking, and somehow that fact had seemed to add to the deep meaning in his words. It was as if he had not dared to look at her just then.

The restlessness grew in her and absolutely tormented her. She could not lie down, could not rest. She could not read. She could not just sit by the open window listening to the violence of the rain which seemed continually to increase. Although Clive had not looked at her she had looked at him as he left her, sent away by her, punished, condemned. And he was so sensitive! That must have been an awful moment for him, a moment of acute humiliation. He had looked broken and humiliated as he went out. There had been a completely desolate look in his face, and he had moved like a man humbled, almost broken. And his voice had faltered. He had not finished his last sentence. His voice had trailed away into silence. "There was no measure . . . I couldn't . . ." and then silence and the shutting of the door.

A sensitive man might hate a woman for doing what she had done that night. The reaction from passion checked must be tremendous, bewildering. In such a reaction hatred might surely be generated.

She began to wonder with a profound anxiety what Clive was doing. She was certain he had not gone to bed. After what had happened he would not be able to lie down and sleep. Perhaps he, too, by an open window was listening to the beat of the rain upon the garden paths and the dense foliage of the trees. The windows of his room were on the

same side of the house as, and level with, the smaller windows of her room. She stretched out into the darkness to see if a light were shining in his room. The rain beat on her head and neck as she craned forward till the wet leaves of the lebbek tree touched her cheek. Suddenly she resolved that if she could see light coming from Clive's room she would go to him, show him the tenderness that was hurting her, tearing her, try to put things right. If there was no light, she would not go.

As she turned her head towards his window a shower of cold drops from the leaves fell on her face mingling with the rain. There was a light in his room. She drew in swiftly.

The rain-drops were running down her neck to her bosom. Her hair was wet. She took a towel and used it roughly. She was full of intention now, and eager to show Clive her sorrow for what had happened. She would ask him to forgive her. She would even do that. Pride did not count when love was fully awake.

"They are not long, the weeping and the laughter,
Love and desire and hate——"

She laid the towel down, went to her door and opened it.

The door of Clive's room was ajar, and a ray of light shone into the lobby. She stopped on the threshold of her room and listened. But the sound of the rain was audible even here, and now it distressed her. She wanted to be able to hear if there were any sound in Clive's room. And she turned softly, went back, and quietly and swiftly shut the three windows. Then she returned to the threshold of the lobby, stood there again and listened.

But she could still hear the persistent, tormenting noise of the rain. Now she heard it in front of her. The windows of Clive's room must be open. She hesitated. What was he doing? What effect had the horrible event of the night had upon him?

How would he receive her?

It was dreadful to be debating mentally about that, and the fact that she was debating proved to her the necessity for immediate action.

She crossed the lobby and entered Clive's room.

X

VIVIAN did not know what she had expected to see in Clive's room. She had wondered deeply what Clive was doing there. But what she found him doing gave her a strong shock of surprise. In the room against the wall, and exactly opposite to the doorway, there was a writing-table. He was sitting, in his pyjamas, at this table, bent over it, and writing. She could not hear any scratch of the pen, but she saw the movement of his hand from left to right, saw him from time to time quickly dip a pen into the inkstand pushed to his right-hand side. His back was bowed. His face was held low, very near to the table. Absorbed in his work he had not heard her. She stood in the doorway intent upon him. He did not feel her presence. His windows were open. His room was full of the noise of rain. Two lights were on, one hanging from the ceiling, one, a standing lamp, set on the table. The room, full of noise, was also full of light. And in the midst of this noise and light, the crouched man in the pyjamas, Clive, wrote.

Vivian was chilled.

This strange nocturnal activity, this energy demanding the constant push of the brain, indicated surely a sad coldness of the heart. How was it possible that after what had happened Clive should be able to sit down and work with this absorbed intentness? For it must be work he was doing. It could not be a letter he was writing. There was something in his attitude, in his movements, in the rush of the

pen over the paper, which forced her to the conviction that this was not ordinary letter-writing. And she saw some sheets of paper lying on the floor near his left foot.

His long absences in the sea room came to her mind. And he had sent for a quantity of books to London. He must be carrying on some work, perhaps had been carrying it on for some time unknown to her. She did not mind that. Anything that interested Clive, that helped him to live, ought to be welcomed by her. But she was very much a woman, and she hated his work at this moment, hated the fact that he could work, be absorbed in work, while she had been agonising about him, and had supposed, indeed had felt certain, that he was agonising about her.

After standing where she was for a little while—she had no idea for how long—she made up her mind not to speak but to go back to her room and shut herself in for the night. Clive would not miss her. It seemed that he had forgotten all about her. He had wanted her body. She had refused it. And now he had given himself to the brain. She could not understand. She was confused by the mystery of it all. She felt cold, sad and very deeply humiliated. And now an intense desire that Clive should not know she had come to seek him beset her.

Holding her dressing-gown together with both hands for fear of its rustling she turned to go. But just as she was stepping into the lobby she heard Clive's voice behind her say:

"Vivian!"

She turned. She felt terribly startled. Clive was standing up in front of the writing-table. He must have looked round just as she was leaving the room and have sprung up at once out of his chair. The noise of the rain had masked the sound of his movement. She looked at him but did not say anything. She did not know what to say.

"Have you been in here?" he asked.

"Yes."

"And you are going away?"

"Yes."

"How long have you been here?"

"I don't know."

"Vivian," he said, in an uncertain, hesitating voice. "Why did you come? What made you come?"

An impulse of truth that was stern came to her, and, looking steadily at him with shining eyes, she said:

"I came to ask you to forgive me."

His head dropped a little as if she had struck him a blow which had suddenly lessened his strength.

"Why should I forgive you?" he said, in a low voice.

"I was unkind. I spoke hardly to you. I was cold and—I was cold and hard to you. I think it was jealousy. I thought you were trying to forget her in me, were trying to use me as a means of forgetting her. I thought you wanted me just then because of that, because you were longing to forget her, to force her away from you even if only for a short time. That made me feel hard. It almost made me hate you. But I don't want her to ruin our life together. So I came to say I was sorry."

She looked at the sheets of paper lying on the floor by the writing-table.

"But you had forgotten about it, I suppose," she added.

And there was a sound of misery, that suggested despair, in her voice.

"Forgotten!" he said.

"You were writing—working——"

"That was for you."

"For me? You were writing to me?"

He came over to her.

"Come in!" he said.

He took her by the arm, drew her into the room and shut the door.

"It's no use. It can't go on," he said. "I've tried, I've struggled, I've worn myself out with struggling. I thought I had the strength. I got through a long way—what most men would think the worst part. It seemed I had won out. But that was the great deception. She wouldn't let go. People—some people—aren't done with when they are what is called dead. And I got to know that out here, in loneliness, in what ought to have been peace, all alone, as it seemed, with you. There's no *endroit du bonheur* for me, Vi. Being here has taught me that, short as our time has been. And to-night, after you sent me away, and I felt that for a moment you hated me, I was trying to tell you—trying to tell you——"

She looked down on the sheets of paper lying on the floor and then at the writing-table.

"What were you trying to tell me? What do you want me to know?"

He did not answer.

"Is it something about her?"

Still he said nothing.

"I don't understand. I don't—why should you write to me? Why shouldn't you speak to me? Was it because we had—did you feel we had quarrelled?"

Still he stood beside her silent. It seemed he could not utter a word. She began to feel frightened by his continued silence. There was something unnatural in it.

"You felt you couldn't tell me because I had been unkind," she forced herself to say. "Because I asked you to go away and leave me by myself. I can understand that. But now— isn't it all right now? I've told you how I feel, how sorry I am. It will never be like that again between us. I couldn't bear any separation from you—that sort of separation—our natures separated. I felt terribly lonely in my room just now. It was an awful feeling. And didn't you feel lonely in here?"

"Yes," he said.

Again she looked at the sheets of paper covered with words. They drew her eyes. A great curiosity began to wake in her.

"It's about her," she said.

"Yes."

"About you and her."

"Yes."

"And you thought telling me it would make me understand you better—something like that?"

As she looked at him now with intensity she noticed that he had become very pale close to the eyes. His face was bronzed by the sun, but now near the eyes there was a strange, unnatural whiteness, as if the blood had sunk away just there. A few minutes ago he had been writing with an absorption, an energy and swiftness that had in them a fierce vitality. Now there was something stony in his stillness, his dumbness.

"What was it?" she said. "Do tell me. Or, if you can't tell me, let me see what you've written. No—but that's so unnatural between us. What has come to us here? I said we must take our light with us. But somehow we haven't brought it with us. What is the matter? Since we have been here something has begun to grow up between us. We haven't been as we used to be. Perhaps it's my fault. I wasn't sincere with you about the Consul. Perhaps it began with that. And then you—Clive, let's be sincere with each other, absolutely sincere! I'm sure it's the only chance of happiness for us. I can't live in insincerity with you. Even the least little bit of secrecy ruins everything. I know that now I've tried to keep something hidden from you. And it hurt you to death, even that small thing, a trifle really. It separated us. I've had my lesson. Let's start again. And don't hide anything from me. Tell me—whatever it is. Or let me read those. I have a feeling that *she* has been able to live in my life because we haven't had

everything quite out in the open, and that if we do, if we are nakedly sincere with each other as we ought to be, because we love each other, she will have no more power. It's almost as if we brought her back, kept her with us by—I by my jealousy of her (for I have been jealous), and you—you by——”

“Yes?”

“I don't know exactly. But I feel as if you lived perpetually with her in your thoughts. You said just now that she wouldn't let go. That can't be true. It must be the other way. It must be that you won't let go of her. Poor woman! She was unhappy. She made you unhappy. But that's all over. It's done with. We both know that. It can't be otherwise. Let us be sincere, truthful. Surely we have the right to a little happiness and peace. Surely we have the right to live for each other now.”

“You have all the right.”

“And you have more right than I, because you've been through such terrible things.”

“I've been punished, but not enough—it seems.”

“But how can you deserve——”

“I do.”

“But why?” she said.

She looked intently at him as she asked the question.

“I'll tell you—I must tell you—it's no use——”

He stopped.

“You shall know,” he said at last, speaking apparently with a great effort. “But don't ask me anything more just now.”

He bent down and slowly, carefully, collected the sheets of paper that lay on the floor, put them together, laid them on the table with the half-covered sheet he had been writing on when she came to his room. Then he came to her slowly and put both his arms round her.

“You asked me to forgive you just now. Have you forgiven me?”

"Yes."

"Vi—let me come to you now. May I?"

He put his mouth against hers and pressed her lips hard. They crossed the lobby and went into her room.

XI

Two days later a telegram arrived at the villa for Clive. He opened it and read:

"Your Mother suddenly taken very ill has had a stroke doctor gives no hope recovery come if possible.—Herries."

Clive read the words on the white strip, read them again and looked up. It was half-past one in the afternoon. They had just finished lunch, and were still in the dining room. Outside the damp garden was steaming under a heavy grey sky that looked swollen. The rain, which had lasted continuously for about sixty hours, had ceased, but there seemed a promise of more in the air. Under the lowering sky the sluggish sea was the colour of lead. There was no wind.

"What is it?" Vivian asked.

"My Mother is dying," he said.

He spoke without any emotion, and looked again at the telegram.

"It's from Bob Herries asking me to come to England at once."

"Oh—Clive!"

She got up instinctively. Already she seemed to be travelling. The sea—France—England—Africa left behind abruptly—the plunge back into that life of complexity and terrible endurance with this sorrow added to it! How would Clive bear it? She was terribly startled, and felt for a moment confused and almost unbelieving.

"Poor Mum! Poor Mum!" she said, after a minute.
"What——"

"A stroke."

"And there's no hope?"

"None."

"Oh, I'm so sorry! I'm so dreadfully sorry."

She moved to go to him with an instinct of tenderness. But he got up quickly, and stood there looking inflexible. She stopped. She had stretched out a hand. She drew it back.

"When shall we go? Where can we get a ship?"

"I must think it over," he said.

Bakir ben Yahia, who was standing solemnly in the doorway, now said in French, in his slow, thick voice:

"Is there any answer, Monsieur?"

"I'll go and see about it," said Clive.

And he went out of the room, followed by Bakir.

He did not come back for a long time—perhaps an hour. Meanwhile Vivian waited, trying hard for composure, but feeling violently excited and still confused. She felt that she ought to be packing, getting ready to go. Already in thought she was gone, was again facing the life of England, once more Vivian Baratrie. But till Clive came to her she did not like to do anything. The length of time he was away suggested hesitation, mental debate—something of that kind. Was it possible—a thought that was like a fear came to her. Suppose that he could not bring himself to face it? Suppose that he would not go?

At last the door opened and she saw him come in. He looked hard and calm. She got up.

"What are we going to do? Oughtn't we to find out——"

"I have found out. There's a steamer from Sidi Barka to Marseille to-morrow. She leaves at noon. I must go in her."

"You must go—yes. And I too. I will begin to get things ready."

"I want you to stay here."

"You don't wish me to come? You wish to leave me behind?"

"Yes. I—I want to leave you here as a guarantee."

"A guarantee?"

"That our African life isn't over, that, whatever happens, we aren't leaving here for good. Vi, I want you to stay. I ask you to stay. I've been thinking—I've thought things out. Will you leave it to me? Will you stay?"

She said "Yes" immediately. Something in his look and manner, even in his voice, prevented her from making any protest. There seemed some strong reason for what he was requiring of her. What it was she did not know, could not guess. The guarantee—that was part of it. But that was not the whole.

On the following day Clive left the villa. Vivian drove with him to the port to see the last of him. Just before he went on board the steamer he drew out of a pocket a key.

"Will you take care of that for me till I come back?" he said, giving it to her.

"Yes. What is it the key of?" she asked.

"Of my writing-table drawer in the sea room. I want to leave it with you."

He gave her no explanation of his reason for this little unexpected action, and she did not ask him for one. They crossed the gang-plank and she went down with him to his cabin. There were not many people sailing that day and he had it to himself. A perspiring negro brought in his luggage, and bestowed it under the berth and in the tall, narrow cupboard that was against the wall by the door. Clive paid him, and he went away, wiping his forehead with a scaly hand.

There was a narrow red settee under the porthole opposite to Clive's berth. Vivian sat down on it.

"Oh, how strange this is!" she said.

Now that they were on the ship in the cabin the abruptness of the alteration in their common life struck home

to her. Till then though she had known she had not realised.

"It's awful—this sudden change!" she said. "Why didn't you take me with you? Why am I not to go?"

"I want to know you are here. If you came with me to England we might never come back here."

"But you said—don't you remember—that being here was no use. Do you feel differently about that now?"

"I don't want you to come to England," he said, obstinately.

"Will you miss me?"

His face changed, softened wonderfully.

"When we are out of the harbour it will seem as if the end had come," he said. "I think it's like that every time a man leaves the woman he loves—like the end. It's terrible. There's something of death in it."

"And yet I am not to come with you."

She felt desperately sad just then, and as if she had been cheated of a right. But it was too late now to try to resist his will. And besides she had made up her mind to let his will be master. She had long ago made a sort of silent vow of obedience.

"If she can understand, tell Mum what I feel about her," she said. "Kiss her for me. Say my good-bye to her. I have loved her. I haven't understood her, but I have loved her. She's strange, but she's very brave. She's got an indomitable heart, I think. I always feel that somehow—the indomitableness of her. And you know how I love pluck. It's the soul standing up to things, and I love it. Without pluck we are nothing."

She saw tears come into his eyes.

At this moment the siren sounded above them. Then a bell rang and in the distance a hoarse voice cried out something. She got up. She put her arms round Clive's neck and kissed him again and again.

"Dearest!" she whispered. "Dearest!"

Tears began running down her cheeks.

"They are not long——" How would it be? An awful feeling that this African life was over, had suddenly ended for ever, came to her. The siren sounded again. The bell was always ringing, now here, now there. She felt Clive's arms strained brutally round her.

Then she was out of the cabin in the narrow corridor going towards the deck and the gang-plank.

A few minutes later she watched from the shore the small, dingy steamship slowly drawing out of the harbour towards the open sea.

XII

CLIVE would probably take three nights and days to reach England. Neither he nor Vivian knew how long he would have to stay there. He might not arrive before his Mother's death. On the other hand, she might linger for some time.

Bob Herries's telegram was not explicit on that point. She was condemned by the doctor. That was all they knew. Even if she were dead when Clive arrived in England, or died almost immediately afterwards, there would no doubt be many things to keep him in London. He would have to arrange affairs connected with her life; he would have to close up her existence. He could not come back immediately leaving everything in disorder. It might be quite a long time, perhaps several weeks, before he returned.

All this Vivian only realised when the ship had vanished out of her sight.

She went back to the *Villa du Soleil* feeling dull, almost dazed. The change now fell upon her like a blow. Since the telegram came she had been driven on by excitement. Perhaps she had not known that, but it had been so. There had been things to do connected with Clive's departure;

there had been things to feel in common with him. Leisure had not been hers. Even the leisure to think had seemed to be wanting. But now she had it and in abundant measure. For the first time in her life she faced a perhaps long period of solitude. She had given way to the will of Clive in a big thing, in a thing at least which had seemed big to her. Now she had to pay the price.

The heavy rains did not come on again, but the weather refused to clear. A heat not unlike that generated in a vapour bath brooded under a perpetually grey sky. Rain seemed always to be coming, to be very near. But it did not fall. The calm of the sea persisted. There was no wind, and seldom any breeze. A strange stagnation pervaded the garden, formerly full of life. Its vivid charm was replaced by a sullen stillness. There was sadness under the silent and motionless trees. Vivian felt this so strongly that she began to avoid their shade and, when she went out, turned instinctively towards the sea terrace. There she was in the open, could see the sky and the sea which divided her from Clive. There, too, she was close to the room in which he had passed so many hours alone.

She often went into it. She sat there. She took down books from the shelves, the books he had chosen. Sometimes she read. Sometimes she just sat still, thinking, feeling—waiting.

The dying, or perhaps dead woman, whom she loved but had never understood, was often in her mind. She would face death—Vivian was sure of it—with the indomitable spirit she had manifested so strangely, so poignantly, ever since Vivian had known her. Death is a lonely thing. But loneliness could have no new terrors for her. Vivian thought of her as the most lonely human being she had ever encountered. She had wrapped herself in loneliness as in a garment. She had deliberately chosen it as her only companion.

It was forced upon Vivian now.

On the fourth day after Clive's departure a telegram came:

"Arrived Mother still alive impossible to know when the end will be love from her and me—Claude."

When Vivian read the name at the end she shivered and crushed the bit of paper up in her hand. She could never get accustomed to that name in her life. It seemed always to stand for a life quite apart from any life natural to her, for a subterranean life, for a life of the depths. And she hated that name most when Clive signed it for her.

Four more days went by. Then a letter came. It was short, but intensely alive. She felt Clive in it, Clive full of longing and a veritable heat of love. He told her that his Mother was conscious, clear in mind, fully able to understand all that was going on round her, but unable to speak plainly and quite helpless. He had seen Bob Herries. He wrote: "I have spent a long time to-day with Herries. He is one of the big, comparatively unknown, men who seem at times to manifest God without knowing that they are doing so. One feels God in their simplicity."

He closed the letter with words that wrapped her in his arms.

She read the letter in the sea room. When she had finished it she felt an inclination to lock it away. It was a letter which she would always keep. Women do not destroy such letters. Clive's writing-table was beside her; she remembered the key he had given her, the key of its drawer. She might lock the letter up in that drawer. It chanced that she had the key with her and she took it out and put it into the lock of the drawer. She did this quickly, without much thought. Clive had given her the key, and asked her to take care of it, and told her what lock it belonged to. The letter would lie safely in that drawer, and now, because it seemed to her full of Clive, she had taken the sea room as her own. She turned the key in the lock and pulled out the drawer. She saw

within it a number of sheets of paper fastened together with a clip. The top sheet was covered with Clive's handwriting. No doubt all the other sheets were written over too, but she could not see whether that was so, or not. Without intention she looked at the top sheet and saw the word "Sabine." Immediately she shut up the drawer and locked it. She could not put her letter in there.

Those were the pages Clive had written on the night when the rain had come, or at any rate some of those pages he had written on that night. He might have added to them on the two succeeding days, when he had been alone in the sea room, or perhaps in his bedroom in the deep of the night when he had left her and was alone. She had asked about them and at last he had said that he had been writing about Mrs. Sabine and himself, and that he had been writing for her. But he had never let her read what he had written, and though he had said that night "You shall know," he had not told her what was in those pages. He had gone away without telling her. But he had left the key of the drawer in which those pages were hidden in her keeping. Why was that? What had been his intention? During the two days which had elapsed between that strange night and his going she had never referred to his writing again, had never again asked him what it was that she ought to know, that she must know. She had wanted to ask, but she had been held back from asking. She had been waiting for the moment when he would come to her of his own free will and tell her. But he had been silent. And the telegram had come, and he had gone away without breaking that silence. He had been on the verge—but he had drawn back.

She looked at the key in her hand, and at the locked drawer. A great temptation assailed her. But she did not yield to it. She put the key away and went out of the room, shutting the door behind her.

She walked up and down on the terrace in the damp

heat under the grey sky wondering whether she would ever read those pages, whether she would ever know what Clive had said she should know.

Perhaps he had changed his mind, had resolved to keep her in ignorance, although he had said with such desperation, "It's no use—it can't go on."

Nevertheless he had given her the key of the drawer in which those pages were lying.

That struck her now as very strange. She could not understand why he had done that. Could he possibly have meant her to use the key, to open the drawer and read what was lying there? Could the giving of the key have been meant as a hint to her to do the thing she had refrained from doing? But he must understand her character too well to suppose that she would read those pages without having been told to do so by him.

Presently she went up to the house and locked Clive's letter to her away in her dressing-case. And from that day she gave up going to the lonely room on the bottom terrace. The thought of what was there kept her away.

It even seemed to her that Mrs. Sabine was there. In her complete solitude the feeling grew in her that the dead woman still had the power to trouble her life and would not resign that power unused.

She began to sleep badly. She lay awake for hours in the night listening for the return of the rain, which seemed lurking about the house and hanging over the sullen grey sea, ready to fall if some word were given. And in the night she felt terribly alone and often apprehensive. She still slept in the flat with the outside staircase, separated from the rest of the house. The door on to the staircase she locked inside every evening when she went up to bed. Then she was quite alone. She could of course have moved into the house where the servants slept, but she did not choose to do that. She was not afraid of any danger coming upon her prosaically

from the African world outside. Her apprehension was not physical. She feared no peril to her body. It was her mind or perhaps her soul—she did not know—which seemed waiting in those dark hours for the coming of something evil, something destructive, which would not approach her with the feet of a robber or murderer, but which would have the power and the will to do harm in the innermost chambers of her life.

Sometimes, weary of lying sleepless in bed, she got up, wrapped herself in a cloak, and went out upon the small square terrace outside the French window of her bedroom. And there she would walk softly up and down, or stand by the low parapet watching the yellow and red eyes wink in the darkness seaward, and listening to the faint sound made by the sucking lips of the sea against the rocks beneath the bank on the far side of the lonely highway. Then the sheer strangeness of her present life would sometimes come upon her like a wave and flow over her, submerging her. And she would vaguely wonder, almost like a person drowning, whether Clive at all realised what life in this remote place had become to her now that he had left her and was in England. He was again Clive Baratrie in England; she was Vivian Ormeley in Africa. And she thought swiftly, but vaguely still, of people in England, of her Mother, Father, Archie, of that strange dying, or dead, woman in Knightsbridge, whose agony she had once shared, but from whose mind she had afterwards been shut out, of Bob Herries and his wife, of Jim Gordon, and of a dead child. And the strangeness of life increased upon her, buzzed in her ears, beat upon her brain, seemed, with the force of an irresistible wave, to be sweeping her away into the vastness of the unknown.

For several days she had no further word from Clive. She had written to him out of her heart, but she had kept back from him everything that might trouble him if he knew it; she had put down nothing of her great feeling of loneliness,

her depression, her nocturnal apprehension, her insomnia. She had not even alluded to the dreariness of the weather. Her letter had been full of warm affection, tenderness, sympathy. And there had been enclosed in it a letter for his mother, to be read to her if it could not be read by her. At the end of the letter to Clive, in the woman's postscript, she had told him of her use of the sea room and of her abandonment of it.

"But I don't go there any more now," she had written, without giving any explanation of her reason for this disuse.

She was beginning to wonder very much why she had heard nothing more from him when one afternoon late—towards six o'clock—Bakir came to her with a telegram. She opened it and read:

"Mother died last night am longing terribly for you lonely here love—Claude."

Although of course she had been expecting this news, the knowledge of Mrs. Baratrie's passing shocked her. She even felt startled and for an instant physically weak.

"Wait a moment, Bakir," she said to the Kabyle. "I must just——"

She got up slowly, went to the writing-table and sat down. She must send an answer. She found a telegram form and, after a moment of hesitation, wrote:

"Wish I were with you to help you am lonely too love—Vivian."

How dull, how cold and inexpressive the words looked! But she did not find other words. And she gave the sheet of thin paper to Bakir. He went away. She remained sitting where she was, intending to write to Clive.

So Mum was gone! Those repelling, intelligent eyes were closed. That active and secretive brain functioned no longer. Mum was gone with her secret to the great secret. And

what had been the truth of her, the truth of that indomitable nature? Behind the often satirical mask what tenderness, what passions, what renunciations had been hidden? And at the last, alone with her son, with Clive, had she been able, and if so had she chosen, to give herself, her true self, in a final word, or look, or touch? Vivian wondered. That mother had loved her son with impetuosity, with a strength of hidden passion. Vivian felt sure of that. Of the rest she was not sure. She could even imagine Mrs. Baratrie going down to death still wrapped in a strange and fiery reserve. Unless weakness of the body had betrayed her into yielding the citadel!

"Claude!"

The name on the telegram hurt Vivian. Even in such a moment of grief and longing he had not forgotten their subterfuge. She wondered that he had been able to put that name at the end of such a message.

But she could write to Clive Baratrie, and she bent over the table and wrote.

That evening there was a glorious red sunset, and on the following morning the lowering grey weather gave place to a wonder of luminous blue. There was a light, warm breeze from the sea, and once more the garden was full of voices. Vivian had a feeling of renewal. Death had spoken his word and fell into silence. The word now was with life.

Soon another strange letter came from Clive. It had been written immediately after the death of his mother and, though not emotional in its wording, seemed to Vivian full of something suppressed. When she read it she had the definite impression that when Clive had written it he had been tremendously moved, had even been shaken, torn, but by a great effort had succeeded in expressing himself with clearness, restraint, even with apparent calm. She did not know exactly how she divined this, what it was in the letter which gave her this impression. But she was sure of its

accuracy. And she was sure that it was just because Clive had been so torn that he had written with so much reticence. Even personal tenderness for her was not openly shown. For some reason he had striven hard to damp down his fires. She felt their blaze nevertheless.

In the letter he told her of his mother's death. She had had a second slight stroke from which she had recovered sufficiently to know people, and even to make herself understood. Then, suddenly, she had failed—"gone out" was his expression for it—had shocked him by the abruptness of her going. She was to be cremated. Before the cremation there was going to be a service at St. Giles's, to which only a very few of her friends would be invited. Clive did not know yet when he would be able to leave England. There were things which had to be done. The house at Knightsbridge had to be dismantled and, if possible, got rid of. He would come as soon as he could.

The letter was strange in its almost prosaic coldness, but not only in that. At the end was this passage:

"You remember my leaving the key of the writing-table drawer in the sea room with you. I may possibly telegraph to you about that later on. I am not sure yet, what I am going to do about it. I feel confused by this change to London and by all that has happened. Perhaps I can't think clearly, or judge what is best. Do you think that dying people have clearer perceptions than we have, or do you think their minds are invariably clouded by the approach of death and make terrible mistakes?"

Vivian read these sentences again and again. She studied them, and drew from them a curious conviction which made her feel uneasy. Just before dying—Clive wrote it—Mrs. Baratrie had been able to make herself understood. That meant that she must have been able to utter words, or to

trace words on paper, unless she had conveyed her meaning merely by signs. But Vivian did not believe that Clive would have so expressed himself about mere gestures and signs. She had surely spoken or written. And what had she spoken or written about? Vivian gathered that the dying woman's communication had been connected with the subject Clive had treated of in those pages locked up in the sea room, the eternal, haunting subject of Clive's connection with Mrs. Sabine. She was led to this conviction by the association between Clive's preoccupation, a strange preoccupation, about the key of the writing-table drawer in which his manuscript was lying, and his questions about the perceptions of the dying. The link between these two subjects was the statement of his own mental confusion. Vivian came to believe that what had happened in London was this: that Mrs. Baratrie, when near to death, had advised, or told Clive to make clear to her, Vivian, something connected with his former association with Mrs. Sabine, and that he was doubtful about doing that, or was afraid to do that. She believed, too, that the truth which Mrs. Baratrie had probably wished Clive to tell her was contained in the locked-up manuscript which she had looked at and not read. Clive was hesitating now, even in the midst of his grief and the work entailed upon him by his mother's death, whether to tell her to go to the locked drawer and read the pages contained in it, or whether to leave things as they were.

His prolonged indecision, surely of a torturing nature, which had been born in Africa and continued in England, began to torment Vivian. She put his letter away. She knew it almost by heart. Late that same day, when the light was beginning to fail, she answered it.

She wrote first about his mother, with ardour and tenderness, about her longing for his return and her great loneliness without him. Then she turned to his questions, and wrote as follows:

"You ask me whether I think dying people have clearer perceptions than we have, or whether I think that their minds are invariably clouded by the approach of death and make terrible mistakes. I know enough about death-beds to be sure that many people are wonderfully lucid in mind in their last moments—that is in the moments preceding their sinking into unconsciousness. I think they often have vision which is denied to us. I think they often *know*. If, as I cannot help thinking from your letter, dear Mum asked you to do something just before she died, and you are hesitating whether to do it or not, I say to you—do it. About the key you left with me, of course if you telegraph any directions I will carry them out at once."

She put her letter into an envelope, ready to post early on the morrow, and went out into the garden.

Day dies swiftly in Africa. Her letter had not been a very long one, yet already the darkness had come. She walked into "Little Africa." A strong apprehension was with her, but to-night she had a desire to rush upon the spear which she felt was mysteriously pointed towards her. Some danger was certainly threatening her, some danger directed against the spirit. She felt that she was approaching some great test of endurance. There was something vital hidden from her, something that Clive had intended to tell her, had nearly told her, was terribly afraid to tell her, yet in certain moments—it seemed of agony—wished her to know. And this something his mother had surely known before she died, and it was about this that, close to death, she had given counsel to her son.

Deep in her life, deeper now than ever before, Vivian felt Mrs. Sabine. The dead woman did not come back to haunt this lonely African garden. Vivian had had strange fancies about that, about silent feet treading over the sand of "Little Africa," about an unseen figure waiting in the darkness under the palm trees, and stealing away into the night

when those whom she had marked down as her victims drew near. These had been only fancies and she had succeeded in dismissing them. The truth was what she had told to Clive. They, she and Clive, chained the dead woman to them by thought as the branch of the leaning pine tree was chained to the trunk. But this mystery about her was surely the means by which she penetrated into the very springs of Vivian's life.

This persecution must not go on. An end must be put to this poisoning of the sources. Otherwise even the shattering of love might become possible.

That night the spirit of the keen, fearless, and very English Vivian, the girl who had the tournament temperament, suddenly revived, reasserted itself in Africa. And that spirit fiercely rejected the tyranny of the dead woman, felt ashamed of what had surely been a long bending beneath an intolerable yoke.

And under the palms of "Little Africa," as the young crescent moon, very slim and silvery, and with a shadow in its arms, was rising in a sky that held a mysterious suggestion of vaporous light in its darkness, Vivian resolved to be her real self, to lift up her head and to act firmly. It was she who had said to Clive: "You know how I love pluck. It's the soul standing up to things . . . without pluck we are nothing." And it was she who had gone in fear. That must end. She could not endure such a contradiction within herself. In "Little Africa" that night she came to an absolutely definite resolve. And early the next morning she sent this telegram to London:

"Have received your letter please let me use the key all my love—Vivian."

He would know what she meant. She was absolutely sure that he would know.

XIII

VIVIAN paid a reply to her telegram. Towards the evening of the day on which she sent it, a Monday, she began to be restless. She did not know how long a telegram would take to reach London, but she supposed it might be possible to have a reply that night. None came. By dinner-time—half-past eight—she had given up hope of hearing from Clive before the next day. She had doubtless been too sanguine. Impatience had driven her into an unjustified optimism. The dark hours now separated her from the fulfilment of her desire. She dined in the garden, waited upon by Bakir, who served her with his usual gentle, and rather sluggish, serenity. Afterwards she went down to the sea terrace. There she paced to and fro for a long time, turning when she drew near to the shut door of the sea room, and keeping her eyes averted from it. That room tempted her—tempted her. Yet, in spite of herself, she felt a dread of it.

The night was balmy and very warm. The three lights shone out over a dreaming sea on which, near to the harbour mouth, some fishermen's boats with flares at their prows glided mysteriously, or seemed to pause as if in expectation. There was no traffic on the highroad at the foot of the bastion, over which the geraniums, now in full flower, streamed down. Sidi Barka was hidden from her sight by a sharp turn of the land not far from the gate of the villa.

She stayed on the terrace till very late. Somehow she could not bring herself to leave the neighbourhood of the shut room in which, she felt sure, Clive's secret lay revealed in those manuscript pages. The young moon was sinking when Bakir, like a shadow, appeared at the far end of the terrace to see what had become of his mistress. Now the master of the house had gone, he evidently considered himself responsible for her safety. He told her the hour calmly. It was past midnight. She went with him at once to the house.

Tuesday passed, and no telegram came; Wednesday and Thursday went by without any communication from Clive. Her wonderment grew and developed into acute anxiety. On the Friday morning she telephoned for a carriage, drove into Sidi Barka, went to the telegraph office and made inquiries. Could there by some ill chance have been a mistake about her telegram? Was there any possibility that it had not been sent? She was assured that there was no such possibility. Her telegram had certainly gone on the Monday morning. She stood in the dingy office uncertainly, trying to weigh things up. Was it possible that Clive had gone out of London? She had addressed the telegram to the house in Knightsbridge. He must surely have had it. Even if he had, for some reason she could not divine, gone away for a day, or for several days, Kingston would have sent it after him. He must have left an address. Besides, he had so much to do, so many matters to arrange, that surely he must have been kept in London. Unless indeed some affair of the dead woman had necessitated an unforeseen journey. That was possible, though it seemed to her very improbable.

After a few minutes of doubt she resolved to repeat her telegram, or rather to send again the gist of it amplified. And she wrote with a failing pen and faint ink on the frail bit of paper provided: "Telegraphed to you last Monday no answer. Stop. Received your letter. Stop. Please let me use the key and read what is in the drawer. All my love—Vivian."

She gave this message in and went out of the office. The carriage, a victoria, was waiting for her at the door. As she was about to step into it she heard a clock at the end of the big "Place" of the town, which was planted with palm trees and bordered by cafés, restaurants and shops, striking eleven. Although she had always believed that she hated Sidi Barka, she now felt inclined to see something of it. Anything would be better than going back to the loneliness of

the villa to wait—and wait. She felt as if already she had waited through a semblance of eternity—a woman's eternity. She paid the Arab coachman and dismissed him. She could easily find a carriage when she was ready to go home. The little horses trotted away, and she set out vaguely up the "Place" in the glaring sunshine between the double rows of palm trees, meeting nursemaids with swarthy children, who looked half Spanish, or Sicilian, or Greek, half African, Arabs, Kabyles, negroes, now and then a pale Mozabite in spotless garments, now and then a French soldier of the Zouaves or the Chasseurs d'Afrique. Some strolling Frenchmen, in hats of black straw and alpaca jackets, stared at her with the audacity they considered suitable to a lonely woman, and a pretty one. She took no notice of them and no one ventured to follow her. She crossed between the palm trunks, went under an arcade, followed it, glancing into the shops, which were French and uninteresting; at the top of the "Place," by the pale pink and cream-white Hôtel de Ville with the clock and the dog-like lions, she crossed again and took her way down the arcade on the other side. Finally she came to the restaurant Foch, where a good many people were sitting at little tables under an awning drinking *apéritifs* and smoking cigarettes.

She was passing slowly in front of them when she heard the scrape of a chair, then a hurry of feet behind her, and a dry, thin voice saying:

"Excuse me—Mrs. Ormeley!"

She stopped, and there stood the little yellow man, hat in hand, smiling and looking anxious.

"I couldn't help just coming to say good morning. I was so surprised to see you here. You never show up in Sidi Barka."

"I came in to send a telegram. My husband's in England."

"I know. The sad death of his mother! I'm so grieved. I saw it in the papers. There was a good deal——"

He suddenly looked self-conscious.

"I don't see the English papers here," said Vivian, rather drily. She realised that Clive's return to his dying mother had been carefully chronicled.

"Can I—dare I ask you to join me at déjeuner?" said Mr. Beake. "There's a nice room in there." (He pointed to the glass doors of the café.) "It's quite a decent restaurant."

Vivian hesitated. It would be something to do, and it would certainly please Mr. Beake. But if she lunched with him she would be forced to invite him to lunch or dinner at the villa. And Clive, she knew, would hate that. So she decided against it.

"I'm afraid I must go home," she said. "They will expect me at one."

"Well, but——"

"Yes, there are only the servants. Still I think I must go."

She saw severe disappointment in the lined yellow face, and added:

"But if you have time, will you be very kind and take me for a little walk in the town?"

"Delighted! Delighted!"

"I've never really seen it. Is there an Arab quarter?"

"There's a market, and there are two mosques. I'll show you everything. It's not very much but—there's the synagogue, too. We have Jews here, you know, oh, plenty of Jews! Ha! ha!"

He took possession of her with an ardour that was really pathetic. When they parted at the end of the "Place" nearest to the sea, where the carriages stood for hire, it was after one o'clock.

Now as Vivian was driving home along the edge of the sea, white here and there with foam-crests that day, and brilliantly blue, with great patches near the land of emerald green, she was beset by what she believed to be, felt convinced

must be, an extraordinary mental hallucination. Like most English people she was a great lover of the sea, and, as she was driving along towards the empty home she gazed at it, feeling its power, its romance, its seducing mystery, and mentally murmuring its name "Mediterranean." The Mediterranean Sea, with its wonderful islands, its magically beautiful coasts, siren among seas! To-day it looked as it ought to look. For the foam-crests were only its laughing tribute to a frolicsome breeze, and its colour put jewels to shame. She was fascinated by its beauty along the African coast-line. But presently she looked out to sea, sending her eyes to the horizon line, beyond which lay the shores of France, searching imaginatively for another land where one whom she loved was hidden. And just then she was pierced by conviction which her brain told her was a lie, the conviction, "Clive is at sea." It startled her, shook her. She leaned forward and said to the coachman, "*Arrêtez, s'il vous plaît!*" He looked round, pulled up his horses.

They were out of the town on the country road which mounted the hill towards the *Villa du Soleil*.

"*Madame! Que voulez-vous?*"

"I want to look at the sea."

He remained still on his box. The horses were quiet. Vivian looked at the sea. And the strange conviction, come from she knew not where, persisted in her.

"Clive is at sea."

What sent it to her? She could not tell. Was it a message from him, or a voice speaking out of the sea, a nature-voice which had to give her knowledge that meant very much to her? She wondered. She felt stricken with awe. It seemed that she knew what it was impossible for her to know.

But it was a lie. It must be a lie. She knew that Clive could not leave England yet. She knew that when he left England he would let her know of his departure. Clive

could not be at sea. Nevertheless she went on feeling that he was.

"Clive is at sea!"

Some silent voice of an informer continued to repeat that to her.

When she was alone in the villa the voice persisted. She could not get rid of it, make herself deaf to its statement. But she could reason, and she opposed to it the voice of her reason, which said, "It is impossible. Clive is in England."

And on the following day, Saturday, something occurred which made her know that her reason was right, and that she had been the victim of a preposterous fancy.

At evening on that day—just before seven o'clock—a telegram at last arrived. She tore it open and read:

"Open the drawer and read the manuscript there. Stop. God bless you deepest and enduring love—Clive."

Clive! He had signed the telegram with his real name. Claude Ormeley had dropped into the abyss. That signature must mean surely that Clive had done with him, and that meant had done with subterfuge. She felt in the first moment after reading the telegram a great sense of relief.

"God bless you deepest and enduring love."

She put her lips to the paper. At that moment she wanted Clive with an intensity, mingled of love and agony, which seemed to tear her entrails. He was in England. She knew that now. And, knowing it, she knew that for more than twenty-four hours something in her had been giving the lie to her reason, had been insisting that he was at sea.

Well—she knew now. They were very far away from each other. Nevertheless she felt that his love was stretching out to her across the vast distance. And that was the only thing that mattered.

Keeping the telegram in her hand, she went to her bedroom. The key of the writing-table drawer in the sea room was

locked up there in a despatch box. She opened the despatch box and took the key out. When mounting the staircase to her room she had believed that she meant to go at once to the sea room, take the manuscript from the drawer and read it. But when she had the key in her hand she hesitated. A strange feeling of uncertainty, which swiftly deepened into dread, took hold of her. And she stood there looking at the key as if it were a weapon with which murder might be done. The long and mysterious hesitation of Clive, a hesitation surely indicative of fear, or at any rate of an almost unconquerable aversion from giving his manuscript to the eyes for which he had written it, was communicated to her. As she stood there she was sorry that the telegram had come. Her insistence no doubt had caused it to be sent. Twice she had sent messages across the sea demanding access to the secret which Clive had left behind him. And at last he had given way; he had yielded, perhaps, his will to hers, as he had yielded in the past.

Her will! And she had made a silent vow henceforth to subordinate her will to his.

It was not too late to do that even now. She need not use that key. She might wait till Clive's return, give it back to him, and tell him that she had not chosen to use it, fearing that only her importunity had wrung the permission from him. She slipped it into her pocket.

Dinner was as usual at half-past eight. She spent the time till then walking about the garden. She mounted up the hill to the highest terrace and looked out over the sea to the chain of beautiful mountains beyond the city and the harbour. When Bakir sounded the bell, no doubt wondering where she was, she went down and made her way to the house.

Towards the end of dinner she said to him:

"Bakir, will you please light the lamps in the sea room. Just open the door and turn them both on. I may go there presently."

"Bien, Madame."

If she went to the room that night—and perhaps she would go—she did not want to make her way into a room that was dark; she did not want to feel about in the dark for the switches which turned on the lights. She preferred to find the room lit up for her. It would look much more cheerful.

Walking with his soft, rather surreptitious tread, Bakir went out of the dining-room to carry out her order. Meanwhile, she sat waiting. She could not eat any more.

He came back in a few minutes.

"I have turned on the lights, Madame."

"Thank you. You can take away. I've finished."

She got up and went out into the open space at the edge of "Little Africa." She stayed there for a few minutes. Then, walking slowly, she made her way down the garden, passing the pine tree with the two bracelets and the chain, to the near end of the sea terrace.

There was a little wind that night. The pine trees had found their voices. She stood by the low wall, looking over the sea, and listening to its murmur and to the voices of the trees. And, strangely, considering what she knew, she was again beset by the conviction that Clive was at sea voyaging towards Africa. It was like an hallucination of the mind which persisted despite the fact that she knew it for an hallucination. She could not release herself from it.

In the distance, at the far end of the long terrace, she saw the lighted room. Bakir had left the door standing wide open. She stood and looked at the light for a long time. It both drew her and repelled her. There was a struggle within her, and it seemed to be a spiritual struggle. But suddenly it came to an end. She did not know why. She made up her mind. Once more her will prevailed. Perhaps she had been obscurely conscious of fear, and resolved that she must have done with fear and live up to the tournament

temperament. She walked quickly down the terrace and went into the sea room. Once inside, she shut the door behind her. Then, without hesitation, she took out the key, fitted it into the lock of the writing-table drawer, pulled the drawer towards her, and lifted out the manuscript that lay there. She shut the drawer, drew forward a chair, and sat down with the standing lamp behind her.

She was just going to read the first words of the manuscript, when she fancied she heard a sound on the terrace, close to the shut door, a sound as if a faint footstep had stirred the tiny stones which were scattered along the path. She sprang up from the chair and stood listening. Now she had the feeling of being watched. But that was impossible. For the door of the room was fast shut. Perhaps Bakir had followed her to the terrace. She went to the door, opened it and at the same time said, rather loudly:

"Bakir! Are you there?"

She looked out into the night, which was not very dark, for there was a little diffused, but not strong, light from the moon. No voice answered. No one was there.

So it had not been Bakir's foot which she had heard. No. But she had known that—had not she—before she had opened the door. No man's footfall made a sound just like that. It had been stupid of her to call Bakir's name. It had been an effort of pretence, really an attempt to trick herself. She felt as if the night had suddenly become very cold. And it would be very dark when the moon went. She would, perhaps, have to go back to the house all alone in the dark if she read all that Clive had written in the lonely room by the sea.

Should she——

A heat of anger came to her. She shut the door brusquely, sat down again by the table under the lamp, and began to read the manuscript.

XIV

THIS was the manuscript.

You said to me, when I'd been a brute to you about Beake and you'd explained things, "Now I have told you and I feel cleaner." You didn't know how you pierced with those words. *You* cleaner! And I'd been reproaching you, attacking you, brute that I am. But when I feel anything separating me from you I get absolutely desperate. And yet I've been the one to put a wall between us ever since we've been married and before. Why have you believed in me so absolutely? If you hadn't I must have told you the truth long ago. Something in me has always wanted you to know, but something else has always been terrified of your knowing. I've had two fellows in me, one needing to be a truth-teller, the other an abject coward and lying all through because of cowardice. The first has hated the second and the second has dreaded the first. In Knightsbridge that day when I'd been explaining things—I was so horribly clear-minded that day, strung up to an awful clear-mindedness—you came right up to the truth, but your love and trust must have blinded you and you didn't see it. I nearly told you. I even said I didn't think we ought to have children. And presently you said, "You are an innocent man and you are talking like a guilty one."

I am a guilty man.

That clears up everything—don't you see? All you've wondered about, all you've fought against in me has been due to that, my guilt masquerading as innocence. If you look back you'll find in that the explanation of everything. I needn't, I can't specify. Everything had its roots in that.

Mother loves me and I am certain she knows. I know she knows. That's the secret of Mother. But she doesn't love me in your way, and perhaps she hasn't got your tremendous

chivalry. I believe Mother's got a brain that she can't get the better of, and that brain has told her the truth. She's never hinted it to me. But I'm sure of it. Only once the brain part of her, which is so horribly, mercilessly acute, weakened, softened—whatever you like to call it. That was when I went for Aubrey Sabine. My doing that made her think she'd done me an awful injustice. But when we were in Court she knew, knew she'd been right from the beginning, and had only gone wrong for a little while because of the strong action I was driven to in a desperate moment. When we were in Court Mother felt my shame, knew it wasn't mere sensitiveness but the shame of a fighting hypocrite, and was brought back to the bed-rock of truth. And from that time she has withered. I shall never forget when I told her that night I was going for Aubrey Sabine how she triumphed. It was then she got off the track. But now she knows what she knew even on the day when I was acquitted. And so she's withering, shut up alone.

I don't suppose anyone who hasn't been in the midst of war has even the faintest idea of what it is, how it shakes a man to his foundations, in the body, the mind, the soul. I don't want to enlarge on that. I hate talking about the war. When do I ever talk about it? But I've got to tell you something, or you'll never have any understanding of—

Before I was wounded I'd been gassed, though not badly. And I'd been blown up twice, like lots of other fellows, and not injured—as they call it. That is, I was still intact. Still, that sort of thing gives a man a terrific shake, and the point is that the shake isn't merely something which has startled, upset the body. No. The mind's changed by it, altered terribly, and can't settle down for a long while afterwards. It isn't the same as it was. Then I was wounded and eventually cleared out of France. And I went into her hospital. Vi, when I went into her hospital I wasn't normal. I wasn't mad, but I wasn't normal. I didn't see things in my usual

way of seeing. I didn't feel things in my usual way of feeling. All that had happened had had this effect upon me—it might have been just the opposite with another fellow—it had made me abominably emotional. I was a mass of emotion. Everything affected me in an emotional way. A word, a look, a trifling action, a sound even, could touch me almost to tears. It was horrible. I was dreadfully ashamed of it. I tried to hide my condition. And it's extraordinary how a man can feel out of control, and yet not show it much, not "give way," as they call it. Often and often I was shaking inside, or blazing, or all broken to pieces—giving out utterly, and I dare say only one in a hundred would have guessed it.

She was very clever. No intellectuality, but very, very clever. She knew the world. She knew men. She knew women. She knew life. And, above all, she knew what she wanted. It was her hospital—wonderfully run. But there was heaps of money behind her. Nothing was spared. It was really run for her, I suppose, by a lot of clever people. But she wasn't only a figure-head. She wasn't a woman who could ever be that. For she had a tremendous will. She dominated. She made her will felt. Every one in the hospital felt it, nurses, doctors, wounded, visitors—every one.

And I felt it. You never saw her. She saw you once. She was what young women call quite old, but she was very good-looking, beautiful even in a way at certain times. And the will of her made somehow a tremendous impression. I think she was a great personality. She was very kind to me. She was never foolish like many women are. She didn't butter you with sympathy—letting go the sluices, we used to call it. She didn't cry over you, or fuss over you. But she kept her eyes on you, and knew you. I felt she knew me, knew what sort of state I was in exactly, and wasn't going to give it away to a soul.

That drew me to her, I believe. I suffered tremendously, and she neither whined over me, nor tried to get me to whine with

her about myself. But I felt she was the only person in that hospital who understood the type of suffering I was going through. I felt sure she didn't confuse *my* suffering with anyone else's. And in my abnormal condition, terribly emotional, and having always to try to keep it dark, that meant a lot to me. In war a man's one of a mass. She seemed to turn me into an individual again, made me feel, without saying it, that I still had some importance in the great, tortured, bloody scheme.

I fell in love with her—abnormally. It wasn't a natural love, or a healthy love, or even a sane love. It was an abnormal falling in love. Common enough that, desperately common in the war. I don't want to dwell on it in detail. But it was a violent thing, a frightfully emotional thing, a feverish obsession. You know my age. I was young enough then. I looked young, and in spite of my physical condition I felt very young, almost like a boy. I think lots of people, when they are coming back to life out of very severe physical suffering and misery, feel like that—a clean sheet, start again, sort of feeling. Anyhow, I did. My feeling for her was young. I know that. And she must have known it. There was nothing she didn't know about that sort of thing. Her life had been pretty well made up of it, I suppose. But she was near enough to the age of forced resignation to welcome my abnormality eagerly. *Vi*, I've got to put down these things, or you'll never understand. And perhaps you'll never see this. It depends—whether I can find the courage or not. No one else ever will. If it seems damnably unchivalrous, remember it's only for you—if it's for anyone.

When she saw how things were with me she just fastened on to me. I fell for it first. And it was that made her come to it—I think. But I am not sure. It wasn't easy to be sure of such things with her. Since, I've often wondered whether she didn't perhaps turn her will on me from the first moment she saw me brought into the hospital, whether, perhaps, it

wasn't that which took hold of me. It may have been so. Anyhow, it came to that—what every one knows, what the whole world's talked about, and snuffed round, and revelled in—a connection between her and me, in which everything—what's called everything, and thought of as everything, by all materialists, and that means the greater part of humanity—was given and taken. But God—what was left out of it! I know now. You've taught me. And it seems to me, and always will, that everything worth having, everything that love really means, was left out. But I expect very few would agree with that. And I didn't know it at first—not for some time really.

In the hospital, of course, nothing could happen. But at last I was able to leave, though I was utterly unfit for service and, as you know, couldn't rejoin my regiment. The doctors said I must rest. She took me to her place in Surrey—to rest. There the whole thing started, developed, and finally raged. I think perhaps she was as abnormal as I. A subtle form of war hysteria may have made a victim of her, or she may have been the victim of her age, or she may have always had a temperament such as I'd never encountered before. People say she had, was known to have such a temperament. Does it matter? There was madness in us both, I think. It was this sort of madness—the controlling principle, I mean the thing that in the normal human being, man or woman, has a hand on the wheel and can guide, and avoid, has a foot above the brake, and can stop the machine when there's danger—the controlling principle seemed to have been removed from both of us. I knew a Russian once. He did an awful thing, got into a dangerous mess, came to me and begged me to help him out. I did. And then I asked him how he had ever come to do that thing, which—unless he'd had more than luck—must have ruined him. He said he had to do it, because the impulse to do it took him. Then I said, why didn't he resist the impulse? He just said he

couldn't, never could resist an impulse, had to give way, simply had to. At that time I couldn't understand. He was sane apparently, quite sane. Yet I felt he must have madness in him.

She and I—we were like him at that time.

Sometimes, like most other fellows, I'd felt absolutely reckless in the midst of danger—not at the beginning, never then, but in the very middle of an attack. Now I felt a new recklessness, recklessness in the midst of safety. And she had a reckless nature, Vi, combined with terrific will. It was a will to be reckless, a sort of absolute passion of don't care a damn. And that was why people knew about us, knew so much about our connection. She didn't attempt really to hide it. People aren't as secretive as they used to be, since the war. And already then they were throwing off secrecy as a bather flings off clothes in hot weather. There was a feeling of "take me as I am" in the air. We fell to it. And so people knew—lots of people. And we didn't care.

She found that she was tired out, needed a complete holiday after her prolonged war-work. A great doctor was easily persuaded to say so officially. A new Head was got hold of for the hospital. And she retired into Surrey with me. There she took complete possession of me. You'll never understand that—how a woman of that type can take possession of a young man. She seemed to make me her thing. All that time I lived in her like a man living in a small, wonderful room, with the light of day and every sound of the world shut out. My horizon was bounded by her. I can't understand it now. It seems incomprehensible. But so do lots of things in life, I suppose, when we look back on them. It's, "How could I ever have done *that*? How could I ever have felt *that*? How could I ever have agonised over *that*?" The boats we burn as we go on! I look back and see

another man feeling, doing, crazily feeling, crazily doing—running mad. But it was myself. And that man has my life in his grip and the whole of my future. There's a fixed fact in this shifting phantasmagoria called life, and it's the existence of the irreparable. The irreparable has its claws fastened in me and as long as I live they will be there. Nothing—no force, no longing—can ever tear them out of me.

The awful thing is the passionate haste, the fierce, unholy eagerness with which a man often helps to fasten chains upon him, without knowing what they are. His one desire is to be loaded with chains, until he finds out that chains make him a prisoner. And then—oh, it's hell to realise suddenly that one has lost one's liberty! I realised it quite suddenly—or so it seemed—on the day when I first met you, Vi. And I remember I went sick—it was like that—sick, all over. A thing that has seemed great can stop with absolute suddenness. My obsession stopped dead,—that was my feeling about it—when I saw you for the first time. You killed what I had fancied till then was my love for her, killed it instantly. How did you do that? How were you able to do that? I shall never know. It's one of the mysteries. But perhaps, without being consciously aware of it, I had already begun to feel in some secret place the nausea of the merely fleshly life, which can have such an enormous attraction for a time, and at last turn a man to disgust, to hatred, to a loathing that's like no other loathing. If man is man and an animal there comes a day, or a night, when he wants to get at his beast and slay it. You made me want to slay mine. But perhaps I had really begun to hate it before I ever saw you. My beast, and it was in a cage, iron bars of her will all round it. That will of hers! How can one explain it, tell about it? A will can really only be felt, it can't be analysed. It isn't a question of "Do this! Do that!" It isn't a matter of ordering about, commanding, hectoring. No, it's more like an emanation, an atmosphere, an emana-

tion of relentless purpose, an atmosphere of determination that's got something diabolic in it. There's fearful expectation in it, and what is expected has to come about. Why? One human being says silently, "I expect that of you," and you don't give a damn. Another says it, and you feel, "I must do that." The rulers of the world—why do they rule? Not because of intellect, but because of the mystery of will. The women who rule men don't rule them because of beauty but because of the same mystery. Her will had been developed, perfected, by years of use. No doubt she'd been born with it, but she'd worked it like a muscle till it was as hard and as unyielding as iron. And as some men get muscle-bound, I believe she got will-bound. I don't believe she knew any more how to be supple. Her will governed others, but it governed her too. It drove her on. It broke through whatever she had of caution, of gentleness, of pity, of humanity—one might almost say—and it went its devastating way.

It was her will to keep me hers, absolutely hers. I knew that, and the day I met you I knew, or thought I knew, what was ahead of me. I remember thinking, "I've been mad. I've taken false for true, ashes for bread, lust for love, death for life"—something like that. And I felt a desperate desire to be free, out of it—the place where the beast was kept close—and a terror of what I had done. And the terror came because of my knowledge of her will, and also because my emotional part, perverse, feverish, unnaturally stimulated by the life we had been leading—indescribable to you—understood that she knew how to feel and what suffering was. Her will was hard as iron, but she had terrible softnesses in her, and I was afraid of them, dreaded them almost as much as I dreaded her will. And then she had eyes that could see. Lots of people have eyes that only see very little. Hers were eyes that saw what was there, on the surface and underneath it.

I remember that as I went down from London to Surrey in the train—I had been up for the day—I kept thinking of her eyes, which would look at me that evening. A tremendous thing had suddenly happened in me. How could those eyes of hers help seeing it? They would see it; they must see it—and then? I had an awful feeling of guilt in the train, a feeling that I was a treacherous brute. It came from this: I somehow knew that she could never change as I had suddenly changed. Her life had been full of just such treacheries—I called them that then—as mine. Only what I had done once and for all—that was falling in love with you—she had done again and again, passing from one so-called love hastily to another. But now she was old. I suddenly woke to that. And age brings desperations and sometimes large changes in character. She would not give me up. She would not be treacherous to me. Such an abrupt change as had operated in me would not operate in her now. No chance of that! And I was afraid of her will. Remember, I wasn't fully myself. I was still more or less of an invalid. Rest was what I needed, and what I was supposed to be having. But my life with her was exhausting. My condition was abnormal still, partly owing to the facts of war—the gassing, being blown up, then wounded—partly, greatly perhaps, owing to my own fault, the life I was living when I ought to have bent all my will to becoming a whole man again.

Your health of body and mind and soul, your complete clear sanity, oh, Vi, what they meant to me then! I saw you, I felt you, as an Amazon with a breath of healing in you!

I got back, drove to the house. At dinner that night we were alone and sat opposite to each other. The silence of the country was round us. Her house was surrounded by a park and gardens. Not a sound came from these at night. Her eyes were on me. She seemed to be always looking at me, and her will was always in her eyes. Towards the end of dinner she said:

"What has happened to you to-day?"

She'd got it, as I knew she would. That was the beginning of misery for us both.

I lied—of course. Men always lie when it comes to that sort of thing. And such women as she was never believe their lies. She didn't believe mine. She persisted. She probed. I went on lying. She pretended to believe me, dropped it, and then, having dropped it, assumed that no change had taken place in me. And that meant that I had to do more than lie, that I had to act.

Acting love is hell. I went down into that hell and I stayed there. She took it out of me then. She must have known I was acting, but for some time she never let me know it. She kept me hard to my acting. That was part of her revenge for the change in me.

My physical condition got worse. As to my mental condition—well, it was rank bad. I was harassed by an awful depression. It was a tremendous struggle just to seem ordinary, fairly like other men. To appear just merely natural—only that—was almost incredibly difficult for me at that time. Self-consciousness was my unrelenting demon. And what had seemed to me once to be love now showed up as destruction. I began to feel like breaking down. I don't know really much about nerves—who does?—but I felt as if I had a thoroughly diseased network of something—I called it nerves—all through me. My physical part seemed on the look out to betray me. My mental part was ill, desperately ill.

She knew it all, must have known it, and never weakened in her demand upon me, kept me relentlessly to my acting, to my simulation of passion. And presently, very soon, that made me hate her.

I had to go to London sometimes. She couldn't keep me from that. For my reasons were good ones. They held water. I had to pay visits to a doctor in Harley Street, to

go now and then to the War Office, to go to the City and visit my partners on the Stock Exchange, to see my Mother. Now and then I had to stay with my Mother in Knightsbridge. "She" couldn't prevent that. And I began to see you.

You didn't know how I was placed, what was going on. How could you? The people who guessed, or knew—and there were many—were in circles you had practically nothing to do with. I was thankful for that. I loved you, and presently I began to think it might be possible for you to love me. I couldn't think why it was possible. I couldn't think why such a fellow as I was might be able to draw you to him. I just felt that the thing was possible. Something inside told me that.

Then—I couldn't help it—I began to cast about in my mind how to get free, how to get away from her. If you're a thorough-going brute, I suppose it's quite easy to break with a woman, even with a woman like her, whatever has happened. But I wasn't a thorough-going brute then. And I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to hurt her. But that wasn't all. I was afraid of her, afraid of what she might do if I showed my hand, let her know the truth. You might say she knew it already. She did and didn't. Her intuition knew, and that was all. Enough too! But it didn't give her the excuse to be terrible. And she could be terrible. (I was certain of that, felt it always.) If I defied her will, what might she do? Perpetually at that time I used to think of that as I looked at her, looked at those strong, determined eyes, that were so acute in seeing.

She didn't help me. Since that question at dinner on the day I saw you for the first time she had left the matter alone. Leaving it alone enabled her to keep on forcing me to act, and punishing me in that sort of way. She was infernally subtle over it. She acted much better than I ever could. But all the time she was acting I knew she was on the watch, and I was certain that some day, somehow, she

would get at the truth. Meanwhile—I really believe it—she was trying to destroy me. Yes, I believe it came to that with her, she was ready to destroy my body rather than that I should ever belong, as a man, to another woman, to the woman whom she knew existed somewhere, to you. I have reasons, horrible reasons, for that belief. I can't give them to you. I could never give them to anyone, least of all to you.

Can you conceive of a woman who loved a man in a certain way doing that? Probably you can't. I can, because I have lived with her.

I became literally her prey at this time. This is an awful confession of weakness, I suppose. But you never knew her, you never knew her dominating will. I wasn't the only one who had felt it, had wilted under it. There had been many in the past, and some of them men whom people called splendid fellows. To be with her as I was—as I suppose some of them were, too—was like falling into machinery. Her will was as pitiless as machinery. Once set in motion—fixed on an object—it could never be stopped, nor diverted. After she knew of the change in me I became her prey. I was no longer her lover. But my beast belonged to her, and she knew that and proved her knowledge in terrible ways.

If you look back you must remember a time soon after you first knew me when I seemed going down the hill, looked "a wreck" as they call it, was all to pieces. No doubt, like any others, you attributed it to all I had been through, to the attack the war had made on my health. I was still "under the doctor," and I naturally made the most of that, to hide the truth. The truth was so ugly that it's difficult to put it into words. I know that rather than let me escape to another woman she would have rendered me impossible as a husband. I know it. She was like that—utterly ruthless when in the grip of a passion. I won't dwell on this part of our connection. I can't. If something hadn't happened, if a change hadn't come about, I should soon have

broken down utterly. I felt a breakdown was close on me.

The change was this. I was offered that small job at the War Office.

The doctors had reported that I was unfit for active service, should be unfit for some considerable time. So, through some interest Mother had, this job was offered me. I took it at once, without speaking to "her." I seemed to see at last a possible chance of escape.

The same night I told her about it, and told her also that of course now I should have to go back to live in London.

That night we had our first "scene." It was abominable. She threw off pretence with startling thoroughness, and told me she knew I wanted to get away from her, to break with her, to have done with her. She told me that this War Office business was nothing but an excuse, that I'd touted for it as a means of getting away from her. I had my opportunity then of coming out with the whole truth. But I didn't take it. I couldn't. She inhibited me from speaking the truth. I lied again. I tried to pacify her. I acted to her again. But I stuck to the necessity of my living in London. She had a London house, of course. She said she would come up to London too. She was sick of the quiet of Surrey. She wanted me to promise to live in her London house. I said I couldn't do that. The scandal would be too great. She said she didn't care. All her friends knew about our liaison. All society knew. What we did now didn't matter.

I told her I must consider my Mother, that I couldn't throw everything to the winds. Then she sprang this upon me: she said, if I felt like that, we had better marry and shut people's mouths that way.

Vi, when she spoke of marriage I felt that I had come to hate her. It was a horrible knowledge. It made my connection with her an abomination. Marriage with her when

you were on the earth! Her eyes were on me. Her will was on me. But I felt in that moment there was one thing her will could never accomplish. I should never tie myself to her in marriage. I didn't tell her that. Somehow I got away from the subject. But she'd accomplished something, for I consented to go to her house for a time. She had conquered me. She had made me give in. Better go on living with her as we were than marry her.

We went to London. She had kindly invited me to spend a few days in her house in Hill Street as my flat in Queen Anne's Mansions was let. I had accepted, and was "staying" with her. Nothing much in that! But the whole of her circle—and it was what is sometimes called the "inner circle" of London Society—knew. She meant them to know. She knew that their knowing would make it more difficult for me to break off our connection. Her intention was to bind me to her by *réclame*.

And so for a time the abomination went on. But I was more careful of my health. I had to be now I had a job. Otherwise I couldn't have worked (She hated my work almost as if it had been a woman!) I did my best with my War Office job, and struggled against my overpowering feeling for you. For I knew my total unfitness for you. I knew you had no idea of the life I was leading, that you would feel nothing but disgust for me if you knew. You stood for health, poise, sanity, all the splendid, clear, clean things. How could you understand that physical disorder breeds mental perversity, that mental perversity leads to bodily horrors? How could you, with your tournament temperament, understand the weakness which—I still believe it—had been bred in me by what had happened to me in the war? You would think that experience of war must strengthen a man's character, give it moral fibre, resisting power. My God, Vi, how little three-quarters of the world still knows about the reactions war sets up in

men! But the truth of them can never be fully given to the world.

I saw you as often as I could, and always with fear. Would "she" find out? She knew, but she didn't know who it was. In London she would surely find out. She did find out.

She went to a tennis tournament, and saw you there for the first time. She'd been a great hunting woman, but she didn't play games or care much about them. What brought her to that tennis tournament I don't know. But she saw you play, and she was very much taken with you, so much taken that she spoke to me about you that very evening. I can recall her exact words.

"I saw an Amazon to-day, Vivian Denys, the lawn-tennis player. She's the perfect English type."

I believe I said nothing. I didn't know what to say. Her eyes were on me. After a moment she added:

"You have seen her? You know her?"

From that moment she knew. It was no use pretending, avoiding, lying, acting—she just simply knew. But she didn't tell me she knew. When I said I had met you, knew you slightly, she accepted the statement quite casually, and soon dropped the subject, after saying something about your grace and your wonderful play.

But after that she had me watched by detectives, and through them knew exactly when and where I met you.

I didn't find this out until one night her anger and jealousy got the better of her, and she let the whole truth loose in a fury of reproaches. Then I couldn't keep it up any longer. By this time I was in a state really of desperation. Her confession that she had been having me shadowed, that detectives had followed me to find out when I saw you, drove me into action. The next day I left her house, without even telling her I was going. I just packed up and went away in the morning early, leaving her to find out from the servants that I had gone.

My doing that shows the condition I was in, the state of things between us.

I didn't go to my Mother's house. I was afraid of her eyes too. I felt I couldn't be with anyone who knew me well, who cared for me. Those who care—watch. I have felt that, the watchfulness, even with you, Vi. Your watchfulness has given me terrible moments. Once you told me you had watched me when I was asleep.

I went to stay at the Rembrandt Hotel.

I don't know whether I thought my leaving her house as I did would put an end to everything between us. I believe I had a faint, yet desperate, hope that it might. But underneath I don't think I could ever have imagined that she would set me free to go to you, to be with you when I liked, perhaps to marry you if you would have me. (And by this time I somehow knew that the miracle had happened, that you did care for me.) You may say that my own action had freed me. Physically, I suppose it had for the moment. But her will hadn't done with me.

She didn't attack me for leaving her in the way I did. She didn't take my going as an insult after all her hospitality to me. She might have done that, though we had long ago gone far beyond all the conventions, and come down in our relations practically to the savage state. No; she found out where I was, and came to the hotel, and begged my pardon. She said she was bitterly ashamed of what she had done, but that she had been driven to it by jealousy, and she begged me to go back to her and live in her house as before. I refused. She insisted. But I held firm that day.

Then she began coming perpetually to the hotel, asking me incessantly to dine, to go with her to the theatre, to take her about. At this time she was charming. But under all the charm I felt the iron of her. And I didn't dare to go where you were. I thought if I did she might do some desperate, even outrageous thing. I didn't know what. But

I felt she might do anything. There's a condition in which even a civilised woman of the world is capable of doing what is called the impossible. I knew that she was in, or near to, that condition.

Many people in London, especially women, knew the sort of situation we were in, knew pretty well what our relations now were to each other. Women are desperately interested as a rule in such an intrigue as ours, especially when it nears tragedy. You may not know that, but it is so. The nearer the tragedy the more absorbing the interest. Lots of people in her world knew pretty much how things were. She had not forgotten, she never forgot, that a man can be held fast in a network of public opinion. She made me feel that people were expecting us to marry, were waiting for me to come forward and marry her.

I don't know how to describe this. It seemed to me to be in the air. I must leave it like that.

I felt that she still had her mind fixed on marriage, her will fixed on marriage, that somehow, in some surreptitious way, she was even working for our marriage, in spite of what had passed between us, in spite of her knowledge that I loved you. And I got to feel that—I didn't know how—she might possibly accomplish her purpose. Sometimes I saw myself married to her, tied to her for life. Yet how could that be? I had the power of refusal. I had the power to obtain from the action which alone could bring our marriage about. Why be afraid? Yet I was afraid. The machinery of her will was in action. I was afraid.

Did you wonder why at this time I never came near you? I hadn't spoken, but you knew what I felt. You must have wondered.

At last she made things so difficult, so almost impossible for me at the hotel, that I threw up the sponge and actually went back to her house in Hill Street. It was the madness of weakness to do that, I know. But I couldn't help myself.

I thought she might do something desperate if I didn't give in and go back. She had stopped having me shadowed since I had found out about it. I had told her flatly that if ever I caught one of those detective fellows at my heels I should go for him. She believed me. Besides, once I had found out, what was the good of it? She knew how to give way in a small matter—never in a big one. The will was always too strong for her there, and she just couldn't yield.

My going back was a triumph for her. But she didn't show that to me. She behaved as if it were a matter of course. We had had a lovers' quarrel and "made it up," and all was to be as before. That was the line she took. I shall never forget what I felt the day I went back to her house, when I saw my luggage being taken in by the very footman who had called a cab for me in the early morning before she was up. He knew. All the servants knew. As I went into that house I felt as if I were going to prison. I didn't know much about prison then. I know enough now.

Vi, it was awful, settling down again in that house. Once I was there I cursed my weakness and folly in going back. How was a man ever to get free who could do such a thing as that? What chance was there for him? I'd lost every shred of self-respect. I tried to tell myself, to convince myself, that it really had been the wise thing to do, given the circumstances, that if I hadn't done it she would somehow have made an open scandal, that she would, perhaps, have got at you and told you the whole truth of our relation! (She was quite capable of that, I still believe.) But my weakness disgusted me, horrified me. The beginning again nauseated me. And the being cut off from you—well, in the state I was in, that was scarcely bearable. Presently it was to become unbearable.

Want of liberty, deprivation of liberty—what that can be, when all there is of you, all that's real, vital, the stark humanity, the part that can suffer and need, is secretly

fighting to be out and away with the only one! For there's only one when you love. It's awful, but it is so. Even the nearest and dearest just fade to shadows before the only one, don't really matter, don't really count. Oh, there's awful inhumanity in the lover. I know it. No one on earth can be so cruel as a great lover. He doesn't care what happens to the shadows, how they suffer, how they bleed. His tenderness doesn't spread. People may say it does. That isn't true. It's all concentrated. It's all for the only one. Exclusiveness is branded on every great lover. Even my Mother—oh, Vi, sometimes I've hated myself for the lack of feeling I've had for Mother. It's been awful. That day of the verdict, when you left me and sent up Mother to me, I knew then the hideous concentration of love, the animal wildness of it. Mother felt what was in me then. Didn't you notice how strange she was when at last you came back? Mother's brain and heart always pierce to the roots of things. That's her curse.

"She" knew I was always away from her. She'd got me back. Her will had triumphed over my body. I was there again in the house, living with her. But I was always away from her. The independence of the soul is almost as awful as the dependence of the body. She felt that there was the wild thing that her will couldn't touch. And that went to you. But that wasn't enough. The body ached in its captivity.

Over and over again, when I was alone, I said to myself: "This shall end. You've the power to end this. You can get up now, and go to her, and tell her that all this has been a war madness, that it was never anything more than that, that she and you have been common victims of a sort of epidemic hysteria, in a weary world running wild because of its very weariness, its utter sickness of disgust. She'll understand. You'll make her understand. She'll be ready to pull up. And if she isn't, all you have to do is simply to have the common pluck to stand up to her with the truth,

set your will against hers and break her will. Get up and do it now."

But somehow I couldn't. When the moment came, when I was actually with her, I couldn't. She must have seen the determination to do it blazing (like straw) and dying out in me sometimes. She did. And then she'd fix her eyes on me and say, "Well, what is it?" and wait with her eyes on me, and say, "Is anything the matter?" She was giving me my opportunity then, giving it me deliberately, perhaps, just to test her power, prove it. For she wasn't a coward. I couldn't take the opportunity. I never could take it. And yet it couldn't have been pity that held me. I loved you too much to be able to pity any woman genuinely, with my heart. And what the brain does in that way isn't worth much. I don't believe I pitied her, Vi. I was concentrated on you. The horrible difficulties which hedged me in, the misery and fear which my love for you had brought about, my lack of freedom—they all seemed to combine together and increase my feeling for you, my longing for you, till I seemed to be on the edge of things. I began to hate her will as if it were a hideous personality. Often I thought of it as something independent of her, which was nevertheless housed in her, and could only act through her. If I could drag it out of her and murder it! She would be different then. I could appeal to her then, explain to her, make her understand, and give up and forgive. Without that monstrous will in her she would surely have some pity for me. For I didn't believe, I never believed, that she loved me at all as I loved you. I couldn't have tortured you deliberately day after day. If you had wanted to get away from me I should have let you go—— Should I though? Perhaps I'm lying. I don't know. No, I believe I'd hold you against your will even, if I had the power to. I suppose we lie to ourselves as we lie to others. I believe I'd chain you rather than you should go from me.

A time came when I felt so desperate about my situation and the future that I thought of defying my own knowledge of her and making an appeal to her. Suppose I made an absolutely clean breast of it, spoke to her with complete frankness, simply, out of my heart, not brutally, gently. Couldn't I make her see? Couldn't I move her to unselfishness? She'd had such a life. So many experiences, so many satisfied passions, lay behind her. She'd had everything she wanted for years and years. She'd lived. Couldn't I perhaps persuade her to let live? Couldn't I touch her heart? "After all," I thought, "every one who isn't a monster has a heart, and every heart must be capable of feeling emotion. Perhaps she isn't really so hard and determined in selfishness as you imagine her to be. Perhaps she isn't really so unyielding. Treat her for once as if she had a kind heart, were a generous creature, understood the meaning of youth and its natural desires. Give her a chance to do a fine thing—she may take it."

Give her a chance to do a fine thing! I was fool enough to do that. I gave her the chance. In return she showed me the bottom of her character, the rock-bottom. She was so desperately angry that she tore off all the clothes and frantically uncovered her nakedness. It is possible, I believe, to be told and shown everything, all the truths, all the blemishes, scars, wounds, and only to love the more. But that needs greatness of character and the most profound humanity. I was told, shown—and I was sick, ashamed, horrified, and I cursed myself for a fool. She told me what a fool I was and how little I knew about women. But she didn't know anything about women like you.

I had had my last throw for freedom. It had failed, more than failed. The contempt she had shown for me had been limitless and, I knew, terribly genuine. Poor fool—to believe any woman would be generous, humane, where love and another woman were concerned! Idiot to imagine that the

tigress was dead in woman! I could hear her laughter, the laughter of an old beauty outraged. I could see her eyes brimful of, flooded with, irony. And the stark genuineness of the contempt and the irony! She had indeed been herself then. And I had been able to think, to go on thinking, I loved her. My horizon had been bounded by her. She had seemed to satisfy me. I had believed that she did satisfy me completely.

The war madness—it must have been that—was lifted from me now. The last tattered shred of illusion was gone.

I had my back to the wall now, at last, and of course she knew it. Knowing it, she threw off pretence. Or at least I believed she threw it off. But with a character such as hers it was practically impossible for a man to be certain. Anyhow, it seemed so to me. I can't say more than that. I had made my appeal, my idiotic, crazy appeal, and I had had my answer. No pretence at any rate in that answer! We were open enemies now, and she knew it. I should have supposed that when love, or what had been considered to be, had been thought of as, yielded to as, love, had come to what ours had come to, the only solution was complete separation, unless there were ties, ties such as marriage, children, ties which oblige people of decency to think of others besides themselves. No such ties bound us. I, therefore, assumed that we had done with one another, that everything between us had gone down, foundered, in that torrent of irony and contempt. I assumed it in the first moments after that horrible failure of mine, when I was sore as if I had been thrashed, beaten all over.

I was wrong. When wasn't I wrong in all my assumptions about conduct, and everything else, with her? I was always wrong. Even when I had a bit of confidence—it wasn't often—I soon found the sand shifting under it. If I've leaned on you, Vi, heavily, almost bearing you down at

times, it was because it was so wonderful to be with a woman I could trust boundlessly. And yet—I haven't trusted you boundlessly. Till now! Even with you I didn't dare the last thing. No, I didn't dare. I'm a coward. You've married a coward—*you*.

I got ready to leave her house in Hill Street for the second time. But I didn't mean to sneak away surreptitiously again, and I told her that after what had happened there was nothing for me to do but go. I was all to pieces by this time. Things had come to such a pass in my life that I sometimes felt as if my brain would give way unless I could get some peace. I looked back to the time before the war and everything that had happened since then seemed to take on the blackness of a nightmare, except one thing—my getting to know you. When I thought of you I felt that I was thinking of my salvation. I knew you cared for me. That made me feel that salvation was within my reach if only I could be strong, pull myself together, grip hold of life and clean things once more, and break finally and for ever with her.

Now surely the break had come?

I told her I was going. I said that after what had happened it was no use, no earthly use, our pretending we were anything to each other. She could have no affection for a man whom she thought a fool, an idiot, whom she smothered with her contempt. I had had enough of it. No man could bear such scorn and consent to be whistled back to heel when a woman changed her mood, and took it into her head to relent. Besides, she knew now how things were. I had asked her to let the thing—a persecution for both of us now—go. She had refused. Then I was resolved to break off entirely. I was going and I was going finally. This was the end of our relation, our association. I thanked her for all the kindness I had had from her. I begged her pardon for everything she had any legitimate reason to resent in my conduct to her. And now this must be good-bye.

She listened to me in silence. She was like a stone then. She didn't accept, she didn't refuse my conditions—that is, she didn't verbally accept or refuse. But even through her stony silence I felt something come to me from her. At that moment I suppose it seemed as if I were ruling her. But somehow I knew I wasn't. There was silent defiance in her. I remember I stretched out my hand to her in the conventional gesture of politeness. I was a guest taking leave of my hostess. There was a certain formality. I complied with it. But she didn't take my hand. So I turned to go out of the room. As I was opening the door I heard her voice behind me. It said:

“You will never marry Vivian Denys.”

That was a statement, a cold, imperious statement, the assertion of what her will was in a certain matter.

I didn't answer. I didn't look round. I shut the door. My luggage was in the hall. A taxi was waiting in front of the house. The footman put my luggage on the cab and I drove away.

I drove away, but I had no sense of being free, of going off into freedom. I felt dull, apprehensive. I felt her will following me. What she meant to do I didn't know, of course. But I was afraid for you. And at one moment I thought of sacrificing any chance of happiness I had. I deserved punishment no doubt. The greatest punishment I could have would be loneliness, life without you in it. If I relinquished happiness, if I accepted loneliness, I believed that she would let me—and you—alone. Could I do that? I resolved to try.

The lease of the people who had taken my flat in Queen Anne's Mansions was just up then. I went back to my flat within two or three days. I stayed in Knightsbridge with Mother during the intervening time.

Just after I had gone back to Queen Anne's Mansions I met you by chance in the street. D'you remember? It was

in Sloane Street. That meeting decided things. My resolution to face loneliness was swept away by that meeting. We walked together a little way. When we parted I knew I hadn't the strength to put away from me the wonderful happiness I felt was waiting for me. Defiance was born in me. My love for you bred defiance. I resolved to ask you to marry me.

That night I found a letter in the box fastened to my flat door. I opened it. Inside there was a sheet of paper on which was written: "*You will never marry Vivian Denys.*" Nothing else. No address, no signature.

Then she knew of our meeting. I realised that she was having me shadowed again.

I tore the paper up and threw the fragments into the waste-paper basket. But I could not throw away the dread of the menace which had come into my room. I felt her will still intent upon me, brooding inexorably over my life. Each time I saw you, after that, I received within a few hours the statement of her decision, expressed in those six words. Can you imagine what six written words can come to mean in a man's life, six words written again and again, received again and again? You may say that I needn't have read them, that I might have torn up the envelopes containing them unopened. Of course I might. It would have made no difference though. I had seen the envelope in my letter-box. I knew her will was at work.

Vi, at that time I went through tortures of hesitation, remorse, longing, doubt. If it had been another type of woman with whom I had to do, I believe I could have released myself from fear. Many women in the past have threatened their former lovers. Many more will do it in the future. It's notorious that when a woman's love turns to hatred the man is in for a bad time. But I think that with almost any other woman I could have done something, come to some conclusion, made some arrangement, brought the

whole matter to some definite end which would have been possible for me. She—I felt—was the one woman whom I had ever come across who was absolutely uninfluenceable, who stood absolutely detached and remote from the operation of any outside will. Just simply she couldn't be got at by the will of another. In that respect she was like a monster rather than a human being. That was why—I confess it—I was horribly afraid of her.

Those envelopes with their monotonous contents fell upon me like blows. I shivered under them. When I had seen you I waited for the coming of the inevitable. I listened, when I was in, for the click of the letter-box, and when it came, when I heard it, I felt I was in the grip of fate. She had decreed unhappiness, loneliness, blankness, blackness, for me. That was to be my punishment. That would be my punishment. I shouldn't escape it. She must have established a tremendous mental hold over me somehow. For I felt then that I simply shouldn't be able to escape it.

If she had been more explicit, if she had written me other menaces, threats, been violent, told me of dreadful things she would do, I think I should have feared her much less. But she never did. Always the same cold statement came to me. "You will never marry Vivian Denys"—never anything more. I continued going to see you. You knew quite well what I felt. You knew how desperately I wanted you. A woman never needs to be told a thing like that, though of course, if she cares, she loves being told. You must have wondered why I kept silence. You must often have wondered about me. Over and over again I was on the verge of asking you to marry me. But I was held back—by her. I knew I had been shadowed to your home. I knew in a few hours I should find another of those infernal missives in my letter-box.

You can't understand, I'm sure, no one could ever understand, without having known her, exactly why I felt as I did. And I don't know how to explain it. I felt that she had the

will to prevent our marriage, and that, her will being what it was, there was absolutely no doubt that she would succeed in her object. I felt that as long as she willed that I should not marry you our marriage would not be possible. If I went on towards it, if I went right up to it, she would prevent it somehow, even at the last moment. She had decided not to allow me to marry you. Her decision would hold good.

I had tremendous moments of revolt. Over and over again I thought I had made up my mind to go ahead, defy her, be as ruthless as she was, trample over her will to the altar. But then my imagination—what a curse imagination is—told me things that might happen, and sometimes they happened to you. And I hesitated. (By this time I somehow knew you would marry me. Don't think me conceited, Vi. I felt humble, wondering, amazed even. But a man cannot deny his own inner conviction. Somehow I knew.)

At last the day came when fate took things out of my hands. We were alone—you remember—and it just happened. I told you, and you told me. And then for a little while I forgot everything. I forgot her will, the decision she had reiterated, the implacability of her, the wages my sin—for it was sin because there was nothing real in it all but lust—my sin had earned over and over again. For a little while I forgot. And you had nothing to remember. The difference between us! I was happy. I was even beyond happiness. There's a further region for lovers, and we reached it that day, I think.

And then I went home. And I waited, and presently—late in the night it was—there was the click of the mouth of my letter-box, the faint, very faint sound of something dropping on to the wire. The night porter had been up, done his errand. I waited for a moment. Then I went out into the little hall of my flat and took out the message—“You will never marry Vivian Denys.”

And very soon, within a day or two, your engagement to me would be announced in the papers.

I had a panic that night. Not that I meant to recoil now. Weakness I have, but don't think I was ever weak enough to consider even for a moment the possibility of going back on my word to you. No; but I realised that now the final battle was joined between her and me. There was no alternative now. One of us would have to go down. And how was I going to fight her? All that night I was up, Vi. I knew I couldn't sleep, and I never even tried to. I never lay down. I was up—thinking. I never knew till that night what real travail of the mind can be. But that night I knew. And I've known since, many and many a time. How can the mind work as it sometimes does, go on working and not die of fatigue? There's further life for it, I believe. There must be, or it wouldn't be so far beyond the body in working power.

There was only one thing to be done. That was my conclusion. I couldn't just chance things, go on and see what happened. For anything might happen. I could see black tragedy ahead, tragedy that wouldn't bear thinking of. I must see her again. I must explain things to her, try to get her to understand, to give in, to be human, to know pity. In spite of that awful scene when I had made a try once before, I must go for it again.

The next morning I wrote to her and asked if I could see her. I didn't give my reason for wanting to see her. In answer to my note, I got one from her, kind, charming, written as if nothing had happened to make us enemies, saying that of course I could see her, but that I must come to her country place in Surrey, and stay for the night, as she was on the point of leaving London. She hadn't been well lately, she wrote. She had been the prey of insomnia. And the doctor had ordered her to go at once into country air. She closed her note with the following sentence: "You

must stay the night or I shan't see you at all. My nerves are all wrong. I'm a wreck during the day and only wake up at night."

When I got this note I hesitated. Its kindness, gentleness, cordiality even, frightened me. There was the grin of a mask in it, I thought. What was the expression on the face behind the mask? And that insistence on my staying the night. I hated that. Nevertheless I went. I felt I had to go. I might have tried to insist on going down for the day. But I didn't. It would have been no use. I knew that because I knew her. So I took a suit-case and went in the afternoon after my work was over. I would do what she wished in a comparatively small matter—pay my sixpence to obtain a possible fortune.

(Will you believe it, Vi, I had some hope that I might persuade her to let us alone? I can't think why, unless it is that a man can scarcely help hoping when he wants something as tremendously as I wanted marriage with you.)

When I saw her I was shocked. She was quite alone in the big house with the servants and looked, I thought, very ill. (Afterwards I had reason to know that she accentuated the look of illness for my special benefit, that she meant to look as ill as possible.) She was pale, haggard, livid almost, and seemed to me to have become dreadfully thin. It was then that she told me that she had been taking chloral in the effort to control her insomnia. (That was the first I heard of chloral in connection with her, though they tried to make out in the trial that I'd known it long before and seen my opportunity, and waited for it.)

I said I was very sorry about her health. And I really was sorry—with my brain. But what's the good of that? I was longing to be back in London where you were. It was summer. The place was almost ideally lovely and peaceful. But I could see nothing in it. I was half crazy because I wasn't in Pont Street.

She asked me to sit out on the terrace with her facing the big view. We were quite alone—only the summer sounds about us. The moment had come for my explanation. But, Vi, she didn't help me at all. She never asked me my reason for wanting to see her. She seemed absolutely free from self-consciousness, she who had been having me watched by detectives for weeks and letting me know it by sending me those letters which had made a sort of hell of my life. She was just kind, charming, gentle—and ill. I didn't know what to do. She seemed to be assuming that I had come to see her for pleasure, or out of kindness, that we were just old friends spending a quiet time together—something like that. She gave me no opportunity to come to the point. In fact, she managed to create such an atmosphere that it seemed to me that I should be a brute committing an outrage if I spoke what I had come to speak. Nevertheless I knew of course that the thing had got to be got through somehow, somewhen. When I looked at her, listened to her, I didn't know how to believe that this very woman had detectives in her pay to watch me, and had made up her mind to prevent me from ever having any real happiness in my life.

(Have you ever looked at a human being, or at a human being's envelope, and thought, "But you *can't* be that!" It's like knowing that a thing is and feeling that it isn't, like knowing with one's mind and having one's knowledge contradicted flatly by one's eyes. It sets up a sort of horrible confusion in one.)

She talked a good deal about her health, and her sleeplessness, and chloral, and, without ever demanding it, claimed my pity in subtle ways. She seemed to be silently saying, "This is what you have made of me. I'm this wreck because of my love for you." Oh, Vi, how a clever woman can put a man in a hole from which he doesn't know how to get out!

Evening fell. It was time to dress for dinner. We had

never got near the subject which had brought me down to see her.

We dined together. Of course I couldn't say anything then. The servants were there. When dinner was over we went into the drawing-room. Coffee was brought. She wouldn't have it. She said she didn't dare to, because of her insomnia. She dwelt upon that—always making me feel that horror was with her because of me. She made me feel guilty—in my brain. But she only got at my brain. My heart was in London. I drank a lot of coffee. Perhaps I thought it would give me nerve, string me up to do what I knew I must do. I don't know. Next morning I was going back to London by an early train. I had to anyhow, because of my work. The time had come. I simply must tell her now what I had come to tell her.

She lay on a sofa near the open window, and talked. She seemed happy and at ease. She even said, "This is like the old times." I didn't know what to do, how to begin. I felt desperate. A clock struck ten. Not much more time now. I must speak out. Men are blunderers, I suppose. Anyhow, they are compared with women. At last I couldn't stand it any more, and I interrupted her—I forget what she was saying—and just said that I had asked you, and that you had promised to marry me, and that we were going to be married.

She lay there with her head on a cushion, awfully pale, and looked at me for a minute. And then she said:

"No."

She didn't say it angrily or with any excitement. She said it quietly like a simple statement of fact.

Her quietness, coldness, made me feel tremendously excited and angry. I attacked her. I attacked her over the detectives, the letters. I said it was no use her trying to dominate my life and yours. We were free agents. She had no power over us. We should marry. I had come to tell

her that. It was no use her shadowing me. It was no use her sending me letters. Our connection was over. I was young. I had a right, an absolute right, to the ordinary, natural happiness of a young man. And that lay in marriage.

When I stopped speaking she said, very gently,

“You can speak to me like this here in my own house!”

Vi, I felt such a brute then. And yet I knew it was her fault. She had made me come down, had insisted on my staying. But I felt a brute, a cad.

Then I begged her—as I had done once before. I entreated her. She listened. Her eyes looked quite soft. I thought—I dared to think she was going to give in. She was old now—for a woman. She had lived. She had had it all. She had been married. It was our turn, yours, Vi, and mine, because of our youth. She would see. She would yield. At last she would show a little common humanity. I caught hold of her hand. At that moment I felt that I could care for her in spite of all—as a friend.

Her hand closed softly on mine. And I knew at once, by the feel of it, that she didn't mean to let me go. The feel of her hand told me more than any words could have told me. Her will was there, in her hand. Somehow, just then, I couldn't take my hand away. I couldn't even try to take it away. And I just left it there, while she spoke to me. The gist of what she said was this—that she had been condemned by the doctors, that they didn't give her long to live, only quite a short time, that I was the only man she had ever really cared for, that she couldn't give me up, wasn't unselfish enough to do that, though she knew she ought to, couldn't make up her mind to face the loss of me when she had to face also the end of her life. She begged me to wait just a little while. It wouldn't be long. Then I should be free of her and could marry, and forget her. But I must wait—just a little while, only a very few months.

Vi, I was shocked. She looked very ill. She seemed to

me ill. And she was soft and gentle. Her face was ravaged and terribly unhappy. She cried. I had seen her cry with rage, but never like that. I didn't know what to do. But in the end you can imagine what I did. I gave in.

Then she was wonderful. But it didn't reach my heart, because I was yours. But it reached my brain. I felt differently about her. My brain was full of pity for her. I believed her, mind you. Yes, I believed she was dying, must die soon. She begged my pardon for everything, for her persecution of me, the detectives, the letters, everything. She said I couldn't know, no man could know, what love meant to a woman as passionate as she was. She exposed—or seemed to expose—her whole nature to me. She gave herself away, or seemed to, utterly. What did it matter now, she said. When one was near death one gave up all subterfuge, and I was the only being in the world she cared for.

Vi, in the end, I promised this: that I would delay our marriage till after her death. It was a horrible sort of compact. But I made it. She made me feel I had to make it, that it was the least thing I could do for a dying woman, who after all had been something to me. She told me the doctor had only given her four or five months—six at the most.

She looked terribly ill that night.

Of course there was no question whatever of any further relation between us. I needn't tell you that. No matter touching our former—the thing was done with, and for ever, I thought.

Again I was wrong.

That night we sat up in the drawing-room very late. She said she couldn't sleep if she went to bed early, that the doctors advised her not to go to rest till she felt thoroughly tired. She rang and told the servants that they need not stay up. We would turn out the lights. We were all alone

downstairs in the big, silent house. Vi, I shall never forget that evening—that night rather. I felt enslaved and, by my own action, felt the captive of my own madness. But long ago the madness had worn away from me. I looked back on my insanity and could not understand it. More than that! I could hardly believe in it. And yet of course I knew it had been. I knew I had been contented with this woman, more than contented. For a time I had wanted nobody but her. Isolation with her had satisfied me. In this very house we had been shut up together and I had never rebelled against the isolation. On the contrary, I had desired it, revelled in it, longed that it should last. Where was the man I had been? Now isolation with "her" was more than irksome to me. It was hateful. It was not that she meant nothing to me now. She meant too much. She meant captivity, obligation, the necessity once more to act; she meant a hideous patience, a waiting that was almost intolerable. In one word, she meant prison.

That night I knew, I could not help knowing, that our compact implied a strong and persistent desire in me, the desire that she might die. I might try to pretend that it was not so. But it was so. It must be so. The man who loves as I loved must wish the obstacle to his love's satisfaction removed. Poor woman! I pitied her with my brain. But my heart wanted her gone—away—out of the scene of life which can be so wonderful, which is often so abominably tragic.

And it was awful to be loved by her. (For she still either felt, or acted, love for me.) There's no gift so dreadful, I think, as the gift of unwanted affection. There's no horror more subtle than the horror of certain intimacies, which ought to be connected only with love, when love is so utterly dead that a man wonders, and doubts genuinely, whether it was ever alive. The joys that were then become demons. Reserve shrivels before the approach that was once the only thing desired.

Oh, Vi, how we pay for our changes of soul! But how are we to help their coming about?

That night I paid, or began to pay, for mine.

Although she knew that our compact was this—I was to wait to marry the girl I loved until “she” died, very soon—she seemed able to dismiss it from her mind. And that night she showed, without shame or any constraint, what seemed to be her deep affection for me. And she showed it in ways I don’t want to set down.

Vi, we parted very late. It was early in the morning. And I had difficulty in getting away then. I don’t want to go into that.

But before we parted for the remainder of the night she had extracted another promise from me. It was this: that I would come down into Surrey and stay with her each week-end for the present. She said my visits would be the only things she had to look forward to, her only consolations. I tried—I made shift—did what I could to keep my freedom. I brought forward excuses, tentative excuses. Her will drove right through them. But she pleaded, she didn’t exact. The result was what she intended. She always knew how to get results. The man always gave in.

What an abominable weakling you must think me! What an abominable weakling I am! And yet I’ll swear that ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have been in her hands what I was—obedient against their will, against their whole nature. I can’t explain why to a woman, make a woman see why, but I believe that the average man would understand—most men would understand. Or perhaps a woman would understand better than a man. I don’t know. What do I really know about women except about you? And you’re such an exception! There isn’t another woman like you. I knew her horribly well in a way, but half the time—more—I was deceived by her. She played round me like lightning and storm, but I never knew her as I know you.

That night she leaned on my arm when at last we turned the lights out and went upstairs. I took her to the threshold of her room and began to say good night. But she made me go in for a moment. I didn't stay. I saw her take chloral that night. She looked at me over the wine-glass strangely, horribly, and said:

"This helps me, and I want help badly now."

I stammered something. I felt awful just then, guilty and a victim at the same time.

"It's rather dreadful if a woman has only chloral to cling to, isn't it?" she said.

Chloral! Cursed—cursed thing!

The next morning I went back to London. But it wasn't release. I had resolved, absolutely resolved, that when I went back I would go as a free man, free at whatever cost. I went back bound by a compact. I went back knowing that I should return on the following Saturday. I went back to delay our marriage. I went back longing for a woman to die.

You know something of what followed. I had to make certain excuses to you. It was decided that we wouldn't marry at once, would let some months pass. There were reasons given, you remember. I couldn't give the real reason. The announcement of our engagement appeared in the papers. I had made no promise to her about that.

She saw the announcement of course. But she didn't say anything about it when I went down to Surrey on the following Saturday.

Those week-ends I spent in Surrey! Vi, I don't know how to tell you of them. They were many. For she kept me to my horrible bargain, and she played up tremendously for my pity, for my sympathy. And I gave her all I could of both. But oh, how I hated the ends of the weeks, how I hated the dawning of Saturday.

The first time I went, after our bargain was made, she was quite alone. And somehow I expected always to find

her alone. I don't know why I should have done so. I only know I did. But the second time Miss Grahamson, who gave evidence at my trial, was there. I already knew her as an intimate friend of "hers." I didn't like her. I never liked her. I always felt she was a woman who couldn't run straight. Besides, I always had the feeling that she didn't like me, and that she knew things about me, intimate things which had been told her, and which ought never to have been told to anyone. One thing I'll say. I believe she was always devoted to her friend. That accounts for her intense animosity against me. When I met her down in Surrey that first time she congratulated me on my engagement to you. I shall never forget her way of congratulating me, the veiled irony of it, the bitter gentleness; the cold, the arctic sweetness of her hope that I would be happy, and the look she gave me as she expressed that hope!

But no doubt she honestly thought that I had treated, was treating, her dearest friend abominably. I am certain of that. In fact I know it, and the whole world knows it. She didn't try to conceal it when the end that was my beginning came.

That end! This is the truth of it—and then I've done.

Eleanore Grahamson was in the whole thing. She knew from the first that I was being tricked about the supposed terrible illness, the supposed doom, imminent, certain, that was hanging over her friend, and that had induced me to delay our marriage and to continue that awful acquaintance, which has been the curse of my life, and, in a way, the curse of yours too, of your dear, splendid, self-sacrificing life. It was she who carried report of my supposed assiduities in Surrey to the circles in London which had the greatest power of spreading malicious gossip far and wide among those who matter.

The truth was this.

"She" was not dangerously ill. She had never been con-

demned by any doctor. There was no more reason why she should die within a few months than why anyone else, any one of us all, should die. There was nothing organically wrong with her. She was what the doctors call "sound." The whole matter of her ill health was a comedy got up for my benefit, you know why. My delaying of our marriage tells you. My visits to Surrey tell you.

Of course I absolutely believed that the comedy was stark truth. She looked and appeared to be ill, even very ill. And it seemed to me that she got worse as time went on. She had entirely given up society and all her usual activities. She never went to London, so far as I knew. It seemed that she existed only for my visits, that they were the only things that brought any happiness into her doomed existence. Miss Grahamson, who eventually spent the greater part of her time in the Surrey house, though she often went up to London for a few hours, or for the night, helped in the deception which was practised upon me with great cleverness. Although, as I've said, I always felt that she wasn't a straight woman, she succeeded admirably in her part of the comedy. I knew she cared genuinely for her friend, and her anxiety and distress about her friend's condition seemed so absolutely unforced, so simply sincere, that she took me in completely. No doubt she considered that it was true friendship's rôle to help her friend to keep me. Their aim, I'm convinced, was to create such a scandal by the advertising of my perpetual visits to Surrey that our engagement would eventually be broken off. They didn't know your character, your complete trust in my love for you. But they set all their London talking. That was a step on the way, they thought.

I've said that she was never really ill. I meant by this that she was never in the slightest danger. But she was in an awful state of nerves, and she was suffering, she had been suffering for some time, from insomnia. The insomnia was genuine enough, and the taking of chloral was an effort to get

the better of it. The fact that she was a victim of sleeplessness, and for a long time had been dosing herself for it, helped to create the illusion that she was dangerously ill. You know what an effect sleeplessness has on a person's looks. It can make a strong and organically sound man or woman look a wreck in a very short time. But insomnia doesn't mean rapidly approaching and inevitable death. No.

Vi, I'd made a compact, and I meant to stick to it. But I hadn't realised what the cumulative effect of the waiting, the patience, the pretence—brain pretending to be heart, wasn't it, really?—the submission to the will I had long ago learned to fear and hate, I hadn't realised what that would be. By degrees, in spite of you, I fell into an awful state of nervous depression. There was something very horrible and, it seemed to me, despicable in waiting impatiently for a woman to die. I tried to pretend to myself about that. I tried to force myself into genuine sympathy with her (supposed) suffering, to feel genuine sorrow because of her (supposed) approaching doom. I was gentle with her, kind to her, tried even for tenderness, the tenderness of a friend who pitied and longed to help. I said to myself that these Saturdays and Sundays passed with her in the country were a very small sacrifice to make on behalf of a woman whose time on earth was so short, and who seemed to cling to me so desperately. I had all the probably long future to be happy, wonderfully happy in. She had such a little while, and even during that little while she could have no real happiness. For what can be the happiness in clinging to someone who doesn't really care for you? I added up, as it were, all her miseries and all my advantages over her, struck the balance and tried to be satisfied with it. And Eleanore Grahamson helped me—did her best to help me! She was always hinting how short a time was left to her poor friend on earth, was always begging me to do my best to make her last weeks of life happy and peaceful. All worry must

be kept from "her." All sorrow must be lightened as far as possible. She and I, the only two people who meant anything really to "her," were the only ones who could be of any genuine use. And if it was difficult for me—an allusion to you, Vi—it would all soon be over. She didn't exactly force the note, but, by Jove, she struck the note with obstinate persistence.

And—I tried! But it got on my nerves terribly. I *hate* acting, and it seems to be my cursed lot never to do anything else. I *hate* insincerity, and I've got into a situation where the whole of my life practically is just one continuing lie. It began then in that house—the abomination of insincerity, ceaseless insincerity. "She" was acting desperate illness. Eleanore Grahamson was acting sorrow and pity for the thing that she knew wasn't. I was trying to play up genuine pity and commiseration for what I believed was. And all the time—and it became absolutely desperate at last—all the time I was savagely longing for freedom, and that implied—how could it not?—longing for the end.

Yes, at last I longed, I seemed to ache with longing, for her to die. I caught myself looking at her surreptitiously, Vi, after the interval of days when I was away from her in London, and had been at moments with you, to see whether there was any change in her appearance, any change for the worse. It was abominable—I know that, I said so to myself—but I did it, couldn't help doing it. Don't mistake me, Vi, for God's sake. I never had the horrible idea of trying to hasten the end. Such a thing never entered my mind. They said such things at my trial that—I swear to you that the thought of crime, that the impulse to crime, was never with me. But I did wish that she was gone, couldn't help wishing it. The longer the delay the more violently I wanted to be always with you, to have you for my own. And presently I began to be afraid. Rumours reached me in London. I realised that my attentions to "her," my visits

to her, my apparent persistence in affection for her (in spite of my announced engagement to you), were "getting about," were being discussed in society. I realised the danger fulfilment of my contract might bring. You heard some of the rumours—I knew that afterwards—and one day your father spoke of them very carefully, with great delicacy, to me. He said he hated scandal, and didn't easily believe anything scandalmongers said, but that perhaps it might be wise on my part to take some heed of what the gossips in London who knew my name and something about me were saying. That day I told him, Vi, the reason of my visits to Surrey, in strict confidence. I said they were made to a dying woman, who had been very kind to me when I was wounded in hospital. I said I didn't like to give them up. He didn't know "her," or anything much of her apparently. And he was quite satisfied. I remember his saying, at the close of our talk, "Do the kind thing, my boy, and let the gossips go hang!"

But that talk gave me a moral shake-up. I wondered who had been starting this gossip which might—I saw that—do me great harm now that I was engaged to you. Soon I discovered that it was Miss Grahamson. I needn't give you the details. Enough that I made sure it was she. That done I resolved to have it out with her. Things couldn't go on as they were. By this time I was in a state of nervous desperation which I can't describe. And now, with this discovery, I suddenly felt as if I were in the hands of two women. I'd been in the hands of one long enough through my own sin and weakness. This addition of another, and a woman who had, I was sure, always disliked me, exasperated me intensely, made me feel right down savage. I resolved I'd settle with her quickly.

That week, when I went down to Surrey, she was there. The previous week she'd been away. I was soon able to get her alone. And then I tackled her. I asked her to realise the position. I was an engaged man. I couldn't afford to

have scandal spread about me and any woman. I told her flatly that I knew it was she who had set all the gossip going in London, gossip which had even got to your father's ears. Vi, she had a thick skin. She sat and listened to me without turning a hair. Only her face got harder and harder as I went on speaking. She didn't deny that she had talked in London. She didn't acknowledge it exactly either. She didn't seem to care a damn what I thought she had done. Her manner, look, her whole attitude, indicated cool obstinacy, hostility, hard determination. Suddenly I felt she had made up her mind—perhaps some time ago—to do me harm in connection with you, Vi. I could see that somehow in her face—her eyes. Then I burst out at her, and told her that if I heard any more of this pernicious gossip, if I had any more reason to think that she was making mischief about me in London, I should give up my visits to Surrey at once, never come down to the house again. I suppose I let her see pretty plainly—involuntarily though—my intense feeling for you, Vi. Probably I couldn't help it. How could I help it? I must have shown it. I was almost out of myself just then. She still looked obstinate, hard, and very calm, glacially calm. (She had cold, silver-grey eyes, always steady and sometimes brutal.) Her comment upon my outburst was this:

“I make no promises.”

Then I thought of you and something flamed up in me. I forget exactly what I said, but it was pretty brutal. I'm sure of that. It must have been just then that I began to feel that there was something not right in the house. Up till then I'd been desperately miserable, irritated, impatient, when I was there. I'd always had the longing for escape, the exasperation of the lover chained, of the man who cared for sincerity forced into subterfuge and acting. But I hadn't suspected that anything was absolutely wrong. But to-day there came a flicker of suspicion, definite suspicion. I think

it was when I spoke of coming down there only because I knew that "she" was dying. When I said that I was staring straight at Eleanore Grahamson, and, Vi, I detected something in her eyes. How to describe it! It was like a cunning smile that slipped over them and was gone instantly, a smile with which her face had nothing to do. It was like the cunning smile of a mind that ran surreptitiously over her silver-grey eyes. It seemed to sting something in me, in the inmost part of me. Something sprang up and was on the alert.

From that moment I was horribly ill at ease in that house. I had been ill at ease before, but this was something new.

Mind you, I didn't know what was up. But I kept thinking of that look of Eleanore Grahamson's. A look in the eyes—it seemed to be only in the eyes—can be like a revelation, can't it? It's like a throwing back of the shutter and showing you the room. I knew, I got to *know* that that look meant that there was a secret understanding between the two women from which I was excluded, a secret understanding which affected me, with which I was concerned. They knew something I didn't know, and had laughed over their knowledge and my ignorance. Miss Grahamson had been thinking of my ignorance and their amusement at it when that look had come into her eyes. It had been the outward manifestation of a mental smile.

In my mind I went back again and again to that look and to our interview. I recapitulated what had been said. It was when I had said that I came down to Surrey because I knew "she" was dying that the revealing flicker of a smile had shown in the eyes of my companion. Why should she have smiled at that? She loved her friend, even with devotion. Why smile at my statement that I knew her friend was dying?

Vi, perhaps I'm a great fool, very naïve, or something, but it took me some time to get at the truth of the matter.

Perhaps many men would have jumped to it at once. I didn't. Something was up. I knew that. I was sure "she" was in it with Miss Grahamson. I was sure it had to do with me. I was sure it made them feel sarcastic about me at times. Women, two women together, very easily feel sarcastic about a man. But what was it? I guessed presently that, in spite of her condition of health, which I believed to be desperate, "she" was still woman enough to hate you, to hate the thought of your being happy with me after she was gone, and that perhaps she had put Miss Grahamson up to spreading those malicious reports about me in London. It wasn't a pleasant thing to think of a dying woman, but if it were true it might account for Miss Grahamson's satirical amusement at my attack. She might have been thinking, "If only he knew that she is in it too!"

"She" had only once spoken to me about my engagement to you since the announcement of it had been put in the papers. Then she had simply said that she had seen it, and that we, you and I, shouldn't have very long to wait. After that she had never alluded to the matter again. She had always behaved as if things were as they had been before; as if I were an unattached man. She had never shown any more jealousy of you. She had behaved to me as if you didn't exist, as if there were no woman in my life but herself. So far as I knew, all the detective business had been long ago dropped. After all, when a woman knows she is dying some of her fires must surely die down. At least I had thought so. But now—I began to wonder, to be horribly uneasy.

At first I didn't like to speak to "her" of my unpleasant scene with Miss Grahamson. I couldn't have done so without mentioning you, Vi, and you can imagine that as things were I didn't care to speak of you to her. You with your splendid health, youth and activity stood for the future. She, I supposed, was fading, and would soon be taken by the past. It would be indelicate in me to talk to her of you.

It would increase her misery. That was my feeling. But at last I was driven to speak. I had reason to know that Miss Grahamson was still talking everywhere about her friend and me. I was convinced that her aim was to make a scandal which might lead to the breaking of my engagement with you. I felt that I must clear the matter up with "her," find out, if I could, whether she had any hand in the matter, as I couldn't help suspecting.

(It was now four months since her revelation to me of her state of health. Those four months had seemed to me like four years.)

I wrote to her and asked that Miss Grahamson should not be with her in Surrey next time I came down there. I didn't give my reason for this request. But I added, that if Miss Grahamson was to be there I shouldn't be able to come. She replied that on the following Saturday and Sunday Miss Grahamson wouldn't be with her. She wrote nothing else, made no comment on my demand, which might well have seemed impertinent, asked no questions. On the next Saturday I went down and found her alone.

It was November. My visits to her had been kept up, with occasional gaps, since July.

When I got down I saw that she was looking excited and, it seemed to me, more vital, more alive, than usual. Very soon she asked me why I had made the stipulation about Eleanore Grahamson. I told her. I was resolved to be frank. I even told her of my disagreeable scene with Miss Grahamson, though of course I was as good as certain that she knew all about that already. (She didn't tell me whether that was so.) I said that though Miss Grahamson was devoted to her, I knew that she detested me and was trying to do me harm. That I couldn't allow without taking measures to defend myself. I asked her to use her influence

to stop her friend's malign activities directed against me. And while I asked I looked at her and tried to divine whether she had taken part in them. I was by now almost certain that she had. But I wasn't absolutely certain.

She listened to what I said in silence—never interrupted me. I couldn't tell anything by her face. Women's masks are masterpieces. Men's more often than not show something of the face through.

At last I had said all I had to say and stopped. Still she said nothing. I felt at that moment—something in her obstinate silence, I think, made me feel—positive that she and Miss Grahamson had plotted, were plotting still, to bring about the breaking of my engagement with you, Vi. And suddenly I seemed to know that I was being made the sport of these two women, that I had been a fool ever to come down into Surrey, that my natural pity for "her" ought never to have moved me to take a risk in a matter where you were concerned, that there could never be any peace, or safety, or prospect of happiness for me—or you—until I realised, once and for all, that in good health or dying "she" was, must be by the circumstances of our case, my enemy. I remembered the detectives, the letters. And my weakness in pity seemed to me a crime against you, no longer a virtue shown towards her. I realised, abruptly it seemed, that a great love has great duties, and that my desire to be gentle with her had caused me to fail in the greatest of all the duties of my love, strict loyalty towards you. Don't misunderstand me, Vi. I was always loyal in my heart. I was thinking not of that, but of my acts, the outside business of life by which we are generally judged, I suppose. I realised that when I had confessed my love to you I ought to have broken entirely with her. The mere fact that she and I had formerly been what we were to one another ought to have kept me entirely away from her once you had promised to join your life to mine.

I felt the indecency of my behaviour. And my com-

passion just then seemed entirely made up of a weakness that was scarcely less than vicious. And, feeling all this, I made up my mind that this should be my last visit to her. Whatever she said, whatever she did, whether or not she had been privy to Miss Grahamson's deliberate attempts to ruin my future, this must be my last visit to her. Compact or no compact, I would never risk another. My pity for her (supposed) condition should not prevail any longer.

Just then all the complications, all the complexities, seemed to drop away. I saw clearly—as if far along a broad white road. My love led to you. My duty led to you. My life must be swept clean for you. I was steeped all at once in a great simplicity, *Vi*. And I couldn't understand how I had been held for so long in the grip of all the dark underthings. Another thing, too! I felt suddenly released from moral—or was it mental—cowardice. You don't know anything about that. I think I know everything. It's an everlasting balancing of this against that, a weighing up of horrible possibilities, a dread of what may come *if*—

A tremendous reformation seemed to be worked in me then. Yet I just sat there, and looked at her, and said nothing, waiting for her to speak.

I don't know what my face showed her. I never know what my face shows, but I generally feel as if it had practically no power of concealment at all. Anyhow, she was a practised reader of men.

I had made up my mind, but I did not mean to tell her. I suppose I was still a coward somewhere, in spite of what I have called my release. I knew I should not come down to Surrey again. I felt I absolutely knew that. But I meant to let her know my decision after I had gone away from her house.

At last, as I stuck to my silence, she spoke. I had thought, when I arrived, that she was looking excited. She didn't show any excitement now. She chose to take the whole thing

rather lightly. She said that probably I was right, that Eleanore knew no measure in friendship, and that, like many women, she was a sometimes indiscreet talker. But, she added, wasn't I making too much of it? She was now almost an old woman while I was a young man. In addition to that, there was the condition of her health. Even the most malicious people couldn't make very much of a young man's week-end visits to an old—she dwelt heavily upon her age that day—to an old and very ill woman. My anxiety was really exaggerated, she thought. Nevertheless she would speak seriously to Eleanore.

Whether it was because I had come down to Surrey full of suspicion, or whether it was because I had at last seen the road clear before me in that strange new simplicity—that's how I thought of it—which I had attained abruptly while I had been with her that day, whatever the reason, for once I felt that I could *see*. Often and often with her I had felt that she could see pretty nearly everything in me but had the power of hiding from me what was in her. Now it wasn't so. While she was speaking, while I sat listening and looking at her, for the very first time the thought—it was a conviction really, like something told to me by a voice that couldn't lie—came to me:

“This isn't a dying woman.”

It startled me tremendously, as a voice might speaking to you suddenly when you felt positive that you were alone.

“What's the matter?” I heard her asking.

I said nothing was the matter. I was confused, shaken by the announcement made to me—it was like that—by the inner voice. She didn't insist, though I saw she didn't believe. That conversation of ours ended there. Time was getting on. I went up to dress for dinner.

While I was dressing I remembered the look in Eleanore Grahamson's cold eyes, the surreptitious smile which had slid over them when I had spoken to her of her friend as a dying

woman. I hadn't understood the furtive satire of it then. I had wondered about it. Now I felt that perhaps—up in my bedroom doubt tried to assail me—that perhaps I did understand it. Hadn't she smiled because she knew, had always known since I had begun my visits to Surrey, that her friend wasn't dying? Was "she" even ill? Had she ever been ill? I believed in the insomnia. The taking of chloral—there was no deception about that. I had only seen her taking it once. But still—yes, she suffered horribly from sleeplessness and nerves and drugged herself because of that, and she looked haggard because of that. But—the rest? Why had this new, startling conviction thrust itself into me, or risen in me as if out of some place of strange knowledge?

If—how they must have been laughing at me, these two women!

I heard a Japanese gong sound softly far away in the distance of the house. I must go down to pass the long evening alone with "her."

Vi, I went down with the fixed intention of forcing her to tell me the truth which I felt I already knew.

There's a vile way of getting at a truth which someone is trying to hide from you, or rather which you suspect someone of trying to hide. A woman taught it to me a long time ago. It's this. Pretend you know it, though you really don't. Speak about it as a fact, and see what happens.

I resolved to do that.

When dinner was over we went upstairs to a small sitting-room she had next door to her bedroom. She said it would be warmer, cosier there than in the big drawing-room. (It was a bitterly cold and windy November night.) I sat down in front of the fire. She, as usual, lay down on a sofa. She told me to smoke, I remember, and I lit a cigar.

I thought I should begin to speak out at once about *it*. But I didn't. She talked more than usual that evening. She could talk well when she chose. She was a very intelligent

woman, though she wasn't in the least what is called intellectual. But she had a vast knowledge of life. She was never a dull companion. I sat by the fire and listened to her. I heard all she said, but my mind was working all the time, Vi, on that problem—how to get at the truth. I had made up my mind how to try for it. But she was so clever that what succeeded with most people might fail with her. She was ever so much cleverer than I was, and had always got the better of me.

Presently I was struck by the persistence of her talk. I seemed to detect effort in it, or a plan. What was she up to? How long had we been up there? We had dined very late, at a quarter to nine. She liked to dine late, said it made the night seem shorter. I glanced at my watch. It was half-past ten. I made up my mind to speak. But she was still talking—running on, talking incessantly. I realised then that she must be intending to prevent me from having my say. She must have realised something of my intention. I mean really that she must have realised that I wished to say something she thought she would prefer not to hear. She must be trying to head me off from it.

I don't know to this day though whether it was so. Anyhow, this is what happened.

When the man who has long hesitated does speak at last, I suppose there's no one blunter, more brutal, than he is. The very hesitation behind him, with all its tormenting capacity which he remembers and secretly resents, drives him into a brutality which the unhesitating man isn't driven to. I had been the hesitating man often with her. That night I was the brutal man with her, I think.

Suddenly I cut through her talk. I forget what I said, but I stopped her roughly. I remember she looked surprised, startled, and her lips made a hard line which I knew very well. (Will shows in the eyes and the lips.)

"How much longer are you going to keep up this absurd pretence of being ill?" I said, when I had stopped her.

I was looking her full in the face and I saw—she was pale already, but it seemed as if from under the pallor a ghastlier pallor showed itself, pushing through.

"Pretence! I am very ill," she said.

I remembered Miss Grahamson's smile.

"I know that you aren't," I said. "I know you have never been really ill. Miss Grahamson knows it too."

And, still remembering the smile, I laughed.

Somehow, by instinct I suppose, I had found the very words to achieve my purpose, the very words to pierce the defences of her consummate deceit. I hadn't chosen them. Really I had said that last sentence at haphazard, thinking of that smile which had, perhaps, set me on the track. She was the type of woman—the man's woman is the name usually given to the type—who instinctively distrusts her own sex. That distrust led her to betray herself to me.

She sat up on the sofa and put her feet to the ground sharply, violently.

"Eleanore has *told* you!" she said.

An awful look—it was really a look of fury—came into her face. By sheer accident I had caught her out.

"Oh no—you have just told me!" I said.

She realised at once that she had indeed told me the secret which Miss Grahamson had known how to keep. By this time she was standing up. It was characteristic of her that she did not demand useless explanations about Miss Grahamson, or try to recover the ground which was irrevocably lost by entering into explanations, or indulging in futile protests. Her brain was a quick brain, and a brain that could face facts.

She had told me. I knew. That was the fact she was facing then. The look of fury which her mistake about her friend had brought upon her face went instantly. She was

the culprit—or the fool—not Eleanore. For once she had made a great failure. As she stood there I knew she was already thinking how she was going to retrieve it. At last she said:

“I could never believe that you have been wishing for me to die. No, I could never believe that.”

She came nearer to me and added:

“Don’t—don’t say that! I couldn’t bear it!”

I realised at once the line she had decided to take. No explanation, no apology for the abominable trick—or whatever I am to call it; I don’t know—she had played on me! No shame at being found out! No. Her clever brain had pierced at once to the weakest point in my armour. How could I acknowledge that I had been waiting eagerly for her to die? How could I attack her because she was not dying? How could I demand, as my right, that she should die?

“I know I’m a burden on you, Clive, but after all that’s happened between us, all we’ve been to one another, all I’ve given you, don’t say you’ve been counting the weeks and the days till I should die.”

And then she began to cry. She seemed to break down. She cried—terribly.

That was how it was to be then! That was how I was to be put in the wrong. Of course I saw through it. But she cried—and cried. Very likely the horrible fact—which of course she knew—that I had been waiting for her to die, couldn’t help—simply couldn’t—wishing for her death, helped the tears to come. But I swear I never saw a woman cry like that before. I believe she cried for herself—but she cried for me too, Vi. She thought it must help her with me. It was, perhaps, necessity aided by craft that kept her crying.

Anyhow, her apparent misery—it seemed like despair—made any reproaches, any attack on my part just then out of the question. For the moment I could only wait for her to recover. Try to comfort, to console her—no, I couldn’t do that. The discovery of this last deception had—I hardly

know how to make you understand what I felt, the state of mind I was in by this time, Vi. The macabre trick she had played upon me revolted me. (It would have revolted any man not insane.) But there was the other thing—the deadly shock of suddenly *knowing*—suspicion's so different from knowledge—of *knowing* that there was no prospect of release in the future from the abominable tyranny of this implacable will. As I watched her crying, as I heard her crying, I knew how I had counted on her death. That's terrible. It's the truth. Life with you—and without her—I had been looking forward to that! My existence freed from her! To know that she was gone, couldn't do anything on earth any more, was powerless, absolutely powerless, couldn't see, feel, know, will any more! Again and again in imagination I had lived my freed life with you, and I had been convinced that it was close to me, almost in my grip.

And now this abominable revulsion!

The sound of her crying was like the sound of a sentence of death, passed on my happiness. I wanted her silence—silence eternal. I was totally incapable of pity then. She had promised me that she would die and now I knew that her promise had been a lie. She wasn't going to keep it.

She wasn't going to keep it.

And I thought of how I had lived in the midst of death day and night for months, of how I had seen death come to multitudes, to splendid fellows, to the very pick of creation. They hadn't been able to give death the slip, those fellows, who'd have made the world worth more by their living on. But she refused to die.

A sort of madness seemed to take me then. I don't suppose I showed anything. She went on crying, and I just sat where I was and felt the madness creeping over me. When one hates as I hated then it's like madness, Vi. All the humanity one has seems to wither away, and without it

one doesn't seem sane. Lots of people can't hate. Heaps of British soldiers can't hate. Every fellow who's been in the war knows that. Ask anyone! But I can hate. I know it since that night. The fact that I can love makes it so. The one and the other—they do go together, whatever people may say. Everything's got its reverse side. I hated her then because I loved you. That was the root reason. I didn't hate her only because she had lied to me, made a fool and worse of me, laughed at me with that friend of hers, held me in the grip of my loathsome part, spurred my beast to conquer the man in me. *You* made me hate her.

At last she stopped crying. I looked away from her, just sat by the fire where I was and heard the ugly silence. (That's how I felt it.) I didn't know whether she was looking at me. If she was, could she see what had happened? Never in my life had I felt the least as I felt then, and I know I can never feel like that again. I felt remote and abominable, and somehow at a great distance from myself. I believe we stayed like that for a very long time. But I couldn't measure time then. So I don't know for certain. I don't believe I thought much—scarcely at all, I fancy. I just sat there and hated her, hated her for the dominion that she had over me, for our common degradation, for her deceit, her trickery, hated her because she wasn't a dying woman—most of all for that.

At last I heard her move. She came over to me and stood by me. She put a hand on my shoulder. I didn't stir, and she took it away. When she took it away I looked at her. She was horribly pale, but apparently quite calm, quite self-possessed.

"I know how it is," she said. "You can't forgive me for not being ill, for not being near to death."

I didn't say anything. After a minute she went away from me. She went to the door between the room we were in and her bedroom, and opened it.

"Stay here, will you?" she said. "I'll be back in a moment."

She went into the bedroom, leaving the door partly open, but not enough for me to see into the room. She was away for a little while. Afterwards I knew that during that time she wrote the fragment which was produced at my trial, the note in which she said that she knew I hated her and had been counting on her death, but that she couldn't give me up and begged me not to break my promise to marry her. That note was found in a drawer in her bedroom addressed to me.

Meanwhile I sat by the fire. I didn't feel I could move. I didn't feel I could do anything. She wasn't dying. She wasn't going to die. How a horrible unexpected knowledge, suddenly sprung on a man, can keep him still as stone. I heard the wind outside.

The strange thing is, Vi,—and that you'll never be able to understand—that since I had found out she wasn't dying I was quite without hope for the future. You, anyone perhaps, would suppose that all I had to do was to leave the house as soon as possible, go up to London, ask you to fix our wedding-day, marry you. As I wasn't married to her, wasn't legally bound in any way, why shouldn't I do that?

You didn't know her. I did, by now through and through. And, knowing her, I hadn't any hope. That's all I can say.

She wasn't dying. Living, she wouldn't allow me to be happy with another woman. I just knew that. She'd find the way to prevent.

At last she came back. She had a wine-glass in her hand, and a bottle partly full of a liquid which looked like water. I supposed that as usual she was going to take chloral before going to bed. I looked at the glass and the bottle. She put them down on a table. Then she seemed to hesitate, and then she drew the glass stopper out of the bottle, and poured some of the liquid into the glass. Having done this, she replaced the stopper in the bottle and put it down. I thought

she was going to take her dose. But she left it on the table. I remember she stared at the glass for a moment. Then she came over to me.

Vi, I can't describe what happened then. I can only tell you—so that you may understand. She came over to me and began to make love to me—yes, at such a moment, after what had occurred, after what she knew. While I had believed her to be ill, dying, she had refrained from the worst temptation. Now I knew she wasn't ill, she threw off restraint. She seemed to think—probably she really did think—that my beast would respond, that it would give way once more at it had given way so many times in the past. She had a horrible conception of what men are. She believed—most women such as she was believe,—that we men are all pretty much alike in a certain way. She dared to think, I suppose, that her will was so strong that it might be able to triumph over me again that night, in spite of everything, triumph over me and you, Vi. For the triumph would have been over you too.

Yes, she must have dared to think I might yield. But she had reckoned, too, on another possibility, the possibility that she would make another, and a final, failure that night. I didn't know it then. I found it out afterwards. Her will meant to be satisfied, if not in one way then in another. I've told you that it governed even her, the totality that was her. I've told you that she was will-bound. She proved it to me that night.

Vi, this last act of hers sickened the whole of me. I can't describe how much. It's enough to tell you that I let her see my loathing. Yes, she saw that even my beast shrank away from her then, that even my beast had done with her. There was nothing in me that didn't absolutely revolt. And she knew it. I made her know it.

I told her—it was an awful thing to do—that I wished she was dying, that I wished she was dead. Then at last

she gave up trying to entice my beast. She told me that if I meant what I had just said I'd better give her the dose of chloral that was in the glass on the table, make her take it. She wouldn't take it of her own free will, she said, but if I gave it to her she would. I couldn't understand what she was up to.

"You'd only sleep," I said, "and what's the good of that?"

Vi, she said I was wrong there. She said that while she'd been away from me in the bedroom she'd taken her chloral for the night, taken a dose that was almost beyond the safety limit. The addition of the dose in the glass on the table would kill her, she said, and make it all right for me.

I didn't believe her. How could I? I had done with believing her word. But I confess that I wished what she said were true, and that she would drink the extra dose—and go out. I suppose I was a murderer in intention at that moment.

I didn't answer her. But I remember looking at the glass, and thinking:

"If only it were true, and she would swallow that stuff!"

As I didn't speak she said:

"Why don't you give me the glass?"

I thought this was some horrible new comedy, macabre like the last one. I didn't understand it. I only knew it was connected with death, as the last one had been.

"You're lying," I said. "You always lie to me."

And suddenly she began to laugh. She kept her eyes on me and shook with laughter.

When I saw her laughing I got up. I thought she was laughing at me, at my hatred of her, and at the impotence of my hatred. Her laughter seemed made of contempt, and not only of her personal contempt for me, the individual's contempt for an individual, but of the destructive woman's contempt for the miserable and dastardly weakness of the

man she destroys. It was woman laughing at man. It was one sex laughing at the other.

I felt murderous then. All my hatred seemed to rush together, to concentrate in a terrific way. She went on laughing with her eyes on me.

I picked up the glass and went towards her with it.

Even then I didn't believe what she had said about the chloral. But I resolved she should drink it. I would stop her abominable laughter by making her drink it. And if she had spoken the truth—I don't think I cared just then one way or the other about the truth or falsehood of her. I don't exactly know what I thought, what I felt. But I meant to take her at her word this time as I had so often done before. I didn't speak. I went up to her. I had a feeling of intense physical strength at that moment. I remember that very well. I gripped hold of her forehead by the temples and pressed her head back. Her mouth opened—fell open. I put the glass to it. I turned the glass up. Suddenly I felt resistance in her. It was as if she were struggling feebly. Then I seemed to realise that there was danger in what I was doing, and I tried—Vi, I swear this is true—I tried to stop. I let the glass go. It dropped on the carpet. But—the stuff had gone down her throat.

I don't know what I expected to happen then. What happened was this. She sat quite still for a moment staring at me. Then she smiled faintly. Then she got up slowly, and went into her bedroom, carrying the chloral bottle with her. And this time she shut the door behind her.

I stayed where I was for some time. I don't know how long. At last, as she did not come back, I thought I would go to my room. As I moved to go I saw the wine-glass lying on the carpet. I picked it up and put it down on a table. But somehow I didn't like to leave it there. And I took it up again, went over to the door of her bedroom and tapped. There was no answer. After knocking again I opened the door.

She was lying on her big, low bed, apparently sound asleep. She was still in the tea-gown she had worn all the evening. I didn't go very near to her, but I could hear her breathing heavily, and I supposed that the chloral had had its usual effect. Evidently she had lied to me again. At that moment, Vi, I was thankful to believe that it was so. For I had got back my self-control. The madness had gone out of me by then.

I put the glass down by the chloral bottle, which was on the dressing-table, and went to my own room.

But, Vi, for once she had spoken the truth. They found her dead in the morning.

Her letter to me was discovered in the drawer of her dressing-table.

Vi, her will, which she couldn't dominate, which dominated her, which was really independent of the rest of her, had destroyed her, acting through me. I knew it might destroy me too, that she had meant that it should destroy me after she was gone. I put up a stern fight against that. All the time I was fighting I knew I was fighting against her will to destroy me after she was gone. That knowledge nerved me to go through with it. She shouldn't succeed in overcoming me again. She shouldn't stretch out from the grave and finally ruin my life.

I've felt her about us sometimes—and here, too, even here in Africa. And it's begun to seem to me that she came, was able to come, because I was living in eternal deceit with you.

It has seemed to me as if somehow she lived, drew her breath in my deceit.

Vi, I've been terribly miserable deceiving you.

But you've always believed in my innocence. And I'm afraid—I'm afraid.

XV

ON the following day, Saturday, soon after four o'clock, from the harbour of Sidi Barka many watchers sighted the steamer "La France" drawing in to the North African coast over a calm sea in almost windless weather after an uneventful voyage from Marseilles. There were very few passengers in the First Class on board of her. Among these few was an Englishman who had attracted some notice by the anxious melancholy stamped on his face, and by his feverish restlessness. Although the weather had been fine throughout the voyage, he had not come into the saloon for any meal, or spoken a word to any of his fellow-passengers. He had hired a deck-chair and had had it placed apart in the bow of the ship, but no one had seen him sitting in it. When he had not been shut up in his cabin he had paced the deck incessantly. Even in the dead of the night he had kept up his walk, under the stars, into the dawn. But now at last, when the African coast was sighted, he stood still with both hands clasping the rail, staring towards the land which came with every moment more clearly into sight, till the trees on the sloping hills behind the town were visible, the curving sandy shores of the coast edging the delicate mountains at which Vivian had so often looked from the garden of the *Villa du Soleil*, the promontory away to the right beyond the *plage* where Mr. Beake went for his morning swim in fine weather, till finally the lighthouse stood out plainly at the end of the mole backed by the close-set dwellings of Sidi Barka, and at last it was possible to discern the figures of people on the wharf moving about their business, or standing together in clusters to watch the approach of the ship from France.

Africa once more! He had only been away for a short time, this traveller, but it had seemed to him very long.

All the time he had been yearning for Africa. But now that the ship was close in, now that he saw the land, the houses, the people, the road winding along the coast towards a low hill and a darkness of trees which concealed a white house looking over the sea, he was afraid, terribly afraid. This coast drew him, but it also repelled him. There was something cruelly inexorable in the ceaseless movement of the vessel towards it. And yet he had been counting the hours till he should see that lighthouse, those dwellings, those hills again, till he should drive along that coast road towards the white house hiding among trees on the hill.

The ship rounded the mole and came stealthily into the harbour. And still the English passenger stood motionless by the rail. His eyes were now searching the crowd which was clustered on the landing-stage. He knew that no one would be there to meet him, yet he looked at the many faces with anxious expectation. It seemed to him almost impossible that his intense consciousness should not have roused consciousness in another, in another very close to him, with whom his life and fate were bound up, almost impossible that his approach over the sea, his nearness to this coast, his arrival in this harbour, should have left that other in total ignorance, in complete indifference. And his eyes went swiftly from face to face in the crowd, instinctively seeking a woman. Of course she would not be there. It was absurd to suppose that she might be there. Nevertheless he sought for her.

His eyes did not find her. But presently he started, like a sensitive man whose nerves were all on edge. Among those on the shore staring up at the vessel he had seen a face that he knew. The British Consul, smoking a pipe and crowned with a battered Panama hat, stood in the forefront of the crowd, talking to a couple of Frenchmen, and scanning the passengers lined up along the rail of "La France." And as Clive saw him, attracted perhaps by the

gaze of the man he was interested in with such a lively curiosity, his eyes came to Clive. He started, too, stared eagerly, wonderingly. His brown hand went sharply to the brim of his Panama. Then, as the ship stopped alongside and was being made fast, he called out in his dry voice:

“Good day, good day, Mr.——”

He stopped abruptly, then continued,

“Good day, Mr. Ormeley. Didn’t expect you back quite so soon.”

Clive nodded, frowning. So—the little man knew he had gone away. But of course he knew. Of course he knew everything that happened in this out-of-the-world place where he was drying up in exile. Besides, no doubt he took in an English paper, one of those cursed papers that will not leave a notorious man alone, and that had duly chronicled the return of Clive Baratrie to the bedside of his dying Mother. This Ormeley-pretence—how insufferable it was now Clive knew of the secret understanding between the Consul and Vivian! Something savage leapt up in Clive. If he came upon Mr. Beake on the wharf he would have it out with him!

The gang-plank was swung into place. The Arab and negro porters swarmed on board vociferating. They seemed to bring the burning heat of Africa with them, a fœtid breath from the souks, from the *Bains Maures*, from the native cafés, from the crowded market-places, where noise seems to hang in the blaze like a miasma above the teeming dark men. How was it possible for a man to feel cold among them? Yet Clive felt a coldness within him, a coldness of apprehension. What was waiting for him in this land?

A one-eyed man, whose shaven head was bound up in a red and yellow handkerchief with tattered edges, seized his baggage, and he followed a string of passengers down the gang-plank to the wharf. There, almost immediately, he found himself close to the Consul, who was evidently on the look out for him, and who greeted him with:

"We didn't expect you back so soon, Mr. Ormeley! I hope you had a good voyage?"

"I only went to England for a short time. My Mother was very ill. She died soon after my arrival."

"Indeed! I'm very sorry, very sorry!"

Clive glanced at the little yellow man and hesitated. There was surely something very odd about him, about his manner, his look. It seemed to be compounded of furtiveness and amazement, of furtiveness because of a desire not to show the amazement. It suggested to Clive something secret, some knowledge which was exciting Mr. Beake, and which concerned himself. He looked round quickly. He could not see an English face in the crowd. He heard only French, Italian, and Eastern dialects being spoken. Probably not one person here understood English.

"D'you think we need keep up the pretence that you suppose my name to be Ormeley any longer?" he said.

Mr. Beake jumped, and his yellow skin seemed to try to show a blush, and succeeded in becoming slightly darker, more dingy in colour.

"I beg your pardon—I don't quite——"

"My name's Baratrie, Clive Baratrie, as you know."

Mr. Beake looked away and said nothing. He was very much startled, very uncomfortable indeed. Evidently the charming girl of the *Villa du Soleil* had given him away. He had not expected this of her after their compact. He had judged her to be a woman of her word. And it was she who had asked him to conceal his discovery of her husband's identity. Or rather it was she who had told him—after—well, anyhow it was owing to her that he had indulged in subterfuge. This was distinctly hard on a man. Mr. Beake bristled with a sense of injustice, of having been badly treated, put in a false position.

"I understood that you didn't wish your real name to be known out here," he said, after a pause. "In calling you

Ormeley I was merely doing what I thought you preferred. You yourself——”

“Yes, yes, thanks! It doesn't matter. Please don't think I meant to blame you.”

“I could not possibly think such a thing!” retorted the Consul, with official severity. “Good day to you.”

His brown hand went up to the battered brim of the Panama hat, and he was turning away abruptly when Clive stopped him.

“I beg your pardon, but just now you said to me, ‘*We* didn't expect you so soon.’”

“Did I? I dare say I did.”

“Perhaps—have you seen my wife while I've been away?”

“Yes,” said Mr. Beake.

And again the oddly furtive, and somehow unpleasantly observant look, showed in his face.

“When did you see her last?”

“Last!”

Mr. Beake hesitated obviously. Then he added:

“I saw her to-day.”

The eyes of the two men met for a moment which seemed to Clive very long. His eyes were trying to read the eyes of the Consul, to tear from him an answer to a question which he could not, did not dare to, ask.

His porter spoke to him hoarsely in Arabic, then in bastard French.

“Morsou desirait un voitoor?”

“Good-bye!” he said.

“Good-bye!” said Mr. Beake.

And the two men parted.

As Clive walked away following the porter Mr. Beake pulled at his bristling moustache and muttered to himself:

“Well, I'm damned!”

What could be the meaning of it all? An intense curiosity was alive in the little man. He scented tragedy. But he was

quite in the dark about its cause. If only Catherine had been alive she would have been able to help him in the matter. She had been so clever, so intuitive. Nobody like her for probing to the root cause of a scandal. She had had "such a sure nose." But, alone, he really couldn't comprehend the meaning of it all. What would happen when that fellow, who had really been very impolite to his country's official representative, got to the villa? And where on earth—— Mr. Beake simply tingled with ardent curiosity. He must wait, must be patient. Surely, if anything very tremendous had happened in the ménage of the *Villa du Soleil*, he must get to know about it eventually. He resolved to be very persistent in bathing at the *plage* near by. And perhaps—why not—he would call at the villa one day. Now that—yes, it would really be quite the natural and right thing for him to pay another visit to the villa now that matters there had taken such very unexpected turn.

Meanwhile Clive had paid the porter, had his luggage put on a landau, and started on his drive along the coast.

Now that he was actually in Africa, very near to the white house and Vivian, he was amazed at what he had done, amazed that he had dared to yield to the impulse which had come to him far away in England. The words of a dying woman had pushed him on. He could hear them still, a faint mutter in his ears: "Tell Vivian. She deserves the truth." His Mother had not known of the writing locked up in the drawer. She must have hoped that he would speak out the truth to that other woman who loved him, though he had tried to keep it from her. To tell the truth, or let it be known, would be release from a long and awful bondage, which had never ceased from tormenting him in his life with Vivian. He had always known that. But could she bear the truth? He was terrified now by her long belief in him. The completeness of her trust tortured him. Its very completeness might be the cause of a revolt which, if it occurred, must

lay his life in ruins. And now he was afraid of her eyes. It occurred to him that he would never be able to look into her eyes again. How would she receive him? What would she say? What would her eyes tell him? If he could find the courage to look into them he would surely see at once what had happened, the nature of the change which had taken place in her since she had read what he had left in the drawer. For she had had no time to prepare, even if she were capable of any preparation, against his return. She did not know he had left England. She must suppose that he was still there, that he had personally sent the last telegram she had had from him, the telegram which he had given to Bob Herries to send after his departure. That telegram must have reached her yesterday. And then she must have opened the drawer.

Unless she had delayed doing that! His heart leaped at the thought of that possibility, his coward's heart. For he was, had always been, a coward in his great love for Vivian. He had always loved too much to dare to be brave. And though at last he had given in to a sort of imperious necessity which spurred him to sincerity now, as he drove along by the sea accompanied by the chime of the bells on the necks of the horses, he knew that he was a coward still. If she had delayed reading the truth he knew how she would welcome him. He could see the light in her eyes, the joy in her amazement. She would forget in that moment the strangeness, like a creeping of not comprehended tragedy, which had darkened their last days together in the villa.

But she must have opened the drawer and read the manuscript. The telegram he had received from her had shown her anxiety to open the locked drawer. He remembered the words: "Please let me use the key." She would not delay. She had not delayed. She knew.

The horses were mounting the hill now. He was assailed by a sudden panic of fear. The white house was close by.

He could see the trees crowning the bluff of land on which it stood, spreading up the hill which rose steeply beyond. In a few minutes the bastion of stone would be in sight, the sands of the *plage*, the promontory, the lighthouse, all the familiar view. She might be in the garden. She often sat there towards evening. She might hear the sound of the horses' bells. She might come to the wall of the sea terrace——

“Cocher! Arrêtez! Arrêtez!”

The driver pulled up sharply and turned on his box.

“M'sieu?”

Clive opened the carriage door.

“I'm going to get out. I'll walk up the hill. Go on. I shall be at the house almost as soon as you are. Have the luggage taken in and wait for me at the house, please.”

“Bien, M'sieu.”

Clive was out on the dusty road. He banged to the carriage door. The coachman cracked his whip and drove on.

Clive waited till the carriage had disappeared round a bend in the road. He could still hear the bells on the horses faintly. Presently their sound diminished, became a mere tinkle, then died completely away.

There was no one about, and now that the bells were inaudible a sudden loneliness of nature seemed to descend upon Clive and enfold him. He heard the wash of the sea, a soft and yet heavy sound, on the shore down there below him. He listened to it for a moment, mechanically counting the small waves that broke and ebbed. He looked out across the sea; he looked at the hills and the tranquil trees, and then at the empty road, dusty that day in the dry heat, winding upward at the edge of the sea. And a sense of unreality came upon him. He felt small and petty in the midst of the immensities.

“What do I and my mental agony, my dread of the future, matter?” he said to himself.

He looked back swiftly over his life since the beginning of the war. It had been a life of ceaseless unrest, of pain physical and mental, of violent moral effort and violent reactions. Like thousands of other men, he had had to struggle for courage, for supreme self-control in tense and difficult moments; like thousands of other men he had paid for great days of achievement by subsequent lapses. Even as his comrades, his brothers in arms, he had touched heights and plumbed depths immeasurable. And now he stood on this African road alone under the hot blue sky and all fear seemed to be concentrated within him; and the world had shrivelled to the dimensions of a few acres of garden containing a little white house; and the soul of that world to the divine spark in the breast of an English girl.

But he felt small, petty, in a way infinitely unimportant. And, looking at land and sea and sky, he said to himself again, "What does it matter?" He savoured the great loneliness of nature in this out-of-the-way corner of the world. Some day, soon enough, nature would take him. The earth, which had taken so many fine-souled and animal-bodied men, so many men and their animals whom he had known, would receive him too. And all would be over for him—here. And the soft waves would still break on that lonely shore beneath the climbing garden and the white house by the sea. What did it matter? Whatever it was, only a short time was given it. He would steel himself with that thought, with that knowledge. And he pulled himself up, braced his muscles, set his lips, and went on up the hill, walking fast. But as he drew near to the brow of the hill, where the road turned and the garden of the villa would come into sight, hesitation seized him again, and in spite of his conviction of smallness, in spite of his reiteration of "What does it matter?" in spite of his realisation of the briefness of his time for happiness or suffering, he knew the feeling of each man in tremendous suspense. It

was as if the universal was in him, as if what was about to occur to him was of world-wide importance. And he could scarcely force himself to go on. But he did force himself, and presently he stood on the bluff, saw the rocks below him with the blue sea sucking round them, the bastion now gay with bright-coloured geraniums, the sands with the bathing house of the *Villa du Soleil*, the pine trees above the low wall of the sea terrace, the solitary room in which he had suffered so much, in which he had left the truth for Vivian to read.

He was close to her now. She had probably heard the carriage, probably knew already of his unexpected return. He felt a sort of agony of excitement, mingled of fear and desire. But he was conscious that the fear prevailed. It was terrible to love so much and to be afraid of the loved one. He glanced furtively at the low wall on the top of the bastion. She might be there on the sea terrace. Or she might come down through the garden knowing he must be on the road. But no face looked down on him. He heard no foot-step. And he walked on slowly till he came to the gate of the drive.

There he stopped again. The gate stood wide open. He could see into the garden. She must surely know by now of his arrival. Unless she chanced to be out walking. Perhaps she had gone down to the *plage*. It was hot and fine. She might have gone down to bathe. Otherwise surely she——

He went to the edge of the bank above the beach and looked out over the sands. He saw the bathing house of the *Villa du Soleil*. It looked deserted, but he could not see clearly into the verandah. Beyond there were a good many figures on the sands, walking or sitting near the edge of the sea. A man was loading sand on to a cart drawn by two mules. Some children were playing; a few people were bathing, but not near. They were small figures, or specks,

in the distance. The sea was blue, the sky clear and radiant. The whole scene suggested to Clive remoteness, contentment, freedom from the cares that seem to weigh upon Europe like chains since the War. But he could not lose himself in the African dream. He was totally detached from it. He stood alone outside of the beauty and peace, and, in spite of a strong moral effort he was making, dread was heavy upon him.

She was not down there. He felt certain of that. She must be in the house or in the garden. She had not come to meet him, though surely she must know now that he had come back. She must be waiting for him.

He turned in to the drive, and walked slowly between the pine trees towards the house, which looked dazzlingly white in the sunshine. The drive curved. He followed the curve and came to the open space before the door of the villa. The landau was drawn up in front of the door. It was empty. His luggage had been taken down from it and carried into the house. The Maltese coachman was standing near the horses talking to Bakir ben Yahia, who held a red flower in his hand, and looked as usual sleepy and totally unemotional. Evidently the unlooked-for arrival of his master from England had not stirred his sluggish pulses. His heavy eyes were half closed, and the whole of his thin figure and dark brown face expressed languor, and a serene indifference to the unexpected events of life. As Clive glanced quickly at him he thought:

"If only I had some of that fellow's fatalism to help me through!"

But he had none of it, and knew he would never have it.

The Maltese coachman turned round, and Bakir allowed himself a faint smile.

"Bon soir, Monsieur," he said, in his thick voice, turning the red flower slowly between his brown fingers.

"Bon soir, Bakir," said Clive.

A silence followed. No sound came from the house. No figure appeared from the garden to welcome the traveller "How much is it?" Clive asked the driver.

He was told the fare, took out some money and paid it, adding a satisfactory *pourboire*.

The man climbed up to his box, shook the reins, cracked his long whip across the backs of his horses. They moved. Once more their bells sounded cheerfully, diminished to a delicate chime, became a mere tinkle among the pine trees, slipped into silence. Clive and Bakir stood alone before the house door.

Clive looked at Bakir, and the Kabyle looked calmly at him, then lifted his scarlet flower and smelt it. No sound came from the house. But the sound of the sea was faintly audible, and the stirring of a small breeze in the crowns of the pines.

"Has my luggage gone up?" said Clive.

"Oui, Monsieur," said Bakir.

Clive made a movement towards the house door, then stopped.

"Is Madame in the house?" he asked.

"Non, Monsieur."

"She's in the garden? I'll——"

But Bakir interrupted calmly with a second

"Non, Monsieur."

"Madame isn't in the garden?"

"Non, Monsieur. Madame n'est plus ici."

"What? What do you mean?" said Clive.

He raised his voice suddenly, without knowing that he did so, and added:

"Where is Madame? Tell me at once!"

The sound of his voice was threatening, but it did not seem to cause any distress to Bakir, who replied with undiminished calm:

"Madame has gone away, Monsieur."

"Gone! Where to?"

"I don't know, Monsieur."

"When did she go?"

"Early this morning, Monsieur. Last night she was in the room down there on the terrace till very late. When she came back I was sleeping. She woke me, and told me to go early in the morning and fetch a carriage from the town. I went, and came back with a carriage. That was about seven o'clock."

He paused and again smelt his flower. Clive seized him by the shoulders.

"Go on! Go on—will you!"

"Madame had packed her things. She left money for us with the cook and went away in the carriage."

"Where to? Where did she go to?"

"I don't know, Monsieur. Madame did not say anything. She just got into the carriage and went away."

"And haven't you been to the town to—haven't you tried to find out——"

"No, Monsieur. I have been here all day in the garden."

Clive's hands dropped from the Kabyle's thin shoulders. He stood for a moment staring at the dark, calm face, the sleepy eyes, the hand that held the red flower. Then, without speaking again, he went into the house. Quickly he walked all through it. In the kitchen he found the cook, and inquired of her whether Madame had left any message when she went away. The woman said no. Madame had left in her charge money for a month to pay the wages and provide food for the servants. Clive listened to what she said, and when she was silent looked at her for a moment. The woman was Algerian-French, small, thin, with very dark eyes and smooth, silky hair. She looked kind, but sharp. Clive felt that he could not ask her any questions about Vivian. And he turned and went out of the kitchen without speaking another word. After going through the rest of the

house he visited the rooms with the exterior staircase, the rooms he and Vivian had lived in. As he reached the top of the staircase he became aware that his legs and his hands were trembling. He stood still in the little hall which separated the two rooms. It was just then that he began to realise his loneliness. He heard the distant wash of the sea, the faint murmur of the pine trees. But it seemed to him that he was listening to a tremendous silence, a silence such as he had never conceived of till now.

After waiting a moment he opened the shut door of Vivian's bedroom and went in. All was in order there. The bed was made and covered with an Oriental bedspread. The windows stood open. The room was full of light and sea air. But all Vivian's things were gone. The room was unoccupied. It was like a spare room ready for a visitor who had not yet arrived. Clive searched it. He found nothing; no letter left for him. He went to his room. Then he descended to the garden, made his way to the lowest terrace and visited the room there. The drawer of the writing-table was shut but not locked. The key had been left in it. He pulled the drawer out. His manuscript was not there. Nor was there any letter for him. She had evidently gone away without leaving any message.

He went out of the room and walked through the garden. Without knowing why he did so he searched every nook and corner of it. Finally he found himself standing under the shining fans of "Little Africa" on the sand with its pattern of sunshine and shade.

She had gone. He was alone. The truth had driven her away. It seemed to him as if Life had snapped, like a twig bent sharply by a ruthless hand. He heard the creaking of the palm fans above his head. In the distance a bit of the house gleamed, brilliantly white against the green. Children were playing on the sands down there by the blue sea. Bathers were cleaving their way through the blue under

the blue of the sky. But nevertheless Life had—just that—snapped.

What was he going to do? An immensity of horrible leisure stretched before him. He saw vast processions of empty hours, and days, and nights, weeks, months—years. His strange Mother was dead, and *she* had fled from him. Since the trial his life had really been bound up with the lives of two women, his Mother and Vivian. For little Clive had been there for so short a time. And now he was stripped of all human companionship. His situation seemed incredible. He did not know at all how to deal with it. His instinct was to keep away the ultimate horror of loneliness by action. If only there were something he could do.

The little yellow man came up suddenly in his mind.

He had seen her that morning!

Two or three minutes later Clive was walking on the sea road towards Sidi Barka.

XVI

It was evening when Clive reached the town, and, knowing that the business of the day must be over, he went to the Consul's flat hoping to find him at home. But the fat Jewess in the little pointed cap who answered his ring informed him that Monsieur le Consul was out. He had been back from the Consulate but had gone out again almost immediately to the *Cafe Foch* to take his *apéritif*. No; he would not be at home to dinner. Monsieur le Consul dined *en pension* at the *Restaurant Foch*. Clive asked where this famous place was, and received elaborate directions from the Jewess, made—he realised—the more elaborate in the hope of a tip. The tip was duly paid, and he descended the dusty and narrow stairs, and made his way quickly towards the palm-shaded "Place" where the more important townspeople

of Sidi Barka went to take an airing when the day's work was over.

He found the long, open space crowded. In a kiosk under the palms a regimental band was playing a selection from "Aïda" to an audience seated on benches and little green chairs. Arab and negro boys ran about offering to dust the shoes and boots of the community. Flower-sellers and sellers of lemonade drew attention to their wares in no uncertain manner. Sailors from the port wandered to and fro staring at the busy crudities of land life with round eyes accustomed to the sea. French and Italian families marched slowly up and down lending an ear to the music, an ear to conversation. Before the cafés crowds were assembled sipping coffee, syrups, lemonade, liqueurs, at little zinc tables with stained marble tops. There were many Arabs, who sat in groups before their coffee-cups, staring gravely above their cigarettes at the pageant of the "Place," and occasionally exchanging a few quiet words under cover of the powerful brass instruments manipulated by the Zouaves.

The biggest crowd was gathered before the *Cafe Foch*, and in the middle of it sat Mr. Beake, wearing the Panama and a jacket of white alpaca, smoking a defiant British pipe, and sipping a rosy concoction of strawberry syrup, Kirsch, soda-water and crushed ice through a couple of straws, preparatory to his dinner in the large pink building behind him. For the moment he was alone, although he knew personally, or by sight, most of the men sitting round him. He sipped, he smoked, he listened to the brazen triumphs of Verdi, he stared at the strolling throng with his tired, and yet keen, eyes. And he thought, "How much more of this am I fated to have?" He was getting very tired of his life, very tired of his loneliness, very tired of North Africa in general and of Sidi Barka in particular. It was all so dusty and dull. He had no real friends. What had he to look forward to? Dinner at the Restaurant Foch, and then home to his empty

flat. (The Jewish servant slept "out.") He might go to a cinema first, or look in at the Club and play a game of French billiards with some swarthy wine-merchant or land-owner, or possibly with some officer of the Zouaves or the Chasseurs d'Afrique. And eventually—bed under a not too clean mosquito curtain as the prelude to another day at the office. For what was the Consulate but an office?

It wasn't much of a life for an ageing and lonely Britisher. And Mr. Beake was full of eager self-pity. But suddenly the self-pity died out of him, banished by the sight of a face.

He saw Clive Baratrie come up under the palm trees and stare fixedly into the crowd assembled at the Café Foch. Abstraction, a sort of ghastly self-absorption, was stamped on his face. Yet he was obviously searching for someone; and while the Consul was wondering for whom, the eyes of Clive fell on him, and instantly he knew.

"By Jove, he's looking for me!"

A moment later Clive was beside him.

"Good evening," said Mr. Beake.

"Can I speak to you?" said Clive.

"Certainly. What will you have?"

"Not here!" said Clive.

"You won't——"

"Won't what?"

"I was only going to say, won't you join me in a drink?"

"A drink! I've come to speak to you about my wife."

Mr. Beake got up. So—he was to be really "in it" at last!

"They know me here. I'll pay later. Where do you wish to go?"

"Anywhere out of this. Down by the sea."

"Certainly. Certainly."

They went in and out among the tables and the many guests of the Café Foch, threaded their way through the

strollers in the "Place," passed under the palm trees before the band, now silent for a few moments, skirted the stand where the carriages were drawn up waiting for customers, crossed a broad road and at last reached the quay, now almost deserted. During this walk side by side neither of them had spoken a word.

Now Clive stopped in the shadow of a warehouse already closed for the night.

"Where's my wife?" he said, facing the Consul.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Beake.

"When I spoke to you on the quay, did you know she had gone away?"

"I can't say I—really it's very difficult to——"

"Please tell me. I've got to find out what has happened. My wife had no idea I was coming back to-day. She supposed me to be in England."

"I thought she couldn't have known that——"

"Exactly! She didn't know. She was alone. She was probably bored at the villa all by herself. Nothing more natural than that she should decide to make a little trip to fill up the time. But as I have come back, I want to find out where she is."

"Exactly! Exactly!" said the Consul. "Of course. Any man would——"

"And as you say you saw her to-day, I come to you."

"I quite understand. But on my honour I don't know where she has gone."

"Please tell me. Where did you see her?"

"I saw her at the station."

"Did you speak to her? But of course you did."

"But I didn't! I did not!"

"Why not?"

Mr. Beake felt that probably he ought to raise a strong objection to this brusque cross-examination of him by a man whom he barely knew. But somehow he was unable to

resent it, unable to protest against it, unable to summon to his aid any professional dignity or official coldness. The stark, devouring anxiety of an unself-conscious human being pierced him and reached an answering humanity in him.

"Why not?" he repeated. "Well, I—I didn't like to."
"Why?"

"Because I—because Mrs. Ormeley——"

"Baratrie!" Clive interrupted sharply.

"I meant Baratrie," stammered the Consul. "But I've got into the habit of——"

"I know, I know."

"Mrs. Baratrie looked very preoccupied and—and distressed, and I did not like to speak to her."

There was a silence. Then Clive said:

"Did you see my wife go?"

"No, I didn't."

"What was she doing at the station?"

"Waiting for a train evidently. She had luggage with her. I only happened to look in about a package for the Consulate and I had no reason to stay. And I felt it would be in bad taste to——"

"Yes, I know, I know."

This man, Baratrie, was certainly brusque, almost more than brusque. Mr. Beake really thought that perhaps he ought to assert himself. But before he could do so another sharp question fell on his ear.

"What time was this?"

"In the morning, between nine and ten."

"Was there any train coming in about that time?"

"There are two trains soon after ten."

"Where do they go?"

"One goes to Duvivier to connect with the train from Constantine to Tunis."

"And the other?"

"The other is a local train that——"

"Thank you very much. And so that's all you know?"

"Yes," said Mr. Beake, with a return to stiffness.

"I'm awfully sorry to have disturbed you, taken you away from the café like this. Please forgive me. I'm naturally anxious about my wife. I must go to the station and find out where she booked to. Good-bye."

And then Mr. Beake was alone on the wharf, standing in coal-dust by the closed and deserted warehouses, and wondering with all his power of wondering what had happened in the ménage of the *Villa du Soleil*. For something tremendous and devastating had happened. He was absolutely certain of that. Mrs. Baratrie's face—and more especially her eyes—had told him so. He had spoken of her as looking preoccupied and distressed, and even while he had been uttering the words he had been struck by their inadequacy. For those eyes had frightened him. They had even seemed to menace him. They had sent him away speechless. And now they haunted him.

He went back alone to the Café Foch in a depressed and thoughtful condition. He was still curious. How could he not be? But a sense of—well, it was almost of awe mingled with his curiosity. It seemed to him that he had drawn very near that day to some great human catastrophe.

Meanwhile Clive walked quickly to the station, which was outside the town at some distance. When he got there it was definitely evening, and he was aware of the approach of night. Presently he would have to go back to the lonely house by the sea. Its doors would be standing open, but there would be nobody there for him. Vivian meant Life to him. Without her Life was not. And now she had fled from him. He had not yet faced that fact coldly, but, like some deep-seated disease in the body, knowledge of it went with him in the mind now wherever he went. As he walked into the shabby station, now nearly deserted, he

felt it as a man may feel the throbbing of a wound, or the dull ache of a cancer that may bring him to death.

An Arab porter came up to him. He asked for the *Chef de Gare*, and was shown to a dingy and very hot little room, full of drowsy flies, where an unnaturally martial-looking Frenchman, short, stout, and wearing stagey moustaches with sharp-pointed ends, inquired what he wanted.

Clive told the man that he lived at the *Villa du Soleil*, had returned that day from England, and had found that his wife—who, he was careful to explain, was not expecting him—had left Sidi Barka on a little trip. As he was anxious to get into touch with her at once, he had come to inquire whether her destination was known at the station.

As he spoke he noticed a very male, and decidedly satirical, expression on the red face of the station-master. Yes, the station-master had seen Madame that morning. He understood that she had bought a ticket to Duvivier. He knew nothing more about the matter than that. From Duvivier, which was a junction, she might have gone on either to Algiers via Constantine, to Philippeville, or to Tunis. She would not be likely to stay at Duvivier. There were no amusements or distractions worthy of her notice there. No!

He pulled at his immense moustaches with fat, short-fingered hands, and stared at Clive, always retaining the satirical expression. Quite evidently he was greatly amused at this episode of a husband unexpectedly returning to find that his wife had gone off, no doubt in quest of some illicit amour.

"Madame started alone!" he was kind enough to add at the close of his explanations.

Clive thanked him stiffly, and went out of the station; while the fellow had been talking he had been realising something—the uselessness of pursuit. Vivian had chosen to leave him. That was the only fact which really concerned him vitally. If he followed her, if he found her, nothing would

really be changed. The fact that she had gone away told him everything which he needed to know.

It was a fairly long walk from the station to the *Villa du Soleil*. The coming night announced itself as sultry, heavy with heat. But it never occurred to Clive to get hold of a carriage. He set out to walk without thought of walking. When he was again in the town, and passing near to the carriage-stand, he continued on his way. It might really be said that he was not consciously aware that he was walking, nor consciously aware that there was any other possible way of getting to the villa than on foot. He went on slowly, mechanically, along the wharves, by the warehouses and the native barracks, past the strung-out shanties in, and in front of, which the seafaring population, and those enigmatic men of doubtful appearance who are to be found living vaguely about all ports of the Mediterranean, were seeking cheap pleasures of the body, not heeding voices, movements, lights, the gazing of curious eyes, the sound of footfalls, entirely neglectful of Life.

A smell brought him back to the consciousness of ordinary things. It came up to him from some rocks, probably covered with seaweed, below him to the right of the road; it was the smell of the sea, with its tang of startling freshness and primitiveness, its strange world-savour. Then abruptly he knew that he was in loneliness, and had been among people; then he knew that it was night; then he knew that his face was set, had been set mechanically for some time, towards a dwelling that now meant nothing to him, meant no more to him than the Consul's dusty flat three floors up in the town behind him. He would go on towards it. He would presently reach it and enter it because—well, simply because there seemed nothing else to be done, because he had to be somewhere and this place was paid for by him, and for the moment belonged to him. But in her going a woman had emptied it, withdrawn from it everything of

value. Memories perhaps it might hold. But he would never dare to have commerce with them.

Now he felt terribly tired, tired out. The road rose in front of him. And it seemed to him that he could not find in himself the necessary strength to continue along it, because it was an uphill road. He had been going uphill too long. He had put forth the last ounce of his strength; now there was no more left. And he sat down on a hump of dried earth at the side of the road, and put his head in his hands.

Perspiration dripped from his face and trickled between his fingers. For an instant he thought that the warm moisture came from tears, that he was crying. Then he knew—and was glad. Perhaps something of the soldier was still left in him, the sense of shame which must come in a fighter with giving up. And he lifted his head. He heard a cry from below him, a cry from the sea. Fishermen were out. Heavily he got up.

He stood still for a moment uncertainly. Then he walked slowly on, and disappeared in the darkness, going towards the *Villa du Soleil* which was hidden in the night of its trees.

XVII

THE impulse which had sent Clive to the *Restaurant Foch* to seek out the Consul, and to the station to make inquiries of the *Chef de Gare* about Vivian's destination, perished in the *Villa du Soleil*. It had been prompted by an intense, a feverish excitement which died away in solitude. It had been born of a latent doubt which did not, which could not persist, because it had no deep roots. Now and then something in Clive, something that derived from the eternal humbug in man, strove feebly to assert itself, to stir up in his mind a dusty cloud of surmises. It took to itself familiar names: came forward as "Common Sense," "Reason,"

"Knowledge of Life," even—God help it—as "understanding of women." It murmured of possibilities. It hinted that Vivian might have hurried off to England where she must have supposed Clive to be when she went away from the villa, that her abrupt departure might have been prompted by an overwhelming desire to get to him and tell him that she understood at last, and, understanding, had found it in her to forgive not only the act which had caused a great tragedy, but also the treachery to her which had resulted from its concealment. It attributed to her a flight hastened by love. It represented her as nearing, as presently in, England. It whispered, "Only wait—and you will hear." And the time passed, and the days died, and no message came from England. And then the terrible intuition of man, which asserts itself often in great crises, and which is like the instinct of a beast in peril, took possession of Clive, and left no corner of his nature free for the housing of humbug. And that intuition coldly knew; knew that Vivian's going had been a flight from the place to which the man who had written the confession would presently come back. It knew; but more than that; it had known from the first. It had known from the moment when the thick voice of Bakir ben Yahia had said:

"Madame n'est plus ici."

In a moment of madness—of misunderstanding, and of hope based upon it that amounted to madness—Clive had pulled down his house of Life. And now he was left alone in the ruins.

He was paralysed by this happening.

The ordinary man in him, the man who was brother to all the ordinary men of his race, class, education, and upbringing, linked to them by the blood-stream flowing in his, and their, veins, knew that there were things which he "ought" to do. He did not do them. Vivian was his wife, an Englishman's wife. She had gone away abruptly

alone, not only in a foreign land, but in a dark continent. He "ought" to go to Algiers, to Tunis, to telegraph to her people in England for information, to find out whether she had withdrawn money from her banking account, to endeavour to trace where correspondence followed and reached her. He did none of these things. He could not do them. His will to do them was paralysed. Certainly he thought of them. His mind was alive, but it proved its life by rejection.

At first letters came to the *Villa du Soleil* for Vivian. He put them in her room, on the writing-table she had been accustomed to use. There they lay unopened, gathering the dust of Africa in the bright days which succeeded each other, slipping by in a golden succession. And soon no more letters came.

Clive knew that Vivian's African address was only known to her family, and that all other letters which reached her were enclosed from Pont Street. He realised that she had told her people that she was no longer in the *Villa du Soleil*.

Had she told them anything else?

That did not matter to him.

All the petty worries which assail the average man, and which are connected with the smaller matters of life, had been swept clean out of him. There was an amazing emptiness in him. In all his life he had never known anything at all like it before. Time which seemed unlimited was at his disposal; Time to be used, to be filled up. He let it flow over and past him like an impalpable fluid. He thought of it as an impalpable fluid in which he was steeped and which meant nothing to him. And he wondered sometimes dully at the dealings of men with Time, at their incessant pre-occupation with hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years, at their perpetual parcelling out of their lives in terms of Time. His indifference concerning it now was vast. But the changes from light to darkness which its passing

brought did mean something to him. For he did not feel at all the same by day as by night. And there came a moment when his indifference to Time vanished, was replaced by a sharp concentration, painful in its acuteness, connected with Time.

One day he received a letter from the agent who acted for the owner of the *Villa du Soleil*, reminding him that the villa was let for the bathing season, and asking him to make arrangements to be out of it, at the latest, by June the thirtieth. The receipt of this letter startled Clive painfully, and made him realise that he had no idea what was the date. He had to inquire of the cook. (Bakir did not know.) The date was the 27th of May. He had been living in the house by the sea without Vivian for about three weeks. In five weeks his lease of the house would be up, and he would have to go—somewhere. Where would he go? What would he do?

He felt like one who had received a hard blow. The extraordinary dullness of apathy in which he had been sunk lifted. A horrible restlessness came to him. He was haunted by fear. Since the agent's letter had come he knew that, without being consciously aware of it, he had all this time been holding on to a little straw of hope—he thought of it now as a straw—a hope that perhaps Vivian would come back to the *Villa du Soleil*. He had of course no idea where she was. She might be in England with her people. She might be in some other country of Europe. But he knew that till now he had always imagined her as in Northern Africa, perhaps not very far off, perhaps "within reach." And at any rate she knew where to find him, if a change of heart should prompt her to return. Whether such a change of heart was possible in such a woman as she was had not been debated by him. He had not been able to analyse, to weigh up possibilities. But he knew now that he must have been waiting. And he was terrified by the prospect

before him; he was terrified at the thought of leaving the *Villa du Soleil*. When he had come back to it, knowing that Vivian had gone, it had seemed to mean nothing to him. Now it seemed to mean everything. If he left it, surely the last faint chance of being with Vivian again would vanish, and he would be let loose in a world of emptiness, totally deprived of hope, naked in solitude.

Nevertheless he would have to go. And now Time had a new and horrible meaning for him. He began to be concentrated on Time and its swiftness appalled him. He clung in thought to the house by the sea, clung with desperation. If he had to leave it he would have yielded the last bit of ground which he had fought to retain. And then he would have to give up the fight. Only the abyss would be left. He saw himself crashing down into the ultimate darkness.

And the bright days went by with an awful swiftness. It was morning, and then, almost immediately, it was night. The sun rose over the terraced garden, and behold the brilliant stars were shining, and Bakir was putting out the lights in the villa, and men were turning to sleep. The hours raced. There was malignity in the pressure of their speed. He seemed sometimes to hear the beating of their galloping feet. And he was counting, always counting. Another day gone—and another. And the horror of a week swept up to him. He had to face it. A week of the five was gone, and the new month, June, was implacably with him. And June was the last month for him. After June—the end! And he found himself wondering at the names of the months, and wondering why the divisions of Time should be given names by men, and thinking of July as a man thinks of an enemy, and clinging to June desperately as if it were the last friend he had.

That was grotesque. But everything began to seem grotesque to Clive at this period, even the sea because of its perpetual movement and murmur—signifying what, leading

to what?—even the pine trees that guarded the house, forced to be there whether they would or no. (He imagined them hating the Power which kept them on the place from which he was going to be expelled. And when they sighed in the warm wind he detected enmity in their voices.) And sometimes he would stand for a long time looking at the pine tree that was bound with the iron bracelet and the chain, and then he would see himself as a creature in irons, as a grotesque in irons, about to be driven forth bound into a world of grotesques, whom he had offended, and who were waiting to have a supreme revenge upon him. And then the chained pine tree would fade away, and he with it, and nothing was left but the sleeping form of a woman in a bedroom with an empty glass beside her.

Another week was gone. He became desperate, like a man doomed to death within a fixed period, and measuring out the divisions of Time. Only three left! He must do something. And he resolved to make an attempt to extend his lease of the *Villa du Soleil*, to buy off the Algerian owner at Constantine if by no other means he could keep possession of the villa. There were many Jews in Constantine. Perhaps the man was a Jew, and would be tempted by a prospect of getting easy money. And he went into Sidi Barka and had an interview with the agent who had let him the villa, and said that he wanted to keep it on indefinitely.

The agent said that was impossible. The house was let from the first of July for four months. Clive insisted. He offered money. He offered to buy off the client who had taken the house. He went further. He offered a bribe to the agent if the thing "went through," if he were left in possession of the villa. The agent was obviously tempted, promised to find out if anything could be done. He would let Clive know as soon as he had communicated with Constantine, but he was afraid it would be rather an expensive business, even if it could be managed, which was doubtful.

Clive said he was ready to pay whatever was necessary. He had taken a fancy to the villa. The climate suited his health. He was resolved, if possible, to stay on there. And he was sure his staying on there could be made possible. The agent hoped so. He would do his best, and let Mr. Ormeley know the result of his efforts as soon as he had heard from his client in Constantine.

A week passed and there came a communication from the agent. He was extremely sorry but his client absolutely refused to give up the villa. He had made every effort to get the decision altered, but he had been unsuccessful. He regretted, therefore, that Mr. Ormeley must leave on the thirtieth of the month.

As soon as Clive had read the agent's letter he again went to Sidi Barka for a personal interview. This time he asked to be put into communication with the Algerian at Constantine, in order that he might try to succeed where the agent had failed. But the agent, who was evidently upset in temper by his inability to lay hands on the bribe which had been offered him in a certain contingency, and who apparently suspected Clive of trying to "go behind him" in a business deal, brusquely refused to give Clive the client's address. The matter was settled. His client held to his right. Mr. Ormeley must be out of the *Villa du Soleil* on the thirtieth of the month.

Clive stared at the man—he was young, with a large hooked nose, a small, carefully frizzed moustache, and greedy black eyes—stared, and said nothing.

"Il n'y a rien à faire, M'sieu, rien du tout!" said the agent after a moment, moving uncomfortably and fidgeting with the folded paper that concealed his shirt-cuffs.

Clive continued to stare at him.

"Je vous dis, M'sieu——"

The young man stopped speaking. "Monsieur Ormeley" had turned away and gone out of the office.

"Mon Dieu! Je n'aime pas ces yeux!" murmured the young man.

He blew out his pale cheeks, went over to the window and lit a cigarette. Then he began to trim his sharply pointed nails, frowning.

Clive went back to the villa. He knew now that he must leave it within a very few days. He calculated. In twelve days he must go.

That night after dinner he walked for a long time on the sea terrace, and often looked at the white and dusty highway running, like a white thread, along the edge of the sea. She had gone away by that road. Where was she now? What was she doing? What was she thinking? With whom was she? Who saw her? Who spoke to her? Who considered her? Was she very far away?

Very late in the night he stood still by the wall, and tried to feel whether she was far away or not. He made an effort to empty his mind of thought, to make himself loose and receptive. For a long time he stood motionless by the wall in the warm night waiting for an impression, for some message out of the void. But none came. And he went away, climbed the outside staircase to his room, shut himself in, lay down, tried to sleep. The silence was deep. His sense of solitude was profound. Since he had come back to Africa, since Vivian was gone, he no longer had any feeling that the dead woman was near him, was busying herself with his life, was hidden among the shadows of "Little Africa," was watching in the twilight of the pine trees. Now she seemed dead. He felt her as dead. His Mother, the murdered woman, Vivian—they had all left him. He was alone. He realised that he had never known absolute loneliness until now; sometimes perhaps he had believed that he had known it, but he had not really known it. And he had to go away. He had to leave the *Villa du Soleil* with his loneliness. Here in this hermitage he could at least hide it,

in the white house and among the trees of the garden. Soon he would have to carry it out with him on to the highway and to expose it to the world.

He began to prepare for his departure. The servants were given their notices and the necessary money arrangements were made with them. His trunks were brought out of the box-room. He went through the house collecting books, a few photographs and trifles that belonged to him. Finally he went down to the sea room to remove from it the small selection of books which he had had sent out to him from London. He carried them away and packed them. Then he shut up the sea room and locked the door. In that room he had left the testimony to his madness. In that room his ruin had been achieved. He would never go into it again.

On the twenty-eighth of the month there was little more to be done. Already the house had a vacant look. The locked trunks stood ready to be carried away. He had only his dressing-case to pack.

He sent a message to Sidi Barka, and ordered a carriage to come to the villa on the afternoon of the thirtieth at five o'clock to fetch him and the luggage away.

Where he was going he did not know. He was absolutely indifferent about that. It did not matter at all. He would go somewhere. He would be somewhere. That was inevitable. The matter, entirely unimportant, could be left for decision to the last moment. He could not force his mind to bother about it till then.

Towards evening, but when the light was still strong, he was sitting in the garden at some distance from the house, with his elbows on his knees and his hands holding his cheeks, when he heard Bakir's voice calling among the trees:

"Monsieur! Monsieur!"

He lifted his head.

"Monsieur! Monsieur!" repeated the voice.

He got up. The blood came with a rush to his face. He stood

there waiting. Bakir was searching, was not far away. No need to do anything. The Kabyle could be persistent in spite of his air of lethargy. Clive had only to stand where he was and he would soon know what Bakir wanted, why he was calling.

He heard a bush rustle, then the sound of footsteps, and then Bakir's voice speaking to someone in a low, thick murmur. So the Kabyle was not alone!

Still Clive did not move. His body could not have moved just then even if his will had tried to tell it to. A little way from the seat by which he was standing there was a turn of the path by a bush of pale and brown yellow roses. Bakir, walking slowly, came round this turn and saw Clive standing. He stopped on the path. Someone must be following him. Clive gazed, holding the sides of his jacket with both hands.

The British Consul stepped briskly into sight.

"Good day—Mr. Baratrie."

Clive said nothing.

"I hope I'm not disturbing you. I hope I—the fact is that knowing your lease of this place would be up at the end of the month, I thought I would just call round and wish you *bon voyage* to—to—wherever you may be going."

"Thanks. Very good of you."

Clive turned to the Kabyle.

"Bring coffee and cigars into the garden, Bakir."

"Oui, Monsieur."

"And whisky and soda."

"Bien, Monsieur."

"We'll go and sit at the edge of the palm walk, shall we, Mr. Beake? My wife and I call it 'Little Africa.' I don't know exactly why. She christened it, I believe. Yes, I'm off. I leave the day after to-morrow."

They were walking towards the house.

"I don't know yet where I shall go. Plenty of time to decide. Here we are. Try one of those straw chairs. They're the best. And have a cigar. Very good of you to look in!

Very good of you to break my solitude. Although, mind you, I like solitude. If I hadn't I should never have taken this house. But I shan't mind leaving it. One place is really as good as another."

"To be sure, to be sure!"

Mr. Beake lit a cigar and looked away from his host. He resolved that he would only stay for a few minutes. This man, Baratrie, really had a terrific power of making a fellow feel in the way, in spite of his hospitality. And there was something in his eyes which—well, it got on a fellow's nerves.

"My trunks are packed——" he heard Clive saying. "I'm all ready to go."

"I won't keep you long. I won't keep you."

"Ah, here's the coffee! And you must have a whisky-and-soda before you go. This heat makes one thirsty."

XVIII

ALTHOUGH Mr. Beake had made up his mind to stay but a very short time at the *Villa du Soleil*, it was past seven o'clock when at length he rose up out of his straw chair to go. He had not got rid of the uneasiness he always felt under the eyes of that strange fellow, Baratrie. But two things combined, a sort of fascination, of curiosity, and a greedy desire for human companionship, and more especially for British human companionship, had kept him in his chair until really in decency he could not stay there any longer. Afterwards he wondered how he had been able, how indeed he had dared, to stay so long. But perhaps Fate, which had thrown him only dusty, unconsidered gifts for many a year, had at last relented and had held him there, in that garden, in order that he might be the witness of an extraordinary event, an event surely dramatic, thrilling with drama. If he had been a little more cowardly—he refused

to call it to himself more considerate—if he had not deliberately braved Baratrie's restless impatience, obvious morbid preoccupation and definitely tragic coldness, a coldness which had seemed to harden into ice as he delayed his departure, he would have missed that amazing encounter which gave him in his rather blank middle age an understanding of romance and of the heat of hidden passion such as he had never known before.

He had got up, and was standing with his back to that part of the near garden which sloped towards the sea, facing his host, when he was startled by—well, he thought of it as a sudden fierce illumination, a glare of light breaking through blackness. He had not known, he had never suspected, that a human being, and more especially that an Englishman, could look like that. For this illumination, this glare, came to him from the face of that extraordinary fellow, that human enigma, Baratrie. At the moment he, Beake—he remembered that afterwards; indeed everything which happened that afternoon remained vividly alive in his memory—he was saying, "Well, I suppose I ought to be going. I hope I haven't kept you too long. But I so seldom get the chance of a real pow-wow——" when the illumination, the glare, struck him. Yes, it came to him from Baratrie like a blow. And "pow-wow," a favourite expression of his, had no successor on his lips.

He had not seen or heard anything to account for this amazing change in his host. Nobody had come out of the house; no footstep had reached his ears from the garden. But Baratrie's eyes had made him turn round sharply, and look towards the sea. The garden—he knew it very well; had often been in it long before the Baratries had discovered it—contained a short, narrow path, which led from the drive near the entrance gate to the left into the heart of the small pine grove at the bottom of the property. From the pine grove this path wound upward to the open space in which the Consul was now standing with Baratrie. And as Mr.

Beake turned he saw on this path, at some distance away among the tall, bare trunks of the pine trees, a woman in a brown dress walking slowly towards the house in the evening light. For a moment he did not recognise her and he looked again at Baratrie. Perhaps his keen eyes asked a question from their network of wrinkles. Anyhow Baratrie said:

"It's my wife!"

The words were said in an ordinary voice, like a formal statement really, but the face of the speaker was still amazing.

"Your——" Mr. Beake said, and stopped.

"It's my wife. I was expecting her back. We are going away from the villa together."

The lie was told with a sort of harsh simplicity, and sounded somehow inevitable. The Englishman's screen! He must have it to put between him and his fellow-man at every great moment. Mr. Beake, being English, appreciated that, and was ready to honour the lie. But how useless it was when that face, when those eyes, were before him.

"Naturally! Naturally!" he found himself saying. "I'm sure I'm very glad—I'm sure I——"

Then he turned—he had to turn—round again.

The pine trees whispered to the evening, with those eternal voices of theirs; the woman in the brown dress was nearer, coming up in the evening light slowly, with eyes bent down, as if withdrawn into herself, and thinking, or feeling, deeply. And suddenly Mr. Beake found himself shaken. Life—that was how he felt it at least—opened before him, and let him see deeply into it for the very first time. And it was different from what he had thought it to be. It had colour he had never suspected, darkness and light he had never imagined, beauty and terror he had never dreamed of, either when he stood upon its threshold in his early youth, or in his later, more cynical years—till now. And the man standing by him, and the woman in the brown dress coming towards him—they were not merely individuals, people labelled with names

whom he knew, but much more than that. He saw them, or seemed to see them, deep down in the core of Life like symbols, symbols of the great emotions which sometimes shake the world startling average humanity, which are sung of by poets, dimly shadowed forth in drama by playwrights, more clearly expressed for the subtle by composers of music. And he felt, half painfully and perhaps half complacently—for he was one of the tribe that aims rather at well being than at great being—that to the general run of men and women Life does not show the greatest of its realities. For instance, he, Beake, had never known what this man beside him, this woman coming towards him, certainly knew. His romance had been Catherine. He missed her since she was gone, but she had not been enough. He knew that now. And he knew how little he had had out of life. And there were many others like him. Generally they were not conscious of their ignorance of feeling, their ignorance of understanding. Till this moment he had not been conscious of his own ignorance. Consciousness thrilled through him now. And though something in him, the poorer part, feebly congratulated itself on having avoided pain, something else yearned, ached with a mysterious yearning, for the intensities that are companions of pain. And beneath the yellow wrinkled lids of his eyes a sudden moisture appeared, startling him, throwing him almost into a panic by its unexpectedness.

Mrs. Baratrie looked up and saw him. She stopped among the pine trees, and her eyes went from him to Clive. The Consul pulled himself together and took off his hat. He did more than this. He left his host standing and went towards her. And then she moved and came towards him, and they met on the narrow path.

“So you’ve come back, Mrs. Baratrie! Good! Good! We’ve missed you in—you’ve been missed in Sidi Barka. But I’m afraid you’re off almost immediately. Your husband—we’ve just been having a friendly pow-wow together—he

tells me that you are obliged to be out of the villa by the day after to-morrow. I'm sorry to hear that. It isn't often—I don't often get the——”

And then somehow he lost his nerve and couldn't go on. He felt melodramatic—yes, that was it, melodramatic, and that confounded moisture would stay in his eyes. And he knew that Baratrie was waiting behind him, and that he was “holding things up,” tremendous things.

“Well, I must be going,” he at last managed to say, striving for briskness. “I've stayed an unconscionable time. You're quite well, I hope?”

“Yes, thank you.”

She had spoken at last and now she gave him a handshake. And it felt to him cordial, as if a bit of her heart was in it. That made the moisture get worse, and he was very near saying “God bless you!” but pulled himself up just in time, saved himself with a “Glad to hear it! Glad to hear it!” And then he had to go back to where Baratrie was standing in the open space between the white house and “Little Africa.” Mrs. Baratrie went with him and they came up to Clive together.

“Good-bye, Mr. Baratrie. I must be off now. I've just been telling your wife that we've had a long pow-wow together and that I'd forgotten the time. Good luck to you!”

He held out his hand. Clive took it, looked at those tell-tale eyes, gave it a sudden hard grip and said:

“Good-bye, Beake.”

As the Consul was going down the drive to the highway he said to himself: “Catherine and I—we weren't like that! We were never like that!”

And he shook his head over it. When he was out on the road walking towards Sidi Barka, with the lifted garden of the *Villa du Soleil* on his right and the sea on his left, he felt an abrupt sadness flow over him. He had so little . . . not even suffering. And those two whom he had left behind in

the garden—they had so much. He envied them. He could not help it. Yes, he envied them their suffering, which he divined as having been intense, and their love which was surely great, much greater than any love he had ever known. And it seemed to him, as he went down the hill, that men like himself and women like—well, not to put too fine a point upon it, like dear Catherine, missed their vocation in life. They were surely meant to be more than they ever succeeded in being. There were peaks, and they never climbed them, never even looked up to see the light that was shining upon them, the colours they took and held in the sequence of the hours, the gold of morning, the rose of evening, the purple black of night.

On the other hand they kept out of the abysses. And Baratrie had certainly been in them.

Mr. Beake made his way slowly to the town. When he was there he soon found himself at the *Café Foch*. A brown waiter came up to him. He ordered strawberry syrup, Kirsch, soda-water and crushed ice, and sipped the mixture through two straws while a band played a selection from "Madame Tango."

So Life took him again. But he was not quite the man he had been. For he had—his own phrase for what had happened to him—"realised things." He had peered up for a moment and had dimly discerned the peaks.

When the sound of the Consul's hurrying and uneven footsteps died away on the drive of the *Villa du Soleil*, Clive moved nearer to Vivian. But he did not attempt to touch her, and she did not touch him, and when at last he spoke to her he did not utter a greeting but a question.

"How did you come?" he said.

"I walked from the station."

"But—your luggage?"

"It's there."

"There—but aren't you——"

He broke off there. He did not dare to finish the question he had begun.

"He—Mr. Beake—when he was saying good-bye just now, he called you Baratrie, Mr. Baratrie!" she said, slowly.

"I gave him to understand that I wished him to drop calling us Ormeley," Clive said.

And then there was silence between them. In it they both heard the faint voices of the trees and the whisper of the sea.

"Vi——" at last Clive said, desperately. "Where have you been?"

"Near Tunis, in a little place by the sea called Sidi-Bou-Said."

"All this time?"

"Yes."

"All alone?"

"Yes."

"Why have you come back?"

Before she could answer this last question Bakir ben Yahia came slowly out of the house to carry away the tray with the coffee-cups, the whisky and the syphon. When he saw his mistress he paused, stood still, looked at her solemnly and then said:

"Bon soir, Madame."

"Bon soir, Bakir."

Bakir lifted the tray carefully, and held it with both hands, still looking at Vivian. He seemed to be considering something, to be, perhaps, about to say something more. Finally he repeated "Bon soir," turned away, and, walking with soft precaution, disappeared into the house.

When he had gone Clive repeated his question, "Why have you come back?" Without knowing that he did so, he spoke in an unemotional, almost hard voice. To his sensation of ecstasy, the sensation which had made the British

Consul "realise things," had succeeded a bitter, even terrible feeling of impotence. Never before had he been so abominably conscious of the definite and cruel separation that there is between a human being and every other human being. Never before had he felt with such sharp intensity the powerlessness of even the greatest and most exclusive love to bridge that ordained gulf. Were not Vivian and he standing together like two strangers? Were they not really two separated strangers in spite of all that life had done to link them together, to bind them fast the one to the other? He remembered his desperate desire to draw ever closer and closer to Vivian, the heat of impatience with which he had striven to get rid of everything which might possibly serve to separate them. And now she had come back, and they were alone together in the garden at the falling of evening and they had not even touched hands, and they did not know what to say. And he felt horribly shy. Yes, that was his master feeling at this moment, a horrible, devastating shyness which he could not get rid of, which he did not know how to overcome, which he hated and was ashamed of. It seemed to be swallowing up everything in him, to be bent on reducing him to the abject shadow of a man. He tingled with it, and he knew it must be showing, like schoolboy terror, in his eyes.

"Let us go somewhere, let us go away from the house," Vivian said. "I want to tell you. I came back to try to make you understand."

"Yes," he said.

But he did move. And he added:

"But your luggage is at the station!"

"I didn't feel—I thought I would tell you first, if you were here."

"You didn't know——"

"I knew you couldn't be here after the thirtieth. I hoped you—I felt somehow you were here now."

"Felt! I tried to feel where you were. I stood in the

night and I tried to feel whether you were in Africa. But nothing came."

"I have never left Africa."

"I wonder why."

"I meant to. I couldn't. When I got to Tunis I took a passage on a ship that was going to Genoa. I felt I couldn't go to Marseille. We sailed from there. But I cancelled my passage and went to Side-Bou-Said."

"Do you know that I came back here on the very day you went?"

"Ah!" she said.

She was looking at him, and now he saw her face change. It reddened slowly, and a strange expression showed in her eyes—it seemed to him that it was in her eyes—an expression that suggested awe and something like distress.

"Then on that Friday you *were* at sea!" she said, after a pause.

"Why—yes, my ship came in on the Saturday. I left my last telegram behind to be sent after I had sailed."

"I felt that you were at sea," she said, in a low, uneven voice. "It seemed absolutely impossible, but that didn't matter. I didn't believe it with my mind. How could I? But I felt it. And you didn't feel that I was still in Africa."

At that moment Clive was released from his paralysing shyness and came once more into his manhood; not with any conquering feeling, not even with any conscious joy or pride, but with a deep knowledge of what seemed like restoration. It was very wonderful. It gave him back a confidence which he thought he had lost for ever, and yet it made him feel humble. For in any great thankfulness there is always a sense of humility.

"Vi——" he said.

But before he could say anything more Bakir reappeared from the house, and said:

"Monsieur!"

"What is it?" asked Clive.

"The cook says will Madame be here for dinner?"

Clive glanced at Vivian.

"There's enough dinner for two, I'm sure, if Madame stays," he answered, uncomfortably.

He said it in a low voice, without any note of decision. He had to answer. That was all he knew. He had to get rid of the Kabyle.

"Then——" began Bakir.

"Go! Go and tell her!" exclaimed Clive, with sudden sharpness.

Bakir stared with his heavy eyes and walked slowly into the house.

"Forgive me!" said Clive, when he had gone. "I don't know why—it's so awful to have such a thing asked by a servant about you and me. Just now I felt as if we were strangers, and then he comes—oh, Vi, after all that's happened, after your great sacrifice, after my fight in London with you to share it, after—after little Clive, and our coming to Africa, it's too awful, too horribly unnatural if we are to be strangers to one another. I can't bear that. Anything but that! But that would be the finish for me. I may have deserved it. I have. I have deserved everything, more than I have suffered already, far more. But that would be the unendurable thing. We can't go back to that, you and I, surely we can't. If it is so, can be so, then I say that all human relations are worth nothing, absolutely nothing, that the greatest love is only farce and deception, that there is no possible link, no link that is real, between any one human being and any other, that human life is simply complete loneliness tricked out in a wretched pretence of being something else. I remember somewhere—seeing somewhere, I forget where—that God has decreed loneliness on earth for each one of us because He has designed us for Himself. If that

is so then—I can't help it—I reject God. He's too cruel and such will as I have rejects Him."

"If you can feel like that——"

"I do. I do."

"Then you know why I went away."

He stood staring at her.

"When I read what you left behind I felt that you had chosen to be always a stranger with me. You had made me love you, and taken care that I should never know you. Wasn't that a terrible thing to do?"

He looked down.

"Yes," he said, at last.

"I believe it was that which sent me away, though I mayn't have known it was that then. It just cut right into my heart, and I felt frightened of you."

"Frightened of *me!*"

"Yes—as if you were something inhuman. It was like that. And I went."

"But—but you have come back!"

"Yes. I tried to leave Africa. I meant to go. I went away from here with the intention of going. But I found I couldn't. It wasn't in me to go. It wasn't in my nature to do that. It seemed to me that though you had chosen to be a stranger to me it wasn't in me to be a stranger to you."

She moved.

"What is it?" he whispered.

"I want to go to the sea room."

"Why?"

"I read it there, at night. It seemed as if she was waiting about outside while I read it."

There was horror now in his eyes as he looked at her.

"Let us go there—and I'll tell you," she said.

She moved away and he followed her, but when they were among the pine trees he remembered something and stopped.

"I've locked the room up. I must go and fetch the key."

"I'll go down and wait for you on the terrace," she said.

And she walked on slowly while he hurried into the house. When he was there, and had found the key, he went for a moment into Vivian's room. It was bare and calm and empty. The windows were open letting in the sea breeze. Would she sleep there that night? Was it possible? He remembered the sound in her voice when she had said: "I felt that you were at sea. . . . And you didn't feel that I was in Africa." That sound had surely meant—but he pulled up his mind sharply and went out of the room, shutting the door behind him. He descended the narrow path among the pine trees and came to the end of the sea terrace. In the distance he saw Vivian standing by the wall motionless near the door of the solitary room. The evening light fell on her, a light soft and not vivid. For night was near now, though the summer evenings were long. As he looked she turned her head towards him.

Was she alone? Was there another woman with her, or near her?

He hesitated for a moment. He listened. He tried to become aware of the secret influences that surround us. But he only heard the sea, the trees faintly. He only saw, felt, realised the woman standing by the door with her face turned towards him.

There was no one else. He felt that. How strange, how wonderful it was, to see her standing there. He was still almost confused by the shock of his great surprise, was companioned by a sense of unreality, of the instability of things. But he went towards her, he joined her, he thrust the key into the lock of the door, turned it and opened the door, then followed her into the room.

It had an empty, deserted look. There was nothing now that suggested occupation. It was as it had been when they first came to the *Villa du Soleil*. He saw her eyes go to the

writing-table, which was now pushed back against the wall.

"Why did you ever let me know?" she asked.

"I had wanted to for a long time. But I was afraid. Over and over again I was on the edge of telling you, I think. When we were here, after some time, I realised in a frightful way the barrier a lie is between two people who care for each other. It seemed to be growing all the time, shutting you out from me. Then, when I was in England, when Mother was dying she told me to tell you. I had not told her, but she knew."

"Yes, she must always have known. That is the explanation of Mum," Vivian said.

She sat down on the divan under the window that looked out seawards. He sat on the chair by the writing-table. He did not dare to sit close to her.

"I understand Mum now," she said, after a moment. "She had been a mystery to me for so long. I wondered about her. How often she must have wondered about me."

"Why?"

"Because I didn't see what she saw. She loved—and saw. I loved—and didn't see."

She was silent for a while. She sat very still. To him she seemed almost a new Vivian, less, much less, girlish than she had been.

"How you must have suffered with me!" she said, when she spoke again.

"I!" he said, startled.

"Yes, because of my perpetual misunderstanding of you. I couldn't help it, but it must often have tormented you."

"I suppose in a way it did—sometimes."

"I realised that after I had gone away. Gradually I realised many things. When I went I was frightened. I've always valued courage beyond every other virtue. But that night, here, I was a coward. I felt terrified of you in a sort

of unearthly way, and of her too. For a long while I did not dare to go out of this room. It was late at night. At last I made up my mind to go. I felt dreadfully alone that night. I don't think in all my life I had ever really felt alone before. When I was out on the terrace I ran through the darkness to the house. I woke up Bakir. I had to tell him something. And then I packed all my things. I knew I was going. I had to go. All night I was up and in the morning I went away. I took a train to Duvivier, and changed there and took another train to Tunis. It was a long day's journey. I didn't get in till midnight. I went to a small hotel. Next day I bought a passage—as I told you—on a ship to Genoa. I knew I couldn't go by Marseille. We sailed from there."

She stopped. Then she added:

"We sailed—in search of the *endroit du bonheur!*"

"Forgive me! Try to forgive me!" he muttered, scarcely knowing what he said.

"Don't! It isn't that! But I—— The ship was to go the next day. I couldn't stay quiet. The hotel was noisy and crowded. Noise made me feel desperate then. I took a carriage. I told the man to drive out, anywhere, into the country, towards the sea, to the sea. He took me to Sidi-Bou-Said. It's on the sea, an Arab village opposite to Carthage. It's beautiful, marvellously beautiful. I haven't travelled much. Very little. But it's the most beautiful place I have ever seen. And that day beauty meant very much to me. I couldn't tell you how much. I suppose I needed it in a peculiar way just then. It seemed like that. I left the carriage and wandered about the little village. It's all Arab, but wonderfully kept, and quiet, and full of air and sun. The people are kind there too. I've never seen a place like that. There's a minaret in the blue, and I heard the call to prayer for the first time. The man was just above me. And when I heard him I began to cry, and

I knew I couldn't leave Africa—not without you. And yet I didn't think I should ever see you again. I didn't mean to. I was full of contradictions. I felt absolutely unnatural. But I just knew I shouldn't go. And I went back and cancelled my passage to Genoa, and left Tunis, and went to Sidi-Bou-Said.

"Scarcely anyone ever stays there, I think. There is no hotel, nothing of that kind. But I found two rooms in a house on the edge of the cliff. It belongs to a French painter. He was away. An Arab was looking after the house. He let me in. I paid him. I don't know whether he ought to have let me be there. I didn't trouble about things like that. What did they matter? A big thing in one's life—in a woman's life—destroys all the little things. I know men think women are always bothering about all the little things, but give a woman a big thing and it's everything to her, everything. It is absolutely everything. Do you believe that?"

"Yes," he said.

"In Sidi-Bou-Said I tried to be quiet. I knew I was in an unnatural, or perhaps I mean an abnormal state. Everything in me seemed to be always crying out. I seemed to be full of loud voices. It was an awful feeling. There was peace and silence outside, all round me. But in me there seemed to be a perpetual—it was like a roaring of many voices. Perhaps mad people are like I was then. I was scarcely ever in my rooms. I used to be out nearly all day. I sat on the hill. I often went down the hill to the sea. The Bey of Tunis has a bathing pavilion there. But it's very quiet. The bathing season hadn't begun. I used to walk and sit alone for hours and hours, looking out on the Gates of Africa, I called the view from the hill that. I don't know exactly why. But the view was so vast and African, like nothing I had ever seen, or imagined, before, with mountains stretching out far along the sea. And I used to

see the ships coming up to the Lakes from Europe. And then I remembered how you and I came away from Europe to Africa to find peace and happiness, if we could. And I remembered what you had told me about Africa, all you had told me. And all the time you had been keeping yourself a stranger to me.

"I hated you at that time—at first. I used to sit looking out to sea and hating you. I felt you had done me a dreadful wrong. I felt you had insulted me by being a stranger to me. And I hated myself for having believed in you, for having been blind. For when I looked back it seemed to me that I had been blind, and that you must often have been amazed at my blindness, that you must secretly have laughed at me."

"Don't!" he said. "Don't!"

"And I hated her too. She seemed to me to have soiled my life, to have stretched out from the grave to make my life dirty. I felt her will then—that terrific will. And then I was afraid of her. I had dreadful moments of fear—of you and her. You seemed still linked together, linked to do me harm. I saw you together, and then the noises in me grew louder. I must have been nearly mad then. And I saw you at night holding her, with a glass in your other hand. And then I heard the crowd cheering you after the verdict in London, and with the cheers, or above them dropping down on them, I heard the call to prayer. Then I felt that the world was frantic, and full of nothing but violence and lies and seeming. And yet all around me was calm, stillness and beauty. It was so strange. And the sunshine fell on me. And there was such a thing as prayer.

"I began to pray. I stood under the minaret and prayed. At night I prayed. It didn't seem much use. But the Arabs prayed, and why shouldn't I? I wouldn't dare to say an answer came, but the noise of the voices in me grew less. They had deafened me—deafened my brain. That's how I

felt it. Deafened my heart too. And one day—it came quite suddenly—I felt quiet. That day I took what you had written and left behind. I had never looked at it since I read it here. I went out and sat on the hill a little way out of the village, and I read it again. I did more than that. I lived it. I was able to live it—the life you had written about. But I lived in your part of it, not in hers. I couldn't forgive her that day. I think I tried to. But I couldn't. I looked at her life from outside, but I lived in yours."

She stopped and looked at him steadily, and something in her eyes filled him with dread.

"There's something I haven't told you," she said.

"Yes?" he said.

He felt that his lips were dry.

"Must you tell me?" he said.

"Yes. It's this. (It persecuted me.) Till that day I had been haunted by the thought of your body as a murderer's body, of your hands as a murderer's hands. My body had been full of fear of your body. And I was your wife. My flesh was afraid of your flesh. And we had had little Clive together. That seemed to me an absolutely irreparable thing—my flesh-fear. And yet I couldn't leave Africa because of you. I knew it was because of you. But all that time I felt that if I were suddenly to see you, my body would be afraid of your body."

She saw his head drop, a dull sallow whiteness showing near his eyes and his lips. He laid a hand on the writing-table and it was quivering. He looked at it and took it away, clenched it and held it on his knee.

"But underneath all that there was something that held to you and couldn't be released, held to you in spite of the body, tenaciously held on to you. That frightened me too. It was two parts of me fighting. They were in absolute opposition. They were like two enemies. To one you were a murderer, to the other you were—*you*. That day, when I

lived in your life with her, my bodily fear of you went away. You had done it. I felt almost as if I might have done it too. Perhaps that was what is called immoral. I dare say it is. Then I was immoral that day. For I felt—"that isn't murder. He was desperate, he was reckless. For a moment, perhaps, he didn't care what happened. But he would have saved her if he could. He would have saved her—but it was too late. And even then he didn't know he had killed her." And I knew I forgave you your crime—if it was a crime. But I couldn't forgive you for deceiving me. And I wondered why, when you were accused, you hadn't just told the truth. For days I wondered about that. For days I thought about her, about you and her. And then one night, in my room, I took out what you had written again and read those words: 'I put up a stern fight against that. All the time I was fighting I knew I was fighting against her will to destroy me after she was gone. That knowledge nerved me to go through with it. She shouldn't succeed in overcoming me again. She shouldn't stretch out from the grave and finally ruin my life.'

"That was your explanation of what you had done. And I saw her fighting against you, and you fighting against her—after her death. I saw a fight such as surely there had never been before. I saw her—stretching out from the grave. I *felt* her will, your enemy—and mine."

He took his hand from his knee, opened it, leaned forward.

"Your enemy?" he said. "You felt it as your enemy!"

"Yes. And that was the beginning. It's always said that women are the enemies of women. I haven't thought so. Women have generally been very good to me. But when I felt her will as our enemy I realised that I had put myself on her side by going away from you. It was like that. I saw myself as her ally. Can you understand? It seemed quite clear, terribly clear to me. She had willed your ruin. She had nearly ruined you. She had made your life a per-

petual fight, often a torture. But she had not ruined you yet. And I knew that she could only ruin you utterly through me. Was I going to let her do that? Could I let her do that? I thought of her will as a still living and working thing. I went on thinking of it as that. And I was helping it. I was ranging myself alongside of it against you. I was battling, with another woman, my enemy, against you. And I saw us, her and me, on one side, linked, and you on the other side alone.

"A woman would understand what I felt then. Because I loved you, and that would never change. And there isn't any woman in the world who could fight with another woman against the man she loved. Such a thing isn't and never could be. Women are made for men, and they all know it. And I knew I had been made for you."

He moved, as if he were going to change his seat, had both hands on the curved wooden back of his chair, when the thin sound of a bell ringing in the distance of the garden came to them. It was Bakir announcing in his usual way that dinner was on the table. It was a summons to ordinary life, to the life in common, a summons to them to take up that interrupted life once more, the life side by side, the life of home.

They sat and listened in silence. Presently the bell ceased. Bakir had gone into the house, and was waiting for them.

Clive got up and stood by the divan looking down on Vivian. His eyes asked her a question, and she understood what it was. But she did not answer it then. Instead she waited for a moment and then said:

"I knew something else, too, then. I knew that I must go over from her side to yours. I had to do that. And today I have done it."

She got up and stood beside him. But still he did not dare to touch her. A strange, prosaic question persisted in his mind. His mind was concentrated upon it, could not be

detached from it, not even by the thoughts that had been pouring through his mind while she had been speaking to him in the sea room. Underneath them, like a stone under flowing water, it had lain unmoved, unaffected by them.

"But——" he said, and stopped.

"What is it?"

"You have left your luggage at the station!"

Her face flushed, and suddenly she looked younger, much younger, and like Vivian the tennis player whom he had loved at first sight, whom he could never unlove. She was a girl again, and suddenly he felt much nearer to her, nearer even than he had ever felt before. For his lie did not stand between them.

"Yes," she said.

"Why did you do that?"

"Well, I didn't—— I thought I would tell you first—and see."

"Oh—Vi!"

He understood, and felt humbled to the dust by that strange touch of sensitiveness in her.

"I'll send for it," he said.

He took her hand and held it for a moment. And he knew that her body's fear of his body was dead.

"Let us go to the house," he said.

They stepped out on to the terrace and he locked the door behind them. When he looked round she was standing by the wall looking out to sea. He went to stand beside her.

"We shall have to go," she said. "We shall have to leave the house by the sea."

"Yes."

"Where shall we go?"

"I want to see Sidi-Bou-Said."

"And then?"

He looked into her eyes and answered:

"Then we will go back to England. I can bear it all now that I have shared my secret with you."

"Yes, now it will all be different."

She turned away from the sea and looked towards the garden. For a moment she was perfectly still.

Then she said:

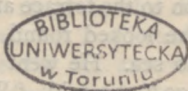
"I can't feel her will any more. I don't think I shall ever feel it again."

Just then both of them seemed to have news from the far distance of a woman's lost battle.

The thin sound of the bell came to them again.

They moved away from the wall and went towards the house.

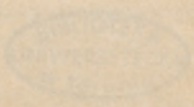
THE END



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They were still in luck as they had
just what I had wanted for years. It was
They were it will all be finished.
She moved away from the fire and looked towards the
window. For a moment she was perfectly still.
Then she said
"I can't feel her with my hands. I don't think I need
ever feel it again."
She then took up their arranged program from under the
for chance of a cigarette and bath.
The thin world of the wall began to tremble again.
They moved away from the fire and looked towards the
window.

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- Adams, Rev. W., † 1848.
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- "All for Greed," Author of (Baroness de Bury).
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Burton, Richard F., † 1890.

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Butler, A. J.

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A Yellow Aster 1 v. — Children of Circumstance 2 v. — Anne Mauleverer 2 v.

Caine, Hall.

The Bondman 2 v. — The Manxman 2 v. — The Christian 2 v. — The Eternal City 3 v. — The Prodigal Son 2 v. — The White Prophet 2 v. — The Woman thou gavest me 3 v. — The Master of Man 2 v.

Caine, William.

The Strangeness of Noel Carton 1 v. — Mendoza and a Little Lady 1 v. — The Author of "Trixie" 1 v. — Lady Sheba's Last Stunt 1 v.

Cameron, Verney Lovett.

Across Africa 2 v.

Cannan, Gilbert.

Annette and Bennett 1 v.

Campbell Praed: *vide* Praed.

Carey, Rosa Nouchette, † 1909.

Not Like other Girls 2 v. — "But Men must Work" 1 v. — Sir Godfrey's Grand-

daughters 2 v. — The Old, Old Story 2 v. — Herb of Grace 2 v. — The Highway of Fate 2 v. — A Passage Perilous 2 v. — At the Moorings 2 v.

Carlyle, Thomas, † 1881.

The French Revolution 3 v. — Frederick the Great 13 v. — Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches 4 v. — The Life of Schiller 1 v. — Essays on Goethe 1 v. — On Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History 1 v. — Historical and Political Essays 1 v. — Essays on German Literature 1 v.

Carnegie, Andrew (Am.).

Problems of To-Day 1 v.

Carr, Alaric.

Treherne's Temptation 2 v.

Castle, Agnes & Egerton.

The Star Dreamer 2 v. — Incomparable Bellairs 1 v. — Rose of the World 1 v. — French Nan 1 v. — "If Youth but knew!" 1 v. — My Merry Rockhurst 1 v. — Flower o' the Orange 1 v. — Wroth 2 v. — Diamond Cut Paste 1 v. — The Lost Iphigenia 1 v. — Love Gilds the Scene 1 v. — The Grip of Life 2 v. — Chance the Piper 1 v.

Castle, Egerton.

Consequences 2 v. — "La Bella," and Others 1 v.

Charles, Mrs. Elizabeth Rundle, † 1896:
vide "Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family."

Charlesworth, Maria Louisa, † 1880.

Oliver of the Mill 1 v. (*Vide* p. 29.)

Chesterfield, Earl of.

Letters to his Son 1 v.

Chesterton, G. K.

The Man who was Thursday 1 v. — What's Wrong with the World 1 v. — The Innocence of Father Brown 1 v. — The Flying Inn 1 v. — Tales of the Long Bow 1 v.

Cholmondeley, Mary.

Diana Tempest 2 v. — Red Pottage 2 v. — Moth and Rust 1 v. — Prisoners 2 v. — The Lowest Rung 1 v. — Notwithstanding 1 v.

Christian, Princess: *vide* Alice, Grand-Duchess of Hesse.

- "Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family," Author of (Mrs. E. Rundle Charles), † 1896.
- Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family 2 v. — On Both Sides of the Sea 2 v. — Winifred Bertram 1 v. — Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevelyan 1 v. — The Victory of the Vanquished 1 v. — The Cottage by the Cathedral and other Parables 1 v. — Against the Stream 2 v. — The Bertram Family 2 v. — Conquering and to Conquer 1 v. — Lapsed, but not Lost 1 v.
- Churchill, Winston (Am.).
Mr. Crewe's Career 2 v.
- Clemens, Samuel L.: *vide* Twain.
- Clifford, Mrs. W. K.
Love-Letters of a Worldly Woman 1 v. — The Last Touches, and other Stories 1 v. — Mrs. Keith's Crime 1 v. — A Flash of Summer 1 v. — A Woman Alone 1 v. — Woodside Farm 1 v. — The Modern Way 1 v. — The Getting Well of Dorothy 1 v. — Mere Stories 1 v. — Eve's Lover, and Other Stories 1 v. — Sir George's Objection 1 v.
- Clive, Mrs. Caroline, † 1873: *vide* Author of "Paul Ferroll."
- Cobbe, Frances Power, † 1904.
Re-Echoes 1 v.
- Coleridge, C. R.
An English Squire 2 v.
- Coleridge, M. E.
The King with two Faces 2 v.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, † 1834.
Poems 1 v.
- Collins, Charles Allston, † 1873.
A Cruise upon Wheels 2 v.
- Collins, Mortimer, † 1876.
Sweet and Twenty 2 v. — A Fight with Fortune 2 v.
- Collins, Wilkie, † 1889.
After Dark 1 v. — Hide and Seek 2 v. — The Woman in White 2 v. — No Name 3 v. — Armadale 3 v. — The Moonstone 2 v. — Poor Miss Finch 2 v. — The New Magdalen 2 v. — The Frozen Deep 1 v. — The Two Destinies 1 v. — My Lady's Money, and Percy and the Prophet 1 v. — The Haunted Hotel 1 v. — Jezebel's Daughter 2 v. — Heart and Science 2 v. — "I say No," 2 v. — The Guilty River, and The Ghost's Touch 1 v. — Blind Love 2 v.
- "Cometh up as a Flower": *vide* Rhoda Broughton.
- Conrad, Joseph, † 1924.
An Outcast of the Islands 2 v. — Tales of Unrest 1 v. — The Secret Agent 1 v. — A Set of Six 1 v. — Under Western Eyes 1 v. — 'Twixt Land and Sea Tales 1 v. — Chance 2 v. — Almayer's Folly 1 v. — The Rover 1 v. — Tales of Hearsay 1 v.
- Conway, Hugh (F. J. Fergus), † 1885.
Called Back 1 v. — Bound Together 2 v. — A Family Affair 2 v. — Living or Dead 2 v.
- Cooper, James Fenimore (Am.), † 1851.
The Spy (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Two Admirals 1 v. — The Jack O' Lantern 1 v. — The Last of the Mohicans 2 v.
- Cooper, Mrs.: *vide* Katharine Saunders.
- Corelli, Marie.
Vendetta! 2 v. — Thelma 2 v. — A Romance of Two Worlds 2 v. — "Ardath" 3 v. — Wormwood. A Drama of Paris 2 v. — The Hired Baby, with other Stories and Social Sketches 1 v. — Barabbas; A Dream of the World's Tragedy 2 v. — The Sorrows of Satan 2 v. — The Mighty Atom 1 v. — The Murder of Delicia 1 v. — Ziska 1 v. — Boy. A Sketch. 2 v. — The Master-Christian 2 v. — "Temporal Power" 2 v. — God's Good Man 2 v. — Free Opinions 1 v. — Treasure of Heaven (with Portrait) 2 v. — Holy Orders 2 v. — The Life Everlasting 2 v. — Love—and the Philosopher 1 v.
- Cotes, Mrs. Everard.
Those Delightful Americans 1 v. — Set in Authority 1 v. — Cousin Cinderella 1 v.
- "County, the," Author of.
The County 1 v.
- Craik, George Lillie, † 1866.
A Manual of English Literature and of the History of the English Language 2 v.
- Craik, Mrs. (Miss Dinah M. Mulock), † 1887.
John Halifax, Gentleman 2 v. — A Life for a Life 2 v. — Romantic Tales 1 v. — Domestic Stories 1 v. — The Ogilvies 1 v. — Lord Erlistoun 1 v. — Christian's Mistake 1 v. — A Noble Life 1 v. — Olive 2 v. —

Studies from Life 1 v. — Poems 1 v. — The Woman's Kingdom 2 v. — The Unkind Word, and other Stories 2 v. — A Brave Lady 2 v. — Hannah 2 v. — Fair France 1 v. — My Mother and I 1 v. — The Little Lame Prince 1 v. — Sermons out of Church 1 v. — The Laurel-Bush; Two little Tinkers 1 v. — A Legacy 2 v. — Young Mrs. Jardine 2 v. — His Little Mother, and other Tales and Sketches 1 v. — Plain Speaking 1 v. — Miss Tommy 1 v. — King Arthur 1 v. (*Vide* p. 29.)

Craik, Georgiana M. (Mrs. May).

Lost and Won 1 v. — Faith Unwin's Ordeal 1 v. — Leslie Tyrrell 1 v. — Wini-fred's Wooing, etc. 1 v. — Mildred 1 v. — Hero Trevelyan 1 v. — Without Kith or Kin 2 v. — Only a Butterfly 1 v. — Sylvia's Choice; Theresa 2 v. — Anne Warwick 1 v. — Dorcas 2 v. — (*Vide* p. 29.)

Craik, Georgiana M., & M. C. Stirling.

Two Tales of Married Life (Hard to Bear, by Miss Craik; A True Man, by M. C. Stirling) 2 v.

Craven, Mrs. Augustus: *vide* Lady Ful-
lerton.

Crawford, F. Marion (Am.), † 1909.

Mr. Isaacs 1 v. — Doctor Claudius 1 v. — To Leeward 1 v. — A Roman Singer 1 v. — An American Politician 1 v. — Zoroaster 1 v. — A Tale of a Lonely Parish 2 v. — Saracinesca 2 v. — Marzio's Crucifix 1 v. — Paul Patoff 2 v. — With the Immortals 1 v. — Greifenstein 2 v. — Sant' Ilario 2 v. — A Cigarette-Maker's Romance 1 v. — Khaled 1 v. — The Witch of Prague 2 v. — The Three Fates 2 v. — Don Orsino 2 v. — The Children of the King 1 v. — Pietro Ghisleri 2 v. — Marion Darche 1 v. — Katharine Lauderdale 2 v. — The Ralstons 2 v. — Casa Braccio 2 v. — Adam Johnstone's Son 1 v. — Taquisara 2 v. — A Rose of Yesterday 1 v. — Corleone 2 v. — Via Crucis 2 v. — In the Palace of the King 2 v. — Marietta, a Maid of Venice 2 v. — Cecilia 2 v. — The Heart of Rome 2 v. — Whosoever Shall Offend... 2 v. — Soprano 2 v. — A Lady of Rome 2 v. — Arethusa 2 v. — The Primadonna 2 v. — The Diva's Ruby 2 v. — The White Sister 1 v. — Stradella 1 v. — The Undesirable Governess 1 v. — Uncanny Tales 1 v.

Crockett, S. R., * 1860, † 1914.

The Raiders 2 v. — Cleg Kelly 2 v. — The Grey Man 2 v. — Love Idylls 1 v. — The Dark o' the Moon 2 v.

Croker, B. M.

Peggy of the Bartons 2 v. — The Happy Valley 1 v. — The Old Cantonment, with Other Stories of India and Elsewhere 1 v. — A Nine Days' Wonder 1 v. — The Youngest Miss Mowbray 1 v. — The Cat's-Paw 1 v. — Katherine the Arrogant 1 v. — Fame 1 v. — Babes in the Wood 1 v. — A Rolling Stone 1 v. — The Serpent's Tooth 1 v. — In Old Madras 1 v. — Lismoye 1 v. — The Chaperon 1 v. — The Pagoda Tree 1 v.

Cross, J. W.: *vide* George Elliot's Life.

Cudlip, Mrs. Pender: *vide* A. Thomas.

Cummins, Miss (Am.), † 1866.

The Lamplighter 1 v. — El Fureidis 1 v. — Haunted Hearts 1 v.

Cushing, Paul.

The Blacksmith of Voe 2 v.

"Daily News."

War Correspondence, 1877, by Archibald Forbes and others 3 v.

Danby, Frank.

The Heart of a Child 2 v. — An Incomplete Etonian 2 v. — Let the Roof fall in 2 v.

Dane, Clemence.

A Bill of Divorcement; Legend 1 v.

"Dark," Author of.

Dark 1 v.

Davis, Richard Harding (Am.).

Gallegher, etc. 1 v. — Van Bibber and Others 1 v. — Ranson's Folly 1 v.

De Foe, Daniel, † 1731.

Robinson Crusoe 2 v.

De lafield, E. M.

Mrs. Harter 1 v.

Deland, Margaret (Am.).

John Ward, Preacher 1 v.

"Democracy," Author of (Am.).

Democracy 1 v.

De Morgan, William.

Joseph Vance 2 v.

"Demos," Author of: *v.* George Gissing.

De Quincey, Thomas.

Confessions of an English Opium-Eater 1 v.

"Diary and Notes": *vide* Author of
"Horace Templeton."

Dickens, Charles, † 1870.

The Pickwick Club 2 v. — American Notes 1 v. — Oliver Twist 2 v. — Nicholas Nickleby 2 v. — Sketches 1 v. — Martin Chuzzlewit 2 v. — A Christmas Carol; The Chimes; The Cricket on the Hearth 1 v. — Master Humphrey's Clock (Old Curiosity Shop; Barnaby Rudge, etc.) 3 v. — Pictures from Italy 1 v. — Dombey and Son 3 v. — David Copperfield 3 v. — Bleak House 4 v. — A Child's History of England (2 v. 80 M. 2, 70.) — Hard Times 1 v. — Little Dorrit (with Illustrations) 4 v. — The Battle of Life; The Haunted Man 1 v. — A Tale of two Cities 2 v. — Hunted Down; The Unconquerable Traveller 1 v. — Great Expectations 2 v. — Christmas Stories, etc. 1 v. — Our Mutual Friend (with Illustrations) 4 v. — Somebody's Luggage; Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings; Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy 1 v. — Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions; Mugby Junction 1 v. — The Mystery of Edwin Drood (with Illustrations) 2 v. — The Mudfog Papers, 1 v. — The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. by his Sister-in-law and his eldest Daughter 4 v. — *Vide* also Household Words, Novels and Tales, and John Forster.

Dickens, Charles, & Wilkie Collins.

No Thoroughfare; The Late Miss Holmford 1 v.

Disraeli, Benjamin, Lord Beaconsfield, † 1881.

Coningsby 1 v. — Sybil 1 v. — Contarini Fleming (with Portrait) 1 v. — Alroy 1 v. — Tancred 2 v. — Venetia 2 v. — Vivian Grey 2 v. — Henrietta Temple 1 v. — Lothair 2 v. — Endymion 2 v.

Dixon, Ella Hepworth.

The Story of a Modern Woman 1 v. — One Doubtful Hour 1 v.

Dixon, W. Hepworth, † 1879.

Personal History of Lord Bacon 1 v. — The Holy Land 2 v. — New America 2 v. — Spiritual Wives 2 v. — Her Majesty's Tower 4 v. — Free Russia 2 v. — History of two Queens 6 v. — White Conquest 2 v. — Diana, Lady Lyle 2 v.

Dixon, Jr., Thomas (Am.).

The Leopard's Spots 2 v.

Dougall, L. (Am.).

Beggars All 2 v.

Dowie, Ménie Muriel.

A Girl in the Karpathians 1 v.

Doyle, Sir A. Conan.

The Sign of Four 1 v. — Micah Clarke 2 v. — The Captain of the Pole-Star, and other Tales 1 v. — The White Company 2 v. — A Study in Scarlet 1 v. — The Great Shadow, and Beyond the City 1 v. — The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — The Refugees 2 v. — The Firm of Girdlestone 2 v. — The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Round the Red Lamp 1 v. — The Stark Munro Letters 1 v. — The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard 1 v. — Rodney Stone 2 v. — Uncle Bernac 1 v. — The Tragedy of the Korosko 1 v. — A Duet 1 v. — The Green Flag 1 v. — The Great Boer War 2 v. — The War in South Africa 1 v. — The Hound of the Baskervilles 1 v. — Adventures of Gerard 1 v. — The Return of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Sir Nigel 2 v. — Through the Magic Door 1 v. — Round the Fire Stories 1 v. — The Mystery of Cloomber 1 v. — The Last Galley 1 v. — The Lost World 1 v. — The Poison Belt 1 v.

Drummond, Professor Henry, † 1897.

The Greatest Thing in the World; Pax Vobiscum; The Changed Life 1 v.

Dufferin, the Earl of.

Letters from High Latitudes 1 v.

Duncan, Sara Jeannette: *vide* Mrs. Cotes.

Dunton: *vide* Th. Watts-Dunton.

Earl, the, and the Doctor.

South Sea Bubbles 1 v.

Eastwick, Edward B., † 1883.

Autobiography of Lutfullah 1 v.

Edgeworth, Maria: *vide* p. 29.

Edwardes, Mrs. Annie.

Steven Lawrence, Yeoman 2 v. — Ought we to visit her? 2 v. — A Vagabond Heroine 1 v. — Leah: A Woman of Fashion 2 v. — A Blue-Stocking 1 v. — Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune? 1 v. — Vivian the Beauty 1 v. — A Ballroom Repentance 2 v. — A Girton Girl 2 v. — A Playwright's Daughter, and Bertie Griffiths 1 v. — Pearl-Powder 1 v.

Edwards, Amelia B., † 1892.

Barbara's History 2 v. — Miss Carew 2 v. — Hand and Glove 1 v. — Half a Mil-

lion of Money 2 v. — Debenham's Vow 2 v. — In the Days of my Youth 2 v. — Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys 1 v. — Monsieur Maurice 1 v. — A Night on the Borders of the Black Forest 1 v. — A Thousand Miles up the Nile 2 v. — Lord Brackenbury 2 v.

Edwards, M. Betham: *vide* Betham.

Eggleston, Edward (Am.), † 1902.
The Faith Doctor 2 v.

Elbon, Barbara (Am.).
Bethesda 2 v.

Eliot, George (Miss Evans—Mrs. Cross), † 1880.

Scenes of Clerical Life 2 v. — Adam Bede 2 v. — The Mill on the Floss 2 v. — Silas Marner 1 v. — Romola 2 v. — Felix Holt 2 v. — Daniel Deronda 4 v. — The Lifted Veil, and Brother Jacob 1 v. — Impressions of Theophrastus Such 1 v. — Essays and Leaves from a Note-Book 1 v. — George Eliot's Life, edited by her Husband, J. W. Cross 4 v.

"Elizabeth and her German Garden,"
Author of.

Elizabeth and her German Garden 1 v. — The Solitary Summer 1 v. — The Benefactress 2 v. — Princess Priscilla's Fortnight 1 v. — The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen 1 v. — Fräulein Schmidt and Mr. Anstruther 1 v. — Vera 1 v. — The Enchanted April 1 v. — Love 1 v.

Elliot, Mrs. Frances, † 1898.

Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy 2 v. — Old Court Life in France 2 v. — The Italians 2 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Sicily 1 v. — Pictures of Old Rome 1 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Spain 2 v. — The Red Cardinal 1 v. — The Story of Sophia 1 v. — Diary of an Idle Woman in Constantinople 1 v. — Old Court Life in Spain 2 v. — Roman Gossip 1 v.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo (Am.), † 1882.
Representative Men 1 v. — Essays 1 v. — Nature and Thought 1 v. — English Traits 1 v. — Conduct of Life 1 v.

"English Fairy Tales." 1 v.

Erroll, Henry.
An Ugly Duckling 1 v.

Esler, E. Rentoul.
The Way they loved at Grimpat 1 v.

"Estelle Russell," Author of.
Estelle Russell 2 v.

Esterre-Keeling, Elsa D'.
Three Sisters 1 v. — A Laughing Philosopher 1 v. — The Professor's Wooing 1 v. — In Thoughtland and in Dreamland 1 v. — Orchardscroft 1 v. — Appassionata 1 v. — Old Maids and Young 2 v. — The Queen's Serf 1 v.

"Euthanasia," Author of.
Euthanasia 1 v.

Ewing, Juliana Horatia, † 1885.
Jackanapes; The Story of a Short Life; Daddy Darwin's Dovecot 1 v. — A Flat Iron for a Farthing 1 v. — The Brownies, and other Tales 1 v.

"Expiated," Author of.
Expiated 2 v.

Fargus, F. J.: *vide* Hugh Conway.

Farrar, F. W. (Dean), † 1903.
Darkness and Dawn 3 v.

"Fate of Fenella, the," Authors of.
The Fate of Fenella, by 24 Authors 1 v.

Felkin, Alfred Laurence: *vide* E. T. Fowler.

Felkin, Mrs.: *vide* E. T. Fowler.

Fendall, Percy: *vide* F. C. Philips.

Fenn, George Manville.
The Parson o' Dumford 2 v. — The Clerk of Portwick 2 v.

Fielding, Henry, † 1754.
Tom Jones 2 v.

Findlater, Mary & Jane (Am.): *vide* Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Fitzgerald, Edward.
Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám 1 v.

Five Centuries
of the English Language and Literature
John Wycliffe. — Geoffrey Chaucer. — Stephen Hawes. — Sir Thomas More. — Edmund Spenser. — Ben Jonson. — John Locke. — Thomas Gray (vol. 500, published 1860) 1 v.

Fleming, George (Am.).
Kismet 1 v. — Andromeda 2 v.

Forbes, Archibald, † 1900.
My Experiences of the War between France and Germany 2 v. — Memories

and Studies of War and Peace 2 v. — *Vide* also „Daily News,” War Correspondence.

Forrest, R. E.
Eight Days 2 v.

Forrester, Mrs.
Viva 2 v. — Rhona 2 v. — My Lord and My Lady 2 v. — I have Lived and Loved 2 v. — June 2 v. — Although he was a Lord, and other Tales 1 v. — Corisande, and other Tales 1 v. — Once Again 2 v. — Of the World, Worldly 1 v. — Dearest 2 v. — The Light of other Days 1 v. — Too Late Repented 1 v.

Forster, John, † 1876.
The Life of Charles Dickens (with Illustrations and Portraits) 6 v. — Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith 2 v.

Fothergill, Jessie.
The First Violin 2 v. — Probation 2 v. — Made or Marred, and “One of Three” 1 v. — Peril 2 v. — Borderland 2 v.

“Found Dead,” Author of: *vide* James Payn.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft (Mrs. Alfred Laurence Felkin).
A Double Thread 2 v. — The Farringtons 2 v. — Fuel of Fire 1 v. — Place and Power 2 v. — In Subjection 2 v. — Miss Fallowfield's Fortune 1 v.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft (Mrs. A. L. Felkin), & Alfred Laurence Felkin.
Kate of Kate Hall 2 v.

Fox, Caroline, † 1871.
Memories of Old Friends from her Journals and Letters, edited by Horace N. Pym 2 v.

“Frank Fairleigh,” Author of (F. E. Smedley), † 1864.
Frank Fairleigh 2 v.

Francis, M. E.
The Duenna of a Genius 1 v.

Frederic, Harold (Am.), † 1898.
Illumination 2 v.

Freeman, Edward A., † 1892.
The Growth of the English Constitution 1 v. — Sketches from French Travel 1 v.

Froude, James Anthony, † 1894.
Oceana 1 v. — The Spanish Story of the Armada, and other Essays 1 v.

Fullerton, Lady Georgiana, † 1885.
Ellen Middleton 1 v. — Grantley Manor 2 v. — Lady Bird 2 v. — Too Strange not to be True 2 v. — Constance Sherwood 2 v. — Mrs. Gerald's Niece 2 v. — The Notary's Daughter 1 v. — The Lilies of the Valley, and The House of Penarvan 1 v. — The Life of Luisa de Carvajal 1 v. — A Will and a Way, and The Handkerchief at the Window 2 v. — Eliane 2 v. (by Mrs. Augustus Craven, translated by Lady Fullerton). — Laurentia 1 v.

Galsworthy, John.
The Man of Property 2 v. — The Country House 1 v. — Fraternity 1 v. — Villa Ruben 1 v. — A Man of Devon, etc. 1 v. — A Motley 1 v. — The Patrician 1 v. — Justice, and Other Plays 1 v. — The Silver Box, and Other Plays 1 v. — The Inn of Tranquillity 1 v. — The Island Pharisees 1 v. — The Dark Flower 1 v. — A Bit o' Love, and Other Plays 1 v. — A Family Man, and Other Plays 1 v. — Captures 1 v. — The White Monkey 1 v.

Gardiner: vide Lady Blessington.

Gaskell, Mrs., † 1865.
Mary Barton 1 v. — Ruth 2 v. — Lizzie Leigh, and other Tales 1 v. — The Life of Charlotte Brontë 2 v. — Lois the Witch, etc. 1 v. — Sylvia's Lovers 2 v. — Wives and Daughters 3 v. — Cranford 1 v.

“Geraldine Hawthorne,” Author of: *vide* Author of “Miss Molly.”

Gerard, Dorothea (Madame Longard de Longgarde).

Lady Baby 2 v. — Recha 1 v. — Orthodox 1 v. — The Wrong Man 1 v. — A Spotless Reputation 1 v. — One Year 1 v. — The Supreme Crime 1 v. — The Blood-Tax 1 v. — The Eternal Woman 1 v. — Made of Money 1 v. — The Bridge of Life 1 v. — The Three Essentials 1 v. — The Improbable Idyl 1 v. — The Compromise 2 v. — Itinerant Daughters 1 v. — Restitution 1 v. — Pomp and Circumstance 1 v. — The Grass Widow 1 v. — A Glorious Lie 1 v. — The City of Enticement 1 v. — Exotic Martha 1 v. — The Unworthy Pact 1 v. — The Waters of Lethe 1 v. — The Austrian Officer at Work and at Play 1 v.

- Gerard, E.** (Emily de Laszowska).
A Secret Mission 1 v. — A Foreigner 2 v.
— The Extermination of Love 2 v.
- Gibbon, Perceval.**
The Adventures of Miss Gregory 1 v.
- Giberne, Agnes.**
The Curate's Home 1 v.
- Gissing, George,** † 1903.
Denios 2 v. — New Grub Street 2 v.
- Gladstone, W. E.,** † 1898.
Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion 1 v. — Bulgarian Horrors, and Russia in Turkistan, with other Tracts 1 v. — The Hellenic Factor in the Eastern Problem, with other Tracts 1 v.
- Glyn, Elinor.**
The Visits of Elizabeth 1 v. — The Reflections of Ambrosine 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Evangeline 1 v. — Beyond the Rocks 1 v. — Three Weeks 1 v. — Elizabeth Visits America 1 v. — His Hour 1 v. — The Reason Why 1 v. — Halcyone 1 v. — The Contrast 1 v. — Guinevere's Lover 1 v. — Man and Maid 1 v. — Six Days 1 v. — The Great Moment 1 v.
- Godfrey, Hal:** *vide* Charlotte O'Conor Eccles.
- Goldring, Douglas.**
Nobody Knows 1 v.
- Goldsmith, Oliver,** † 1774.
Select Works (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Goodman, Edward J.**
Too Curious 1 v.
- Gordon, Julien** (Am.).
A Diplomat's Diary 1 v.
- Gordon, Major-Gen. C. G.,** † 1885.
His Journals at Kartoum (with eighteen illustrations) 2 v.
- Gore, Mrs.,** † 1861.
Castles in the Air 1 v. — The Dean's Daughter 2 v. — Progress and Prejudice 2 v. — Mammón 2 v. — A Life's Lessons 2 v. — The Two Aristocracies 2 v. — Heckington 2 v.
- Grand, Sarah.**
Our Manifold Nature 1 v. — Babs the Impossible 2 v. — Emotional Moments 1 v.
- Grant, Miss.**
Victor Lescar 2 v. — The Sun-Maid 2 v. — My Heart's in the Highlands 2 v. — Artist 2 v. — Prince Hugo 2 v.
- Gray, Maxwell.**
The Silence of Dean Maitland 2 v. — The Reproach of Annesley 2 v.
- Grenville: Murray, E. C.** (Trois-Etoiles), † 1881.
The Member for Paris 2 v. — Young Brown 2 v. — The Boudoir Cabal 3 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk (*First Series*) 2 v. — The Russians of To-day 1 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk (*Second Series*) 2 v. — Strange Tales 1 v. — That Artful Vicar 2 v. — Six Months in the Ranks 1 v. — People I have met 1 v.
- Grey, Zane** (Am.).
Tappan's Burro, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Call of the Canyon 1 v. — The Thundering Herd 1 v.
- Grimwood, Ethel St. Clair.**
My Three Years in Manipur (with Portrait) 1 v.
- Grohman, W. A. Baillie.**
Tyrol and the Tyrolese 1 v.
- Gunter, A. C.** (Am.), † 1907.
Mr. Barnes of New York 1 v.
- Guthrie, F. Anstey:** *vide* Anstey.
"Guy Livingstone," Author of (George Alfred Laurence), † 1876.
Guy Livingstone 1 v. — Sword and Gown 1 v. — Barren Honour 1 v. — Border and Bastille 1 v. — Maurice Dering 1 v. — Sans Merci 2 v. — Breaking a Butterfly 2 v. — Anteros 2 v. — Haggarene 2 v.
- Habberton, John** (Am.).
Helen's Babies & Other People's Children 1 v. — The Bowsham Puzzle 1 v. — Mrs. Mayburn's Twins 1 v.
- Haggard, Sir H. Rider** † 1925.
King Solomon's Mines 1 v. — She 2 v. — Jess 2 v. — Allan Quatermain 2 v. — The Witch's Head 2 v. — Maiwa's Revenge 1 v. — Mr. Meeson's Will 1 v. — Colonel Quaritch, V. C. 2 v. — Cleopatra 2 v. — Allan's Wife 1 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Dawn 2 v. — Montezuma's Daughter 2 v. — The People of the Mist 2 v. — Joan Haste 2 v. — Heart of the World 2 v. — The Wizard 1 v. — Doctor Therne 1 v. — Swallow 2 v. — Black Heart and White Heart, and Elissa 1 v. — Uysbeth 2 v. — A Winter

Pilgrimage 2 v. — Pearl-Maiden 2 v. — Stella Fregelius 2 v. — The Brethren 2 v. — Ayesha. The Return of 'She' 2 v. — The Way of the Spirit 2 v. — Benita 1 v. — Far Margaret 2 v. — The Lady of Blossholme 1 v. — Morning Star 1 v. — Queen Sheba's Ring 1 v. — Red Eve 1 v. — Marie 1 v. — Child of Storm 1 v. — The Wanderer's Necklace 1 v. — Wisdom's Daughter 1 v. — Heu-Heu, or The Monster 1 v. — Queen of the Dawn 1 v.

Haggard, Sir H. Rider, & Andrew Lang. The World's Desire 2 v.

Hall, Mrs. S. C., † 1881.

Can Wrong be Right? 1 v. — Marian 2 v.

Hamerton, P. G., † 1894.

Marmorne 1 v. — French and English 2 v.

Hardy, Rev. E. J.

How to be Happy though Married 1 v. — Still Happy though Married 1 v.

Hardy, Miss Iza: *vide* Author of "Not Easily Jealous."

Hardy, Thomas.

The Hand of Ethelberta 2 v. — Far from the Madding Crowd 2 v. — The Return of the Native 2 v. — The Trumpet-Major 2 v. — A Laodicean 2 v. — Two on a Tower 2 v. — A Pair of Blue Eyes 2 v. — A Group of Noble Dames 1 v. — Tess of the D'Urbervilles 2 v. — Life's Little Ironies 1 v. — Jude the Obscure 2 v. — A Changed Man 1 v. — The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid 1 v.

Harland, Henry (Am.), † 1905.

The Lady Paramount 1 v.

Harraden, Beatrice.

Ships that pass in the Night 1 v. — In Varying Moods 1 v. — Hilda Strafford, and The Remittance Man 1 v. — The Fowler 2 v. — The Scholar's Daughter 1 v. — Interplay 2 v. — Out of the Wreck I Rise 1 v. — Patuffa 1 v. — Youth Calling 1 v.

Harrison, Agnes.

Martin's Vineyard 1 v.

Harrison, Mrs.: *vide* Lucas Malet.

Harte, Bret (Am.), † 1902.

Prose and Poetry (Tales of the Argonauts: — The Luck of Roaring Camp; The Outcasts of Poker Flat, etc. — Spanish and American Legends; Condensed Novels; Civic and Character Sketches; Poems) 2 v. — Idyls of the Foothills 1 v. — Gabriel Conroy 2 v. —

Two Men of Sandy Bar 1 v. — Thankful Blossom, and other Tales 1 v. — Drift from Two Shores 1 v. — Jeff Briggs's Love Story, and other Tales 1 v. — Flip, and other Stories 1 v. — On the Frontier 1 v. — By Shore and Sedge 1 v. — Maruja 1 v. — Snow-bound at Eagle's, and Devil's Ford 1 v. — The Crusade of the "Excelsior" 1 v. — The Heritage of Dedlow Marsh, and other Tales 1 v. — A Waif of the Plains 1 v. — A First Family of Tasajara 1 v. — Sally Dows, etc. 1 v. — A Protégée of Jack Hamlin's, etc. 1 v. — The Bell-Ringer of Angel's, etc. 1 v. — Clarence 1 v. — The Ancestors of Peter Atherly, etc. 1 v. — Tales of Trail and Town 1 v. — Mr. Jack Hamlin's Mediation, and other Stories 1 v. — From Sand-Hill to Pine 1 v. — Under the Redwoods 1 v. — Trent's Trust 1 v.

Hawthorne, Nathaniel (Am.), † 1864.

The Scarlet Letter 1 v. — Transformation (The Marble Faun) 2 v. — Passages from his English Note-Books 2 v.

Hay, John (Am.), † 1905: *vide* "The Bread-Winners," Author of.

Hay, Marie.

Mas-anliello 1 v. — The Evil Vineyard 1 v.

Hearn, Lafcadio, † 1906.

Kokoro 1 v. — Kwaidan 1 v. — Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan (*First Series*) 1 v. — Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan (*Second Series*) 1 v. — Gleanings in Buddha-Fields 1 v. — Out of the East 1 v. — The Romance of the Milky Way, etc. 1 v.

Hector, Mrs.: *vide* Mrs. Alexander.

"Heir of Redclyffe, the," Author of *vide* Charlotte M. Yonge.

Helps, Sir Arthur, † 1875.

Friends in Council 2 v. — Ivan de Biron 2 v.

Hemans, Mrs. Felicia, † 1835.

Select Poetical Works 1 v.

Henry, O (Am.).

Cabbages and Kings 1 v.

Hergesheimer, Joseph (Am.).

Java Head 1 v. — Cytherea 1 v. — Mountain Blood 1 v. — The Three Black Pennys 1 v. — Linda Condon 1 v. — The Bright Shawl 1 v. — Balisand 1 v.

Hewlett, Maurice.

The Forest Lovers 1 v. — Little Novels of Italy 1 v. — New Canterbury Tales 1 v. — The Queen's Quair; or, The Six Years' Tragedy 2 v. — Fond Adventures 1 v. — The Fool Errant 2 v. — The Stopping Lady 1 v. — The Spanish Jade 1 v. — Halfway

Hous 2 v. — Open Country 1 v. — Rest Harrow 1 v. — Brazenhead the Great 1 v. — The Song of Renny 1 v. — Lore of Proserpine 1 v. — Bendish 1 v.

Hichens, Robert.

Flames 2 v. — The Slave 2 v. — Felix 2 v. — The Woman with the Fan 2 v. — The Garden of Allah 2 v. — The Black Spaniel, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Call of the Blood 2 v. — A Spirit in Prison 2 v. — Barbary Sheep 1 v. — Bella Donna 2 v. — The Spell of Egypt 1 v. — The Dweller on the Threshold 1 v. — The Fruitful Vine 2 v. — The Londoners 1 v. — An Imaginative Man 1 v. — The Way of Ambition 2 v. — The Holy Land 1 v. — The Last Time, and Other Stories 1 v. — After the Verdict 2 v.

Hobart Pasha, Admiral, † 1886.

Sketches from my Life 1 v.

Hobbes, John Oliver (Mrs. Craigie) (Am.), † 1906.

The Gods, Some Mortals and Lord Wickenham 1 v. — The Serious Wooing 1 v. — The Dream and the Business 2 v.

Hoey, Mrs. Cashel.

A Golden Sorrow 2 v. — Out of Court 2 v.

Holdsworth, Annie E.

The Years that the Locust hath Eaten 1 v. — The Gods Arrive 1 v. — The Valley of the Great Shadow 1 v. — Great Lowlands 1 v. — A Garden of Spinsters 1 v.

Holme Lee: *vide* Harriet Parr.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell (Am.), † 1894.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Professor at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Poet at the Breakfast-Table 1 v.

Hope, Anthony (Hawkins).

Mr. Witt's Widow 1 v. — Half a Hero 1 v. — Comedies of Courtship 1 v. — The Heart of Princess Csra 1 v. — Simon Dale 2 v. — Rupert of Hentzau 1 v. — The King's Mirror 2 v. — Quisanté 1 v. — The Intrusions of Peggy 2 v. — Double Harness 2 v. — A Servant of the Public 2 v. — Sophy of Kravonia 2 v. — Tales of Two People 2 v. — The Great Miss Driver 2 v.

Hopkins, Tighe.

An Idler in Old France 1 v. — The Man in the Iron Mask 1 v. — The Dungeons of Old Paris 1 v. — The Silent Gate 1 v. — The Women Napoleon Loved 1 v. — The Romance of Fraud 1 v.

"Horace Templeton," Author of. Diary and Notes 1 v.

Hornung, Ernest William:

A Bride from the Bush 1 v. — Under Two Skies 1 v. — Some Persons Unknown 1 v. — The Amateur Cracksmen 1 v. — The Rogue's March 1 v. — Peccavi 1 v. — The Black Mask 1 v. — The Shadow of the Rope 1 v. — No Hero 1 v. — Denis Dent 1 v. — A Thief in the Night 1 v. — Dead Men Tell No Tales 1 v. — Mr. Justice Raffles 1 v. — The Camera Fiend 1 v. — Fathers of Men 2 v. — The Thousandth Woman 1 v. — The Crime Doctor 1 v.

"Household Words."

Conducted by Charles Dickens. 1851-56. 36 v. — NOVELS and TALKS reprinted from Household Words by Charles Dickens. 1856-59. 11 v.

Houstoun, Mrs.: *vide* "Recommended to Mercy."

"How to be Happy though Married": *vide* Rev. E. J. Hardy.

Howard, Blanche Willis (Am.), † 1898.

Aunt Serena 1 v. — Guenn 2 v. — Tony, the Maid, etc. 1 v.

Howard, Blanche Willis, † 1898, & William Sharp (Am.), † 1905.

A Fellow and His Wife 1 v.

Howells, William Dean (Am.).

A Foregone Conclusion 1 v. — The Lady of the Aroostook 1 v. — A Modern Instance 2 v. — The Undiscovered Country 1 v. — Venetian Life (with Portrait) 1 v. — Italian Journeys 1 v. — A Chance Acquaintance 1 v. — Their Wedding Journey 1 v. — A Fearful Responsibility, and Tonelli's Marriage 1 v. — A Woman's Reason 2 v. — Dr. Breen's Practice 1 v. — Miss Bellard's Inspiration 1 v.

Hughes, Thomas, † 1898.

Tom Brown's School-Days 1 v.

Hungerford, Mrs. (Mrs. Argles), † 1897.

Molly Bawn 2 v. — Mrs. Geoffrey 2 v. — Faith and Unfaith 2 v. — Loÿs, Lord Berresford, and other Tales 1 v. — Rossmoyne 2 v. — A Maiden all Forlorn, etc. 1 v. — A Passive Crime, and other Stories 1 v. — Green Pleasure and Grey Grief 2 v. — A Mental Struggle 2 v. — Her Week's Amusement, and Ugly Barrington 1 v. — Lady Brankmere 2 v. — Lady Valworth's Diamonds 1 v. — A

Modern Circe 2 v. — Marvel 2 v. — The Hon. Mrs. Vereker 1 v. — Under-Currents 2 v. — In Durance Vile, etc. 1 v. — A Troublesome Girl, and other Stories 1 v. — A Life's Remorse 2 v. — A Born Coquette 2 v. — The Duchess 1 v. — Lady Verner's Flight 1 v. — Nora Creina 2 v. — A Mad Prank, and other Stories 1 v. — The Hoyden 2 v. — Peter's Wife 2 v. — A Tug of War 1 v. — The Professor's Experiment 2 v. — A Point of Conscience 2 v. — A Lonely Girl 1 v. — Lovice 1 v. — The Coming of Chloe 1 v.

Hunt, Mrs.: *vide* Beaumont.

Hunt, Violet.

The Human Interest 1 v. — White Rose of Weary Leaf 2 v. — The Wife of Altamont 1 v.

Hutten, Baroness von (Am.).

Kingsmead 1 v. — The Lordship of Love 2 v. — The Green Patch 1 v. — Julia 1 v. — Candy, and Other Stories 1 v.

Ingelow, Jean, † 1897.

Off the Skelligs 3 v. — Poems 2 v. — Fated to be Free 2 v. — Sarah de Berenger 2 v. — Don John 2 v.

Inglis, the Hon. Lady.

The Siege of Lucknow 1 v.

Ingram, John H.: *vide* Poe.

Iota: *vide* Mrs. Caffyn.

Irving, Washington (Am.), † 1859.

The Sketch Book (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Life of Mahomet 1 v. — Lives of the Successors of Mahomet 1 v. — Oliver Goldsmith 1 v. — Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost 1 v. — Life of George Washington 5 v.

Jackson, Mrs. Helen (H. H.) (Am.), † 1885.
Ramona 2 v.

Jacobs, W. W.

Many Cargoes 1 v. — The Skipper's Wooing, and The Brown Man's Servant 1 v. — Sea Urchins 1 v. — A Master of Craft 1 v. — Light Freights 1 v. — At Sun-
wich Port 1 v. — The Lady of the Barge 1 v. — Odd Craft 1 v. — Dialstone Lane 1 v. — Captains All 1 v. — Short Cruises 1 v. — Salthaven 1 v. — Sailors' Knots 1 v. — Ship's Company 1 v.

James, Charles T. C.
Holy Wedlock 1 v.

James, G. P. R., † 1860.

Morley Ernstein (with Portrait) 1 v. — Forest Days 1 v. — The False Heir 1 v. —

Arabella Stuart 1 v. — Rose d'Albret 1 v. — Arrah Neil 1 v. — Agincourt 1 v. — The Smuggler 1 v. — The Step-Mother 2 v. — Beauchamp 1 v. — Heidelberg 1 v. — The Gipsy 1 v. — Darnley 1 v. — Russell 2 v. — Sir Theodore Broughton 2 v.

James, Henry (Am.).

The Europeans 1 v. — Daisy Miller; An International Episode; Four Meetings 1 v. — Roderick Hudson 2 v. — The Madonna of the Future, etc. 1 v. — Confidence 1 v. — Washington Square, etc. 2 v. — The Portrait of a Lady 3 v. — Foreign Parts 1 v. — The Siege of London; The Point of View; A Passionate Pilgrim 1 v. — Portraits of Places 1 v. — A Little Tour in France 1 v. — The Finer Grain 1 v.

Jeaffreson, J. Cordy.

A Book about Doctors 2 v. — A Woman in spite of Herself 2 v. — The Real Lord Byron 3 v.

Jenkin, Mrs. Charles, † 1885.

"Who Breaks—Pays" 1 v. — Skirmishing 1 v. — Once and Again 2 v. — Two French Marriages 2 v. — Jupiter's Daughters 1 v.

Jenkins, Edward.

Ginx's Baby, his Birth and other Misfortunes; Lord Bantam 2 v.

"Jennie of 'The Prince's,'" Author of:
vide B. H. Buxton.

Jerome, Jerome K.

The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Diary of a Pilgrimage, and Six Essays 1 v. — Novel Notes 1 v. — Sketches in Lavender, Blue and Green 1 v. — The Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Three Men on the Bummel 1 v. — Paul Kelver 2 v. — Tea-Table Talk 1 v. — Tommy and Co. 1 v. — Idle Ideas in 1905 1 v. — The Passing of the Third Floor Back 1 v. — The Angel and the Author—and Others 1 v. — They and I, 1 v. — All Roads Lead to Calvary 1 v. — Anthony John 1 v.

Jerrold, Douglas, † 1857.

History of St. Giles and St. James 2 v. — Men of Character 2 v.

"John Halifax, Gentleman," Author of:
vide Mrs. Craik.

Johnny Ludlow: *vide* Mrs. Henry Wood.

Johnson, Samuel, † 1784.

Lives of the English Poets 2 v.

- Jolly, Emily.
Colonel Dacre 2 v.
- "Joshua Davidson," Author of: *vide*
Mrs. E. Lynn Linton.
- Kavanagh, Miss Julia, † 1877.
Nathalie 2 v. — Daisy Burns 2 v. —
Grace Lee 2 v. — Rachel Gray 1 v. —
Adèle 3 v. — A Summer and Winter in
the Two Sicilies 2 v. — Seven Years, and
other Tales 2 v. — French Women of
Letters 1 v. — English Women of Letters
1 v. — Queen Mab 2 v. — Beatrice 2 v. —
Dora 2 v. — Silvia 2 v. — Bessie 2 v. —
John Dorrien 3 v. — Two Lilies 2 v. —
Forget-me-nots 2 v. (*Vide* p. 29.)
- Kaye-Smith, Sheila.
The End of the House of Alard 1 y.
- Keary, Annie, † 1879.
Oldbury 2 v. — Castle Daly 2 v.
- Keary, C. F.
The Mount 1 v.
- Keeling, D'Esterre: *vide* Esterre.
- Kempis, Thomas A.
The Imitation of Christ. Translated
from the Latin by W. Benham, B.D. 1 v.
- Kennedy, Margaret.
The Constant Nymph 1 v.
- Kimball, Richard B. (Am.), † 1892.
Saint Leger 1 v. — Romance of Student
Life Abroad 1 v. — Undercurrents 1 v. —
Was he Successful? 1 v.
- Kinglake, A. W., † 1891.
Eothen 1 v. — The Invasion of the
Crimea 14 v.
- Kingsley, Charles, † 1875.
Westward ho! 2 v. — Two Years ago 2 v.
— Hypatia 2 v. — Hereward the Wake
2 v. — At Last 2 v.
- Kingsley, Henry, † 1876.
Ravenshoe 2 v. — Austin Elliot 1 v. —
Geoffry Hamlyn 2 v. — The Hillyars and
the Burtons 2 v. — Leighton Court 1 v. —
Valentin 1 v. — Reginald Hetherage 2 v.
— The Grange Garden 2 v.
- Kinross, Albert.
An Opera and Lady Grasmere 1 v.
- Kipling, Rudyard.
Plain Tales from the Hills 1 v. — The
Second Jungle Book 1 v. — The Seven
Seas 1 v. — "Captains Courageous"
1 v. — The Day's Work 1 v. — A Fleet
in Being 1 v. — Stalky & Co. 1 v. — From
Sea to Sea 2 v. — The City of Dreadful
Night 1 v. — Kim 1 v. — Just So Stories 1 v.
— The Five Nations 1 v. — Traffics and
Discoveries 1 v. — Puck of Pook's Hill 1 v.
— Actions and Reactions 1 v. — Rewards
and Fairies 1 v.
- Laffan, May.
Flitters, Tatters, and the Counsellor 1 v.
- Lamb, Charles, † 1834.
The Essays of Elia and Eliana 1 v. (*Vide*
p. 29.)
- Lang, Andrew: *vide* H. Rider Haggard.
- Langdon, Mary (Am.).
Ida May 1 v.
- "Last of the Cavaliers, the," Author of
(Miss Piddington).
The Last of the Cavaliers 2 v. — The
Gain of a Loss 2 v.
- Łaszowska, Mme de: *vide* E. Gerard.
- Laurence, George Alfred: *vide* "Guy
Livingstone."
- Lawless, the Hon. Emily, † 1913.
Hurrish 1 v.
- Lee, Holme: *vide* Harriet Parr.
- Lee, Vernon.
Pope Jacynth, etc. 1 v. — Genius Loci, and
The Enchanted Woods 1 v. — Hortus
Vitae, and Limbo 1 v. — The Spirit of
Rome, and Laurus Nobilis 1 v. — Vanitas
1 v. — Louis Norbert 1 v. — The Sentimen-
tal Traveller 1 v. — The Tower of the
Mirrors 1 v. — The Golden Keys 1 v.
- Le Fanu, J. S., † 1873.
Uncle Silas 2 v. — Guy Deverell 2 v.
- Lemon, Mark, † 1870.
Wait for the End 2 v. — Loved at Last
2 v. — Falkner Lyle 2 v. — Leyton Hall,
and other Tales 2 v. — Golden Fetters 2 v.
- Lever, Charles, † 1872.
The O'Donoghue 1 v. — The Knight of
Gwynne 3 v. — Arthur O'Leary 2 v. —
Harry Lorrequer 2 v. — Charles O'Mal-
ley 3 v. — Tom Burke of "Ours" 3 v. —
Jack Hinton 2 v. — The Daltons 4 v. —
The Dodd Family Abroad 3 v. — The
Martins of Cro' Martin 3 v. — The Fortu-
nates of Glencore 2 v. — Roland Cashel
3 v. — Davenport Dunn 3 v. — Confessions
of Con Cregan 2 v. — One of Them 2 v. —
Maurice Tiernay 2 v. — Barrington 2 v. —
A Day's Ride 2 v. — Luttrell of Arran 2 v.
— Tony Butler 2 v. — Sir Brook Fossbrooke
2 v. — The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly
2 v. — A Rent in a Cloud 1 v. — That Boy
of Norcott's 1 v. — St. Patrick's Eve; Paul
Gosslett's Confessions 1 v. — Lord Kil-
gobbin 2 v.

Levett-Yeats, S.
The Honour of Savelli 1 v. — The Chevalier d'Auric 1 v. — The Traitor's Way 1 v. — The Lord Protector 1 v. — Orrain 1 v.

Lewes, G. H., † 1878.
Ranthorpe 1 v. — The Physiology of Common Life 2 v. — On Actors and the Art of Acting 1 v.

Lewis, Sinclair.
Babbitt 1 v. — Our Mr. Wrenn 1 v. — Arrowsmith 1 v.

Linton, Mrs. E. Lynn, † 1898.
The true History of Joshua Davidson 1 v. — Patricia Kemball 2 v. — The Atonement of Leam Dundas 2 v. — The World well Lost 2 v. — Under which Lord? 2 v. — Todhunters' at Loanin' Head, and other Stories 1 v. — Lone 2 v.

Lockhart, L. W. M., † 1882.
Mine is Thine 2 v.

Loftus, Lord Augustus.
Diplomatic Reminiscences 1837 - 1862 (with Portrait) 2 v.

London, Jack (Am.).
Burning Daylight 1 v. — The Call of the Wild 1 v. — When God Laughs 1 v. — The Sea-Wolf 2 v. — South Sea Tales 1 v. — Martin Eden 2 v. — A Son of the Sun 1 v. — The Son of the Wolf 1 v. — The Valley of the Moon 2 v.

Longard, Mme de: *vide* D. Gerard.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth (Am.), † 1882.

Poetical Works (with Portrait) 3 v. — The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri 3 v. — The New-England Tragedies 1 v. — The Divine Tragedy 1 v. — Flower-de-Luce, and Three Books of Song 1 v. — The Masque of Pandora, and other Poems 1 v.

Lonsdale, Margaret.
Sister Dora (with Portrait) 1 v.

Lorimer, George Horace (Am.).
Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to his Son 1 v. — Old Gorgon Graham 1 v. — Jack Spurlock, Prodigal 1 v.

"Lost Battle, a." 2 v.

Lowndes, Mrs. Belloc.
The Uttermost Farthing 1 v. — Studies in Wives 1 v. — When No Man Pursued 1 v. — Jane Oglender 1 v. — The Chink in the Armour 1 v. — Mary Pechell 1 v. — Studies in Love and in Terror 1 v. — The Lodger 1 v. — The End of her Honeymoon 1 v. — Why They Married 1 v. — The Terriford Mystery 1 v. — Some Men and Women 1 v.

Lubbock, Sir John (Lord Avebury), * 1834, † 1913.

The Pleasures of Life 1 v. — The Beau-

ties of Nature (with Illustrations) 1 v. — The Use of Life 1 v. — Scenery of Switzerland (with Illustrations) 2 v. — Essays and Addresses 1900-1903 1 v.

"Lutfullah": *vide* Eastwick.

Lyall, Edna, † 1903.

We Two 2 v. — Donovan 2 v. — In the Golden Days 2 v. — Knight-Errent 2 v. — Wayfaring Men 2 v. — Hope the Hermit 2 v. — In Spite of All 2 v. — The Hinderers 1 v.

Lytton, Lord: *vide* E. Bulwer.

Lytton, Robert Lord (Owen Meredith), † 1891.

Poems 2 v. — Fables in Song 2 v.

Maartens, Maarten.

The Sin of Joost Avelingh 1 v. — An Old Maid's Love 2 v. — God's Fool 2 v. — The Greater Glory 2 v. — My Lady Nobody 2 v. — Her Memory 1 v. — Some Women I have known 1 v. — My Poor Relations 2 v. — Dorothea 2 v. — The Healers 2 v. — The Woman's Victory, and Other Stories 2 v. — The New Religion 2 v. — Brothers All 1 v. — The Price of Lis Doris 2 v. — Harmen Pols: Peasant 1 v. — Eve 2 v.

McAulay, Allan (Am.): *vide* Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Macaulay, Lord, † 1859.

History of England (with Portrait) 10 v. — Critical and Historical Essays 5 v. — Lays of Ancient Rome 1 v. — Speeches 2 v. — Biographical Essays 1 v. — William Pitt, Atterbury 1 v. — (See also Trevelyan).

Macaulay, Rose.

Told by an Idiot 1 v. — Orphan Island 1 v.

McCarthy, Justin.

The Waterdale Neighbours 2 v. — Dear Lady Disdain 2 v. — Miss Misanthrope 2 v. — A History of our Own Times 5 v. — Donna Quixote 2 v. — A Short History of our Own Times 2 v. — A History of the Four Georges. Vols. 1 & 2. — A History of our Own Times. Vols. 6 & 7 (supplemental). — A History of the Four Georges and of William IV. Vols. 3, 4 & 5 (supplemental). — A Short History of our Own Times. Vol. 3 (supplemental).

MacDonald, George, † 1905.

Alec Forbes of Howglen 2 v. — David Elginbrod 2 v. — The Vicar's Daughter 2 v. — Malcolm 2 v. — St. George and St. Michael 2 v. — The Marquis of Lossie 2 v. — Sir Gibbie 2 v. — Mary

Marston 2 v. — The Gifts of the Child Christ, and other Tales 1 v. — The Princess and Curdie 1 v.

Mackarness, Mrs., † 1881.

Sunbeam Stories 1 v. — A Peerless Wife 2 v. — A Mingled Yarn 2 v.

Mackay, Eric, † 1898.

Love Letters of a Violinist, and other Poems 1 v.

Mackenzie, Compton.

The Old Men of the Sea 1 v.

McKnight, Charles (Am.), † 1881.

Old Fort Duquesne 2 v.

Maclaren, Ian, † 1907.

Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush 1 v. — The Days of Auld Langsyne 1 v.

Macleod, Fiona, † 1905.

Wind and Wave 1 v. — The Sunset of Old Tales 1 v.

Macleod, Norman, † 1872.

The Old Lieutenant and his Son 1 v.

Macpherson, James, † 1796: *vide* Ossian.

Macquoid, Mrs.

Patty 2 v. — Miriam's Marriage 2 v. — Pictures across the Channel 2 v. — My Story 2 v. — Diane 2 v. — Beside the River 2 v. — A Faithful Lover 2 v.

"**Mademoiselle Mori**," Author of (Miss Roberts).

Mademoiselle Mori 2 v. — Denise 1 v. — Madame Fontenoy 1 v. — On the Edge of the Storm 1 v. — The Atelier du Lys 2 v. — In the Olden Time 2 v.

Mahon, Lord: *vide* Stanhope.

Maine, E. S.

Scarscliff Rocks 2 v.

Malet, Lucas (Mrs. Mary St. Leger Harrison).

Colonel Enderby's Wife 2 v. — The History of Sir Richard Calmady 3 v. — The Far Horizon 2 v. — The Score 1 v. — Adrian Savage 2 v.

Malmesbury, the Earl of.

Memoirs of an Ex-Minister 3 v.

Mann, Mary E.

A Winter's Tale 1 v. — The Cedar Star 1 v.

Mansfield, Robert Blachford.

The Log of the Water Lily 1 v.

Mark Twain: *vide* Twain.

Marlowe, Christopher.

Doctor Faustus; Edward the Second; The Jew of Malta 1 v.

"**Marmorne**," Author of: *vide* P. G. Hamerton.

"**Marriage**," the Authors of (Am.).

Marriage. Short Stories of Married Life by American Writers 1 v.

Marryat, Capt., † 1848.

Jacob Faithful (with Portrait) 1 v. — Percival Keene 1 v. — Peter Simple 1 v. — Japhet in Search of a Father 1 v. — Monsieur Violet 1 v. — The Settlers in Canada 1 v. — The Mission 1 v. — The Privateer's-Man 1 v. — The Children of the New-Forest 1 v. — Valerie 1 v. — Mr. Midshipman Easy 1 v. — The King's Own 1 v. (*Vide* p. 29.)

Marryat, Florence, † 1899.

Love's Conflict 2 v. — For Ever and Ever 2 v. — The Confessions of Gerald Estcourt 2 v. — Nelly Brooke 2 v. — Veronique 2 v. — Petronel 2 v. — Her Lord and Master 2 v. — The Prey of the Gods 1 v. — Life and Letters of Captain Marryat 1 v. — Mad Dumaresq 2 v. — No Intentions 2 v. — Fighting the Air 2 v. — The Poison of Asps, and other Stories 1 v. — "My own Child" 2 v. — A Harvest of Wild Oats 2 v. — A Little Stepson 1 v. — Written in Fire 2 v. — Her World against a Lie 2 v. — The Root of all Evil 2 v. — The Fair-haired Alda 2 v. — With Cupid's Eyes 2 v. — My Sister the Actress 2 v. — Phyllida 2 v. — Facing the Footlights (with Portrait) 2 v. — A Moment of Madness, and other Stories 1 v. — The Ghost of Charlotte Cray, and other Stories 1 v. — Peers and Player 2 v. — Under the Lilies and Roses 2 v. — The Heart of Jane Warner 2 v. — The Heir Presumptive 2 v. — The Master Passion 2 v. — Spiders of Society 2 v. — Driven to Bay 2 v. — A Daughter of the Tropics 2 v. — Mount Eden. A Romance 2 v. — Blindfold 2 v. — A Scarlet Sin 1 v. — A Bankrupt Heart 2 v. — The Spirit World 1 v. — The Beautiful Soul 1 v. — At Heart a Rake 2 v. — The Strange Transfiguration of Hannah Stubbs 1 v. — The Dream that Stayed 2 v. — A Passing Madness 1 v. — The Blood of the Vampire 1 v. — A Soul on Fire 1 v. — Iris the Avenger 1 v.

Marsh, Mrs. Anne, † 1874.

Ravenscliffe 2 v. — Emilia Wyndham 2 v. — Castle Avon 2 v. — Aubrey 2 v. — The Heiress of Houghton 2 v. — The Rose of Ashurst 2 v.

Marshall, Mrs. Emma, † 1899.

Mrs. Mainwaring's Journal 1 v. — Benvenuta 1 v. — Lady Alice 1 v. — Dayspring 1 v. — Life's Aftermath 1 v. —

In the East Country 1 v. — No. XIII; or, The Story of the Lost Vestal 1 v. — In Four Reigns 1 v. — On the Banks of the Ouse 1 v. — Alma 1 v. — Under Salisbury Spire 1 v. — The End Crowns All 1 v. — Winchester Meads 1 v. — Eventide Light 1 v. — Winifrede's Journal 1 v. — Bristol Bells 1 v. — A Lily among Thorns 1 v. — Penshurst Castle 1 v. — Kensington Palace 1 v. — The Master of the Musicians 1 v. — An Escape from the Tower 1 v. — A Haunt of Ancient Peace 1 v. — Castle Meadow 1 v. — In the Choir of Westminster Abbey 1 v. — The Young Queen of Hearts 1 v. — Under the Dome of St. Paul's 1 v. — (*Vide p. 29.*)

Mason, A. E. W.

The Four Feathers 2 v. — Miranda of the Balcony 1 v. — The Courtship of Morrice Buckler 2 v. — The Watchers 1 v. — Running Water 1 v. — The Broken Road 1 v. — At the Villa Rose 1 v. — The Turnstile 2 v. — The Witness for the Defence 1 v. — The House of the Arrow 1 v. — The Winding Stair 1 v.

Mathers, Helen (Mrs. Henry Reeves).

"Cherry Ripe!" 2 v. — "Land o' the Leal" 1 v. — My Lady Green Sleeves 2 v. — As he comes up the Stair, etc. 1 v. — Sam's Sweetheart 2 v. — Eyre's Acquittal 2 v. — Found Out 1 v. — Murder or Manslaughter? 1 v. — The Fashion of this World (80 Pf.) — Blind Justice, and "Who, being dead, yet Speaketh" 1 v. — What the Glass Told, and A Study of a Woman 1 v. — Bam Wildfire 2 v. — Becky 2 v. — Cinders 1 v. — "Honey" 1 v. — The New Lady Teazle, and Other Stories and Essays 1 v. — The Ferryman 1 v. — Tally Ho! 2 v. — Pigskin and Petticoat 2 v. — Gay Lawless 1 v.

Maugham, W. Somerset.

The Trembling of a Leaf 1 v. — The Painted Veil 1 v.

Maurice, Colonel.

The Balance of Military Power in Europe 1 v.

Maurier, George du, † 1896.

Trilby 2 v. — The Martian 2 v.

Maxwell, Mrs.: *vide* Miss Braddon.

Maxwell, W. B.

The Ragged Messenger 2 v. — The Guarded Flame 2 v. — Mrs. Thompson 1 v. — The Rest Cure 1 v. — In Cotton Wool 2 v. — General Mallock's Shadow 1 v. — The Day's Journey 1 v. — Children of the Night 1 v.

"Mehalah": *vide* Baring-Gould.

Melville, George J. Whyte, † 1878.

Kate Coventry 1 v. — Digby Grand 1 v. — Good for Nothing 2 v. — The Queen's Maries 2 v. — The Gladiators 2 v. — The Brookes of Bridlemere 2 v. — Cerise 2 v. — The Interpreter 2 v. — The White Rose 2 v. — M. or N. 1 v. — Contraband 1 v. — Sarchedon 2 v. — Uncle John 2 v. — Katerfelto 1 v. — Sister Louise 1 v. — Rosine 1 v. — Roys' Wife 2 v. — Black but Comely 2 v. — Riding Recollections 1 v.

Memorial Volumes: *vide* Five Centuries

(vol. 500); **The New Testament** (vol. 1000); **Henry Morley** (vol. 2000); **Theodore Stanton** (vol. 4000).

Meredith, George, † 1909.

The Ordeal of Richard Feverel 2 v. — Beauchamp's Career 2 v. — The Tragic Comedians 1 v. — Lord Ormont and his Aminta 2 v. — The Amazing Marriage 2 v. — The Egoist 2 v. — Rhoda Fleming 2 v.

Meredith, Owen: *vide* Robert Lord Lytton.

Merrick, Hope.

Mary-Girl 1 v.

Merrick, Leonard.

The Man who was good 1 v. — This Stage of Fools 1 v. — Cynthia 1 v. — One Man's View 1 v. — The Actor-Manager 1 v. — The Worldlings 1 v. — When Love flies out o' the Window 1 v. — Conrad in Quest of His Youth 1 v. — The Quaint Companions 1 v. — Whispers about Women 1 v. — The House of Lynch 1 v. — The Man who Understood Women, etc. 1 v. — All the World Wondered, etc. 1 v. — The Position of Peggy Harper 1 v.

Merriman, Henry Seton, † 1903.

Young Mistley 1 v. — Prisoners and Captives 2 v. — From One Generation to Another 1 v. — With Edged Tools 2 v. — The Sowers 2 v. — Flotsam 1 v. — In Kedar's Tents 1 v. — Roden's Corner 1 v. — The Isle of Unrest 1 v. — The Veivet Glove 1 v. — The Vultures 1 v. — Barlasch of the Guard 1 v. — Tomaso's Fortune, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Last Hope 2 v.

Mill, John Stuart.

On Liberty and The Subjection of Women 1 v.

Milne, James.

The Epistles of Atkins 1 v.

Milton, John, † 1674.

Poetical Works 1 v.

"Miss Molly," Author of.
Geraldine Hawthorne 1 v.

"Molly Bawn," Author of: *vide* Mrs.
Hungerford.

Montgomery, Florence.
Misunderstood 1 v. — Thrown Together 2 v. — Thwarted 1 v. — Wild Mike 1 v. — Scaforth 2 v. — The Blue Veil 1 v. — Transformed 1 v. — Colonel Norton 2 v. — Prejudged 1 v. — Behind the Scenes in the Schoolroom 1 v. (*Vide* p. 29.)

Moore, Frank Frankfort.
"I Forbid the Banns" 2 v. — A Gray Eye or So 2 v. — One Fair Daughter 2 v. — The Jessamy Bride 1 v. — Nell Gwyn — Comedian 1 v. — A Damsel or Two 1 v. — Castle Omeragh 2 v. — Shipmates in Sunshine 2 v. — The Original Woman 1 v. — The White Causeway 1 v. — The Artful Miss Dill 1 v. — The Marriage Lease 1 v. — An Amateur Adventurer 1 v. — Priscilla and Charybdis 1 v. — The Food of Love 1 v. — The Laird of Craig Athol 1 v. — The Ulsterman 1 v.

Moore, George.
Celibates 1 v. — Evelyn Innes 2 v. — Sister Teresa 2 v. — The Untilled Field 1 v. — Confessions of a Young Man 1 v. — The Lake 1 v. — Memoirs of my Dead Life 1 v. — Ave 1 v. — Spring Days 1 v. — Salve 1 v. — Vale 1 v. — The Brook Kerith 2 v. — Muslin 2 v. — The Coming of Gabrielle 1 v.

Moore, Thomas, † 1852.
Poetical Works (with Portrait) 5 v.

Morgan, Lady, † 1859.
Memoirs 3 v.

Morley, Henry, † 1894.
Of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria. With Facsimiles of the Signatures of Authors in the Tauchnitz Edition (v. 2000, published 1881) 1 v.

Morris, William.
A Selection from his Poems 1 v.

Morrison, Arthur.
Tales of Mean Streets 1 v. — A Child of the Jago 1 v. — To London Town 1 v. — Cunning Murrell 1 v. — The Hole in the Wall 1 v. — The Green Eye of Goona 1 v. — Divers Vanities 1 v. — Green Ginger 1 v.

Muirhead, James Fullarton.
The Land of Contrasts 1 v.

Mulock, Miss: *vide* Mrs. Craik.

Murray, David Christie.
Rainbow Gold 2 v.

Murray, Grenville: *vide* Grenville.

"My Little Lady," Author of: *vide* E.
Frances Poynter.

New Testament, the.
The Authorised English Version, with Introduction and Various Readings from the three most celebrated Manuscripts of the Original Text, by Constantine Tischendorf (vol. 1000, published 1869) 1 v.

Newby, Mrs. C. J.
Common Sense 2 v.

Nicholls, Mrs.: *vide* Currer Bell.

"Nina Balatka," Author of: *vide* Anthony Trollope.

"No Church," Author of (F. Robinson).
No Church 2 v. — Owen:—a Waif 2 v.

Noel, Lady Augusta.
Hithersea Mere 2 v.

Norris, W. E.
A Bachelor's Blunder 2 v. — The Rogue 2 v. — Miss Shafto 2 v. — Mrs. Fenton 1 v. — Misadventure 2 v. — Saint Ann's 1 v. — A Victim of Good Luck 1 v. — Clarissa Furiosa 2 v. — Marietta's Marriage 2 v. — The Fight for the Crown 1 v. — The Widower 1 v. — Giles Ingilby 1 v. — The Flower of the Flock 1 v. — His Own Father 1 v. — The Credit of the County 1 v. — Lord Leonard the Luckless 1 v. — Nature's Comedian 1 v. — Nigel's Vocation 1 v. — Barham of Beltana 1 v. — Harry and Ursula 1 v. — The Square Peg 1 v. — Pauline 1 v. — The Perjurer 1 v. — Not Guilty 1 v. — Vittoria Victrix 1 v. — Paul's Paragon 1 v. — The Triumphs of Sara 1 v. — Tony the Exceptional 1 v.

Norton, Hon. Mrs., † 1877.
Stuart of Dunleath 2 v. — Old Sir Douglas 2 v.

"Not Easily Jealous," Author of (Miss Iza Hardy).
Not Easily Jealous 2 v.

"Novels and Tales": *vide* "Household Words."

"Nursery Rhymes." 1 v.

O'Connor Eccles, Charlotte (Hal Godfrey).

The Matrimonial Lottery 1 v.

Oldmeadow, Ernest.

Susan 1 v.

Olipphant, Laurence, † 1888.

Altiora Peto 2 v. — Masollam 2 v.

Olipphant, Mrs., † 1897.

The Last of the Mortimers 2 v. — Mrs. Margaret Maitland 1 v. — Agnes 2 v. — Madonna Mary 2 v. — The Minister's Wife 2 v. — The Rector and the Doctor's Family 1 v. — Salem Chapel 2 v. — The Perpetual Curate 2 v. — Miss Marjoribanks 2 v. — Ombra 2 v. — Memoir of Count de Montalembert 2 v. — May 2 v. — Innocent 2 v. — For Love and Life 2 v. — The Story of Valentine and his Brother 2 v. — Whiteladies 2 v. — The Curate in Charge 1 v. — Phoebe, Junior 2 v. — Mrs. Arthur 2 v. — Carità 2 v. — Young Musgrave 2 v. — The Primrose Path 2 v. — Within the Precincts 3 v. — The Greatest Heiress in England 2 v. — He that will not when he may 2 v. — Harry Joscelyn 2 v. — In Trust 2 v. — It was a Lover and his Lass 3 v. — The Ladies Lindores 3 v. — Hester 3 v. — The Wizard's Son 3 v. — A Country Gentleman and his Family 2 v. — Neighbours on the Green 1 v. — The Duke's Daughter 1 v. — The Fugitives 1 v. — Kirsteen 2 v. — Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, his Wife 2 v. — The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen 1 v. — The Heir Presumptive and the Heir Apparent 2 v. — The Sorceress 2 v. — Sir Robert's Fortune 2 v. — The Ways of Life 1 v. — Old Mr. Tredgold 2 v.

"One who has kept a Diary": *vide* George W. E. Russell.

Orczy, Baroness.

Petticoat Government 1 v. — The Scarlet Pimpernel 1 v. — I will Repay 1 v. — The Elusive Pimpernel 1 v. — Fire in Stubble 2 v. — A True Woman 1 v. — Meadowsweet 1 v. — Eldorado 2 v. — Unto Caesar 2 v. — Nicolette 1 v. — The Honourable Jim 1 v. — Pimpernel and Rosemary 1 v.

Osbourne, Lloyd (Am.).

Baby Bullet 1 v. — The Motormaniacs 1 v. — Harm's Way 1 v. — The Kingdoms of the World 1 v.

Ossian.

The Poems of Ossian. Translated by James Macpherson 1 v.

Ouida, † 1908.

Idalia 2 v. — Tricotrin 2 v. — Puck 2 v. — Chandos 2 v. — Strathmore 2 v. — Under two Flags 2 v. — Folle-Farine 2 v. — A Leaf in the Storm; A Dog of Flanders; A Branch of Lilac; A Provence Rose 1 v. — Cecil Castlemaine's Gage, and other Novelettes 1 v. — Madame la Marquise, and other Novelettes 1 v. — Pascarel 2 v. — Two little Wooden Shoes 1 v. — Signa (with Portrait) 3 v. — In a Winter City 1 v. — Ariadne 2 v. — Friendship 2 v. — Moths 3 v. — A Village Commune 2 v. — In Maremma 3 v. — Bimbi 1 v. — Wanda 3 v. — Frescoes and other Stories 1 v. — Princess Napraxine 3 v. — Othmar 3 v. — A Rainy June (60 Pf.). Don Gesualdo (60 Pf.). — A House Party 1 v. — Guilderoy 2 v. — Syrlin 3 v. — Ruffino, and other Stories 1 v. — Santa Barbara, etc. 1 v. — Two Offenders 1 v. — The Silver Christ, etc. 1 v. — Toxin, and other Papers 1 v. — Le Selve, and Tonia 1 v. — An Altruist, and Four Essays 1 v. — La Strega, and other Stories 1 v. — The Waters of Edera 1 v. — Critical Studies 1 v. — Helianthus 2 v.

"Outcasts, the," Author of: *vide* "Roy Tellet."

Pain, Barry.

The Exiles of Faloo 1 v. — Stories in Grey 1 v. — Stories without Tears 1 v. — The New Gulliver, and Other Stories 1 v.

Parker, Sir Gilbert.

The Battle of the Strong 2 v. — Donovan Pasha, & Some People of Egypt 1 v. — The Seats of the Mighty 2 v. — The Weavers 2 v. — The Judgment House 2 v.

Parr, Harriet (Holme Lee), † 1900.

Basil Godfrey's Caprice 2 v. — For Richer, for Poorer 2 v. — The Beautiful Miss Barrington 2 v. — Her Title of Honour 1 v. — Echoes of a Famous Year 1 v. — Katherine's Trial 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Bessie Fairfax 2 v. — Ben Milner's Wooing 1 v. — Straightforward 2 v. — Mrs. Denys of Cote 2 v. — A Poor Squire 1 v.

Parr, Mrs.

Dorothy Fox 1 v. — The Prescotts of Pamphillton 2 v. — The Gosau Smithy, etc. 1 v. — Robin 2 v. — Loyalty George 2 v.

Paston, George.

A Study in Prejudices 1 v. — A Fair Deceiver 1 v.

Pasture, Mrs. Henry de la.

The Lonely Lady of Grosvenor Square 1 v. — The Grey Knight 1 v. — Catherine's Child 1 v. — Master Christopher 2 v. — Erica 1 v.

Paul, Mrs.: *vide* "Still Waters."

"Paul Ferroll," Author of (Mrs. Caroline Clive), † 1873.

Paul Ferroll 1 v. — Year after Year 1 v. — Why Paul Ferroll killed his Wife 1 v.

Payn, James, † 1898.

Found Dead 1 v. — Gwendoline's Harvest 1 v. — Like Fatheg, like Son 2 v. — Not Wooded, but Won 2 v. — Cecil's Tryst 1 v. — A Woman's Vengeance 2 v. — Murphy's Master 1 v. — In the Heart of a Hill, and other Stories 1 v. — At Her Mercy 2 v. — The Best of Husbands 2 v. — Walter's Word 2 v. — Halves 2 v. — Fallen Fortunes 2 v. — What He cost Her 2 v. — By Proxy 2 v. — Less Black than we're Painted 2 v. — Under one Roof 2 v. — High Spirits 1 v. — High Spirits (Second Series) 1 v. — A Confidential Agent 2 v. — From Exile 2 v. — A Grape from a Thorn 2 v. — Some Private Views 1 v. — For Cash Only 2 v. — Kit: A Memory 2 v. — The Canon's Ward (with Portrait) 2 v. — Some Literary Recollections 1 v. — The Talk of the Town 1 v. — The Luck of the Darrells 2 v. — The Heir of the Ages 2 v. — Holiday Tasks 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales (First Series) 1 v. — A Prince of the Blood 2 v. — The Mystery of Mirbridge 2 v. — The Burnt Million 2 v. — The Word and the Will 2 v. — Sunny Stories, and some Shady Ones 1 v. — A Modern Dick Whittington 2 v. — A Stumble on the Threshold 2 v. — A Trying Patient 1 v. — Gleams of Memory, and The Eavesdropper 1 v. — In Market Overt 1 v. — Another's Burden etc. 1 v. — The Backwater of Life, or Essays of a Literary Veteran 1 v.

Peard, Frances Mary.

One Year 2 v. — The Rose-Garden 1 v. — Thorpe Regis 1 v. — A Winter Story 1 v. — A Madrigal, and other Stories 1 v. — Cartouche 1 v. — Mother Molly 1 v. — Schloss and Town 2 v. — Contradictions 2 v. — Near Neighbours 1 v. — Alicia Tennant 1 v. — Madame's Granddaughter 1 v. — Donna Teresa 1 v. — Number One and Number Two 1 v. — The Ring from Jaipur 1 v. — The Flying Months 1 v.

Pemberton, Max.

A Woman of Kronstadt 1 v. — The Garden of Swords 1 v. — The Footsteps of a Throne 1 v. — The Giant's Gate 2 v. — I crown thee King 1 v. — The House under the Sea 1 v. — Red Morn 1 v. — Beatrice of Venice 2 v. — Mid the Thick Arrows 2 v. — My Sword for Lafayette 1 v. — The Lady

Evelyn 1 v. — The Lodestar 1 v. — Wheels of Anarchy 1 v. — Love the Harvester 1 v. — White Walls 1 v. —

Percy, Bishop Thomas, † 1811.

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry 3 v.

Perrin, Alice.

The Charm 1 v. — The Anglo-Indians 1 v. — The Happy Hunting Ground 1 v. — Government House 1 v.

Philips, F. C.

As in a Looking Glass 1 v. — The Dean and his Daughter 1 v. — Lucy Smith 1 v. — A Lucky Young Woman 1 v. — Jack and Three Jills 1 v. — Young Mr. Ainslie's Courtship 1 v. — Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Extenuating Circumstances, and A French Marriage 1 v. — More Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Constance 2 v. — That Wicked Mad'moiselle, etc. 1 v. — A Doctor in Difficulties, etc. 1 v. — "One Never Knows" 2 v. — Of Course 1 v. — Miss Ormerod's Protégé 1 v. — My little Husband 1 v. — Mrs. Bouverie 1 v. — A Question of Colour, and other Stories 1 v. — A Devil in Nun's Veiling 1 v. — A Full Confession, and other Stories 1 v. — The Luckiest of Three 1 v. — Poor Little Bella 1 v. — Eliza Clarke, Governess, and Other Stories 1 v. — Marriage, etc. 1 v. — School-girls of To-day, etc. 1 v. — If Only, etc. 1 v. — An Unfortunate Blend 1 v. — A Barrister's Courtship 1 v.

Philips, F. C., & Percy Fendall.

A Daughter's Sacrifice 1 v. — Margaret Byng 1 v. — Disciples of Plato 1 v. — A Honeymoon—and After 1 v.

Philips, F. C., & C. J. Wills.

The Fatal Phryne 1 v. — The Scudamores 1 v. — A Maiden Fair to See 1 v. — Sybil Ross's Marriage 1 v.

Philips, F. C. & A. R. T.

Life 1 v. — Judas, the Woman 1 v.

Phillipotts, Eden.

Lying Prophets 2 v. — The Human Boy 1 v. — Sons of the Morning 2 v. — The Good Red Earth 1 v. — The Striking Hours 1 v. — The Farm of the Dagger 1 v. — The Golden Fetish 1 v. — The Whirlwind 2 v. — The Human Boy Again 1 v. — From the Angle of Seventeen 1 v. — The Bronze Venus 1 v. — The Grey Room 1 v. — The Red Redmaynés 1 v. — A Human Boy's Diary 1 v. — Cheat-the-Boys 1 v. — A Voice from the Dark 1 v.

Phillipotts, E., & Arnold Bennett.
The Sineus of War 1 v. — The Statue 1 v.

Piddington, Miss: *vide* Author of "The Last of the Cavaliers."

Poe, Edgar Allan (Am.), †1849.
Poems and Essays, edited with a new Memoir by John H. Ingram 1 v. — Tales, edited by John H. Ingram 1 v. — Fantastic Tales 1 v.

Pope, Alexander, †1744.
Select Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Poynter, Miss E. Frances.
My Little Lady 2 v. — Ersilia 2 v. — Among the Hills 1 v.

Praed, Mrs. Campbell.
Affinities 1 v. — The Head Station 2 v.

Prentiss, Mrs. E. (Am.), †1878.
Stepping Heavenward 1 v.

Prince Consort, the, †1861.
Speeches and Addresses (with Portr.) 1 v.

Pryce, Richard.
Miss Maxwell's Affections 1 v. — The Quiet Mrs. Fleming 1 v. — Time and the Woman 1 v.

Pym, H. N.: *vide* Caroline Fox.

Quiller-Couch, Sir A. T. ("Q").
I Saw Three Ships 1 v. — Dead Man's Rock 1 v. — Ia and other Tales 1 v. — The Ship of Stars 1 v. — Fort Amity 1 v. — Shakespeare's Christmas, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Mayor of Troy 1 v. — Merry-Garden, and Other Stories 1 v. — Brother Copas 1 v.

Quincey: *vide* De Quincey.

Rae, W. Fraser, †1905.
Westward by Rail 1 v. — Miss Bayle's Romance 2 v. — The Business of Travel 1 v.

Raimond, C. E. (Miss Robins) (Am.).
The Open Question 2 v. — The Magnetic North 2 v. — A Dark Lantern 2 v. — The Convert 2 v. — The Florentine Frame 1 v. — "Where are you going to...?" 1 v. — Way Stations 1 v.

"Rajah's Heir, the." 2 v.

Reade, Charles, †1884.
"It is never too late to mend" 2 v. — The Cloister and the Hearth 2 v. — Hard Cash 3 v. — Put Yourself in his Place 2 v. — A Terrible Temptation 2 v. — Peg Woffington 1 v. — Christie Johnstone 1 v. — A Simpleton 2 v. — The Wandering Heir 1 v. — A Woman-Hater 2 v. — Readiana 1 v. — Singleheart and Doubleface 1 v.

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"Recommended to Mercy" 2 v. — Zoe's "Brand" 2 v.

Reeves, Mrs.: *vide* Helen Mathers.

Rhys, Grace.
Mary Dominic 1 v. — The Wooing of Sheila 1 v. — About many Things 1 v.

Rice, James: *vide* Walter Besant.

Richards, Alfred Bate, †1876.
So very Human 3 v.

Richardson, S., †1761.
Clarissa Harlowe 4 v.

Riddell, Mrs. (F. G. Trafford).
George Geith of Fen Court 2 v. — Maxwell Drewitt 2 v. — The Race for Wealth 2 v. — The Earl's Promise 2 v. — Mortomley's Estate 2 v.

Ridge, W. Pett.
Name of Garland 1 v. — Thanks to Sanderson 1 v. — Miss Mannering 1 v. — The Lunch Basket 1 v. — Just like Aunt Bertha 1 v.

"Rita."

Souls 1 v. — The Jesters 1 v. — The Masqueraders 2 v. — Queer Lady Judas 2 v. — Prince Charming 1 v. — The Pointing Finger 1 v. — A Man of no Importance 1 v. — The House called Hurrish 1 v. — Calvary 2 v. — That is to say— 1 v.

Ritchie, Mrs. Anne Thackeray: *vide* Miss Thackeray.

Roberts, Miss: *vide* Author of "Madoiselle Mori."

Robertson, Rev. F. W., †1853.
Sermons 4 v.

Robins, Miss: *vide* Raimond.

Robinson, F.: *vide* "No Church."

Ross, Charles H.
The Pretty Widow 1 v. — A London Romance 2 v.

Ross, Martin: *vide* Somerville.

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, †1882.
Poems 1 v. — Ballads and Sonnets 1 v.

"Roy Tellet."
The Outcasts 1 v. — A Draught of Lethe 1 v. — Pastor and Prelate 2 v.

Ruck, Berta.
Sir or Madam? 1 v. — The Dancing Star 1 v. — Lucky in Love 1 v. — The Clouded Pearl 1 v. — The Immortal Girl 1 v.

- Ruffini, J., † 1881.
Lavinia 2 v. — Doctor Antonio 1 v. — Vincenzo 2 v. — A Quiet Nook in the Jura 1 v. — The Paragreens on a Visit to Paris 1 v.
- Ruskin, John, * 1819, † 1900.
Sesame and Lilies 1 v. — The Stones of Venice (with Illustrations) 2 v. — Unto this Last and Munera Pulveris 1 v. — The Seven Lamps of Architecture (with 14 Illustrations) 1 v. — Mornings in Florence 1 v. — St. Mark's Rest 1 v.
- Russell, W. Clark.
A Sailor's Sweetheart 2 v. — The "Lady Maud" 2 v. — A Sea Queen 2 v.
- Russell, George W. E.
Collections and Recollections. By One who has kept a Diary 2 v. — A Londoner's Log-Book 1 v.
"Ruth and her Friends": *vide* p. 29.
- Sala, George Augustus, † 1895.
The Seven Sons of Mammon 2 v.
- Saunders, John.
Israel Mort, Overman 2 v. — The Shipowner's Daughter 2 v. — A Noble Wife 2 v.
- Saunders, Katherine (Mrs. Cooper).
Joan Merryweather, and other Tales 1 v. — Gideon's Rock, and other Tales 1 v. — The High Mills 2 v. — Sebastian 1 v.
- Savage, Richard Henry (Am.), † 1903.
My Official Wife 1 v. — The Little Lady of Lagunitas (with Portrait) 2 v. — Prince Schamyl's Wooing 1 v. — The Masked Venus 2 v. — Delilah of Harlem 2 v. — A Daughter of Judas 1 v. — In the Old Chateau 1 v. — Miss Devereux of the Mariquita 2 v. — Checked Through 2 v. — A Modern Corsair 2 v. — In the Swim 2 v. — The White Lady of Khaminavatka 2 v. — In the House of His Friends 2 v. — The Mystery of a Shipyard 2 v. — A Monte Cristo in Khaki 1 v.
- Schreiner, Olive.
Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland 1 v. — Woman and Labour 1 v.
- Scott, Sir Walter, † 1832.
Waverley 2 v. — The Antiquary 1 v. — Ivanhoe 2 v. — Kenilworth 1 v. — Quentin Durward 1 v. — Old Mortality 1 v. — Guy Mannering 1 v. — Rob Roy 1 v. — The Pirate 1 v. — The Fortunes of Nigel 1 v. — The Black Dwarf; A Legend of Montrose 1 v. — The Bride of Lammermoor 1 v. — The Heart of Midlothian 2 v. — The Monastery 1 v. — The Abbot 1 v. — Peveril of the Peak 2 v. — Poetical Works 2 v. — Woodstock 1 v. — The Fair Maid of Perth 1 v. — Anne of Geierstein 1 v.
- Seeley, Prof. J. R., † 1895.
Life and Times of Stein 4 v. — The Expansion of England 1 v. — Goethe 1 v.
- Sewell, Elizabeth, † 1906.
Amy Herbert 2 v. — Ursula 2 v. — A Glimpse of the World 2 v. — The Journal of a Home Life 2 v. — After Life 2 v. — The Experience of Life 2 v.
- Shakespeare, William, † 1616.
Plays and Poems (with Portrait) (*Second Edition*) 7 v. — Doubtful Plays 1 v.
Shakespeare's Plays may also be had in 37 numbers, each number sold separately.
- Sharp, William, † 1905: *vide* Miss Howard, Fiona Macleod and Swinburne.
- Shaw, Bernard.
Man and Superman 1 v. — The Perfect Wagnerite 1 v. — Cashed Byron's Profession 1 v. — Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant (The Three Unpleasant Plays 1 v. — The Four Pleasant Plays 1 v.). — Getting Married & The Shewing-up of Blanco Posnet 1 v. — The Doctor's Dilemma & The Dark Lady of the Sonnets 1 v. — Three Plays for Puritans 1 v. — John Bull's Other Island etc. 1 v. — Androcles and the Lion; Pygmalion 1 v. — Misalliance 1 v. — Fanny's First Play, etc. 1 v. — Heartbreak House, etc. 1 v. — Back to Methuselah 1 v. — Saint Joan 1 v.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe, † 1822.
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- Sheppard, Nathan (Am.), † 1888.
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- Sheridan, R. B., † 1816.
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- Shorthouse, J. Henry.
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- Smollett, Tobias, † 1771.
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 Stanhope, Earl (Lord Mahon), † 1875.
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 Stanton, Theodore (Am.).
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 Sterne, Laurence, † 1768.
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 Tennyson, Alfred (Lord), † 1892.
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 Thackeray, William Makepeace, † 1863.
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- Warren, Samuel,** † 1877.
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