



THE DOOR UNLATCHED

by Marie Cher

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A first novel of unusual power and finish which tells the story of a modern young man haunted, baffled, and tormented by intimations of a submerged personality. Roger Darrington, passionately interested in the French Revolution and occupying rooms steeped in memories of that time, goes back into a former life lived in the shadow of the guillotine, and takes part in stirring and poignant adventures. Written with depth and delicacy of style, the novel reveals a high narrative gift and rises to a climax of tragic intensity.

"The delicate perfection of the author's style, her alert and sympathetic analysis of motive, and unfailing appreciation of atmospheric values, have combined to create a drama of vital and convincing significance."—Birmingham (Eng.) *Post*.

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Agnesoyer Arnold

US Author.

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In Reginald

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INTRODUCTION

Not often in the dreary wastes of manuscript reading does a publisher find a first novel of such amazing competence that it seems to him worthy of being called literature. *The Door Unlatched* is one of such phenomena. The delicacy of Miss Cher's style, her persuasive telling of a curious and difficult story, the originality of her conception, and her acute analysis of character and motive, are all qualities that one expects only from an old hand.

Though she is an American, Miss Cher's novel was first published in England, where a collection of essays, *Life In Still Life*, previously appeared. It is particularly gratifying to introduce to the American public an American author of such high talent.

THE PUBLISHERS.

THE DOOR UNLATCHED

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THE CHESTNUT-TREES on the boulevard were just bursting into flower under the spring sunshine. There was warmth in the air, gaiety in the steps of those who passed. Even Roger was not insensible of the mere pleasure of walking along the Paris street. He looked appraisingly at old books, at prints, at a pair of arm-chairs before the door of an antiquary, at whatever the ingenuity and taste of the vendor presented to his view. He lived in a few rooms in a decayed house that had been a mute witness to revolutionary doings, and it had pleased him to surround himself with the furniture and ornaments of the period. That had not been difficult, the taste of the day being all for the eighteenth century. In the window before him now there was an amusing collection of fans on the fluted paper of which had been painted the liberty caps and civic altars of 1790 instead of the court shepherds of Madame de Pompadour. Amidst the fans were two little Sèvres cups covered with roses. Nothing

of the captured flowers seemed lost save their fragrance. They made Roger think of Fan, and at that moment the child herself cried out from behind him: 'Oh, here's Mr Roger!'

She was with her mother, and the three of them, like old friends, without wasting words, turned and walked together toward the rue de la Chaise where Evelyn Wynne had lived since her husband died and Fan was a baby. The tall child, now almost fourteen, her shoulder already on a level with that of her delicate young mother, gave more than a hint of Amazonian development. Beside the mother's finished figure, Fan seemed all boyish angles, all long arms and legs. She was shy, too, even with Evelyn; but Roger had the key to her confidence. He had earned her respect and devotion because he was teaching her Latin, something she burned to know. She was now reading Cæsar and was immensely proud of herself. She was being taught as a boy might be, and, active and ardent, hardy and intelligent, she attacked each task as if it were a game. This morning, prancing in imagination before her legions, this fair sun of Gaul shining on her Roman armour, this wind playing with her plumes and her pennons, the better part of Fan had been absent from her physical environment, until she had caught sight of Mr Roger musing on the little cups.

The sacred lesson hour struck as they reached the apartment, and Evelyn sent Roger and Fan on

ahead of her while she stopped for a word with the concierge. She was much attached to these rooms of hers, in this eighteenth-century hôtel, shabby but distinguished, where she could manage on her small income, just sufficient for this modest train of life in a dull street in an old quarter, dusky and close-shuttered as any provincial town.

Fan and Roger shot up the stairs like intelligent arrows, while Evelyn followed more slowly, not having their incentive. She paused on the landing to catch her breath, her hand on the rail of the wrought-iron balustrade, her eyes on the worn steps whose depressions were so many faint memorials to long-dead feet. What a river of them had flowed up and down this stair! Her own now fitted neatly into the place those others had channeled for her; she linked herself thus to the past, living in this old house that had seen the days of revolution when women like herself must have borne their load of terror about these corridors, dragging up these very stairs, pacing anxiously backwards and forwards behind the shuttered windows of these rooms. The past was in the air, thick, nostalgic; and Evelyn, high-strung and sensitive, registered a dim sensation of it from time to time when she was tired, as now, or when she was worried about her affairs.

From the flagged antechamber, where there was a mutilated bust on a rickety pedestal, she entered her salon that might well serve as an harmonious

continuation of her mood. The once white paneling, yellow and discoloured, dusky about the moulded cornices, still retained a pleasing air of coquetry in the light that fell through the long windows, picking out the gilded lines on old wood and plaster, lying, on sunny days, like a pale carpet over the polished floor. About the walls, mirror answered to mirror, slightly tarnished, but clear enough still, reflecting in their waterish depths the mass of Evelyn's hair, as they had once shot back to eyes as living as Evelyn's the fantastic headdress, the fringe à la Brutus, of 1793.

A sofa covered in striped silk that was drawn up near the fireplace; arm-chairs; a round table; a desk, frivolous in satinwood, suggesting nothing so little as the bills with which it overflowed—all these objects spoke their peculiar language of eighteenth-century charm. A screen painted with Oudry-like cockatoos, swinging on a ring-perch, shut off a portion of the room where a low table and a cupboard of china indicated feminine meals, unpunctual or casual.

Evelyn, with a wave of her hand to the studious pair by the distant window, disappeared into her bedroom.

Roger sat looking over Fan's head at a strip of vaporous blue sky. Below it the long line of the street showed that mixture of smoke-greys, of dingy yellows, of smirched mauves that a Paris

thoroughfare so often presents to those who care to notice it. A boy passed carrying on his head a basket out of which nodded the green heads of cabbages. Rending the air with a piercing whistle, he disappeared around the corner. Stirred to rivalry, a bird in a wire cage above the window of the laundry gave a thin eager cheep; the cat of the concierge, eyeing it hopefully from below, shuddered with the ecstasy of his desire. So we act and are acted upon absolutely by chance, thought Roger dreamily. Who knows the thread we must wax and turn, the colours we must snatch from passing hands, blending and shading, in ignorance of what dim, even hated pattern we may be doomed to weave? This compulsion—free only in our dreams.

But the next instant, at a movement of Fan's, he was juggled back, safe and smiling, into his neat case, labelled in clearest lettering: Fan's tutor. That young person had swept into his life, as into a darkish room, like a breath of the springtime, like this April wind that scurried in the tree-tops and over the brown roofs, drawing up the tips of the tulips in the gardens, blowing into the pink hyacinths ranged in their pots before the door of the flower shop, their pink no pinker than her cheeks. Such was Fan on this morning, eager to harry her thrice-divided Gaul with fire and Roman steel.

Her enthusiasm, her love for the sonorous words

she rolled out so carefully, her touching hero-worship of himself—he, so negative, so dispirited—had aroused Roger to a more normal interest in life and his fellow-men than he would once have believed possible. A year ago he had come back to Paris from Crete, suffering from the effects of what he supposed to be a sunstroke, or, perhaps, from the too-potent remedies of the Italian doctor in Candia. Architecture had led him to amateur archæology, and in Rome he had joined a zealous pair bound for Crete, that treasure-galleon still riding the Mediterranean wave, with marvels hidden in her dark bosom. In helping to dig them out, later in the season than was prudent, toiling up the burning hillside, he had had his touch of sun. It was in the house of Dr Riquetti that he had stayed for a tedious convalescence. Lying on his cot in the darkened room, visions flowed like water through his feverish brain—always in blazing colour, in tones that seemed to ache with their own intensity, in hues too piercingly pure. Thus he saw the sea, blue with the molten quintessence of all blueness, as when it rose and fell about the flanks of the bull-god; or an upland meadow of a torturing greenness, stabbed through and through with the knife-like white of flowers. These inner landscapes were still vacant of figures, but Roger had an uneasy consciousness that behind these vivid scenes were pressing and murmuring beings that he would rather

not encounter. They seemed to be tapping at the walls of his self-possession, tapping and fumbling for an entrance possibly unguarded. The so-called sedative that Dr Riquetti freely gave him may not have been quite so soothing as was supposed.

In the autumn he was able to travel, and before Christmas he had settled himself in Paris, in the rue Gozlin—poor ground, sour with centuries of living, but he liked the bareness of the rooms, the thick walls, the low ceilings. It was away from his usual haunts; it was quiet enough, dingy but historic, inconvenient but cheap. He could see from his windows the south portal of Saint-Germain-des-Prés through the screen of summer leaves, or through the lattice of winter boughs, provided equally well by the chestnut-trees on the boulevard. With too much time on his hands for unprofitable dreaming, with no taste for the life about him, Roger was still normal enough to welcome the distraction that Fan gave him, the friendly warmth of her mother's interest. Tony Cartwright had presented him in the rue de la Chaise, and what Roger had thought to let drop as a commonplace call had been the beginning of something mysteriously attaching. The mother and child, merely plastically, in the setting of the old salon, teased him with a sense of the half-remembered. Where, before, had two such figures played their parts in his emotional consciousness? Where, before, had such voices as theirs sounded

thrillingly to his inner ear? Where? Foolish to try to answer. Enough to remember that on that very first day Fan had picked him out for mentor and friend. Without his own will being engaged in the matter at all, Roger suddenly found himself in the position of Fan's classical tutor.

He had been telling Evelyn something of Crete, to which it was becoming the fashion to go in a yacht, if you had a complacent friend who owned one, and Evelyn was amused to hear of the slim-waisted Cretans, figured on the palace walls, of the young girls exercising with the boys in the bull-ring, their long black braids of hair streaming straight out behind them as they gallantly soared over the beast's back, negligently holding on by one horn.

Fan, leaning on her mother's chair, drew a deep breath. 'What a life!'

'Were they Greeks?' she burst out, coming around to stand in front of Roger, an engaging little figure, as straight and vigorous as those budding flowers in their glasses on the chimney-piece behind her. She had a passion for Alcibiades, and knew the Greek alphabet. Roger was almost instantly in possession of these related facts, with a quantity of collateral material touching upon centaurs, dryads and fauns. He supplemented this with tales of the minotaur tracked to his lair in Crete, in the folds of Ariadne's labyrinth. Fan stood by his side,

completely satisfied. Here, at last, to her hand, was the fount of original wisdom; all she had to do was to bend over and drink.

Here was a child singular enough to wish to learn; would he teach her? So much did Evelyn put to him, laughingly, half-confused, at their second meeting. She liked him, but did not understand him. She never studied people for themselves; she realized them only when their personalities began to establish direct relations with her emotions, when their passions or their pains ran along levels communicating with her own. Roger was to Evelyn merely an agreeable acquaintance, a little odd and absent, but to be depended on as a kind of Committee of One of Public Safety, holding his meetings by her fire, exonerating her, handing her her civic-card, changing the dreaded domiciliary visit into something benign and comforting.

So the lessons became a fact, the man relieved of a deepening ennui as he watched Fan's expanding mind take his imprint as clear and fresh as a Roman medal; the child, delighting in what she learned, nibbling ever at bigger morsels, throwing the glitter of her imagination over dead wars and deader Cæsars. They had begun with Latin, Greek to be held as a Golden Helen in the background. Soon she would be tasting Virgil, passing on from beechen bowers and philosophic hinds to the full-blooded fracas of Homer and the tragedies.

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Now, sitting beside her by the window at a professional-looking table, he heard her pipe up gravely: 'Vercingetorix, ex arce Alesiae'—

BUT SUCH were the 'good' days with Fan. In the background lurked the 'bad' ones, or at least the absent negative ones, when Roger permitted himself a half-life that had nothing to do with the physical one about him. An active imagination, together with a lack of vitality—what there was of it already deranged by the convenient sedative from Candia with which he was abundantly supplied—predisposed Roger to look through his fingers at life rather than to live it, and for nothing in the world would he have given up his secret days in this old room, where he would sit for hours, motionless, his heavy eyes on the smoke-darkened ceiling.

The house in the rue Gozlin was one of a short row that had once formed an irregular part of the vast abbatial establishment of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Its windows overlooked the high gables of the abbot's palace, and that tower of the Prison of the Abbey from whose barred openings on that September Sunday in 1792 pale blurs of faces were to peer out in horror at the killing down below. To the right, in those low blackish houses still

standing in the Passage de la Petite-Boucherie women must have trembled behind their stifling jalousies, shutting out the sunlight and the air, the air that must have brought to them the sounds of massacre, blowing across the autumnal garden where the bodies lay heaped against the wall. It was haunted ground, and Roger was susceptible.

He had succeeded in getting for his rooms more or less genuine Louis XVI furniture—a sofa of painted wood, a few low-backed chairs, a commode—the kind of gear with which pretty Lucile Desmoulins might have set up housekeeping, or that any curious idler might have picked up for a song at, say, the Danton sale after that ‘dropping April’ of ‘94. The sofa and the chairs were covered in *toile de Jouy*; on a mantelshelf were a clock, and a pair of candlesticks, two medallions in white wax on a blue ground, and a soiled tricolor cockade with a coarse pin still stuck in the faded silk. The latticed bookcase, the round table, the footstool with a worked canvas cover, were perfectly in the spirit of the vanished period that Roger had set himself to revive. A beautiful photograph of Knossos was the only modern thing in the room.

If he were persistently to ‘think away’ the Boulevard Saint-Germain, to reconstruct the Porte Sainte-Marguerite, to reinstate the Cour du Parvis, entered by a grille near the present rue des Ciseaux; to put back the vast garden with its shady alleys

and its forest trees; if he were to rebuild in imagination the Guest-House, the garden-court before it where the killing began that hot September afternoon, he might stand at his window now, raking with his eye the grey tower of the church, with much the same prospect before him as might have been before his predecessor in these very rooms in the feverish days of revolution. The boards he trod upon, the window at which he leaned, the chair upon which he sat, the objects to his hand, had all borne their mute part in those little plays of pity and despair, staged unconsciously wherever men and women lived and suffered as the terror grew about them in those hot nights of spring, ever deepening to the oppression of Thermidor.

Often Roger paced about the neighbourhood, his step singularly out of tune with the rattle of the trams of the rue de Rennes, the new glitter of Raspail—those modern highways that have mutilated the ancient streets, choking the life half out of them, slicing away at gardens, opening gaping wounds. But enough of the old quarter is left to put the sensitive pedestrian, in the early autumn dusk, into communication with certain soundless voices that come from these close houses, from these mysterious mansions, gloomy and proud—still voices that try to make themselves audible. They have interminable tales to tell in a kind of cracked whisper, the words tumbling over one another, as though the

speaker were already aware of the rattle of the patrol in the street below, of the tramp of mounting feet, of the blow upon the door—the official summons of arrest, so soon, a matter of hours often, to end upon the slippery steps of the guillotine. No wonder some of the old horror survives in this kind of thin, miasmic veil of suggestion. Roger often felt it hanging over his eyes and lips, but he never put up so much as a finger to brush it away.

To-day, lying open on his table, was a letter from an art-publisher who, hearing he had been in Crete, had written to make him a not unpleasing offer. He knew he could write the kind of series that was wanted, and as he planned his answer in his mind he was conscious of a certain interest that had been foreign to him for more weary days than he cared to count. Fan, with her three hours a week, was not yet strong enough to set in a more stirring key the broken music to which he moved his dragging feet. But now he would bestir himself; he would give himself more occupation. This editor might prove to be a springboard; he might, from his friendly shoulder, make even a sensational leap. He felt his blood running more freely; there were fugitive homely pleasures in everyday things, in daily encounters, in men, in women. Certainly in women; and it was the thought of Evelyn that took him that afternoon to the rue de la Chaise.

As he came from the gloom of the antechamber

into the fading April light, Roger was charmed anew by the picture of the mother and the child. Evelyn was in a low chair over the back of which she presented to him barely more than a welcoming profile. Fan was at her feet, her arms about her mother's waist. Thus clasped they might have been posed by Vigée-Lebrun, Fan's eager face a spot of rose under the roughened mop of her splendid hair, her strong young hands smoothing the light stuff of Evelyn's gown. The mother gained in softness, in a kind of gentle distinction, set so closely beside this vigorous creature that was Fan, instinct with life, with gaiety, with that lovable awkwardness of colt or puppy.

Roger often made Evelyn feel rather silly and diffuse; but to-day he seemed more human, seemed to seat himself more readily in her frail conversational barque. He was recapturing his sense of her simple charm, her ingenuousness, her actual youth—no other magic than that.

EVELYN WAS so pale the next morning when Fan came in with her coffee that the child stared at her rather piteously. 'I shall be all right in the air,' Evelyn reassured her. As a matter of fact she was worried about money, and disturbed at an offer Tony Cartwright had recently made her to lend her whatever she wanted. For Fan's sake, Evelyn could not see herself the bountiful Tony's pensioner, or anything else in relation to him. Without the child—but what was the use of thinking of that? 'We'll go out the moment I'm dressed,' she cried through the half-open door.

Along the quai, under the blue sky, the poplars and planes were throwing their shadows over the parapet with its open bookstalls. On the attic of the Institut the grey stone urns crowned with flames and flowers outlined themselves against the sky. Through one of the dusty-paned windows of the gallery on the ground floor Fan could just make out the white back of a Diana, the small head covered with braids, one delicate arm raised, bow in hand. Here was nudity with chastity and pride, as only a goddess could present the combination.

To which gardens shall they go—the Tuileries, the Luxembourg? It is amusing to sit by the statue to Perrault near the Orangerie and admire Puss-in-Boots carrying his tiny cloak and plumed hat with all the manner of d'Artagnan. But Fan is faithful to her own quarter. The Luxembourg let it be, which is as good as her own private preserve. She knew the moment in late February when the forsythia near the Vavin gate would be beginning to open pale buds along its bare stalks. She knew the day in March when the hawthorns would show their infinitesimal yellowish buttons at the end of each twig. And now, in April, the tulips were up in the broad beds, one carrying on its pointed tip a minute clod interwoven with a dried leaf. Winter broken and life set free, all the force of the spring-time seemed to be centred in that green spear bearing aloft its singular headdress. In the clipped alleys the mist was being sucked up by the sun. It still hung here and there among the chestnut-trees, suggesting magical vaporous distances, miles and miles.

Evelyn and Fan selected their straw chairs on the terrace, where they could hear the clock of the Palace strike, near the statue of the Queen of Navarre, on whose head a pigeon perched and preened. A portly priest on one of the stone benches bent his severe brow over his little book. He should have been in some Roman garden, in Vatican shadow.

Scurrying troops of children swept by them, bare legs flashing, toys clattering; but this light infantry did not then attack with the abandon that it would show later in the day when music would resound in the tent of the wooden animals; when the drum would beat with a half-terrifying yet joyous note in the Punch and Judy shelter; when the man who makes the puffy *gaufrettes* would hypnotise the solitary sou out of your little pocket with a fascinating sweep of his tin sugar-sifter. Oh, that would be the moment of crowded life!

Fan tilted her chair and pretended to follow the insane involutions of an irregular verb, but the book had a way of slipping shut in spite of a marking finger, and she eventually humoured its passion for seclusion and closed it of her own accord. The sweetness of the morning, all new-washed and fragrant, swelled the child's heart with pleasure. Such youth as hers creates its own zest with which to leap upon each new day, be it fair or foul, all life looming up like the piled domes of an enchanted palace at the end of the forest-ride, the sun caught forever in those golden tiles. Yet even Youth submits to an extra fillip when such a day as this widens and curls at its feet, and Fan expanded with the rest of the growing things about her.

She enjoyed feeling tall and protective, as she did now, beside her mother, slender and fatigued. Evelyn was dabbing with her parasol tip at a pebble

here and a pebble there, trying to fix her mind on this foolish pattern she was making, determined that she would put some order into her affairs, once and for all. Fan was growing up, everything cost more. In the back of Evelyn's mind was the hard little conviction that some day she would marry Tony. But what a step-father for Fan! Tony and Fan, impossible combination—clogging earth and mounting fire! If she ever lost Fan, she lost everything. She turned to the child, dropping her parasol in the dust beside her. The best in Evelyn had always answered to Fan's arms about her, to Fan's head on her breast.

Now the child looked up startled. 'Maman?' All her protectiveness was alert. She was like a chivalrous boy, aquiver with she knew not what.

Evelyn felt slightly ashamed of herself, the child's eyes were so adoring. No such danger as she feared could ever smite her there. The danger would be in her own failure; never in Fan's. She might go bankrupt of love's credit, but Fan drew upon an inexhaustible balance.

'Nothing, darling,' she said, answering the unspoken question. 'Shall we walk about a bit?'

Arm in arm they strolled, pushing as far as the bust of Watteau, tirelessly conscious, with what one might conceive to be an immortal distaste, of the young woman whose pleated robe of stone perpetuates his name. They retraced their steps, paus-

ing to lean on the cracked balustrade with the urns, to look down into the tops of the orange and pomegranate trees set out in their tubs. The façade of the palace fronted them, grey softening to cream in the sun. Here Fan was moved to an historical reverie, having been recently introduced to that shattering phenomenon, the French Revolution. Madame Roland naturally held her fast, only loosening her clutch when Camille Desmoulins plucked her fingers away. But Camille's tiny son Horace held Fan even tighter than he, and Madame Roland's Eudora she could scarcely bear to think about. These shades, in their strange pale clothes, had taken to accompanying Fan on her walks; and Roger had humoured her, since this fancy of hers marched with his own. He had pointed out several haunted dwellings in their own quarter, haunted because Camille or Lucile or Eudora had gone in and out of those doorways, up and down those stairs.

Now she said: 'How strange that they put him in prison there,' nodding toward the Palace. 'People could walk quite close, and he may have seen them from the window. Perhaps she came, carrying their little boy.'

Evelyn was presently made aware that she was expected to transport herself, imaginatively, to another spring day in another century, when women bereft of lovers or of husbands haunted these gar-

dens, deaf to their bird sounds, dumb to their magic, blind to their beauty, seeking only some sign or some token of the living creature that had been snatched away from them. Fan approached the subject from the terrified point of view of the bewildered children, crowding close to their mothers' skirts, afraid to cry, understanding nothing, yet scenting pain as surely as the hound scents blood.

'Do you mean Camille Desmoulins?' Evelyn asked, and Fan nodded. Evelyn was too tightly held to-day by twentieth-century preoccupations to be able to shed even a passing tear over ancient woes, and she disgracefully did not play up, as Fan had hoped she would. In some ways Maman fell far behind Mr Roger, who always seemed alert to answer the revolutionary call. In fact, in the past weeks, Cæsar, splendid as he was, writing in his tent at night, was in grave danger of being supplanted in one small English girl's thoughts by a personage in a striped waistcoat and an enormous muslin stock, with a pair of restless dark eyes peering from under his unpowdered hair. Fan might have quoted, had she happened to know the lines:

*Voilà le vrai Camille, une âme
Enfantine et mobile et folle; oiseau de
flamme
Esprit de faune et cœur de femme.*

But that was beyond her as yet. Her pitiful musings centred more naturally about the small beings who were sucked down into the red flood of those other days, clutching impotently with their scraps of hands at fathers and mothers who kissed them and never came back.

She heaved a tremendous sigh, and her mother laughed. Yet, sitting there in the shadow of the clipped trees near the Odéon gate, more tired and harassed than she cared to admit, Evelyn was conscious of a retrospective shudder along her nerves. At that moment the sunny garden was indeed peopled with shades, unhappy women who flitted before her, aching for a sight or a signal. Did such pain leave its own wraith behind? Had she and Fan unwittingly stepped within the dissolving circle of its influence? . . . Ah, she was fanciful with lying awake half the night. Fan mustn't be encouraged; it was morbid. She glanced at her daughter, but nothing less morbid than that young person could well be imagined. She was snapping her fingers at a waddling puppy who was extremely puzzled by his own feet. Her gay laugh rang out. 'Oh, do look, Maman!' Forgotten the small Horace and all that he stood for, pushed back, cast out of mind by the superior claims of life, life vibrating in this Paris sunshine, in this brown garden mould, in this fat puppy slobbering her hand.

They reached home to find a sprawling mass of

enormous roses on the table with a note from Tony. Evelyn read it while Fan struggled with the flowers, pressing their giant stems into poor little vases that were at once over-weighted by these great heads, which had all the vigour of hardy vegetables. They disturbed everything in the room, but it would not be polite to put them in the antechamber. Evelyn laughed at her. 'Horrors!' she exclaimed, looking at the display of what might have been small pink cabbages. 'But how kind! We mustn't forget, Fan, that Tony lives in a general gorgeousness that befits these fantastic things. I don't suppose he ever ordered "our" flowers in his life. Let us stuff them all together into this *jardinière*. Then we shall get the staggering blow in the eye at once, and the room won't be all spotted up with them. Unfortunate Tony!'

WHEN ROGER came in that afternoon, Fan, who was alone, welcomed him with a good imitation of the way a grown-up would receive a cherished guest, then, suddenly abandoning this manner, she hung on his arm, her curls sticking to his coat sleeve. Blessed Fan! he thought. He knew he mattered to her.

He had been playing with his first article of the Cretan series, making notes that seemed too poetic and fantastic when he came to read them over. He must try to give the man what he and his readers wanted. He knew he could do it, but——. The pitfall for one of Roger's temperament lay in that 'but.' But—how much more attractive to lie dreaming by your window all through the brilliant afternoon, its light dimmed by a shabby curtain, its bustle dull to the ear, its subtle pull upon the instincts neutralized by languor that was almost an ache. As you dreamed, how easy it was to people the space within your four walls with pleasant wraiths, *revenants* of other days, who slipped into the most familiar postures of good-fellowship with your old furniture, who knew their way about as

well as you, even rummaging in the tiny concealed drawer of the writing-table.

Two figures had a way of outstaying all the rest—the woman eternally adjusting at the mirror her broad flapping hat over her lightly powdered hair; the man, very indistinct still, a tall grey silhouette leaning against the side of the window, one finger raised as though he were gently manipulating the tiny slat of the jalousie that no longer hung there. For what was he watching, so urgent himself to remain unseen?

Roger, half-asleep, would lose himself in a thousand conjectures about those beings whom he seemed able to project by an effort of will, as though he had their personalities bottled up within himself and could suddenly uncork and set them free, free to repeat with tireless monotony a certain range of gesture that some emotional shock had perpetuated—the woman ever at the mirror, preparing for some expedition that must have had a fatal ending; the man ever watching for the sight that might have meant death to him when it came.

Roger knew the danger of too much indulgence in such—dreams, he called them. He had first noticed this particular faculty at Candia. Dr Riquetti had warned him, but Roger was in the mood to consider that these captives in his brain-cells had as much right to live as he, and if his sunstroke had given him the key to their prison-house, it would be

brutal not to let them slip out of the door occasionally, to go through with their poor little play—she perhaps, for the last time at the mirror, he with who could tell what deadly panic in his peering.

Luckily for Roger, the lessons with Fan broke up conscious indulgence, at least, in the secondary life of dreams. Sometimes the guests appeared of their own accord, at night, when he was tired, but he deliberately summoned them less and less frequently.

Now, as he faced Fan across the table with its books and papers, he determined to push his Cretan article to completion, to work as though he had this child to take care of, as though her mother had given her to him as a sacred charge. His long look disturbed her; she thought she was being stupid and her heart sank. However, she attacked her translation so well, dealing hardily with a bad bit of syntax, that the lesson was far from being a failure after all. Work at an end, Roger got up with the intention of proposing a walk, having in mind to show her a certain ancient house, doomed by the recent cutting of a new street. Its garden had already gone; one side of the dilapidated pavilion had fallen, but the columns still held the sagging weight of the portico roof; the shutters were mouldering, the iron balconies disintegrating. What an outward quietness there is in all decay, he had thought when he first saw it, poking his stick through a hole

in the rickety paling to uncover a broad-leaved violet plant; how successfully the furies of corrosion hide themselves. Soon the poor distinguished relic would actually be attacked by the house-breaker, and presently a modern dwelling would rear its bland façade, whitened like a Pierrot, smartened with lumpy decorations in plaster.

But Fan was not to see any such lingering agony this afternoon. Roger perceived that she was on tip-toe to give him tea and to play the authentic hostess, so he smiled and said nothing. He could hear her now, laughing at Emilie, no doubt twitching the toasting-fork out of that worthy's stout and competent fingers.

They had looped the curtains aside to make the most of the twilight, and Roger, with his back to the windows and his hands in his pockets, rested a tranquillized eye on this quiet room, harmonious in outline, filled with objects that would naturally have been there had he swung back into the century that had witnessed the building of this room. Modern Paris had nothing to say here. Evelyn was a woman of taste and knew how to make her environment vocal, not woodenly dumb. Here everything came well—the woodwork, the faint lines of gilding, the furniture set sparingly, no jostling, no crowding, but dignity, urbanity in every adjusted curve. He alone, in his tweeds, was a blot upon the

ordered scene, however well his mental attitude might march with its undertones.

He came to a halt in front of one of the mirrors, and as he stared into the dim expanse he seemed to be conscious of a crowd of speechless phantoms, wavering behind his own familiar image, ebbing away in a dwindling perspective along just such lengths of polished floor as this upon which his own feet were set.

He turned abruptly. Where was Fan? Were all these old houses haunted, stained and worn with age-old living as they were?

Fan came, accompanied by the hotly domestic odour of buttered toast, rounding with great care the leaves of the screen, a little tray in her hands, for she wished to do everything for him herself.

The three stout candles in their stand under the green shade had been lighted when Evelyn walked in alone, a branch of flowering almond in her arm, her hand clasping a rather wilted bundle of primroses whose limp crowns drooped from her bare fingers. She had been to Compiègne with Tony, and had come back a little draggled and depressed, as though she were Flora, caught in a shower and rather resenting it. She threw off her hat and jacket, her hair, flattened about her ears and brows, giving her the look of a child. She was so slim that Fan appeared almost too robust, as she stood leaning against her mother's chair, her frock held out by her

finely developed shoulders. At this stage she carried about with her the breath of an earlier time; its fragrance beat upon your cheek, its warmth and eagerness melted you.

Roger got up to go, the dusky room widening out mysteriously beyond the mild light of the candles. Night had fallen there. But Evelyn had no mind to let him escape. She shrank from a long evening alone with Fan from whom she felt spiritually separated, as though the afternoon hours had carried her into another world where the apparatus did not exist with which she could communicate with her child. She had shut herself out and off, but Fan must not suspect. In the morning all would be different. So she jumped at Roger, begging him to stay and dine with them, showing such urgency in her eyes that he acquiesced, fancying that she had some real need of him. Whatever Tony had or had not done on that afternoon's expedition, he had certainly not made Evelyn any happier.

The pretty, frugal meal over, Roger smoked his cigarette and talked as much to Fan as to her mother, the three making the most domestic of groups in the dim light. Evelyn looked at the child, her flushed face raised to Roger's, all her heart in the voice with which she was reciting for his benefit some splendid French verse. The stately words of a great epoch seemed to recall to transitory life brilliant figures that might move once more and speak,

galvanized for a moment by a child's passionate sympathy.

Evelyn's pricking conscience was awake. Could she conceive Tony ever taking Roger's place in such a group as this? She could imagine on the other hand with complete lucidity the comments Tony would be bound to make if saluted with a page of Racine. The child had developed under Roger's eye with all the freshness of awakening intelligence. She was being taught to think; and Evelyn, her own starved childhood in mind, marvelled at the boldness and freedom of the process. This was Fan with Roger, he stimulating, guiding, controlling, not to a fashionable repression but to a broadening of every boundary, a pressing back of foolish barriers. Oh, why was life so difficult? inquired Evelyn of a dissolving deity who could only mock her with a parrot-like echo. Tony had said some extraordinary things about Fan that afternoon. He evidently regarded her as a large part of Evelyn's own charm; he coveted her as a delightful young creature who would give him back as good as he gave, who would do him credit as an appanage of himself, who would grow into a superb figure that he could use as a jeweller's dummy to be bound and manacled and half choked with ropes of pearls. Horrible! He had no faintest glimmering of what Fan really was—as exquisite as a flower. Such hands as Tony's should never touch her. The child

disliked it even now: one could see that under her polite little manner. Evelyn might throw herself to a lion who would chasten his roar to the purr of a cat in order to get her, but she would push Fan away convulsively behind her into cleverer hands than hers.

Then self-preservation awoke in Evelyn, draped and tinted to hide its nakedness, veiled and softened deceptively. Tony could make himself compelling in a blunt way when he was sufficiently direct in his admiration, and to-day he had let himself go. Evelyn was not insensible to the fact that her fineness was not that of Fan's. Hers would not shrivel at contacts that would scorch and torture the child.

She turned her head toward Roger. It was Fan's bedtime, and Evelyn recalled the fact with a soft emphasis. When good night adieux had been made with much ceremony, and reluctant small feet had vanished quite away, Evelyn felt that she could ease herself of a kind of protective armour the child's presence had imposed upon her. With the thoughts that had been flooding her all the afternoon, the projects, the revulsions, the evasions, she had need of an authoritative word, a friendly direction. She was bent upon getting from Roger some judgment of Tony or herself that she might superstitiously apply as a solvent to the tiresome riddle now agitating her heart as well as her head.

Roger gave her an opening by praising her,

apropos of the room in which they were sitting, for having chosen for Fan just the environment in this quiet old house that would arouse, not deaden, her imaginative idealism, that would—oh, he said half a hundred things that stuck like darts in Evelyn, already disturbed as she was by the guilty feeling that she had indeed been thinking of a very different setting for Fan, one as gaudy as those great roses.

‘You understand her. You are extraordinary with her’ broke in Evelyn. ‘I am helpless, and I often feel so foolish. In these few months with you she has passed far beyond me. I want to do the best for her. I can really understand the pelican tearing her breast, horrid mess as it makes.’

‘Don’t tear it; you could give her only animal warmth that way. Freedom and simplicity—all that you surround her with here—are what Fan needs.’

Evelyn’s eyes slowly filled with tears. She was unnerved and easily moved, and Roger’s voice had disturbed depths in her of which he was unaware. He drew her with a much stronger pull than Tony could exert, for they spoke the same spiritual tongue. There was nothing more to say now; for her the oracle had delivered itself, and a certain badly built castle in Spain dissolved in mist from its hill-top.

Roger bent over her hand. She roused herself

to smile. 'I feel as though I were a poor dying woman who had pushed her baby into your arms. Oh, don't look alarmed. I'm merely half-stupid to-night with the wind and the sun. The car raced, as it always does with Tony. Good night, and forget how foolish I am. Fan will make up for me. The antechamber is as dark as a cavern. Wait till I get you a light.'

So his last glimpse of her showed him a figure small and pale, leaning against the pedestal of the bust, holding a candle in her hand, exactly as some long-dead woman might have stood, terror in her heart, listening with painful intentness to a footfall on the stair.

FOR THE NEXT few weeks Roger wrote with more pleasure than he had anticipated. He had a subject that fascinated him, that recalled to his memory some of the freshest impressions he was ever to know. Like the dawn in an early mythological world, for him the sun of Crete had come up out of the blue sea, striking asphodel meadows with shafts as poignant as Apollo's arrows. He had lain on aromatic turf, under olives as grey as Nestor's beard; he had paced the pavement of prehistoric palaces, had clambered to airy terraces hung out over the rock face with a jut as abrupt as the cut of a gull's wing. For him all sensation had melted into a strange fusion, colour striking into sound, the gush and ripple of unseen water mingling with the broken tones of a prism.

He had dug just enough to be able to give himself a countenance in the Minoan labyrinth archæologists were rebuilding out of the ruined potsherds, the sunken levels, the frescoed walls of the Island Sanctuary, a maze in which wasp-waisted Cretans defended against all comers the misty secrets of their birth.

So he lost himself in his note-books, seeing little of anyone save Fan. He never missed his hour with her, however much it might break across his mood. In fact, it frequently dove-tailed into it, for she was his living clue of Ariadne, the link between him and a whole world of normal activities of which he was half-consciously beginning the siege with this monograph of his. She was healthy vigour itself, yet with an imaginative, poetic vein that poor Roger found particularly seductive. This young life, throbbing and budding under his hand, moved him as nothing else had ever done.

One dull day of cold rain he looked up from his writing-table to see Tony confronting him, Tony who glowed like a large and healthy product of some expensive forcing-house. Roger felt that he had as little to say to him at that moment as one human being ever had to another since speech was evolved. He was deadly tired, stupid from lack of exercise, and Tony was exactly the reverse. His vitality vibrated about him, a kind of fluid garment that fitted him as deftly as his own admirable clothes. Roger wondered if he were to have Tony on his hands all the afternoon, discoursing of his own absorbing affairs. Tony's tongue was indiscreet, and Roger often had the exasperating sensation of peering through keyholes and glancing around screens, whether he would or no. He couldn't struggle with the fellow. From their

school-days together he had known Tony to be impossible. You had to take him or leave him. But now it was he who took Roger in the flow of his monologue, and Roger, moving a restless hand among his papers, opening drawers and note-books, felt a wave of ennui submerge him. Coming on top of a night of sleep artificially procured, it made him almost ill. Why couldn't he be a man and kick Tony downstairs? Light-headed, he abruptly got up to stand by the open window for the air.

In spite of the rain driving against the weather-beaten church, the street was lively enough. People waited for the bus at the corner, grouped under the shining mushroom tops of their umbrellas; boys darted about crying the afternoon papers; the wooden flower-booth fitted into an angle of the church wall was gay with its rows of pots, each with its note of colour—of mauve, of yellow, of rose, of purple-striped and purple-plain—in the hyacinths and tulips and crocuses, all fresh and beaded with moisture. Roger never forgot just this commonplace look of the Boulevard Saint-Germain at this moment on this particularly rainy afternoon, for while he stood idly at the window something happened that for ever turned the current of his life.

Because of a certain faintness he had closed his eyes. When he opened them he looked out of the window upon a changed Paris. The boulevard

was gone; a wall seemed to have taken its place in which was a decorated gateway leading to the precincts of the church; the pavement had vanished; unknown buildings crowded upon the eye, some grey and decaying, one of stone with barred windows and an old tower. In the distance, beyond the gables of the abbot's palace, he could see how the green tops of trees in a park or garden took the light, for now the day, changing with the rest, was clear and mild and bright.

His eye fell upon his hand yet not *his* hand, playing with the slats of a jalousie that was shading the window. He noted a cambric ruffle over the wrist, his waistcoat was of striped nankin, he wore brown knee-breeches and grey stockings, his throat was bound with a muslin stock, and when he put up his hand he could feel his long hair on his shoulders. But still there was no panic. He had sunk out of one life into another so softly that there had been no shock; he still had the illusion of free-will; he was Roger Darrington masquerading in the dress of some ancestor; he was still master of the game.

He turned from the window and looked about him. The room he knew had subtly changed: the furniture was slightly different, and the arrangement. The writing-table appeared to be the same; he recognized a peculiarity, a defect in one of the legs; the brass-mountings were unmistakable. But

all the litter of his Cretan work had vanished. The papers he saw now were thick and coarse, covered with writing not his own. Instead of the plain paint to which he was accustomed, the walls were now hung with a greyish paper in a design of a broken column and a laurel wreath, monotonously repeated. A clock and a pair of ornaments were on the mantelpiece, a tricolour cockade was pinned to a small fire-screen, and a lady's fan lay on a chair, together with a loose cloak of black silk.

As though he stood apart from himself, Roger felt that he ought to be highly excited. It seemed to him that his head must be throbbing, his pulse beating with the full pressure of his blood, but in reality he was calm and curiously unmoved; interested, of course, in what appeared to be a marvellous reconstruction of an eighteenth-century scene, but he supposed it to be a kind of optical delusion, owing its verisimilitude to his own taste for and knowledge of that period. He confidently expected his old room, with Tony seated therein, still talking, to burst through, at any moment, this singular double that had swamped and silenced it. He, Roger, confident of himself as a personal entity able to will and to act, turned again toward the window.

Immediately a soft voice cried 'Raoul!' and then Roger knew, for the man who responded was not himself. He, Roger, had nothing to do with

this sharp turn across the room; no volition of his, no movement of his arms, drew this woman through the door, pressing her cold hands, asking her a thousand questions. He simply hung like a parasite in his own body that Raoul manipulated to please himself. He had shrunk to an intruding intelligence in the life of another man. He was powerless to will, he had diminished to a mere watchful eye that registered impressions with exquisite subtlety. He could feel, also, but only with a kind of secondary reflex. What Raoul experienced of suffering or of joy, of torment or of ecstasy, Roger seemed to be made aware of only by intellectual report.

It was as though two personalities, equally developed, contested the guidance of a single life. Raoul had now seized the lever of the will, and Roger, while apparently sinking back into the accustomed sleep of the dispossessed, was yet able to lurk in the background, to persist as a tiny cell of observation through whose sensitized walls the acts of Raoul's phantom existence flowed like photographic waves. He could not submerge him altogether, as one personality is sometimes snuffed out by another. Roger, his will-to-act temporarily paralyzed, inert, incapable, thus became a mere witness to Raoul's energy that imposed upon him the simulacrum of his body in the clothes of another century, that blotted out for him his

familiar environment, causing him to keep his eyes directed inward, blind to his old surroundings, seeing only those scenes in which Raoul had once moved with such a pressure of horror and despair that they could be reprojected in the subconscious life, composing like the scenery of a theatre, set up by expert hands. Into these rooms, along these streets of a vanished Paris came the other actors in those last short episodes of Raoul's life, as vivid as he, as firm to the touch, galvanized by his force, living by his will.

His self-control jarred and shaken by some obscure lesion, by Dr Riquetti's seemingly harmless sedative, Roger had fallen a victim to the morbid activity of his own subconscious life. Out of those depths this Raoul had arisen, stronger than Roger, but not strong enough to overcome his personality entirely, to push him back into unresisting sleep. All he could do was to attack his will, to pull him down from his conscious existence. At the time of this first seizure, Roger, at the window, still had the illusion that he was directing his own movements. In reality, they were subconscious, willed by Raoul, and the Roger visible to Tony's eyes was as motionless as a dead man, although to himself he seemed to be picking nervously at the curtain, bending his dark head, listening for a sound at the door.

In the beginning of these abnormal experiences,

Roger remained a mere outsider, a watcher of Raoul's activities. Later, in the second seizure, he found himself growing more and more telepathic, able to absorb himself in Raoul, to identify himself with him in a rush of emotion that finally swept away all intellectual barriers; at the last, he suffered what must be with a shuddering recoil of each agonized nerve. He paid for his unlatched door.

Even now, at the moment of the woman's entrance, Roger passionately attempted to see with Raoul's eyes that fair head, to feel with Raoul's fingers those small clinging hands . . .

Then blackness, vacancy, to come to himself with a swimming head, to discover Tony grasping his shoulder.

'What on earth's the matter with you? I thought you were going to pitch out of the window. Hadn't you better lie down? What the devil——' Tony was frankly alarmed and showed it.

'Rather odd,' murmured Roger. 'If you'll go, I'll try to get some sleep.' He felt as though he had been beaten. Suppose he were to lose his mind? Whatever the experience he had just come out of, not one detail of it was lost to him. One thing was plain: Raoul's movement across the room, the entrance of the woman, had not existed for Tony. Roger, under Raoul's control, might seem to himself to perform acts that had their being solely in

his own mind. No observer of Roger would ever suspect his inner transformation. He could plunge like a diver into depths that would cover him completely, with an unnatural delight in suffocation, whilst friends on the bank with him would visualize him in his ordinary habit, dry-shod, but perhaps a trifle—absent.

Tony took himself off, and Roger reclined on the sofa, considerably interested in himself and relieved to be alone. The whole extraordinary affair had shaken him, but it had likewise lit within him a passionate curiosity. He attempted no futile explanations. He was content to let himself go, on a high imaginative wave, intensely eager to surrender to Raoul, if, by so doing, he could live with his life in scenes and among people snatched back from the dead limbo of the past. If vivid moments can create their own kind of immortality, where would such shades be thicker than in these old streets of Paris, in these old rooms of old houses whose walls have witnessed what explosions of love, of anger, of despair?

Roger raised himself on his elbow to look at his writing-table with new eyes. Had that object once actually belonged to Raoul? Had these rooms been his? Did he lurk about here, disembodied, yet burning still with the will to rehearse again the scenes of what must have been his calvary? Did he attempt the capture of tenant after tenant,

tapping here and tapping there, seeking an entrance? Did Roger's sunstroke, jarring his equilibrium, lay him temptingly open to just such an assault as this? However that might be, Raoul had him, could use his body as his tenement, could force him to be the audience before which the old game of love and death would be played out once more.

The possession was evidently a precarious one. Raoul had seized the moment to wrench away Roger's conscious control when Roger, feeling faint, had closed his eyes at the window. But Raoul had not been able to keep it up. What had happened to cause Roger to eject his unsought guest? A physical reason, perhaps, the vertigo that had almost pitched him out of the window? Too bad for Raoul; Roger would make it as easy for him as he could. His morbid imagination now rode him completely. He was fascinated by the glamour of revolutionary Paris into which Raoul had dipped him. Since he could remember what happened when Raoul possessed him, what might he not collect at first hand about one of the most baffling convulsions in history? He quite forgot that the 'legend' of those mad days had been created once for all by professionals. In the strange submerged life that was to come to him he found out the truth of the paradox that you cannot see the forest for the trees. He was too close for a perspective; he was dragged along the fringe of massacre, of fête,

too confused by the bludgeon-stroke of one, the shrill music of the other to be able to distinguish the motive power behind either. Cards, blood-stained or freshly gilt, were dealt into Raoul's hand, but Roger never knew how certain games ended, or against whom they had been played. In the final count, merely the pathos of a private fate, the despair of an unknown woman, the convulsive clinging of a child's hand, were to make up for Roger all that Paris came to mean to him in those hurrying days of '92—no more, no less.

He lay on his sofa, letting the twilight softly invade the spaces of the room, making no movement to send the shadows scurrying into the corners like mice at the simple lighting of his lamp. He felt the darkness to be as soothing as an opiate. He had no wish to move, his one half-somnolent thought being to make himself receptive to another such experience as the afternoon had given him. To-morrow he must work; to-morrow Fan would greet him with those eyes of hers; to-morrow must be Roger's; let to-night be Raoul's.

But it wasn't. Nothing happened. Then Roger realized that his own will was negligible. He was to receive orders, not to give them.

FOR A WEEK or so after that first feverish night Roger eyed himself like a lynx. He was in a panic lest he should be seized in the street, or with Fan, made helpless, perhaps speechless, the better part of him careering after Raoul, the body that represented Roger to his world being practically empty.

Could he carry on any makeshift of a dual life? He doubted it. If Tony had spoken to him that day in his room, would he have heard him, could he have answered? Such questions irritated him by emphasizing his ignorance of the coil in which he was entangled. Stronger, too, grew his desire to prove himself once again susceptible to abnormal adventure.

As he was to find out later, the dispossessed Roger was to strike his friends—Tony once, Evelyn once, when they saw him in what they called an 'attack'—as the victim of some strange nervous malady, needing a darkened room and immediate quiet. He was excessively drowsy when first invaded by Raoul, and for that reason escaped the embarrassment of questions that would have been addressed to a Roger no longer in evidence, all his

intelligence turned inward, to a Roger who had 'dropped out.' Thus, discovery of his peculiar state was avoided, even by those nearest him. Lying in the dark, he was free to follow, in an agony of concentration, the life that Raoul was to reproduce for him. There was nothing dream-like about it, Raoul was as real to him as his own personality.

But this was of the future. In those early days of May, conquering his fear, Roger would take Fan for a walk, their lesson finished, the brilliant afternoon making the room in the rue de la Chaise seem as confined as a ship's cabin. Sometimes they went to the Champs Élysées where the children were crowding in front of the gaily painted Guignol theatre shrieking with joy when the French incarnation of Punch delivered terrific smacks, impartially, to crocodiles or to members of the police force. Old women in white caps were keeping watch over rows of coloured pin-wheels turning frantically in the breeze; over mounds of gingerbread seductively displayed. People were sitting on the penny chairs, so warm and encouraging was the sun. It was Paris, Paris in her smiling aspect, conscious of her urbanity, for that agreeable word sums up her civilized charm, her Latin sophistication, her 'nothing too much.'

Or they would idle along the *quais*, hanging over the parapet. In a loop of the stream by the em-

bankment men and horses were working beside fawn-coloured heaps of loam and sand. A distant arch of one of the bridges, the drooping silvery poplars gave to the little scene some of the dignity and amplitude of a Roman sketch by Hubert Robert. Fan was as quick to catch a note as Roger, having an incurable sense of the picturesque, together with a lightning appreciation of the absurd. They hung about old print and bookshops, Fan intent upon anything so long as she was with Roger. She will always cherish a little coloured print he bought for her of a lady in a cap and ruffled gown, teasing a lap-dog who yearned after a round of pastry-bread that his mistress crisped between finger and thumb, held forever beyond his eager nose. It was exciting to follow Roger into the gloomy shop and to come out again into the sunlight carrying with loving care this gift of his, wrapped in pale green paper, secured with a striped red, white and blue string.

Another day saw them in what remains of the old Cour du Commerce, but Roger did not dilate upon its revolutionary past, or recall that upper room where Danton had sat, waiting to see if they would dare to arrest a Titan. He was afraid to stir the stagnant waters of that epoch that now held for him an intimacy of appeal that was almost painful. But he and Fan could at least divert themselves with this furniture dealer who piled his wares on the cobblestones at one end of the passage—

tables with folding legs, high old commodes, decrepit chairs that would have bled from their gashes if they could. Chickens, with that singularly domestic air they can give to the most unlikely surroundings, pecked idly in front of a tiny hutch that sheltered four white rabbits, couched, wild-eyed, about a head of lettuce. Commerce and the basse-cour, town and country, fraternizing amiably enough.

Sometimes they wandered further afield, to Saint Cloud on the boat, with a grown-up tea in the Blue Pavilion, but more often the shade of the Bois sufficed them. The dusk falling before they turned homeward, the lustres that were lighted in the little cafés among the trees, might equally well have shone from the windows of some enchanted hunting-lodge in an Italian wood. That is, they might, if you had any imagination. Roger and Fan were adepts in such evocations. What one didn't think of, the other did.

Occasionally Tony disputed the possession of the child, and Evelyn, falling in with his wishes, took her with them on an expedition very different from the homely ones with Roger. The car would rush through the Bois, disdaining the humble side alleys by the edge of which people were eating good things out of papers. In her heart Fan would have liked her tea with them, rather than the one she was to have at a big table in a window of the smart

hotel, where a band in scarlet coats played loudly, and friends of Tony's came up to laugh with their big voices, to kiss her mother's hand and to take more notice of Fan than the child herself relished. Not one of them was in the remotest degree like Mr Roger, and she found nothing to say to them. Then would come another wild flight along a hard, staring, sunlit road. They went so fast that the greenness of the meadows, the leaves of birch and poplar, the willows nodding over a stream, were blurred into meaningless dots and dashes, all their own peculiar life sponged out of them, nothing remaining vital but the brilliant white ribbon of road over which the car dashed, seeming to let it uncoil behind it in a dusty undulation. Fan was more tired after such an afternoon than after the longest of walks with Roger, half across Paris. Her spirit was in prison, as her body was enclosed in the big green car.

Evelyn realized, if Tony didn't, that Fan was merely a politely acquiescent little victim on these occasions, and it hurt her obscurely, made her a trifle jealous to note the delight with which the child would yield herself to Roger's keeping.

DURING THESE spring days, languid one moment, intoxicating the next, Roger was haunted by the memory of what Raoul had willed him to see in that dazzling interval of his surrender. To look out of his window once again upon a scene tantalizing in its combination of the familiar and the strange; to prolong the experience, to have time for details, to check, to compare, to walk through a Paris with the physiognomy of one of those maps of 1790; to come in hot and tired from the noisy streets, disagreeably pungent as to their odours, to seat himself in this very room, fingering, perhaps, that black silk cloak, that lady's fan; to wait for their owner's tap upon the door, to draw her in—ah, what would he not give to bring these things to pass!

Roger's imaginative temperament was unstable enough to be favourable to the tricks of the subconscious. If he made himself docile, some transformation might be looked for on any of these drowsy afternoons when he hurried back to his rooms, leaving Fan, leaving his normal, sane intercourse with her, to shut himself up, burning with

the passionate desire to cease to live in his own person, to slip into an underworld as alluring as the opium dream to an amateur of the drug.

He frequented that network of sombre streets in the neighbourhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés; he pored over the miscellaneous scraps of old iron, of crazy antiques in the window of that dark hole of a shop in the Passage de la Petite Boucherie. In these old streets, in spite of certain modern disfigurements, he found much the aspect of a century ago. Nearby, in the rue de Seine, one of those slatternly domiciles might very well have housed that café in which the butcher, who was later to be accused of too active a part in the September massacres, declared that he had spent the hours of that fatal Sunday afternoon in an innocent game of dominoes. Bouvier, one of Maillard's gang, cynically sending the prisoners to their death with the laconic formula 'à la Force,' was a journeyman hatter living in Roger's own street. With what exalted or merely tigerish feelings, thought Roger, must he have gone home, groping his way, perhaps, up the dark stairs of one of these very houses, falling like a log, upon his bed, worn out with the foul air he had been breathing in that room where Maillard sat, in his sinister travesty of a court, the daylight obscured by the men who hung upon the bars of the windows, striving to peer in.

The whole quarter seemed to reek with the fume of these creatures—Merteit, the grocer, with his shop in the Carrefour de la Croix-Rouge, who returned from his labours in the prison with his stockings full of blood; Jean Debêche, the jeweller of the rue de Buci, with his stained weapon, who suffered from the fatigue of wielding it and said so with complaining frankness. Life was hard on patriots in those days; killing aristocrats could be as wearing on the muscles as beating plaster.

In the long hours of these May twilights, the sun setting in a blaze beyond the Seine, flushing once more with a burnt-out red the high windows in the attics of the Louvre, colouring for an instant the water rippling around the piers of the Pont-Neuf, just as it might have done when Fouquier-Tinville leaned there on the parapet for a mouthful of air after the fetid closeness of the Conciergerie—in this atmosphere created by his fixed idea Roger walked, tiring himself physically so that he might throw himself at last into his arm-chair, exhausted, his head in his hand, his elbows on that table that had known the contact of Raoul's fingers, his whole body taut, yet quivering—waiting.

But Roger's very self-consciousness defeated his purpose. His concentration on the morbid change he longed for only deferred it. Raoul's moment must be one of relaxation, of forgetfulness, emptied

as much as possible of any definite content. His attack must always be a surprise one.

The needful conditions were realized at last one evening late in the month. In Roger the first feverish expectancy of a second visitation had dropped, day following day with no hint of symptom of the abnormal. He had had a particularly vivid waking-dream—that was all, and he might never have another. This rough and ready explanation that explained nothing had the advantage of drawing off Roger's continual self-analysis. With his foolish label of a dream in his hand, he closed the little drawer of his unique experience, and in so doing actually presented the key to Raoul.

Pressure from London in regard to the promised article helped to shake Roger back into his old line. Knossos dominated the scene, and the flanks of Mount Ida testified to the miracle of the sunset instead of the windows of the Louvre or the sucking water under the bridges. To-night Roger was walking the Cretan uplands, Paris sunken to oblivion beyond the squares of the windows. Toward midnight he wrote the last words—the confounded thing was finished. He was conscious merely of relief, of a weight thrown off. He felt vaguely empty, a tramp-steamer that had discharged a cargo and lay with open hatches.

How close the room had grown! His head had been too near the lamp. He blinked involuntarily,

then opened his eyes to the bliss of something exquisite recovered, the joy of recognition, the sense of repossession filling the burning centre of watchfulness that he had become.

After a period of immobility as in sleep, with a horrible sensation of slipping, of falling, of saving himself by clutching something moist and sticky—a slat, a bar, or a step—Roger was pitched back into ordinary consciousness, shaken, feverish, his head on the table's edge, his legs stiff and cramped. The 'possession' had lasted for nearly two hours. He threw himself on his bed, aching for sleep.

In the morning he began to take the notes that eventually became the most curious part of his literary baggage. He at once identified himself with Raoul, and used the first person naturally in describing what befell.

I was sitting at this identical table, sorting papers. I had taken my coat off and turned back the cuffs of the muslin shirt. It seemed to be early in the morning and it was hot. The green jalousies were down, but they were broken in places and the light came through. I made two piles of the papers I was sorting—tough square sheets. Some were in an amateurish kind of cypher of stars and crosses and what not. These went in one heap; others, seemingly about some country estate in Normandy, near Caudebec, went in the other. I took a drink

from a glass of lemonade that stood on a corner of the table where it had made a sticky stain. I put the Caudebec papers back in the table-drawer, and, after listening at the door, then pulling it open suddenly to see if anyone were in the corridor, I took the cypher papers with their note-book key, and burned them on the hearth. I scraped the charred flakes together and put them in a small cardboard box that I fastened and slipped into my pocket. After wiping the hearth carefully, I washed my hands at a little wooden stand in the bedroom, looked in the glass at my blue and white waistcoat, took my hat and went out.

The house smelled abominably, the walls and stairs being greasy and foul. The tenants seemed very curious, for, as I passed, doors would open and heads be poked out, careless and dirty, one in a white cotton nightcap, another with most disorderly uncombed hair. A jeweller, in a small way of business apparently, had his shop on the ground floor, next door to an antiquary. Because of the sunshine, of the thick green of the trees opposite in the garden of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, it was evidently early summer, probably June. A few idlers were reading a public announcement stuck upon a bare wall of the Prison of the Abbey. I did not go in that direction, but turned down the rue des Ciseaux and so on into the rue du Four. There, in a small café, patriotically decorated with

a plaster bust of Marat over the door, I ordered and drank a bowlful of very good café au lait. The patronne, a large woman, not ill-looking, with her fichu caught together with a knot of tricolour, smiled upon me very agreeably. I returned her salute, addressing her as citoyenne Rativeau, and inquired about her cat Pom-Pom. Rativeau continued to talk, grumbling about the rising price of everything—the soul of the tradesman being the same at all epochs. Suddenly she said something that gave me a disagreeable impression: was the citizen quite satisfied with his lodgings? The people were honest, eh, and minded their own affairs? She had heard—from whence do such rumours spring?—that the house in the rue Marguerite was not considered to be quite—healthy. Should the citizen decide to change his domicile, why, she and her husband would be delighted to give him quarters above—excellent rooms, clean, quiet, cool. He would be safe with them.

What did the woman mean—honest advice or smiling menace?

I leaned an elbow on the counter where the glasses and spirit bottles stood, conscious of the thinnest iciest trickle along my nerves. I was aware that in those day any innocent person, with a record as spotless as a new civic-card, might not infrequently fall under suspicion in his section if any patriot with a personal grudge chose to shrug at

his name in some local committee meeting. How much did Rativeau know? I was exceedingly careful to show no alarm.

'You are very good, citoyenne,' I replied, looking squarely into her high-coloured face, that was friendly enough, though I could read no special meaning in her hard black eyes that seemed to have no depth to them, only a surface animation.

'If I change my quarters, be sure that I shall come to you. Have you heard anything definite in regard to the unhealthiness you mention?'

'Nothing in the world, citizen,' laughed Rativeau. 'I thought it might be damp so near the old prison, that was all.'

The woman had undoubtedly given me a certain uneasiness, but I shook it off. I left the wine shop, retraced my steps, and by one street or another reached the river. It flowed between its muddy banks, gay and fresh in the summer morning. I looked across to the long line of the Tuileries, the Pavillon de Flore bathed in light. The tops of the trees in the garden formed a dense wedge-shaped expanse of green, suggesting coolness and shadow on the terrace there. I had now a small task to perform, it seemed. I descended to the edge of the water at the risk of muddying my shoes. This portion of the bank was deserted. Beside the bridge, a fisherman sat motionless near a barefooted man in a blue blouse who was washing a

poodle. I picked up a stone and sent it skipping over the water, a harmless enough action were anyone to notice it. If one stone in a series flashed whiter than usual and failed to skip, who could say that it was a cardboard box and not a pebble? I was as pleased as a boy at this childish way of disposing of evidence that I had been burning papers in my room.

I then ascended the bank, crossed the bridge, and walked along until I reached a wicket and was able to enter the gardens, access thereto being not particularly easy. I made my way to the terrace of the Feuillants and seated myself on a bench. The Assembly was holding its meetings in the old Riding-School near by. I could hear the murmur of voices, the windows being set open.

I drew out a watch. It was past eleven o'clock. Apparently I was waiting for some one who failed to come. I took a book from my pocket and began to read. It was Collins's *Odes*. I must have had a good knowledge of English for I followed the lines with ease and pleasure. After some quarter of an hour had passed, I allowed my attention to be distracted by the sights and sounds around me—by the light print dresses of the women that flitted across the sand at my feet, by a small child in a tiny cap who crept close and laid a hand upon my knee only to dart off and hide in his mother's lap when I raised my eyes. The lemonade seller at

the gate had a noisy crowd about him, and the Savoyard lad, with his cage of birds that told fortunes, walked up and down with his nasal cry . . . I began to be more and more disturbed. In those days any deviation from the customary was alarming, and apparently the person for whom I was waiting was wont to be punctual.

It was nearly noon before she came. I saw her pass the wicket. She must have known my eyes were upon her, but she made no sign. Perhaps this was all according to arrangement. She descended the steps of the terrace and strolled toward the fountain basin. Presently she selected a retired seat under an elm. Her slender fair face was shaded by a drooping hat of Italian straw bound with white ribbon. Instead of her black silk cloak she wore to-day a kind of muslin shawl that the heat had caused her to throw aside and it now trailed over her arm. She had been walking fast and was breathless.

I took her hand in mine for an instant. 'Something has happened?' I questioned her low and eagerly.

'The worst,' she breathed. 'He has come back.'

'Impossible!'

'Oh, that it were!' she made a desperate effort to swallow her tears. 'His old nurse, Maman Cartier—you have heard me speak of her?—sent

me word this morning by her grand-daughter the laundress. He is there, with her, in hiding. What shall we do? She has rooms to let, in lodgings, in the rue des Fossoyeurs. He has smuggled himself in, how, do not ask me. He is here—and he is lost. I shall have killed him.'

She stared in front of her, her poor hands picking at the seams of the wooden bench on which we sat.

'You?' I murmured.

'I should have gone with him. I sacrificed him. I did not wish to go. I pretended to be afraid and he believed me. I was afraid of only one thing, and that was to be separated from *you*, from *you*. Now he has come back because he cannot live without me——'

'Impossible!' I cried a second time, overwhelmed with joy at her confession, but exasperated at her childishness. 'He has come back for that which is dearer to him than his life, or than you, however he may disguise it. He has come back simply and solely for his money. He thinks he can manage a second escape as easily as the first, and this time he will carry his gold with him. But what a frightful risk he causes you to run, for the money is—you know where—in the secret place in your salon. You must not receive him under any pretext. You must seem to go away for a visit, but you must come to me. I will take it to him, or the laundress.

We must arrange that, but you must not see him. You must be ignorant of his return. Do you hear me, Adrienne?'

I leaned over her, melted at her suffering, at that small white face so near my own, yet feeling the obstinacy of the spoiled child in her silence, in the hand that would not yield itself to mine.

'You, too, are foolish, Raoul,' she said, looking up at me. 'If I am in danger as his wife, you are in more as his secretary. You remember there are papers——'

'No, there are no longer any papers. I have destroyed them.'

'Why did you do that? Had you heard anything, suspected anything?'

'Nothing; do not alarm yourself. We must keep to the point. Morizot is here, endangering in the most desperate manner himself, you, Lucie, and me. He must be induced to go away again as quickly as possible, and the only way to do that is to give him the money. You must get it ready, but—no, you are not strong enough to pull back the panel. I had better go home with you and do it. Your concierge knows that I come occasionally to give Lucie a lesson. She will think nothing of it. Then we must get word to the rue des Fossoyeurs. It may be necessary to arrange a meeting with him, but that will be horribly risky. What madness!'

I was enraged at Hippolyte for his senseless selfishness. Rativeau's remarks had made me uneasy. Our good days were perhaps over.

'Lucie must take a note to Maman Cartier,' Adrienne murmured. 'She will be less observed than I, and you are out of the question. But she must not see him; she must have nothing to be frightened about—my poor little Lucie!' Adrienne clutched her hands together under her scarf. I was speechless with fury against Morizot.

'Come,' I said, getting up from the bench and standing in front of her to conceal her agitation. 'We have not a moment to spare. Lucie must take the message this afternoon, saying that I will be in such and such a place in the Luxembourg gardens, to-morrow. He must meet me there, if it be at all possible. It is only a step from Maman Cartier's. If not, we must devise some other means. Come!' I put out my hand and took hers. I did not trust myself to speak what was in my heart. She would know it from my touch.

We left the garden, she, by now, glad to lean on me. How often we had walked so in the *allées* at Caudebec—and now! It was very sultry and the streets doubly airless after we had crossed the bridge and left the river behind us. In the rue de Varenne many of the great houses were closed. Some had been sacked, the courtyard doors gaping wide, the long windows opening on the terrace broken,

morsels of wrecked furniture protruding, the legs of a table, the gilt arm of a chair, curtains that had been hacked with a knife, and, in the midst, the remains of a huge bonfire, the blackened brands being scattered as though devils had leapt through them.

As we neared the end of the street we could see the windows of the apartment, Lucie's bird hung in one, suspended over some pots of flowers. We crossed the roadway. The concierge was prompt at the window of her *loge*. The citoyenne Morizot's laundress had passed, leaving a packet of linen.

'With you?' asked Adrienne, looking frankly at the woman.

'Oh, no, she ascended. She wished to greet the little Lucie.'

A word or two was exchanged in regard to the heat, and then Adrienne dragged herself up the stairs, her hat concealing her face bent upon her breast. I seized her in my arms on the dusky landing, but she resisted, and I let her go.

'Not now, my dear,' she said with an attempt at a smile to soften her repulse. 'I am in an agony till I find out what Marcelle can have brought. I must devise a game of cache-cache with Lucie in my room while you are pushing back the panel. If you make too much noise, our laughter will drown it.'

‘Only be quick,’ I responded, ‘so that everything may be in order before evening.’

We had reached the door of her apartment. She let herself in with a key. I waited in the ante-chamber, oval in shape, and flagged with black and white squares. A classic bust on a pedestal stood by the door, a liberty cap rakishly askew on its plaster brow—some sport of Lucie’s. Adrienne called me and I went into the salon. A child sprang to greet me with a happy laugh and little bare soft arms around my neck. It was Lucie—it was Lucie—it was Fan! A horrible sensation of slipping, of falling, beset me. I was convulsed by the effort to save myself from—what? The familiar room with its high windows, its singing bird, its flowers, Adrienne taking off her hat at the mirror, Lucie with her warm lips against mine—all this began to waver, to blur. I no longer heard their voices, I no longer felt their presence. I was receding from them; I was being sucked down, or jerked up. After a suffocating instant I raised my head from the table. I was dizzy, stiff, aching yet exultant, and happier in a feverish way than I had been for years.

Here Roger stopped writing and threw down his pen. He was so deeply moved that he trembled. What he most needed was breakfast and a smoke. Gathering up the manuscript of the Cretan article,

it seemed as though he were another man, not the one who had written that last sheet less than twelve hours before. He was another man; he had walked with shades in Avernus.

WHEN HE reached the street everything about him had a vivid sharpness and brilliancy of appeal. The most commonplace objects became at once significant. It was doubtless his way of testifying to the superiority of his perceptions, as Roger. As Raoul, stimulation had come mainly from within. That may have been why these little shops with their shady morning look, the sun lying in patches on the tops of their awnings, had a quite personal attraction for him, so that he loitered by them, taking in all their coqueties—the hats in one, the laces and embroideries; in another, the vegetables, the fruit, the flowers, even to the string of rabbits, furry unfortunates, hanging upside down on the doorpost of the butcher's, their heads in knots of paper.

At his table on the terrace of a small café near the Cluny, Roger at last felt calm enough to go over in his mind some of the puzzling aspects of what had befallen him. First and most maddening was Raoul's perfectly natural indifference to his familiar environment. Because of this, Roger, in the grip of Raoul, hurried along on the flood of his anxiety, of his emotional intensity, could give no heed to any

streets save those through which they passed—the rest of Paris might have been non-existent. Raoul had sat calmly in the gardens, reading his English odes while historic voices were calling upon posterity, at his very elbow almost, in the old Riding-School. The murmur of their speech could be distinguished through the open windows. Unfortunately for Roger, Raoul was willing to let it go at that; he desired no closer relation with patriotic deliberations.

Detesting the principles upon which the Revolution had built up its imitation of a government, an individualist with a confused yet profound contempt for popular movements, Raoul, as Roger conceived him, young and ardent, loving his life for the sense of vigorous power that it gave him, Raoul must have found himself in constant need of assuming republican zeal, of making himself so quietly insignificant that he might pass unnoticed by moderates and hot-heads alike. His looks were against him; he was bound to be observed in spite of himself. He evidently interested women—note the untidy chignons on the staircase—he interested Madame Rativeau. He was constantly under the surveillance of the sentimental, if not the judicial eye, and no man could afford to be watched by any kind of an eye in the June of '92. Yet in that ominous month itself, he had sat in the Tuileries gardens, as foolishly engaged as one could imagine

—with Collins's confounded *Odes*. Roger was helpless. There were only those confused murmurs from the Riding-School to indicate that the men who would soon hold Paris by the throat were beginning to tighten their fingers.

But if Roger rebelled, Raoul was indifference itself. If he could keep his own head and Adrienne's till the worst of the storm had blown over, the old life might be taken up again in the old sweet leisurely stupid fashion. Raoul was not a fool, he was simply a man of his class and of his time. The modern world was in travail, but to him it was merely suffering from an indisposition that a constitutional poultice would allay. Not when Raoul had squeezed him into his own image, but now, when he was himself again, could Roger realize what he had lost. But since Raoul cared not a flip of his fine finger for Robespierre, or Marat, Danton or Camille, Roger was unable even to approach them in imagination. Raoul preferring the airy spaces of English poetry on these hot June days to any intercourse with the master cooks who were stirring the revolutionary broth, Roger was the irreparable loser.

But the most vivid impression of all he did not yet dare to think of. He deliberately thrust it into the back of his mind, determined to let it alone till he was calmer. He caught himself mentally edging toward it, and wrenched his will about, as you

might a baulky horse. He forced himself to any distraction the morning scene might afford, desiring not to think, but to see, and when does Paris ever leave the vagrant eye unfilled?

Smoking his cigarette after luncheon, he felt he might venture to lift the dressing and look at the wound, for it hurt, ah, it hurt, that moment in the rue de Varenne when he knew what street and what rooms lay before him, what he should see, and feel, when he had mounted the stairs. Only a child, and a child's soft arms about his neck, but some horror in the recognition, inexplicable to himself, had been sufficient to restore his equilibrium and to cast Raoul back into that limbo where he persisted in his restless secondary life.

Fan, the personality of Fan, had leaped upon him with the touch of that other child, and had jarred him into sanity again. Fan and Lucie, Evelyn and Adrienne continued to be related in his consciousness by a mystical bond of association that was disturbing. That Raoul had occupied his, Roger's, very rooms, one might have let pass, but that Adrienne and Lucie should have been the predecessors of Evelyn and Fan in the old apartment in the rue de la Chaise was to give almost too sharp a jerk to the long arm of coincidence. And yet, the experience had been his. As Raoul, he had gone up those so familiar stairs, had waited in that antechamber, identical with the present one

even to the bust; had entered the salon. The same, yet with a subtle difference of atmosphere: had seen Adrienne's head reflected in Evelyn's mirror, and had felt the child on his breast. In what amazing web was he entangled? He had no doubts now that Raoul would 'get' him again. He was too good a subject, too fundamentally sympathetic, too resistless to be allowed to slip. He would follow Raoul to the end, whatever that might be.

With the hints afforded by his morning with Raoul, it was possible to weave a certain fabric of conjecture. The unpleasant Morizot, with his estate in Normandy and his gold hidden behind a sliding panel, had put himself in safety and his family in danger by emigrating. That Adrienne the wife and Raoul the secretary were in freedom and apparently not under surveillance went to prove that they had convinced the authorities that they had been in ignorance of Morizot's designs. Raoul, no doubt, had communicated with his employer from time to time, as the burned papers seemed to indicate. He was tinged, at all events, with anti-civism and in a position that might become dangerous at any moment. He and Adrienne, tormented lovers, would be sure to commit an imprudence; Morizot's return would be discovered, and their last ride together would be a short and sinister one, with bound arms that would never embrace again.

So Roger, building up his libretto from stray snatches. He was consumed with the desire for the play to begin anew, so that he might walk forth as Raoul and experience, through him, the excursions and alarms of his desperate plight. What spasms of fear or of joy, of horror, or of resignation must have clutched the hearts of this man and this woman, caught in the red wheel of Revolution, to be broken on it as you would snap a stalk in two!

An hour had passed; Roger paid his score and strolled toward the river. He did not wish to see his rooms again until he had been able to overlay his present impressions with new and commonplace ones. The rue de la Chaise was equally impossible for the same reason. He had despatched a message to Evelyn when he had stopped in that post office to send off his packet to London, begging her to forgive him for disappointing Fan, but his head was troubling him. He hoped to see them both on the morrow.

Darling Fan! He shrank from the very softness of her appeal. He was too sore yet. He must become more callous before he ventured on that sacred ground again.

AND FAN it was who healed him the following day with her simple magic. There was spiritual medicine in the touch of her hand, in the gesture with which she rubbed her head against his shoulder, as though to make sure that he was really there.

She had dashed into the antechamber at the sound of his step, and they had met like long-lost comrades who had been separated by unknown perils, by land and by sea, or at least so said Evelyn, amused at their transports. He underwent a searching quizz from Fan as to the nature and derivation of that horrid headache. Had he gone to bed for it? a mark of the last extremity to the child.

Evelyn thought Roger pale, and how oddly he seemed to take in the room, as though he had never seen it before. She stood up, gathered her embroidery under one arm, and, with her free hand stopped to arrange her loosened hair before the glass.

In an instant Roger was on his feet, with something in the almost convulsive movement that piqued Evelyn's curiosity. She turned her head and glanced at him over her shoulder . . . Good

heavens, Roger Darrington, impossible! Never before had she caught such a revealing flash. Why did he look at her like that, if he——? Oh, she must be dreaming. She knew very well that she had no special attraction for Roger. She turned away from the glass and from him. How well he looked with that air of startled animation!

His look was normal now, and Evelyn, intensely feminine, regretted the quick smothering of that conflagration that is full of a wordless fascination for most women. She had always found him sympathetic; he was her superior, as she was Tony's. He quickened the best in her; with him she felt spiritually enlivened, not dull and heavy, almost vulgar in her complaisance with what really displeased her. But had she imagined that strangely revealing look? Was she sinking to the level of those tiresome women who discovered in every man of their acquaintance a potential lover?

With a word or two she made haste to leave the salon, Fan already opening books on the table, Roger following her with a gaze she could no longer distinguish.

With her vanishing, Roger almost groaned. Into what a trap had he fallen? Was he to be obsessed for the rest of his life by a shadowy love and a shadowy terror? Raoul's passion had impressed him so deeply that it could stir its blackened embers and shoot up a lurid spark in Roger. There was

no 'control' now; Roger was Roger and Evelyn was Evelyn. But, at a given moment, when she had imitated Adrienne's gesture before the glass, Raoul's undying emotion could so electrify Roger that the latter seemed moved by genuine feeling of his own, he alone knowing it to be vicarious. At such a moment Evelyn melted into Adrienne, and as Raoul had adored the dead woman, so Roger was driven to present the semblance of adoration to the living one. That was what his look had said, he had no manner of doubt. Good heavens, he must try never to let it happen again. He must see to it that his emotional instability had no other victim than himself.

He turned to Fan, obscurely aware that with her he was most completely his real self. She was new-born sanity, fresh, ardent, everything a tired head could crave. He made no bones at seizing what she offered so freely. The child asked nothing better than to be his largest creditor.

To-day, they were in rustic Italy, carried on the placid stream of the harmonious Virgil. Together they would lie out on the hillside, in the short grass well-cropped by the goats, Rome raising her shining head in the plain beneath them. From behind a stunted pine they could spy upon that red-cheeked young shepherd, blowing amorously into his pipe, calling with those wood notes wild that first rang across the sea from Sicily. Soon, from under the

beech boughs, would come stealing the maiden, Galatea or Delia, Amaryllis or Phyllis—the blowsy farm-lass transformed into the goddess by nature's madness, her lips stained with mulberry juice, her hands red from milking.

They would see wine poured from a two-handled cup, and wreaths woven for the altar of the wooden god made ages ago from a piece of a fallen plane-tree. The divinities of the spot having been propitiated, they would see human needs satisfied—that healthy hunger the shepherd feels, out all the long sunny day with his flock in the keen air of the hills. They would smell garlic and the wild thyme mingled in the steaming mess to be gobbled up with a wooden spoon. There would be ripe apples and a white cheese, mealy chestnuts, and fennel seeds to crack.

Then, the feast over, there would be music wilder and gayer, challenging the very inmost powers of the pipe. Galatea or Delia, Amaryllis or Phyllis would dance a measure learned from the swaying reeds by the river, wreathing her arms now white as Dame Hera's in the twilight, bending her towsled head now golden as Aphrodite's in the sunset.

But when the shepherd sees the evening star, he calls his goats together. His nymph, his goddess, his simple farm-lass once more, hangs upon his shoulder. All is quiet again when they have passed over the summit of the hill, save for the stir of the

crickets, or for the rustle of the snake gliding through the long grass.

Fan was enchanted with the courtly suavity with which these rustic vignettes were painted, not understanding it all, but realizing that hereafter she would look upon fields and woods, reeds by a sluggish river, even ugly goats, with a totally different eye. Fancy had been loosed, imagination had been given free rein, and the veil of beauty hung in her hands to drape as she chose. She was a little pantheist on the instant, reverencing the god in the music of the pipe, in the pungency of the bruised herbs, in the white arms of the curving river, in the dusky blue of the sky. Were she older she would have traced the same divinity in the eyes of Tityrus and Galatea, but now they were simply an elder brother and sister with whom she would have liked a wild laughing chase through the beechwood.

Her cheeks glowed, her eyes shone, as she sat close to Roger, one small finger following the lines. She had done well, assimilating what he had taught her, like an enthusiastic and intelligent boy. Her increasing power to read at sight delighted her, as though she possessed some talisman, as indeed she did, to enter at will, unchallenged, the inner Courts of Kings' houses. Everything was fine and smooth about this Virgil, and Fan, herself just budding, newly awakened to the pageant of natural objects, willingly saw them through his eyes, relishing the

sweetness, the ordered harmonies that later might cloy and irritate, stimulated by a stateliness that soon might come to seem but a concealment for the fatigue of a talent, splendid enough, but no more than a talent after all.

Roger, moved out of himself by her enthusiasm, tried to forget twenty years of his life, and absorb himself anew in what still remained a work of art, after criticism had done its worst. Hand in hand with Fan he felt he could do it, as their hour lengthened into two, whilst kids leapt for them on spurs of the Sabine hillside, milk bubbled warm in the bowls, shepherds piped to extinction of breath, and all the homely paraphernalia, laboriously 'collected' by this early seeker after what we now call 'atmosphere,' fell into the appointed place with a sonorous roll of the magnificent Latin verse.

'It makes me feel as though I had been wading in a brook on a hot day,' exclaimed Fan, with an attempt at relating criticism to life. She clasped her hands and held Roger with a gaze of gratitude. He had opened this magic casket of beauty for her, as actually as though he had put into her arms a veritable toilet-box, with a whole dazzling rout of gods and fauns on the bronze sides, and within the most engaging pots and bottles, with creams and essences as fresh as though you had just bought them in the rue de la Paix. With this collection she could 'make up' a world to suit herself, in-

finitely more seductive than the one that meets the casual eye.

This was quite in Roger's own vein, who liked his nature just a trifle denatured. He was conscious that a painted landscape often touched him in a way that nature never did. For him the picture was more vital than the reality it attempted to represent, by reason of that singular *plus* it had taken on from the mind that conceived it, the hand that wrought it out. He was not consciously inoculating Fan with his whimsical detachment from material concerns, but she drew in the virus with her every breath when he was beside her. Roger bulked in her childish eye like an intellectual Colossus of Rhodes. His temperament had the power to play upon her own, stringing her up to who knows what fantastic vows. Roger was unaware that small hands were toiling every day, in secret, to make higher and more shining the pedestal upon which he was unwittingly poised. He had an excellent influence upon her taste; he would never let her literary palate lose its delicacy, its critical edge. But his tendency to stumble across forbidden thresholds made him a dangerous guide. Fan must never be his squire when he is to ride out on that dusky plain that encircles the Dark Tower.

But he had put all that away from him this afternoon, pulled up with a jerk by his betraying look at Evelyn. That had acutely disturbed him. Fan

and Virgil helped him, however, and when Evelyn came in again, surprised by their long seclusion, Roger was able to meet her on their old ground. He knew she trusted and liked him. He let it go at that, and felt grateful to the mother of Fan.

But, alas, the mother of Fan was to seem disconcertingly absent to-day, and the appealing figure of Evelyn was to emphasize a kind of pathetic dissociation from this tall child, who looked better able to face the challenge of life than the slender woman by whose side she leaned so protectingly.

Tony was expected presently, and Evelyn hinted that it would be nice to have their tea now before he came. 'I am not hospitable, I know, but we are always so jolly by ourselves, and other people may very well drop in with Tony. Emilie will be in at once. Yes, I've told her about the toast.' This to Fan, whose taking on of housewifely airs was a tenderly cherished local joke.

Roger relaxed, letting himself go in this atmosphere that so pleased him æsthetically, that warmed him in friendly human fashion.

'Do you think one could get a reed-pipe in Paris?' asked Fan suddenly.

'If you made love to the property-man at the Opera, possibly,' suggested Roger, and the two fell into a teasing dialogue.

Evelyn watched them from her sofa. She was frankly puzzled by Roger, who was now as firmly

cased in his old brotherly attitude as though he had never thrown it off with a completeness that had been more eloquent than he realized. If there were two Rogers under this languid exterior, Evelyn meant to use her woman's skill to draw forth the one that could say such brilliant, disquieting things without uttering a word—the one that had seemed to tell her that she mattered supremely, that she wielded a power she had never even suspected she possessed.

It was exhilarating, but—here Evelyn looked at Roger and Fan—absurd. No one could turn on and off so completely the emotional current. She had allowed herself to dream that other Roger. Here she was honest enough with herself. She had been flirting with Tony, and the more serious he became, the more elusive did she. Nevertheless, the experience had stirred her, and nothing in Tony appealing to her fastidiousness, was she trying to find in Roger another partner for the age-old game she was playing, half-unconsciously even to herself?

Oh, she was ashamed. She turned her head restlessly. Roger and Fan—how well they came together! The best in both their natures leaped up, with the clearest flame, at personal contact. Evelyn knew she could never give Fan one fraction of what the child was getting from Roger. So be it; she was glad. But—*she* wanted something, too. Here

was the temptation to let her fingers fumble with certain stops, as unfamiliar as they were fascinating. But she must do it in the dark, with a baffling uncertainty as to her own real capacity for such music-making after all.

While they talked, the twilight had come, rubbing out the marks of modern taste in the old room, softening the too-audible voice of everyday, hushing it down to a murmur lest it should interfere with that low, insistent, half-desperate calling that the objects of a vanished century are known to emit in old rooms, in old houses, when that blind hour comes before the lamps are lighted, when the spiritual atmosphere is propitious, and some one sufficiently sensitive may turn an ear to their murmur of the past—a past disengaging itself almost in palpable form. It hangs like a kind of secondary envelope about these things once electrically charged by the passage around and over them of agitated life—the life of men and women tragically bereft, cut short, denuded, torn apart in those stifling days of the Terror.

Roger, in spite of himself, felt the gathering impulse to sink back into his abnormal receptivity to the suggestions with which this old room was saturated, to run the risk of seeing the image of Adrienne impose itself upon Evelyn, to feel in Fan the Lucie who had run to his embrace. Now it was almost dark, but on that 'other' day the sunlight

had bathed these walls, this floor, had sparkled on the gilded bird-cage, had drawn perfume from the pots of flowers—Adrienne at the mirror, taking off her drooping hat, and Lucie, her little feet flying over the polished floor to greet him. He had been about to move back the panel of some secret hiding-place when Raoul's control had snapped. Now Roger promenaded his eye about the walls, high and grey, with discreet lines of carving at intervals, enclosing narrow compartments any one of which might yield to pressure, if one knew just where to place the finger. What might one not find in the musty aperture thus disclosed? Certainly not Morizot's gold—perhaps a rotting morsel of linen, Adrienne's handkerchief dropped and forgotten, or a thick letter, now as harmless as a dead snake, then sufficient to send the writer to the Conciergerie.

But Roger, because he was deliberately willing a certain attitude of mind, failed to get what he wanted. He was sketching in a set-piece, and the result was dead and artificial. He was to learn his lesson presently. He could not put out his hand and give himself a dose of the strange drug he so much desired. In vain he sat now, passive, relaxed, more than ready for the stab of the needle. Raoul must always catch him unawares. That was a rule of the game.

Roger started. Evelyn had just finished speaking, and he hadn't the faintest idea what she had

said. Fan saved him by exclaiming, 'But, Maman, Mr Roger doesn't mean to leave Paris till I have begun the Iliad. Do you, Mr Roger?'

'Your really good pedagogue,' smiled Roger, 'is a slave. My young tyrant has promised me freedom as soon as she shall be ready for Homer. I give her till July, or rather she gives me. Until that time I stick.'

Evelyn laughed. 'I shall plan nothing then till after the fourteenth. Paris grows so stale and crowded. What do you do with yourself in the summer?'

'I generally go over to England, but this year I should like to stay on quietly, even in those stuffy rooms of mine, through the anniversaries of the "great" days—June, July, August, September—they come thick and fast enough.'

'Oh, the Revolution, you mean. I know you are sensitive to that period. Sometimes, in the Luxembourg, or in those streets in the neighbourhood, even I get a frisson. Do you remember the rue Casette, those grey blind walls and shuttered windows—behind them what tragedies! Even this very room must be steeped in such things. This apartment has scarcely been changed at all, certainly not this salon. Sometimes, when I pass a mirror, I find myself looking out of the corner of my eye for another face, for powdered hair. And the stairs! I drag up them, coming in late, so tired,

feeling as though I were carrying all the sorrow of all the women who had gone up before me, for centuries.'

In the gathering darkness Evelyn's silhouette, the delicate head, the disordered hair, might well recall to a nervously unstable Roger the woman of the Tuileries garden, the woman he had seized in his arms, full of despairing passion, on a dim turn of those very stairs.

He got to his feet abruptly, wishing he could shake himself free of the tantalizing glimmer of an earlier Adrienne that Evelyn seemed to throw back at him. In his secondary life, if she had been Adrienne, then she held him fast. In this primary one he was conscious to-day, for the first time, of an inclination that might surprise them both some day.

She, for her part, smiled to herself. Roger's curious look had excited her, had sent this pricking current through her blood, and she meant to probe him with every feminine device she could lay her hands on. A sense of unexpected power exhilarated her. Behind it was the irksome little mystery of Roger's self-control. He had 'saved himself' with a precipitancy that piqued. He must be made to stumble again.

Roger took his leave with an excellent imitation of his usual manner. It would have required a more subtle penetration than Evelyn's to detect the

emotional disturbance that was still shaking him, in that dark pool that never allows a revealing ripple to reach the surface, for was it not Adrienne's hand that seemed for a moment to rest in his as though to quicken his pulse-beats?

WHENEVER EVELYN showed a happy morning face Fan was ever ready to answer her with becoming radiance, eager to prove to her mother that one need never be tired or bored or pale or fretful if one had for companion a loving and resourceful daughter.

'Shall we go off somewhere?' asked Evelyn suddenly. 'It is still early; we can still catch trains.'

'Oh, no,' cried Fan, 'a train would spoil it, and if we went to Versailles it is so big and splendid, with all the people about, that we couldn't make a special day for ourselves, just you and me. They would make it for us, wouldn't they? Let us think of some little place, why, even the Bois would do, where we could hide among the trees and imagine all sorts of thrilling things.'

Evelyn was amused at the child's point of view. If *she* made Tony crude, what, in heaven's name, did Fan make *her*? 'The Bois let it be, then,' she smiled. 'There are quiet spots and some big beeches about the Bagatelle. We can take the open tram with some chocolate in our pockets for tea. One can scarcely reduce a real fête to simpler proportions. We'll "make up" all the gorgeous trap-

pings and be beholden to no man, only to the Bois for a green thicket and a couple of trees. Fan will stage-manage the rest, won't she?' The mother leaned over, a hand on the child's neck. 'But there is still our morning to be provided for. It promises to be hot enough for thin frocks and parasols. Shall we dawdle along the shady side of some of your old streets, and you may spin me revolutionary tales, and we can wonder and shudder on the very spot? Will that do? There is that old yellow house with the tablet. Somebody famous was born there in that summer of '94. How his poor mother——!'

'I remember something in the rue Servandoni,' cried Fan. 'Mr Roger told me that it used to be called the rue des Fossoyeurs. A poor man hid there and was found out because he ate too much chicken.'

'Extraordinary being!' laughed Evelyn. 'My heart warms to him for I love white meat myself. Let us be off, then. My shadiest hat is on the top of the cupboard. Can you manage it, if you jump up on a chair?'

They sauntered out arm in arm, avoiding the busier streets with their morning bustle and their female legions, converging from all points upon the Bon Marché. It was the hour when courtyard doors are apt to be open, and a grizzled person in a green cloth apron washing the pavement, or, mounted on a wooden step, clipping ivy on the long

wall, as though he were Silvanus shedding the fresh sprays about him, their leaves varnished bright in the sunlight.

In the Place Saint-Sulpice the water was splashing in the great stone basin, while a kind of flower-market had ranged itself under the summer green of the trees. Tiring of that they went into the church, glad to rest their sun-dazzled eyes in the pleasing gloom. A couple of rush chairs invited to relaxation. Nothing stirred. On a remote altar the candles showed, each a motionless dab of flame.

Fan might have recalled that the parents of the little Horace were married here, Robespierre attending, but if she did she kept the fact to herself, and Evelyn's consciousness was too much concerned with a certain closeness of stale incense to allow an historical shade to tap and obtain admission thereto. 'Let us go out again,' she said at length, 'I am afraid a service is beginning.'

They emerged directly in front of the opening of the rue Servandoni. 'It does give one a particular feeling, doesn't it?' said Evelyn, as they walked up the steep, irregular street, the tall old houses leaning over the footway, the doors blistered and out of plumb, swinging open to allow a more generous entrance of air and sunshine into the damp courts where green slime had gathered about the water-taps over the battered lead tanks. In one or two cases, by the side of the *loge* of the concierge,

could be seen the wide curve of a staircase, still furnished with its balustrade of hand-worked iron.

Few people were about. A woman's capped head showed at a window, a child in a black blouse darted into the low door of a shop where paper and tobacco were sold. A cloud passed over the sun. Instantly every gash and crack in the wounded plaster of these sordid house fronts sprang into a life of its own, that of shameful and pitiful decay.

'There is something horrible about this street, Fan. What was it Mr Roger called it—the street of the gravediggers? Think of being in one of those upper rooms, frightened to death, terrified of every chance step! The place is full of shadows. Where did your man hide who ate the chicken?'

'There, across the road,' answered the child, whose quick eyes had caught the tablet. 'It was Condorcet, you know.'

'Oh, was it?' replied her mother, with a distinct drop. 'He was as stiff as Euclid, that man. I am sure he sat up there, making diagrams as cool as you please.'

'He had a pretty young wife, Mr Roger said, who used to come here to see him at night, in secret. An old nurse, or a friend, I forget which, hid him, and it was she who brought so many good things to eat that the tradespeople suspected something. When he found that out, he went off by himself, so as not to get her into trouble. He may have been

stiff, but I think he was awfully brave, too. They caught him, you know, because his hands were too white, or something like that.'

While the child talked, they had been standing still in front of the Condorcet house, Evelyn tracing cracks in the pavement with the tip of her parasol. It was a much humbler dwelling than the ancient mansion facing them, and its open door gave a glimpse only of a dark pocket of a hall, the steep stairs rising at the back.

Evelyn kept her head bent as though she had seen enough. She had a curious feeling that she knew quite well how to mount those stairs, two flights of them, how to pause on the squalid landing, how to tap in a particular manner on the door of the back room. But it ought to be night, not this blue day of cloud and sunshine. This pavement ought to melt away into filthy cobbles; a gutter, malodorous and dark, ought to menace her hurrying steps. She seemed to herself to slip into this doorway, breathless, terrified, angry. Not love, but fear, had sent her up those stairs. Her head was swimming with a hundred ghosts of thoughts, impotent appeals of dead emotions. She was struggling to admit them to consciousness; she was eager for their message, straining her ears to catch their cries. But nothing broke through. She let herself down, dazed and suddenly tired. How hot the sun, flooding out from its cloud!

She mechanically put up her parasol, as she did so sweeping the house before which they stood with an eye that recognized, that noted, that remembered, with a heart—not her own—suddenly sick with abhorrence. While the spasm lasted, an instant, she heard herself say to Fan in a flat voice, ‘The nurse had a daughter who was a laundress. Why wasn’t she clever enough to save him?’

‘But how did you know that, Maman?’ inquired an excited Fan. ‘You know more than Mr Roger. What book was it in? You had never heard of the chicken, or did you only pretend?’

Evelyn caught herself up. ‘It couldn’t have been Condorcet, Fan, whose nurse had a daughter. I must have been thinking of somebody else; I must have dreamed that laundress. How silly of me! Let us walk on quickly out of this sun. The Luxembourg is just ahead of us. We’ll sit in the shade while we decide where to have luncheon. This old street of yours is as depressing as a mousetrap, and I seem to be the nervous mouse.’

‘Such a soft white one,’ retorted Fan, with a squeeze.

They entered the gardens by the Museum gate. Children and *bonnes* abounded. Evelyn and Fan strolled toward one of the cross-alleys where the trees were thick, and dragged their chairs across the pebbly path. In front of them, on a bench, a workman sat eating his lunch out of a paper, taking

careful bites at bread and meat, with luxurious pulls at some wine in an old mineral water bottle. Not far off a porter, with the name of some shop on the vizor of his cap, shared his crumbs, a broad smile on his face, with troops of sparrows, the sparrows always getting the better of the fat pigeons fussing in their rear.

'Pigeons are so foolish,' declared Fan. 'They are only amusing when they perch on the heads of the statues. One even sat on Bailly's forehead the other day. I felt like pushing it off. They might leave him alone. Let them roost on the poets and the queens.'

'Why this care for Monsieur Bailly's dignity—because he was guillotined? Does that make him sacred?' teased Evelyn.

'More or less,' admitted the child stoutly. 'It was cold when they took him out to kill him, and he shivered. They taunted him with being afraid, but he said that it was because of his rheumatism. I like that.'

'Oh, they were brave—the women, too. It was something to make a good death, I suppose. Your rue Servandoni has made me dream some horrible little episodes. Those ruinous houses must be full of ghosts, this garden, too—all Paris. People might have hidden here in the long summer days, suspected people who were in terror of chance meetings in the streets. The gardens were larger then,

neglected and overgrown. Perhaps your Condorcet escaped into this alley for a breath of air at night-fall.'

Fan edged her chair closer. Maman was responding brilliantly this morning. Something indeed had stirred Evelyn, something she could explain neither to the child nor to herself. It was as though a hand had shaken her, oh, gently, but insistently, trying to make a strange forgotten sediment rise up to stain with alarming images the clear walls of her consciousness. She must let it go no further. She determined to ask Roger about it. He might explain the mystery of the rue Servandoni. She wouldn't confess it to Fan, but the laundress had positively leaped to her lips, almost as though some other woman had spoken. Evelyn, however, was not going to spoil her happy day alone with Fan by being morbid. She turned a smiling face to the child.

'Revolution or no Revolution, that good man over there with his enormous sandwich has made me hungry. We must eat, Fan. Wait! I know what you are going to say, my frugal daughter, but no tea-shop for us to-day, not when you take your only mother out to luncheon. You can't put her off with that. There is a little place near here where all the fat old senators go, their eyes glistening with anticipation. That is the place for us. Do you catch the glint of my gold?' She

dangled her netted purse before Fan's laughing eyes.

Arm in arm they left the gardens, but as the clock of the Palace had not yet boomed its noontide strokes, they followed their first idea of going through the rue Cassette, so narrow that its pavement was still partly in shadow. It was grey and secret-looking, with that air of half-disdainful concealment that certain Paris streets share with those of Rome. Far back, in a court some one was playing the violin, and to its strains a young seller of plaster images came towards them, basket on back, green cap on black Italian head, a goddess in either hand.

'How proudly he steps out! Looking at him you could well believe the Seine had turned to Tiber. If it wasn't for carrying it, we might buy that too-plump Venus.'

After a luncheon that was all Evelyn had claimed for it, they vanished away on a yellow bus, their faces turned toward the quiet grass pools of the Bois.

The Bagatelle—that engaging specimen of playful architecture, that toy for grown-up dolls in powder and patches—was almost deserted. This fitted in well enough with their humour. They dawdled away into the shrubberies of this French attempt at an English garden, and felt how Horry Walpole would have appreciated the various mouldering 'gothick' effects of tower and temple.

Under the beech that Evelyn had prefigured they sat them down, and what more natural than that Fan should take the most blissful of hasty naps, her head in her mother's lap? Evelyn smoothed softly with her bare hand the masses of curling hair streaming over her knee. Her heart grew big at all Fan meant to her. How was she—how much less Tony—to judge what would be best for this child? Here in this cool tranquillity, in this cave of verdure in a June wood, with her child's innocent head in her lap, Evelyn's anxieties as to her future fell away from her as too sordid to be entertained. She was free, free to make a fool of herself, if she wished. Roger had unwittingly excited her burning curiosity, and now, flushed and still, she became wholly receptive to her dreams.

Fan opened her eyes in complete wakefulness as suddenly as she had closed them. She begged her mother's pardon for creasing her gown with her heavy head, but Evelyn said she liked it.

Young Fan now showed herself vividly impressed with her responsibilities. She had urged the Bois against the more florid charms of Versailles, and she must justify the choice. You really could not pass a whole afternoon simply sitting under a tree and then pretending that you had had an exciting time. It was obviously Fan's task to see to it that something happened—imaginatively be it understood. Even Fan did not look for a

sudden eruption of Carnival maskers in this green glade, or for the sound of Lulli's violin stealing from behind those lilac bushes. Nevertheless, the shades of something of the kind had to be evoked, and Fan set her wits to work.

She was presently in the full tide of a woodland interlude, improvising, in her sweet high little voice, as fluently as any gifted Italian prodigy. Maman's comprehension of what was taking place on that oval lawn that fronted them, with shrubs and drooping acacias screening in what must be the wings, was quickened from time to time by asides from the impresario, who was at once poet, stage-manager, and caste.

You gathered that the two young gentlemen in peach-colour and silver, in prune and steel, who must have escaped from some picture by Watteau, were met together to mingle their sighs over the loss of their two charming companions, Chloris and Rosalinde. An odd creature in a skin coat, playing a pipe, had lured the ladies down a forest aisle, while Myrtil and Sylvandre, in their peach and prune, had been talking to their comic servant, lifted bodily from Molière, as the audience of one recognized with an appreciative smile for the quickness of the child's memory.

The youthful gallants waved their arms, tossed back the be-ribboned curls of their vast periwigs, drew their dress-swords and vowed they would

pursue to the death this hind who had so bewitched their lady-loves. The servant, in a tremendous flutter, urged prudence, with a sly question, in the style of the period, touching the actual worth of any fair one. Myrtil gave the lackey a buffet, and started off (left). Sylvandre (right), in an attitude of listening that showed his silken back and flowing curls to the best advantage, made that gesture of exaggerated sensibility and extreme knowingness, so well understood on the stage, and withdrew with the servant behind an inadequate bush. You are immediately aware that he has pierced to the heart of the mystery, even if you haven't, and that all will yet be well.

Sounds of pipe-playing are now heard, rising and falling in a wild-wood rhythm, as if the night wind were sweeping over the reeds by the river. The thud of dancing feet upon the turf draws nearer and nearer, until, with a brisker clamour of the sylvan music, the creature in the skin coat, with bare leaping legs and tiny gold horns in his hair, springs into the centre of the lawny space, while about him, like gorgeous butterflies intoxicated with light and heat and sound, dip and swing, recover and relax the fair lost ones. The mauve and green of their vast hooped skirts, barred with the sinking sun, sway about their slender ankles like airy balloons tied with white silken cords. Their head-dresses of fluted lace, disarranged by their move-

ments, have allowed the coiled hair to escape, undulating in red-gold serpent lengths across their white shoulders.

For comic relief the servant here bursts out of the bush, with the cry of one who would chase escaped fowls back into the barnyard. At the same moment Myrtil appears, sword in hand. Chloris and Rosalinde collapse upon the grass, like great soft puffballs of silk and brocade out of which rise the slim bent stalk of their bodies, the white flowers of breast and cheek.

The creature in the skin coat, thus surprised, sticks his pipe behind his pointed ear, cuts a superb caper, and vanishes like a dying stave of his own music, administering, as he flits, a resounding clap to the head of the leering lackey.

Myrtil, with the airs of a conquering Alexander, assists the ladies to rise, a hand to each. Sylvandre appears, breathless and disordered, even his lace jabot in disarray. He hints that the dancing hind has been properly disposed of, and that it will now be safe for the ladies to return to the château. To reward such bravery, Chloris, the prettier lady of the two, sweeps him a splendid courtesy that loses nothing by the spread mantle of her hair. Myrtil, reduced to the secondary part, puts up his sword with philosophic calm, and ranges himself by Rosalinde, as you always must do at the end of a play. So Peach and Prune, with beautiful slow steps, lead

Mauve and Green, with every gesture of sensibility and devotion, straight off the green grass stage, straight off to their castle in Spain.

Fan threw her arms around Evelyn's waist, and lifted her animated little face to hers, eyes alive with delight in the reality of her make-believe. 'I love the faun, don't you?' she cried. 'Another time I'll have more of him in it.'

'Bravo, Talma, or should it be Corinne?' laughed Evelyn, kissing her child. 'I had no idea that Madame Berthe had grounded you so well. Take care, or you will become an unnatural little prodigy with your French verse and your Virgil. Has Mr Roger ever been favoured with anything like this?'

'Oh, no, he might think it silly. You and I understand. I do it only for you.'

Fan was so adorably loyal she sometimes made Evelyn ashamed. In the dim tracts the latter was exploring her feet might any moment find themselves caught in a trap. What place was there by her side for noble, free-stepping Fan, whose head should always be in the sunlight, whose eyes should range, wide and unafraid, over all her little world? Evelyn recognized with a pang her difference in fibre, in character, from Fan. She clung to the charming eidolon of herself that she knew to be enshrined in the child's mind, and determined, with the strength of her weakness, to keep the image

upright. If she achieved that, it would be something, even though the wreckage of tempting schemes should strew the temple floor. Evelyn had but the delusive firmness of a lily on a land-locked pool. Let but the faintest ripple move across its surface, and her immobility lay at the mercy of the first wavelet. But at this quiet moment she believed herself a free agent.

'Wouldn't you sell your soul for a citronnade, all cool and green?' she suddenly inquired of Fan, with the amiable intention of making the child as thirsty as she was herself. How she loved Fan's laugh, the twist of the young body!

'Dying for it!' Fan was understood to gasp. 'But we have the chocolates, you know,' she regretfully added, fishing out the silver-wrapped morsels.

Evelyn waved them aside. 'Well enough for children, but we've grown up in this last hour. You can't refresh a parched poet on sweet little brown squares—drink it must be. Come!'

The twilight freshness of the late afternoon was all about them, exhaled from the grassy stretches, from the shrubberies, from the tangled undergrowth. The figures of the mother and the child, bathed in a great burst of the setting sun, vanished down a glade that still knew how, coquettishly, in this cold century of mechanical progress, to preserve that air of detachment, of enchanted isolation so needed for any *assemblée dans un parc*.

IT WAS the end of the week before Evelyn saw Roger again. He and Fan had had their hours together without a break, and had even taken one walk. Mr Roger was writing, so Fan reported, hurrying his second article in order to finish it before the middle of July. He had a good month before him.

Roger threw himself with eagerness into this Cretan work, exasperated at the delay in resuming subconscious relations with Raoul. It was an occupation to which he clung, as favouring a condition of fatigue that Raoul had once made use of and might conceivably find convenient again. He worked through the long June mornings, his table near the window. The sounds from the boulevard mounted to mingle with those other more covert noises, the creaks and jarrings that always animate old rooms. Half of his mind was busy with evocations of a past so incredibly remote that it might well have had its birth from Mediterranean foam, like Dame Venus, when those blue waves first burst into their preordained basin, when the islands rose like flowers on its breast. The other half of him,

restless, nervously unstable, seemed to listen for the backward splash of a past scarcely separated from his own present by more than a beggarly hundred years.

He would be back in that Paris June when the rabble surged all one long hot day through the Palace rooms, over there across the river where the spindling trees of the Tuileries gardens cast a thin shade on the sandy stretch beneath them. Or would it be that August morning when, in the heat, the leaves of the elms, blistered and brown, fell curling on the walks, to be rustled over by mob, and National Guard, by Louis in the midst, calm enough to remark how early the leaves were dropping that year? All through the afternoon they would be sacking the Tuileries, tossing the gilded, brocaded chairs out of the windows, lolling on the down beds, pawing the soaps, the perfumes, the delicate powders of the Queen's toilet-table, secreting what they did not destroy. That night, it is said, a patriot brought some sponges from Antoinette's dressing-closet to Lucile Desmoulins. She and Danton's wife, who had kept together all that day behind drawn shutters, terrified of they knew not what, doubtless fingered with interest these intimate souvenirs, scarcely dry from royalty's bath. In those days one could pick up most amusing relics, things of value, too. The man who kept the bric-à-brac shop on the ground floor of the house in the

rue Sainte-Marguerite had made this observation for himself, and on that August afternoon, shots and drum-taps taking the place of the earlier clamour of the tocsin, he had pushed up to his own door a handcart at the nature of whose contents the neighbours made a shrewd guess, covered as the loot was by a great crimson hanging. A man had to live, and if things were thrown out of window——.

The vividness with which Roger recalled these items, read sometimes, somewhere, showed that the barrier between his two stages of consciousness was wearing thin.

One afternoon he found himself slack and listless, with a style that he felt to be preposterous, and an imbecile grasp of what should have been telling facts. It is no wonder that reading over his manuscript in this spirit, he pitched it into the drawer, snapped-to his ink-pot, and determined to give himself a bit of relaxation before going on. His head ached; there seemed to be no air in the room; madmen might as well have been in possession of the boulevard from the racket they made; demon-horses, too, and motors that had developed human intelligence along with hydrophobia—how they hissed and reared and fought upon the roadway!

His one idea was something cool and quiet and soothing where he could stretch himself and forget to count the throbs in his head. The nearest

refuge answering this description was the grey salon in the rue de la Chaise. He half hoped no one would be in, for Emilie would make him comfortable while he waited. The street, as he turned into it, had its usual look of conventual seclusion, a trifle tarnished and furtive with its blank walls and shuttered windows. There was thunder in the air, a thickening of livid cloud, a hush.

Roger mounted the stairs half-somnabulistically, in the premature darkness of the approaching storm. With an odd kind of multiple familiarity he saw himself admitted to the antechamber. Madame was at home. Would Monsieur wait for a few moments?

While he did so, he paced silently from end to end of the long room. It seemed incredibly cool after his own disordered quarters. With an eye that knew every convolution of the cornice, every line of the panels, every pattern in the parquet, Roger sauntered, taking in, silently noting with an almost passionate attention this room in which he found himself. It must hide secrets throbbing just beneath the surface, living their half-life in the old wood, in the tarnished gilding, in every turn and fold . . . There was the matter of that sliding panel. Surely he must remember where he had set his fingers, inserted his knife-blade, perhaps . . .

He stood still with his hands in his pockets, his gaze raking attentively the walls that in their im-

mobility and their symmetry seemed to resist, almost with insolence, his imaginative attack. No clue. The room was growing darker, a dull roll of thunder sounding in the unnatural stillness like the beat of a drum.

Evelyn appeared in the doorway in a thin white frock with a fichu crossed over the breast. She moved so lightly to meet him that Roger was not aware of her until she stood before him. What was there in the face uplifted to his own that seemed to strike him a tiny staggering blow upon the heart? What message did her eyes give him, her lips?

Poor Evelyn was uttering the most banal of welcomes when Roger seized her hands. His back was to whatever light came through the windows, and she was unable to make out the expression with which his eyes fixed her. His hands told her much, and she was breathlessly wondering how she could meet this crisis that made her vaguely triumphant, when the enigmatic creator of it staggered, released her, feeling about him blindly. She got him into a chair, shaking with her own nervous reaction. Was he ill? What should she do?

She called Emilie, and together they managed to stretch the hapless Roger upon the sofa. He opened his eyes that looked reassuringly sane, said something about his head, and sank off to sleep. Evelyn knew how to feel for the pulse. It seemed normal enough. They laid a compress on his forehead,

and Emilie was prodigal of toilet vinegar. When Evelyn was alone with her patient, with this Roger limp on her couch, who could wonder if she hung over him, touching him, moved out of herself, emotionally shaken?

Fan found them in the dark when she slipped in an hour later, having left Madame Berthe at the door. The child turned white when her mother lighted a candle and she saw who was on the sofa. She knelt close by him like a pitiful bird. Evelyn could hardly drag her away to a hurried supper.

Roger's breathing was perfectly natural, so Evelyn decided to do nothing till midnight. If he did not rouse himself by that time she would send for her doctor. She could not have him on her conscience longer than that. Fan, wide-eyed and determined, would not leave her place by Roger's side. When she grew drowsy she laid her head in her mother's lap, and Evelyn, fluid, soft, and melting as she was, felt herself capable of hardening into a protective shield about these two beings, so beloved, so helpless in their sleep.

The storm had spent itself, and a breeze came up with the mounting moon. The curtains had been pulled back for the air, and the pale light spread itself in broken splashes over the floor, over the dim group by the sofa, mottling the vague shadows cast by the pair of candles.

When the time was nearly up, close upon mid-

night, Roger opened his eyes with a long sigh. He expressed no surprise at his posture, at the presence of Evelyn by his side, at Fan sitting at her mother's feet. He accepted the tableau in the moonlight as though it fitted in with some dream from which he had just awakened. In fact, he appeared to luxuriate in the sense that for once the transition from sleeping to waking images had run on, smooth as silk, without a jar, keeping him still in touch with the two figures that, in the curious mixed light from moon and candles, might very well seem to be other than they were.

'Ah, my dear one, what a night!' he murmured, looking, Evelyn thought, as though he saw beyond her, but with what a depth and warmth of passionate meaning in his tone!

Fan broke the spell by scrambling to her feet, crying, 'O Maman!' Roger sat up, caught her to him, whispering something in her ear. Then the veil over his imagination split from top to bottom, and Evelyn, who was staring fascinated at his eyes, saw the unsteady light she loved die out of them, saw the immediate re-birth of his self-control harden the face that an instant before had seemed incredibly tender.

'Good heavens, Mrs Wynne, what have I been letting you in for?' He drew his hand across his forehead. 'I feel almost light-headed. Was I stupid enough to faint? It was this afternoon—

but now it is night. How can I ever forgive myself? '

Evelyn crushed down a pang of disappointment. Not a look, not a hint of the man who, a moment before, with a word, had made her heart beat furiously. Where had he sunk to, that other Roger? With what ardour she desired to know!

She told him briefly of his attack, of his long sleep; her reluctance to send for a doctor, knowing how he would hate that. How was he feeling? What could she give him? Roger declared himself to be all right now, but extremely confused at the trouble he had given them. He promised to let them know the first thing in the morning how he did. With the pressure of friendly hands, with sympathetic murmurs they let him go, Evelyn, like a phantom in her white gown, hanging over the dark well of the staircase with a candle in her hand to light him down. He looked up at her with a painful tightening at his heart. How like she was to that Adrienne from whose beloved contact he was still only half-tremblingly loose!

Fan deepened the mystery of which Evelyn was nervously aware by saying, as she made ready for bed, that she was sure Mr Roger had not been really awake when he had first opened his eyes. 'He called you "dear one," didn't he, Maman? which of course he wouldn't have done had he been quite himself, and he whispered in my ear, quickly,

"Lucie! Lucie!" He must have been dreaming, dear Mr Roger.'

The object of their solicitude passed a troubled night. So Raoul had caught him, as he had feared, in the presence of others, but Evelyn had doubtless seen nothing particularly striking in his 'attack,' and, as such, it would be put into the cupboard of medical mysteries into which no one pried. The fact to be emphasized was that Raoul had swept over his horizon once more, giving him an enormous sense of life, of vigour, of emotion such as he had never before experienced in all the current of his aimless days. But he was troubled, troubled and unnerved by Evelyn's likeness to Adrienne. He realized that his self-control might be severely taxed in the future if she, in her haunted surroundings in the rue de la Chaise, should continue to reproduce with uncanny accuracy the atmosphere, the movements, even the gestures of Adrienne. As to Fan, Roger frankly shrank. It was hideous to have her warm hands, her eager head against his shoulder, recall the tragic pressure of that small doomed Lucie.

He could lie no longer in his uneasy bed. Let him get on with his narrative while it was still fresh in his mind, every moment stamped in his memory with the vividness of an abnormal experience.

It was dawn, and in the pale light, in the quiet of his room, he took out his note-book, and at

Raoul's table tried to bring back the vision of dead days and nights, lived through with panic terror at his heels.

As he made it out, Raoul succeeded in getting him just at the moment that Evelyn came in the salon. When he took her hands, when he looked at her, she was Adrienne. As Raoul, he had felt a momentary qualm of faintness; as Roger he had staggered and become unconscious.

I evidently had a momentary sensation of fatigue, even of faintness. When I opened my eyes, Adrienne was before me, her face pale and frightened. I lost control of that decently civil manner she exacts from me when there is any chance of our being interrupted, and seized her hands, pulling her towards me. We had our moment. She then repulsed me. I took a seat by the window, concealed from view of the street by a curtain. It was sunny, like mid-afternoon.

'I cannot but feel how dangerous it is for you to meet him, openly, in the daytime,' she whispered close to my ear. 'You say his disguise is convincing?'

'Absolutely,' I answered. 'The first time I crossed him on the path I could scarcely believe it was he who had given me the signal we had agreed upon. Do not alarm yourself. He has powers on which to rely of which we do not dream. If he

were only away again! It drives me to fury to think of the danger to Lucie and to you.'

'Oh, to me,' she sighed, pressing her hands together. 'Raoul, I must confess: I have been to him. I went to that house two nights ago. I saw him. He is horrible.' She shuddered as I stared at her. What madness to expose herself! We should need all our wits now. I got up and began walking about the room. She tried to quiet my agitation—poor foolish beloved Adrienne.

She was speaking again. 'I went very plainly dressed, with a little basket of linen Marcelle had left with me. I slipped into that black corridor when the concierge was in the back room. No one saw me, I am sure. No one passed me on the stairs. I tapped on the door in the manner Marcelle had told me. He was there.'

I did not interrupt her. She must have known what I was feeling by my face.

'He is now only anxious to get back to England. He told me that since you had brought him the money, he is now free to act on whatever plans he has made. He wishes me and Lucie to join him. Never! Never!'

Now she came to me of her own accord, and silently my pressure told her all that I dared not say. She glanced at the clock on the mantel-shelf. 'It is time for you to go. He will be waiting. Oh, what horrors he makes me endure!'

I tried to reassure her. There was danger, of course, but I made light of it.

'It will be safer for me not to return here,' I said. 'Come to me, at six o'clock. Wait for me, if I am not there.'

I took my hat and left her, the tears not dry on her cheeks. The streets were full of people, more than usual it seemed to me for that quiet quarter. There were knots of men lounging in front of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. I turned into a street that would lead me to a more retired portion of the gardens, away from the Palace. It was in one of those creeper-tangled paths that I was to meet Morizot. I waited till nearly six o'clock, covering my fear and impatience as well as I was able. He did not come. As I walked in the shrubberies, crushing down my anxiety, growing to alarm as the shadows lengthened, as I sat on a bench under the lime-trees with the birds singing in my ears, with the golden burst of sun sinking lower and lower down the tree-trunks, I think I tasted all the bitterness of love and hate—love for her, hate for that skulking hound.

I dared not wait longer in the gardens. I had already been there long enough, manifestly impatient of a broken rendezvous that I trusted any curious observer would take to be an amorous one.

I left the gardens. It was long past six. The air was deliciously fresh, the upper heavens all gold

and blue. I made the best of my way back to my lodgings, crossing Madame Rativeau in the rue du Four. She returned my salutation and seemed about to speak, but reconsidered and passed on. She was serious, without her accustomed smile. Business was doubtless bad.

I sprang up the stairs, nervously eager for the sight, the touch, of Adrienne. If disaster came, let it find us together. I had no other prayer than that selfish one with which to stun the unheeding ears of the gods.

My room was empty. She had failed me too. I threw myself into my chair, my head on the table, trying to shut out the thronging images of despair that assailed me, mounting to me in the sounds from the street, even in the cries of children, in the hoarse murmur of voices at dusk, the thud of a pike against the stones. There are guards set about the Abbey now. I can see the windows of the prison from where I sit.

It grew dark. I may have fallen asleep. It was nine o'clock when I sprang up, hearing her fingers at my door. I drew her in, spent and trembling, inexpressibly touching in her discomposure.

'There was a woman on the stairs,' she panted. 'How she stared at me! Do you know who she is?'

'A fellow-lodger, doubtless. Women are eternally curious. But why are you so late? Have

you heard anything? He never came. I waited till I was afraid to wait any longer. Have you had news of him. Is it bad? Is it dangerous? Tell me, Adrienne!'

I was alarmed at her silence. She sat in my chair, bent over. I took her hands, cold on this stifling night. She fetched a long breath and shot her bolt.

'He has gone, without a word or a sign. Maman Cartier sent Marcelle to me with the news.'

'Did he not leave, perhaps, for the meeting with me, and might he not have been arrested in the street?'

'That is possible, but I do not think so. No, for he went away in the middle of the day, long before the hour set for you. He carries his money sewed in his clothes. He had nothing but his sword-cane, and who knows what small bundles in his coat pockets. If they should take him, would it not be because they knew him to be who he is, in spite of his disguise, in spite of his false papers all in order?'

'If they should take him!' I groaned. 'Adrienne, Adrienne, why did you ever go to that accursed house? I warned you. You were cleared, you were safe—and now?'

I walked the dark room in agony. The single candle on the table enabled us to see each other, no more. I found myself staring at the wall-paper, at that grey column, at that wreath, repeated with a damning iteration that echoed dully through my

brain. I scarcely dared to look at her, at that white neck rising from the striped silk of her bodice, at those hands so helpless and so cold.

Presently I spoke more calmly. 'There is always the possibility of his escape. He may have been told to leave at once. He must make his way to the coast. He did it before, he may do it again. We must be reasonable. If he has been arrested, we shall hear of it only too soon. There will be a domiciliary visit in the rue de la Chaise, at the least. You have nothing? No papers? You are absolutely sure?'

She made a sign of assent. 'And you?' she murmured. I shrugged my shoulders. She rose, pulling her scarf about her. She had a little painted fan in her hand.

I thought it best for her to slip out first, I to join her later in the street. I do not know whether this plan were well or ill, for, opening my door some few moments after Adrienne had left me, who should stand upon the landing but Madame Rativeau. For the second time to-day her hard brilliant eyes took their fill of my face. God knows what she was searching for, or what she found. It was she who, earlier in the evening, had passed Adrienne upon the stairs.

I bowed and would have gone my way without speaking, but she broke into a voluble account of a sick neighbour, pointing as she did so to a door in

the rear, from which she had evidently come. Under cover of this she contrived to murmur: 'Take care!' I affected not to hear. Again she whispered: 'One stifles here. The lodging I spoke of in our house is still vacant. My husband could be of use to you. He is of growing importance in his section. Think of it.'

We had been going down the stairs side by side. There had been no help for it. Her words congealed me. She knew of something in the wind—the Morizot affair? Was she sincere in her offer of help? Dared I risk it? I thought of Adrienne. This woman might befriend her. I turned to Madame Rativeau, with an emotion I could not keep out of my voice.

'Danger to myself, citoyenne, I must face with what composure I may, but danger to a woman—some one very dear to me——'

Fool that I had been! The lightning change in her face warned me to withhold the name. The tiger sprang into life behind those eyeballs, in the hand she laid upon my arm, the claw itching for the scratch. Her words leaped over one another. 'The woman you received in your room to-night, the woman who passed me on the stair, the woman who is now waiting for you in the street, the pretty sister, is it? the aristocratic cousin? You fear danger for her?'

I could have struck the sneer from her mouth. I

trembled with anger. She misunderstood, like the impassioned shrew she was. 'Forgive me,' she muttered. 'You fear something for your friend. She has given cause for suspicion? Much news is discussed in our café. Rely upon me, citoyen. But her name—her name!'

The desperate impatience in her voice steadied me. A lie would have been futile. 'Anything touching a citoyenne Cartier—a domiciliary visit, you understand, an hour's warning to steady the nerves——'

'And to burn what is necessary,' put in Madame Rativeau dryly. 'I comprehend. And you will remember, perhaps, the notorious unhealthiness of this house—so damp, so airless these August nights. It is too near the Prison that, they tell me, grows more crowded every day. The enemies of the people—the dogs! Have you heard of the priests in the house in Vaugirard—crows that would pick our bones?'

The woman sickened me. She had found out what she wanted, or thought she had, so she let me go. She stayed in the doorway while I passed out into the street.

My poor Adrienne! I saw her slim figure flitting down the rue des Ciseaux, lit by the flare of a light outside a wine-shop. I took her arm in mine and we walked quickly. In the distance we could hear shouts from the direction of the Croix-Rouge. The

people were ready for a tumult, exciting themselves with the mad arguments, the impassioned cries of their pot-room orators. In the dull, heavy, airless night something was brewing. We avoided the carrefour and entered the rue de Grenelle. Here was silence and darkness once more in which to feel the dead weight of our personal predicament.

'Keep close to-morrow,' I whispered in her ear, as we neared the house. 'I must not go in with you. Kiss the little Lucie for me. I shall find some means to let you know if I discover anything. You must be prudent, Adrienne, think of——'

'I think of no one but you now,' she replied quietly, monotonously. The avowal brought the blood to my face. That cursed Morizot! I said nothing more. What was there to say? We were in the stream, whirling with the current, with the black water up to our necks.

Her door was open, the concierge dozing outside for a breath of air. Temptation overcame me. I went in with her. What did it matter? A blessed moment longer with her in the stillness, in the yet undesecrated room that might so soon echo to who knows what brutal footsteps.

She sank down on the sofa in the darkness. I went to the window and leaned against the side of it. The strong scent from the pots of flowers, baked by the heat of the day, met me. That perfume almost brought the tears to my eyes. At the

sound of an opening door, at the murmur of voices, I turned. A young woman had come out of Lucie's room. She carried a candle in a shade. 'Oh, Monsieur Raoul!' she cried. Adrienne addressed her as Marcelle. 'Have you any news?' She made a negative gesture. She had come to sit with Lucie who was now sleeping. Everything was quiet. No one had inquired about their lodger. He came—he went, *voilà!* She was a stout, heavy creature with a red and friendly face. Finally she left us.

Still I lingered. It was torture to tear myself away from Adrienne to-night. Madame Rativeau had pointed to the handwriting on the wall. I sat on the floor at Adrienne's feet, my head against her knees. To-morrow who knew where we might be? A clock somewhere in the room shook out a feeble chime. There was a rustle, a murmur, and Lucie in her white nightgown, her big eyes shining from their sleep, crept to where we sat in the darkness. With a sob, her mother caught her to her. In that moment I seemed to suffer, in anticipation, the worst that could befall. The child tore at my very vitals. Leaving her mother she threw herself on my breast, half-laughing, excited as at play. Again, as once before, with the touch of her warm little body against me, I seemed to be slipping, falling, desperately trying to save myself, with aching fingers that clutched upon nothingness. 'Lucie! Lucie!' I cried, but it was all over.

The room in the rue de la Chaise wavered and dissolved, the figure of Adrienne on the sofa sank away behind a greyish veil, and I opened my eyes, I, Roger, but still in the rue de la Chaise, still in the room Raoul had entered what minutes, what hours, what a century before! There by my side, in a low chair, sat—who but Adrienne? ‘Ah, my dear one, what a night!’ I was faint, giddy. Once more the child was in my arms. ‘Lucie! Lucie!’ We three had completed the circuit.

Then came the real awakening. If Raoul released me as abruptly as he had taken possession, Evelyn maddeningly took on the image of Adrienne, and my brilliant Fan stole out of my arms like the child Lucie, warm and rosy from her sleep.

Roger found himself staring at his walls, as Raoul had done, with a retrospective tightening of his throat. He was deeply moved. He had had a heady draught, and no wonder his senses swam. He realized that he must keep away from Evelyn for a few days until her resemblance to Adrienne had worn off. He feared that he would betray himself, should she give him even the faintest opening, and he was not unaware of her new manner towards him, of the interest and inclination deepening in her eyes. He knew that no living woman had ever moved him as this Adrienne of his abnormal dream. For her he died to self, in a kind of

glorious surrender, each moment that she was in his sight. His life no longer meant anything personal to him; he used it only to submerge himself intoxicatingly in her. No living woman had ever had such powers as this over him, least of all Evelyn. And yet—the temptation! Roger could now conceive a moment, self-control gone under the obsession of his secret passion, Evelyn usurping some likeness of the flesh to the lost Adrienne, when he might stumble into an intrigue with her that, sanity returning, would poison all his days, for the real Evelyn meant to him simply the mother of Fan.

And Fan brought him back to Lucie. How more than strange that the most vivid of his impressions as Raoul should have to do with just that headlong recoil, that violent mustering of all his forces, that despairing effort to keep his balance on what might have been the slippery edge of a precipice, on that oily surface that glided away beneath his feet. Repugnance, sickening distaste mingled with the terror of it. His whole being drew itself together at an outrage and insult his manhood was powerless to avenge. Why should the touch of the small Lucie release this rush of poisoned waters, to which he must stoop, of which he must drink? The very intensity of the shock was sufficient to loosen Raoul's hold, and to shoot Roger once more to the surface of his ordinary life. Raoul must have met

his death at some such moment of furious reaction, and he died anew each time before Roger, with nerves stretched to breaking-point, with sweat upon his forehead, could open his eyes once more upon the world that he called his own.

Increasingly this world of his became but the covering, torn here and there, for another world that strove to catch just such a musing morbid eye as his. In this room where he sat, invaded by brisk, early-morning sounds, he could now project the allure, the appeal of other days. The walls lost that dull modern paint, and papered themselves with a column and a wreath. Adrienne's little fan lay on the table by his elbow. Roger even knew the touch of the smooth sticks against his lips. By an effort of imagination unhealthily stirred he could draw around him the atmosphere in which Raoul had moved, could feel the heat and the ache—Roger's own now—of his passion for Adrienne, could taste the bitter mixture of suspicion, of fear for others, that ran through his veins at the snaky, amorous gaze of Madame Rativeau. These rooms, these stairs, the house itself were haunted ground. The wood of that door had felt the brush of Adrienne's gown, her feet had touched these worn boards beneath his own.

Oh, the stifling summer night (Rativeau had said that it was August), the crowded Prison of the Abbey, the wretched priests in the rue de Vaugirard

(August deepening to September)! Had the tenth passed, or was the unrest even Raoul had noticed in the streets symptomatic of the heated days and nights that must have preceded the assault upon the Tuileries, the imprisonment of the King and Queen? If this were so, his own personal danger, growing out of the probable arrest of Morizot, would come to a climax in those wild days that culminated in the massacres, beginning to stain Paris with blood on the afternoon of that September Sunday—the savage answer to Longwy.

Roger moved restlessly in his chair. He began to re-read his notes. He saw how much more intimately he was experiencing the feelings of Raoul; he was less the mere observer, more and more the participator. His imagination was aflame; Raoul's passion for Adrienne was becoming his own. In order not to think too much of that disturbing element, he began to chafe at Raoul's will that held him, Roger, bound; outside of Raoul's personal predilection he was helpless. In the dark streets vistas tempted to exploration in vain; in this monstrous Paris of palace and hovel momentous issues were being decided; history was being made in that raftered hall of the Cordeliers, a stone's throw from where he sat, yet he heard nothing; from the mountainous slope of the benches of the Jacobins words were being hurled like knives. If Raoul had but willed it, Roger might have penetrated into those

twisting alleys of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the very ground beneath his feet seeming to stir with the fecundation of liberty or of license. He might have moved with the press for ever active about the forbidding prison of La Force; he might have stood to watch the tumbrels being driven into the courtyard of the Conciergerie; he might, on one of those warm, airless afternoons have crossed a certain precise figure in a blue coat, walking for exercise in the Champs Élysées, followed by the leaping dog Brout. In the thin, tight-lipped, serious face what indication of the Robespierre who was to hold this Paris in the vice of Terrorism, that slim hand with down-pointed thumb for friend and foe alike? Or, might he not have looked his fill at Camille—fascinating, voluble, doomed—rushing to his printer's in the rue de la Harpe with the manuscript in his pocket that would be a household word on the morrow? At Lucile, fair little large-eyed woman; at the Queen, even, with that proud Hapsburg neck set at the angle of a hauteur that was physical rather than temperamental?

But Raoul troubled his fine dark head about none of these personages. The Revolution gathered its Niagara-like impetus around him, and his one thought was to save the woman he loved from setting her feet in that torrent, turning suspiciously red in the livid sunset, as Fouquier-Tinville was to

see the very waters of the Seine dye themselves under the arches of the Pont-Neuf.

The summer sun was lying in sticky patches on the window-sill when Roger got up and stretched himself, throwing his note-book into the drawer of the writing-table. Thus would he clear the whole episode out of his mind. The most elementary prudence counselled that. Just now, when he had looked up to see the sun at his window, to feel the creeping heat in the room, he had recalled Madame Rativeau's remark as though she had spoken the moment before, as though she were a woman he might meet as he opened his door. It was becoming too real to be safe.

Plenty of cold water and a brisk toilet steadied him. On his way to breakfast he would send the promised message to Evelyn, and would call upon her in the afternoon to report himself and to apologize once more for the extraordinary evening to which he had treated her. Meanwhile he had time enough in which to recover his self-control, and he needed it, for to-day all this Paris world about him appeared to take on, with uncanny unanimity, a revolutionary tinge. He must minimize absolutely, with all the force that he had in him, the unhappy coincidence that Evelyn should occupy the sometime apartment of Adrienne Morizot. Her very fairness, her small helpless hands, must be considered strictly as Evelynesque characteristics, peculiar to herself

alone, not to be allowed to haunt him with a sickening nostalgia for that other woman they too poignantly recalled.

The salon into which Emilie showed him was empty. That gave him a moment to orient himself, and Fan filled the next. With her delighted smile at seeing him, she warmed and touched his heart as no other living thing had ever done. They sat together on the sofa while he assured her of his well-being. That off their minds, Fan deflected the conversation to what might roughly be catalogued as 'tales of Greece and Rome.'

They were haggling over poor white devoted Iphigenia on the Taurian strand, when Evelyn came up to the screen unseen. A throb of pleasure quickened her. She took thankfully what her eyes gave her. Roger was goading Fan, by diplomatic opposition, into a frenzied denunciation of Agamemnon, whom she considered a beast, and of Achilles whom she hated to think a cad. She brushed aside the will of the gods as if it had been no more than a whim of the celestial chancelleries, and would have had Iphigenia 'put up a fight' even on the altar-stone.

'Wait till you meet Admetus,' laughed Roger. 'Save some of your adjectives for him.'

'Was he horrid, too?'

'He is commonly supposed to have been a trifle careless of his wife. The woman question had not

been invented then, you know, but Euripides was hot on the scent. But to go back to our Iphigenia. If such an important thing as a fleet could not start without the sacrifice of a small white princess, why, blood had to flow. The point's as plain as the hair of Agamemnon's beard.'

'I'd have tweaked it for him,' cried Fan, and Evelyn's laugh betrayed her.

In answer to her inevitable solicitude, Roger declared himself to be as fit as possible, though he didn't look it.

Realizing that he would prefer to talk of other things, Evelyn prattled on, mentioning Tony and his racing adventures in England. She was expecting him back from day to day now. Had Roger heard? 'I? oh, never. Tony ignores me when in foreign parts. The most I can boast of was a solitary telegram once from Italy, when his special tobacco had given out. It ran to fifty words and useless vituperation.'

Evelyn found herself inconsequently wishing that Tony would stay on in London or anywhere else for an unlimited time. Roger stimulated her, piqued her. With Tony away, she would have a steadier hand. But Roger to-day was as calm as a lake; not a hint or a flicker of that expression, changing his whole being, that Evelyn now thirsted to draw back into his eyes when they looked at her. What was the mystery at the root of it? It was the

barest chance, after all, that gave her the first workable clue.

It was Fan who started it. Skipping as airily as Iris from the Black Sea to the Seine, she left the dim clamours of the Trojan War for the more immediate excitements of revolutionary Paris.

'Oh, Maman,' she exclaimed, 'while you remember it, do tell Mr Roger about your laundress in the rue Servandoni.'

'Am I supposed to be interested in the young woman?' inquired Roger. 'Has she designs upon me, Fan?'

'She has been dead for ages. It was so odd the other morning on our walk. We were hunting out old streets, as you and I do, and in the rue Servandoni I was telling Maman about poor Condorcet, when she said the strangest thing about a laundress. Do tell Mr Roger, Maman.'

The mention of the street pricked Roger's attention. How absurdly small the field of reference seemed; how every chance word served to recall the tyranny of his dream! It was the same rue des Fossoyeurs where Morizot had hidden. Because of that, the street was his alone. The illustrious Condorcet with his tablet retreated into the shadow. But Evelyn was speaking.

'It was really rather curious. As Fan and I went up the street together from the church, I found myself trying to recall some memory, some sugges-

tion that just eluded me. My gifted guide was busily hunting for her tablet, and as we came to a standstill in front of the house, in spite of the morning sun, so warm that I was using my parasol, I had an instant's impression of the street at night, all dark and ill-smelling, much dirtier than a street could ever be now. When Fan and I looked in the open doorway of the house, I had the strangest feeling that I knew exactly how it felt to go up those stairs in the darkness, even to knock in a certain manner at a door, as though I were very much terrified, hating and loathing what I was doing, yet doing it nevertheless. It was like a dream, or like a scene in some old exciting book I might have read as a child.'

'But you never told me all that, Maman,' cried Fan, much interested, yet disgusted, too, that she had not shared this psychic experience of her mother's.

Roger said nothing. Evelyn thought he looked pale, but he had his back to the light.

'You were so busy, Fan,' she went on, 'telling me about Condorcet, and what you were saying seemed to run in so strangely with my own thoughts, that I said nothing. But it wasn't Condorcet, never Condorcet of whom I was thinking. Some other man was in deadly danger in that upper room—but it wasn't Condorcet. Then you spoke of the poor old housekeeper, and I burst out about

a laundress. Why didn't the laundress think of something to save him? For my life, I could not tell you what a laundress had to do with it, or why I thought of her at that moment. It is one of those minor mysteries that brighten our silly routine of every day. Can you imagine what possessed me?'

Evelyn half turned in her chair to look at Roger, the afternoon sun touching her hair, her eyes clear and shining. He saw the abyss yawn for him. So she was Adrienne. His head swam. Why not let himself go? She was his, there before him, looking at him. In a wave, the passion he had felt as Raoul flooded his face, sprang to life in his eyes, dragged him quivering to his feet. In another second he would have seized her, had not his will wrenched hard at the bit, jerking its best at the reins of habit and convention.

He closed and unclosed his long fingers as though they were stiff. He knew he must speak, must try to be himself. Evelyn would think him mad indeed after this second exhibition. He was now able to present to her moved and heightened colour a fair imitation of his old self. But he could go on quoting the proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research till doomsday for all his seeming listener heard or cared. He had given himself away, and Evelyn excitedly knew now the pedal on which to press her foot if she would have the strange music for which she longed.

JULY HAD come, and its long bright days were a weariness to Roger, who, cut off from Raoul, was becoming more and more like a man without the drug by which he dies to live. Often he would find himself standing by his window, not quite knowing how he got there, or why, aimlessly gazing through what was presented to his eye, dreaming, absent to his surroundings, but present—where?

One afternoon Tony burst in upon him, and Roger was amused at the cordiality of his own greeting, knowing that it sprang from a haunting fear of Evelyn. Tony reappeared upon their horizon with the effect of a large and competent lifebuoy, and Roger threw himself upon him like a drowning passenger.

Now that it was growing too hot to be comfortable in his old rooms, Roger had screwed himself up to the point of saying, at last, that he was going to England. That might clear French cobwebs out of his brain, once he were loose from morbid associations, growing insistent enough to be not without a certain danger. The English plan he presented to Tony for what it was worth, and was more or less

amused by the dismay the latter permitted himself to show. Roger had more than once joined Tony's summer parties at whatever château he might have secured for the season, affording an excellent spot of high relief in a scatterbrained assemblage, and this year Tony was particularly anxious to have him, since he had persuaded Evelyn to go to Dinan, an easy motor-run from the house he himself had taken. He had made up his mind to marry her, but he was irritably aware that she was now (unaccountably, to him) holding off. He had fancied that Roger, in the coming months, might help him over certain tight places because of Fan. Roger's attraction for Evelyn, Tony, in his complacent obtuseness, never even saw.

'Going to England? What about me?' His stare punctuated his point of view.

Roger laughed. 'You'll pull through, especially with Evelyn and Fan to help you. I wish I could steal away the child. Fancy her in an English garden with a couple of puppies at her heels!'

'She'll look just as well in a French one, and I have a ripping terrier. Not but what she'd have a better time with you. She's swallowed you whole, but she's never got beyond the sniffing stage with me—good old Fan. But she'll shake down. I want her to ride. With the dogs and the horses and the car we'll change her from the infant Plu-

tarch you've tried to make of her, so that you won't know her when you come back.'

Tony, launched on this possessive vein, was good for another hour. Roger resigned himself from pure ennui.

The days slipped quietly away, throwing Roger and Fan more and more together for companionship. He was trying to escape from certain uneasy mental states that his Italian drug could not master. Evelyn, accompanied by Madame Berthe, made several flights from Paris to set in order the small house that was to be their summer home. It lay on the outskirts of Dinan, perched on a hill, with an unpruned orchard, a straggling garden, and a beautiful view. Fan showed little curiosity in regard to it, being secretly overwhelmed at parting from Roger. She had never been so fond of anyone in her life, except of course Maman, but this was different. Maman was part of herself, like her own head and hands, but Roger was a being bewilderingly aloof and independent, yet so near and dear. The long hot months without him seemed to stretch before her like desert leagues. Tony, with his horses, his dogs, his talkative friends, and the general pleasurable confusion in which he delighted—Tony, so far from exciting the child, made her shrink. He was the barbarian prancing about on his wonderful horse, letting off pistols with both hands, but Roger was the sacred pilgrim, seated

tranquilly in some dampish oasis in that far-off England beyond the Channel mists. She meant to study each morning, very early, before anyone else was astir, so that in the autumn she might surprise and charm him by her marvellous erudition.

Thus Fan, and Roger was almost as foolish. The child pulled at every instinct; he was proud of her, of her beauty, her high spirits, her opening intelligence. Her small hands grasped and shook into life the saner, better part of him. He would listen to her whimsical tales, her imagination as fresh and unspoiled as a bird's note. He encouraged her little poetic sallies, sensitive as he was to her undoubted gift. It was easy to treat her as though she were older than she really was, and she responded admirably. It was impossible to spoil that ardent, unselfconscious nature.

They lengthened their hours together by common consent, the routine of life in the rue de la Chaise being jarred by those unlovely preparations that precede departures. Roger felt almost safe again with Evelyn, who could be amusing and friendly without a hint of the troubling personality that had seemed to stir beneath her own, drawing him to her, fascinated, helpless, possessed by this Adrienne Raoul had loved. The Evelyn of these days realized that her moment had not yet come. Tony had entangled her once more in the labyrinthine threads of his engagements; the apartment

must be closed, Emilie cajoled, the place at Dinan seen to. A thousand occupations beset her. To discover how matters really stood with Roger there must be long quiet hours, free from disturbing interruptions, free, above all, from the constant menace of Tony bursting in upon them, free from his atmosphere, in which such subtle flowers as Evelyn had been trying to grow shrivelled immediately. She looked toward autumn with a secret excitement. She foresaw moments in the firelit dusk when mysterious barriers might one day crumble at her feet.

Meanwhile the breaking up of their circle was imminent. Roger was prepared to close his rooms by the simple expedient of turning the key in the lock. He would go and vegetate in Dorset where he knew no one. But, as the hour for leaving Paris drew near, he found himself restless and preoccupied. He was convinced that outside the influence of his environment, away from these rooms in which Raoul had agonized, away from the streets and gardens in which he had watched and suffered under that long-extinguished sun of Messidor, there would be for him, Roger, no more abnormal visitations. The increased eagerness with which he desired to lay himself open to Raoul, the feverish anticipation from day to day, from hour to hour, warned him. He wanted it too much; therefore he must give it up. He tried to think this a stupid

convention and not the wisdom of the ages, but the question had been brought home to him in other ways, on the mere medical side. The best he could look forward to would be a kind of drowsy ease, a period of lying mentally and nervously fallow in distant Dorset. Here, the rooms, the very streets were haunted.

Of Fan he made as much as possible, well knowing how he would miss the child. Their last day together found them sitting on a dilapidated wooden bench in the garden at Malmaison. They had come to this Napoleonic shrine principally because the roses were out. Neither one had very much interest in the stout little Corsican and his creole Empress, who had impressed their taste upon this country house. They had rambled through the suites of low rooms with the custodian's parrot-cry of '*acajou massif*' sounding like a tourist's whistle in their ears. It was as inevitable as the golden bees and the swollen N stamped upon every object that presented a stampable surface. Fan wrinkled up her nose at the red silk hangings of the bedchamber, at the pleated folds that turned the ceiling into something very like the cover of a gigantic bon-bon box, and slyly caressed the head of a gilt swan that, with a host of his fellows, had swum into decorative prominence along with Josephine and the Empire.

Bored with relics that did not happen to release

any answering imaginative stir in themselves, Roger and Fan tried the gardens. This was better. Nature has a way of getting out of hand, and these shaded alleys and groups of forest trees spoke no audible word of the edict that had traced their arrangement. It was damp and cool, away from the sun that poured upon the prim terrace, drawing perfume from the hot-headed roses.

The two sat comfortably upon their bench, penetrated, each of them, with the pleasure of being together, a pleasure that received the acute accent from the fact that parting was so near. Roger had been amusing Fan with a long and detailed account of the house of a certain aged aunt of his, long dead, of the room he had occupied there as a boy in the holidays, built out over the entrance porch, with a tiny dressing-closet, up two steps, panelled in yew; of the garden, bordered with enormous boxwood cones that here and there sported a faintly recognizable peacock, or an heraldic bird of some sort, in old-fashioned topiary work.

To Fan this was the very essence of romance, and with all her heart she yearned after the glorious hours she might pass in some such spot with Mr Roger, if——, but that 'if' was so insurmountable, such a very dragon of an 'if,' that this small Andromeda did not dare even so much as to waggle a finger to see if the Beast were perchance asleep, or to lift an eyelash to see if Perseus were about. No,

she was gripped hard by Tony, and the chalet near Dinan, perched on its stupid hill, and the château near by, full of gilt furniture and electric lights, lost all the charm they might have had, when she thought of some enchanted manor house in England, sunken deep in its woodland, so old, so mysterious, so foreign to anything she had ever known. But the child was desperately loyal to Maman, and only by negative signs could Roger divine her. He caused a happy flutter of excitement by telling her he meant to write to her every week, and that he expected the most detailed of answers.

'Oh, rather,' she cried, clapping her hands. 'I shall tell you everything. And you will really write to me? You will not forget?'

Who could resist a child who looked at you with so much of her candid soul in her eyes, with such a happy flush, half-timid, half-triumphant? Roger swore a tremendous oath on the spot to post his letter to her every blessed Wednesday.

'I shall expect to hear about the wonderful progress you are making in running Tony's car. He tells me you are to ride, too.'

Fan nodded, but did not smile. One could see that she was merely politely lukewarm to any programme that might be devised at the château for her amusement.

A footstep creaked on the path behind them, shadows were beginning to define themselves on the

sloping lawns, the birds grew less noisy, the afternoon hush increased.

Roger looked down at the motionless little figure at his side. Her arm was hooked through his, the small brown hand lying on his sleeve. The smocked frock was pink to-day and flat pink roses garlanded her spreading hat.

'You *are* coming back in the autumn, Mr Roger? You won't stay on in England? You won't let anything keep you away?'

'What do you take me for?' responded Roger with so much calm conviction that Fan drew a deep breath and put dull care away. 'I shall probably be in Paris before you are, early in September, at the latest.'

He did not as yet acknowledge, even to himself, that he would be doing well if he kept away as long as that. Some August night, close, lowering, breathless, would find him once more climbing the stairs to his rooms, listening at the door as though he half expected to hear a pacing footfall, the rustle of a woman's gown. Raoul would be wild with impatience to get at him again, and abstinence on Roger's part, while it might steady his nerves, would only serve to sharpen to an exquisite point his determination to see Raoul through to the end. In other words, he would pull up now, only to let himself go the more completely a month hence. So much the better were the crowning experience to

come with Evelyn safe in Dinan under Tony's eye. Free from that danger, he could savour the coming episode with a lingering gusto: there need be no crude reining-in of desire.

'That will be splendid,' cried Fan. 'I shall tease Maman to give up the little house early. Don't you think it gets quite cold in September—too cold for the country?'

'Assuredly,' mocked Roger, 'you might even look for snow. But I don't see Tony losing his prey so easily as that. He'll have a little coat of rabbit skins made for you. He'll teach you to shoot. Atalanta in Calydon will be a fool to you, and you'll forget all about poor Iphigenia and the rest of them. Come, let us walk about a bit. The sun has gone under a cloud and we must have another look at those roses.'

'If you think I shall ever forget anything you have taught me, you are greatly mistaken,' remarked Fan sedately. 'I shall not learn to shoot. I should hate it. Tony will be so busy with all his friends and with Maman that he won't have time to bother about me. I shall study every day, and try to think that you are coming to give me a lesson.'

Fan let out her secret in her exasperation, but Mr Roger didn't seem to take it in. They were strolling along the terrace near the chapel, and wind was beginning to blow out of a dark cloud. Most of the tourists were hurrying down the avenue that

led to the gate, the hour for a returning tram having come. A low mutter of distant thunder sounded a warning.

‘Rain or no rain, we must have tea, and your pretty frock must not get wet. Run for it!’

They tore down the path by the blotched yellow wall, the boughs of the plane-trees creaking above them, and reached the shelter of a little café, coquettishly painted pale blue, just as the first big drops began to fall. They found a solitary table in the arbour-room, sheltered from the rain by matted vines. In the pleasant twilight Roger’s cigarette showed to as much advantage as a firefly. Fan felt very experienced as she sat before the painted tin table pouring out tea into the clumsy cups. Roger and the thin garçon, who looked like a priest in someone else’s clothes, treated her as though she were at least eighteen, which had a most exhilarating effect. She would have liked to hold back each flying minute with both hands—those aggravating minutes that persisted in rolling themselves up into quarter-hours, into half-hours, into hours, even, like so many magic Chinese balls.

Roger was happy, too, content to watch Fan while she sipped and nibbled as daintily as a bird; content to feel her young spirit in harmony with his own; to know that her personality, undeveloped as it might be, was yet strong enough, sweet and

fine enough, to lay like a cool hand on his feverish nerves.

The storm was over; the dripping trees, the beaten flowers, even the muddy paths exhaled delicious odours; spears of yellow sunset light began poking through the arbour where they still lingered; a bird set up a joyous bustle, swinging his ruffled body on a spray of acacia. A band of violet in the brightening sky, and distant rumbles of thunder toward Paris, were the only reminders of what Fan's pink frock had escaped.

They were both reluctant to move. Roger was to dine in the rue de la Chaise, but that would not be the same as this small fête in the blue café. He had been teased by a haunting sense of familiarity ever since the storm had caught them. When had he done just this sort of thing before—the rush down a lane with some dear companion whose pretty light finery must not be spoiled? Even the low thunder in the air in the direction of the city seemed to take on the similitude of firing, of guns at some hasty barricade, of shots in some abrupt street fighting. Raoul again, without a doubt, sapping and mining at Roger's conscious defences. In what long-past summer day might he not have carried the little Lucie off with him for a breath of country air after the stale oppression of Paris streets in which the scent of blood was becoming more and more pronounced?

But Roger, in a panic lest he be attacked, encouraged no further dreaming. Fan was before him, the living child, who must innocently help him to remain himself. She was more than willing to talk when she saw that he wanted her to, and their laughter preceded them into the dim ante-chamber of the rue de la Chaise, causing Tony to remark impatiently that Fan never seemed to find *him* so highly amusing.

Dinner over, and Fan tucked away in her white bed, Evelyn stood for a moment in the dark, in her own room, before rejoining the two men in the salon. Everything was packed and corded, ready for departure on the morrow, and Evelyn felt the forlornness of that moment when the household gods have left their accustomed shrines and are hovering about in the darkened air before they alight anew in the fresh places prepared for them. Domestic pieties, order, tranquillity, suffer at such seasons of dislocation, and Evelyn wondered pettishly why she had lent herself to any such move. They might have stayed on weeks longer if it hadn't been for Tony. It was all Tony's fault with his tiresome habit of bustle and urgency about everything he wanted. He had settled, in an instant, on the château near Dinan for himself, principally (so far as she could see) because its previous occupants had put in more bathrooms than any human being could need, and electric lights all over the place.

Not content with that, he had pitched upon her ch  let, and had given her no peace until she had taken it. She and Fan must go somewhere in the summer, so why not there? But her delicate sense of independent values had not so much been disregarded as trampled upon, and Tony, vigorous and self-satisfied, didn't have sufficient imagination to put his finger on the cause of what he called her aggravating indifference.

She had let herself drift, certainly, almost too far to find her way back, even did she care to, but the surface she presented to irritation seemed to increase each day. She had deliberately taken Tony and subjected him to the one test he couldn't stand. Refusing him his right to be an unrelated phenomenon, she had compared him, daily and hourly, to his extreme disadvantage, with another man. To do this was to throw Tony entirely out of drawing, and Evelyn knew it. His treasured planes collapsed when, gay and bright-coloured as he was, she plucked him from the centre of the picture and thrust him into the greyest, coldest corner of the background where he seemed to dwindle and lose tone. Roger, on the other hand, had captured her imagination, had fascinated her by his curious advances and still more curious recoils, but she knew, instinctively, that on his nature her own could leave no lasting impress—there would be no future for

any present they might share, however strange and deep and heady that might be.

The long high salon was shadowy and cool. Through the dark expanses framed by each open window came only a subdued murmur of street sounds. In the distance the city might lift its lighted face to the warm night sky, but here in this sheltered backwater, in this old apartment with its past thick upon it like an airy mantle of dust, one sat as retired from the world as though behind the grille of a convent. For this very reason Tony hated it here at night and was the rarest of visitors. Evelyn generally dined with him in his own characteristic restaurant setting, but this evening she had made some trivial excuse. She had wanted a last look at Roger, and this had seemed the only way to get it.

But now that he was here beside her she was acutely conscious of a wall between them, as effective as it was impalpable. How was she to know that Roger had been feverishly constructing that wall ever since that uneasy moment in the café at Malmaison when Raoul had shown himself as active as a rat in the arras? Roger had no intention of being caught here again, if he could help it, in the too tender and disturbing presence of Evelyn. He knew now how closely a nervous collapse dogged him. No more rendezvous with Raoul until he had enjoyed a period of complete stagnation.

THE END of the month found Roger in lodgings in the out-of-the-way village of Middle Abbas. He had an infinite sense of relaxation and was sleeping now without his drug. In the late afternoon, at that most tranquil hour of the summer day, with the light melting ever lower and lower between the distant trees, with the call of the rooks in his ears, and the moss-stained wall of the cottage blocking his eye, Roger drank deep of a certain consciousness of release, a reprieve from something he did not care to define. He was too lazily content with this English saturation to wish to break the spell. He was somewhat better physically, his sensibilities folded in this placid life, touched at no single point by the needle of that curious compass that had directed his existence in Paris. He had succeeded in dropping back into the mental and physical surroundings of his boyhood. His fever for Adrienne was being covered over, like a fire smothered in ashes, but he knew by an inner heat that he forbore to blow upon that the flame of it was there, eating its way into him. Meanwhile, he slept naturally, and walked to fatigue himself.

There was nothing in the rolling moorland, stained with rusty patches of heather, in the high meadows with their wind-bent pines, to recall the lamp-lit boulevard or the scarred face of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Evelyn, when he thought of her, in and out of château and chalet all day long in the hot dusty sunshine of the French country-side, had faded to a silhouette with no touch of personal light or shade. Only Fan remained as living as when he had left her. His mental eye had photographed her image forever, with every line and subtlety of expression, with every wrinkle of the short nose in laughter, with every gleam of humour or of adoration in the wide-opened eyes. She was part of himself. The shade of the small Lucie sank away with Evelyn-Adrienne into a kind of artificial oblivion, but the image of warm human Fan was not infrequently as real to him on his solitary walks as though she were with him, slim and straight, her arm in his, her feet dancing with the mere pleasure of living and of being with him. Fan called up no sinister memories—she was too strong a personality in her own right, too much in harmony with this English setting to which he had reverted. Her letters delighted him: they were gay and spirited. She told him, now and then, that Maman was often tired and had more migraines than she liked. She reported a respectable number of lines of Virgil, but said never a word of Euripides. She

got a tremendous feeling of emancipation out of what she could understand of the latter, and if a dead Greek can give you that, why ask for more?

Roger himself, on some such an afternoon as this, would lie in a long chair in the garden, caught in a net of lazy fancies that were scarcely thoughts. Visual images of portions of the heath would pass behind his half-closed lids. He saw again every dip and hollow: the stone chimney of a ruined cottage, a rank of trees spreading a dismal shade before the door that lay open on its rotting hinges with a travesty of hospitality; the deep ruts of a moorland track, yellow and cracked like the lips of an unhealthy wound; an angry burst of sunset light between clouds that had once dazzled him when he had raised himself from a bed of dried needles under pines that were never silent—whispering or creaking or moaning in the wind that stirred their branches. Figures rarely moved across these inner landscapes, for Roger had no gregarious instincts, and the monotonous grey or brown toiling shapes that he must have encountered on his way were to him so much a part of their environment that they subdued themselves to it as dumbly as lichen to its portion of bark. In some sunken lane he would step aside into the hedge to let a wagon pass, its high wheels turning with a fantastic simulation of desperate endeavour as the horses plodded on. In this grey-green world, under the low-hanging

Island sky, in these long twilights, the air, incomparably pure, carried to an idle ear every casual sound of minute rustling life in undergrowth or shrubbery. Roger could not well have been more isolated from the message the pavement of a Paris street might be conceived to hold in solution than here, in this lost corner of Middle-Abbas.

One night, however, he was pulled up with a jerk. He had had a dream, only a natural dream of Fan, but suddenly the familiar little figure wavered, dwindled, was sucked out, and in its place uprose the child Lucie, to sidle against him, her hand feeling for his. He was Raoul. Then he was suddenly wide-awake, Roger once more, but in the grip of his unnatural life. With ungovernable ardour his soul and body leaped to meet it. In vain had somnolent weeks been passed in this old house, erecting what now proved to be barricades of sand that crumbled at the first real assault of the gathering water. He was alive and alight again. He was in the posture of the morphine-eater who, after abstinence, once more caresses the familiar receptacle in the inner pocket. He was once more fit for Raoul, ready and aching for further adventure, cost what it might, strung up to follow even over the edge of the precipice. He was shaking already with the application of the forbidden current; no 'real' life had ever had for him the savour of this.

But he was to have no mystic meeting at Middle-Abbas, receptive as he made himself.

The placid country scene, so grateful to his tired senses a month ago, no longer exerted any magic. His pulses were beating to another tune, to a kind of piercing music never heard across English fields. Such a strain must, in fact, find its sounding-board in the high façades of narrow old houses, huddled together in a monotonous perspective; must echo in the dusky portal of an abbey-church, caught, surrounded, strangled in the encroachment of a modern boulevard. It answers to the thud of feet upon pavements; sharp and thin and shrill it hangs in the misty evening air, when the café lamps are lighted. It was this note that Horace loved in the crowded Suburra; it was this note that Danton followed, a 'sick Titan,' turning his back on Arcis-sur-Aube to plunge once more into the Paris whirlpool; it was this note that now drowned for Roger all other sounds of the summer world.

He was in a fever to be gone. Tense now as a wire, he marvelled at his former drowsy slackness. All health had gone out of him, desire mining him. He had the sensation of standing before a door ajar; one touch of the finger and it would swing open to admit him to a life of—what? Seeming freshness, hiding what decay? He did not try to reason; all he wanted was to get back to his rooms, to dream them into a recrudescence of their former state.

Presently he would open his eyes on the greyish paper with the wreath, on some sign of Adrienne's passage—her fan, her glove, her scarf. How burning the sun of '92 could be behind the closed jalousies! There would be thunder before night.

IT WAS the end of a wet September evening when Roger reached Paris. He drew in a great breath of the damp air, saw to his luggage, and then started, with the impatience of a boy, to walk half across the city to the rue Gozlin.

He felt inexpressibly at ease to be once more in the atmosphere that suited his nature. The smell of the moist pavements, the rivulets dripping from the corners of the kiosks on the boulevard, the freshness of the flowers in a market where women and girls, belated by the storm, were reloading their handcarts and stretching tarpaulins—all these unconsidered things took on, for Roger, a charm exotic in themselves. He threw away the memories of Middle-Abbas and replunged into his old familiar life with nothing but pleasure at the submergence. He even regarded with a friendly eye the people who passed him, hurrying by intent upon their own concerns, so important to them, so negligible to the detached observer. To-night the drama of the streets was being played as though for him alone; he, only, had the key to hundreds of excited, alarming, or pathetic adventures. Even the old

apple-woman whom he encountered crossing the Pont-Royal, bending her broad back under the weight of her little wagon, crying her wares—those brownish-yellow worm-riddled things—with every value given to the sibilant in her adjective '*superbe!*' took on for him the attributes of a Roman Sibyl at the least. On the Quai Malaquais the river was running full and black under the bridges, the majestic bulk of the Louvre like a vast crouching animal in the shadows. Lighting a cigarette, he mounted the rue Bonaparte, savouring to the full, in anticipation, the opening of his own door. A line to his concierge had led, he hoped, to the necessary airing of his rooms, and to such domestic necessities as a freshly made bed and a newly filled lamp.

It was with a heightening of a not too well regulated pulse that Roger saw the grey mass of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, its bold tower rising into the misty evening sky. He crossed the Place slowly, busy with disordered thoughts.

Escaping as quickly as possible from the fatherly transports of his concierge, unnaturally pleased at his return, it was now almost with reluctance that Roger pushed open the door of his room. All was quiet and faintly stuffy, but clean and in order. With a sigh he sat down by the writing-table, bare of its usual litter, and let his senses re-absorb the food for which they had been clamouring. Here they found it, in this room that was the mystic

depository of a drug more subtle than any sold by chemists or mentioned in the *Pharmacopœia*.

He passed a restless night, half-stifled one moment, only to shiver the next in a fitful gust of wind blowing across the bed. He had hugged to him, like a child, the illusion that his first night in the familiar atmosphere would not be allowed to run its course without some signal being given and received. But nothing came of it, and Roger, saner at nine a.m. than he had been at any moment since his arrival, unpacked his belongings, handling, with a feeling of recovery, those that had been left behind, and read, on the wing, a post rather larger than usual. He slipped Fan's letter, unopened, into his pocket, to take out to breakfast with him.

The child knew, when she wrote, that he would be on his way home, and every line bespoke her desire to be where he was. The rue de la Chaise apparently had become transfigured in relation to the *châlet* at Dinan. Tony, she confessed, had been seriously vexed with her more than once when she would not stay at the *château*. A pretty American lady, one of the guests, had teased to have her. Fancy her leaving Maman alone! Now they were having a few quiet days, as the party at the *château* had gone off to Trouville. They had all seemed greatly disturbed because Maman had not been well enough to go with them. Tony had spent a whole afternoon in persuasions. At the last moment the

American had decided to make the voyage to London, so everything had been in confusion, and no one had seemed good-tempered. It was a disturbing way to spend a holiday. She cherished the hope that in a week or ten days the moment might come for packing up. She had told Maman that Mr Roger was returning to Paris, and Maman had laughed and said that September was a delightful month to spend in town, as so few people realized. Fan evidently drew from this the best of omens.

Three days later a chant of triumph, telling of their arrival, came from the child, and the following afternoon found Roger approaching the familiar doorway. Mother and daughter received him together, arms entwined in the happy Lebrun manner. Fan was radiant, with a splendid colour. She had shot up wonderfully and was now taller than Evelyn. Hand in hand with her while he listened to her mother, Roger was conscious of an electric sense of well-being. Obscure irritations received their quietus at the child's touch.

Evelyn was looking rather frail and white, but in the animation of their meeting a flush appeared. She was herself astonished at the strength of the re-impression he made upon her. She had had more than she could well stand of Tony, but Roger was as elusive as ever, charming to her, of course, but visibly it was for Fan that he had come. Whatever strange flicker of interest she, Evelyn, had

aroused in him, it had evidently been put out with no more difficulty than he would find in extinguishing a cigarette. She could not very well re-light it. She was sick of pursuit.

She leaned back against her cushions, watching Roger's face as he talked with Fan. Poor darling Fan, how that affectionate heart lavished itself! Roger, too, seemed carried along by the youthful spirits of his companion. They made a feast of tea, even Emilie smiling as she brought in the tray. The habitual train of life, picked up where they had let it drop, was gratefully renewed by all of them. The absence of Tony was commented on by no one.

Presently Roger said he must go, and Fan danced off to fetch him some ridiculous Breton souvenir. He and Evelyn sat beside each other in the brief September twilight now falling through the windows, deadening the faded colours of the room to a misty grey. She was silent—pale, fatigued, appealing.

Abruptly something leaped in Roger, mere blind impulse pressing against the walls of his consciousness, determined to tear an opening, to agitate itself once more in the free movement of the senses. The face of Evelyn began to waver before his eyes, as a pool quivers in a sudden gust of wind. The bright hair lost its sheen, or was it only the gloom of the room? Her dress subtly changed its con-

tours. Surely she had not worn that long pointed bodice, that velvet band about her throat? . . . She looked up at him and smiled. Was fate giving him back to her, the Roger who could make her heart beat furiously, as it was doing now? She leaned toward him with a sudden, almost brusque gesture. She didn't ask herself what she was doing. She simply knew that he attracted her irresistibly; she was answering something in the face now so near her own.

It all passed in an instant—the shadowy invitation, the blind acceptance, the instinctive recoil, the breaking of the magic mirror, the return to homely sanity. Evelyn had spoiled a promising situation by moving. Had she remained as quiet as—the dead, who knows how far Roger might have been impelled to go? But her gesture recalled him. He rose from beside her, with an apology for his restlessness. She drew herself back once more into her corner of the sofa, and, with that astounding composure women can display when they wish to show you that the dart you have cast has not even grazed them, began to talk of the deadliness of Dinan, although the slender arm along the back of the sofa trembled slightly, as did her whole body.

Blind Roger quite missed the point of what had occurred so far as Evelyn was concerned. All he remembered was that for one paralysing second he had thought to find Adrienne beside him. Dur-

ing that quivering suspension of time, Evelyn, for him, had ceased to exist. Then she had moved and broken the current, that was all he knew. He thanked heaven that she had, and made his adieux, Fan's present bulging out his pocket, and a certain tense exhilaration causing him to walk more quickly than usual, as though something on the watch for him in his silent rooms must not be kept waiting.

He read late, bent upon controlling his wandering attention. Gradually he forgot himself, the limpid masterly prose painting picture after picture before his tired eyes. Even the sounds of the boulevard had sunken to a murmur when he let the book drop upon his knee. Before his aroused imagination the mountains rose above Delphi; in the darkness of the cave he saw the outline of the tripod, the veiled prophetic shape. He was thousands of miles from Paris, held by a Grecian dream.

Then it was that Raoul got him.

It was well after dawn when Roger opened his eyes with a shiver. He was stiff and cold. The book fell to the floor and he let it lie. With his head in his hands he gradually pulled himself together. This third experience had left him much more shaken than the other two. Raoul, grown stronger with success, was riding his mount too hard.

After some sleep and much strong coffee, Roger took out his note-book. He was oppressed with

what he had passed through. He must write it down and so get rid of it. He dipped his modern pen into what might have been any eighteenth-century writer's inkpot, and began:

I had been reading Beaunier, and remember closing the book, thinking of Delphi. I must have shut my eyes, for I opened them on a rush of exultation—Raoul had me.

I was in my own room, this room, in shirt and breeches, without my coat, the latter hanging over the back of a low chair, so that the metal buttons touched the floor. It was hot—thick summer heat. Many of the leaves of the chestnuts in the abbey garden had fallen, those remaining being but poor shrivelled things. The position of the sun showed it to be near noon. The city seemed uneasy, as there was much more animation than usual in these streets. A few stragglers of the Guard passed, going toward the river. A crowd of idlers of the section had gathered about the Prison. I could make out several, mounting on the shoulders of their fellows to peer in at the windows. Something was evidently astir.

I made the jalousies fast, put on my coat and left the room. I saw no one on the stairs; the shops below were closed. I had the impression that certain people were keeping out of sight for some set purpose. I made my way to the gardens, al-

most on the spot where I had waited for Morizot. My heart beat thickly. For whom was I waiting now?

But it was not Adrienne, her face shaded by the hat of Italian straw as I had seen her in the Tuileries, who came quickly down the path. It was the servant Marcelle. She was red and hot, but not frightened.

‘Monsieur Raoul’—she stopped to take her breath, ‘he is there, in the Abbey, we know for certain. They caught him near Rouen and sent him back.’ She clasped her thick hands. ‘I fear for Madame and the little one, and for you, Monsieur Raoul. They may make him talk.’

I clenched my hands. I felt as though I were choking. When I had mastered my rage and my hatred of the wretched Morizot, I told Marcelle that Madame must be prepared for the police. All her papers were burned: she had little to fear. She could prove her presence at Caudebec for three months before her husband’s flight from Paris, three months during which she had received no word from him. I was silent about her fatal night visit to the rue des Fossoyeurs—of course there was the danger.

But Marcelle went blindly on. ‘Madame insists that she must see you. I was to tell you to return at once to your rooms. She will be there.’

I made a despairing gesture. ‘What impru-

dence!' I ground my teeth. Marcelle shrugged. 'The poor dove is half-mad, Monsieur. There is a rumour about to-day that Maillard is to be at the Abbey, and that certain prisoners are to be transferred to the Conciergerie or to La Force. She counts upon his gold. If there is a chance of escape——'

'She will harbour him, or shall I?' I cried, with the sneer I was at no pains to suppress. But Marcelle only stared at me, wiping her hot face with her hand. '*Eh bien*, he is her husband, and there is the little one——'

'He shall never see her again, Marcelle,' I interrupted, controlling my voice. 'He puts her in the most deadly danger. My rooms now are not safe. I am watched, I know. My papers have been tampered with. I stay only because I dare not leave. And you tell me she is going there? My God, what folly!'

I turned from the woman and looked about me, but I have only the most confused recollection of a thicket of trees, of the path on which we stood, overgrown, neglected, covered already with rotting leaves. We parted, and I made the best of my way back, the sweat gathering on my temples, so that I had my handkerchief constantly in my hand.

The drinking-shops were crowded, men half-drunk gesticulating at the doors. I noticed several with their pikes that trailed as they walked. In

the rue du Four I avoided passing the Rativeau café. I might have spared myself the trouble, for from the other side of the road I saw that the shutters were up, the house windows blank. Had they astutely scented trouble? Trouble was in the air, that I knew. It was as heavy and ominous as the heat.

No one spoke to me. I walked carelessly, as though with no other object than a promenade. The antiquary shop was closed, but I thought that I heard the proprietor moving about within. As I stood in the doorway for an instant to catch my breath that came rather faster than ordinary, the noise of some outbreak reached me from the other side of the Prison. Men were running up the rue Abbatale. Some bell clanged noisily. From the direction of the river came the sound and rattle of what might be musketry. I was better indoors. An oppression that was not fear for myself made the steps I was mounting go suddenly black before my eyes. I controlled myself, and opened the door.

She was there, on the little sofa by the fireplace, holding on to the edge of the seat on either side of her with her hands. She was as white as her dress, her eyes large and haggard in the shade of her hat. I went to her. 'My poor Adrienne! Marcelle has told me. What do you think to gain by coming here? The risk is great; we are both suspected. I am watched, if not you. It will be

fatal for us to be found here together—conspiring at the escape of an émigré, so they will put it. Why did you come? ’

It was cruel to press her. The tears on her cheeks were her only answer. Morizot, whom she hated and feared, drew her to his prison, as he had drawn her, trembling and loathing, to his hiding-place in the rue des Fossoyeurs. Women, splendidly illogical, have not our man’s code. In the rooms of her lover, at the risk of her own life and his, she could still clutch at the fantastic chance of escape for the husband she despised. My poor Adrienne! It was useless. I tortured her no further. I was hers to use as she desired.

Sitting beside her, her restless hands in mine, she told me of Marcelle’s cousin, a guard in the Abbey, from whom their information had come. He was to be trusted, a patriot, but still human. He was honest, not bribable, but would look the other way if occasion required. In the exchange of prisoners that was to take place to-day there might, perhaps, in the confusion toward nightfall, be some chance for Morizot.

I listened to her, but found nothing to say. Morizot at large again, hunted like a wild beast, would this time drag his wife under the knife with him. So be it. There was nothing to do but wait through the long hot afternoon.

I walked to the window and held up the broken

slat with my finger. The sun was lying in great dazzling splashes on the roadway. There was no air to stir the tops of the trees in the Abbey garden.

I turned with relief to the darkened room. Adrienne had thrown off her hat. She had found her fan on my table and was waving it softly to and fro. Our eyes met—forgotten the errand on which she had come, forgotten the prisoner and his miserable fate, we remembered only that we were alive and together. I cannot write of this. When she drew herself softly out of my arms, she was smiling. All the whole world had changed. The black depression in which I had walked melted to nothingness. I was elated; moved to my very soul. And still she smiled. We were like children who had dreamed a horror, and awakened to find once more the old love and safety warm about them.

I made her bathe her eyes at my toilet-table, while I brought out a poor store of eatables. We placed a napkin on a corner of the table and ate with an appetite we would not have believed possible half an hour before. Never had I so lived in the fragile moment, as the saying is—I was feeling, not thinking, and the rush of my emotion, stem it as I would, carried us both far beyond the desperate preoccupations that lay hidden in each of us, drugged now into insensibility to all things save ourselves.

How long this blissful interlude lasted I cannot say—an hour? two? Perhaps. She was on the sofa, I beside her. I had been recalling for the thousandth time the first day I had seen her. It was in the park of the old manor near Caudebec. I described her dress to her so minutely that she laughed, and said it was impossible that anyone could so remember.

‘Your hair was arranged in long thick curls, carefully powdered,’ I went on unmoved, ‘with a black ribbon in the midst. You held the tiny Lucie by the hand. About her breast was a little harness of coloured cords. She had been playing at being a pony. It was just at sunset that I saw you, on the edge of the terrace. The clipped trees were in shadow. Against them your white dress held all the light. Your face—ah, Adrienne!’ She leaned against me. I was silent, my heart, my senses full to delicious suffocation.

Suddenly, across the shimmer of these memories that carried us both far from this room where the sickly summer sun mingled with the dust upon the floor, came the sudden sharp clanging of the tocsin. I sprang to my feet. Danger was thick about us in the ringing of those bells. Through the still air the sound gathered volume, joined in another instant by the rapid roll of a drum.

‘The people—’ gasped Adrienne. I nodded. She had expressed the horror we knew was upon

us. Were we to have a second Tenth of August? The people! I clenched my weaponless hands.

The rush of running feet pounded along the street, the clatter of pikes against the stones. I went to the window and looked carefully through the slat. Cries and curses came to my ears. The Prison was surrounded; the grille at the top of the rue des Ciseaux had been opened, the crowd was pouring through into the precincts of the Abbey itself.

'What is it that they want?' whispered Adrienne, who had come up softly behind me, with a hand on my shoulder.

'God knows; perhaps they are bringing out the prisoners.' Morizot flashed through my mind; through hers, too, for the blood rose in her face.

'Go back to the sofa,' I whispered, 'and do not speak.' I knew that the door was locked. I had had the luck to see no one as I came in, and she, too, may have escaped notice. The house was dangerous. The poor girl held her shaking hands in her lap, her eyes now dry and bright.

I remained at the window, cursing the scantiness of my outlook. What was happening behind those walls? I was to know only too soon. The householders in the neighbourhood were barricading themselves in, every wooden shutter closed. The crowd in the street was still fairly orderly; they moved along as though a mysterious word had been

given. They were armed as best might be, some with old sabres. I noticed many who carried clubs, staves, or rusty iron bars. Among them I recognized several of the shopkeepers of the street—André Lyon, the lemonade-seller, and Pierre Damiens. Rativeau was nowhere to be seen. His activities and those of his wife were apt to be subterranean.

Abruptly, at one of the barred windows of the tower that jutted out from the old building used as a prison, an arm in a white sleeve was thrust out. A howl went up from the crowd, and men began climbing up the rough stone masonry, clutching at every inequality, trying to reach the wretch, not to rescue, but to kill. That was the meaning of the frenzy borne on the heat-soaked air like a palpable cloud.

The climbing figures now hung thick and black like flies upon the wall, supported by those beneath them. The rotten bars of the window had been wrenched aside, but the would-be victim had disappeared, dragged down to what was doubtless but precarious safety within. The screams and cries redoubled from the interior of the Abbey, from the garden-court, hidden by the trees. There was the sudden clatter of hooves, as of terrified horses, stray shots, and over all the discordant, intermittent noise of the bells.

I confessed to a momentary qualm. I left the

window to drop into a chair. They were massacring the prisoners. Was that what Rativeau had meant when she had urged me to leave my lodgings? This house where we sat might not be safe for long. Once unchain the beast as he was now raging in the Abbey, and he would gorge further afield. I dared not look at Adrienne. Nameless details at which I inwardly shuddered assailed my memory. For weapon I had only a kitchen knife.

‘Raoul, sit nearer me,’ came her voice, low and a little hoarse. I walked over to her. We sat in a silence that only made the vile confusion beneath our windows more apparent. I asked her if she would not go into the inner room and lie on the bed, but she shook her head.

Almost at once there arose the sound of furious battering at what I took to be the street door. I leapt to my feet. Had the moment come? Were they attacking the house? From the window, for I did not dare to venture into the corridor, I could barely make out a struggling mass of men and women—women, too. They were breaking into the antiquary shop. In an instant, amid cries and laughter, objects began to be tossed out upon the cobbles, glass and crystal breaking with sudden sharp crashes; articles of furniture, a chest of drawers, tables, chairs, pell-mell, hacked, dismembered with pike or axe, merely for the pleasure of destruction, or perhaps to practise the stroke.

Shouts, drunken boasts of what had been done 'over yonder,' of what yet remained to do, filled the narrow street. Then the first attackers streamed out and away, armed with the ancient weapons, swords, old pistols and the like, that the shop had been gutted to secure. The remainder followed, laughing and jesting. What they had done and what they were about to do intoxicated them like wine. A man, a mason or plasterer evidently by the white splashes on his clothes, had thrown a great scarlet curtain or hanging, with tarnished gold fringe, over his half-bare shoulders. In a moment this portion of the street was clear again.

I ventured carefully to loosen the jalousie in order to peer down more at my ease. A dark bundle kicked into the gutter had aroused my curiosity. I looked, then quickly drew back into the shelter of the room. It was the shopkeeper himself with a crushed head, the blood from it beginning to gather in tiny pools among the fragments of shining glass. He was the first to be killed in the street. I was hot with rage, burning as with fever. The long sunny afternoon was still at its height—hours, before darkness, to kill and still to kill. I opened and shut my empty fingers. If it had not been for my companion, I would have gone down into the street. For myself, I had no desire to live. I might die, but not before having killed one, at least, of those mad dogs. But there was Adrienne.

When I turned from the window she asked me nothing. I suppose my face told her what she feared. Now I knew we were prisoners here till nightfall. In the darkness there might be some faint chance of getting away unseen. Meanwhile, to shut out as much as possible the ghastly sounds that became every instant more frequent, more detailed, as it drew on toward four o'clock, I induced Adrienne to follow me into the inner room. I made her rest upon my bed where she lay with her face to the wall. Her hands and feet were cold, though the heat was intense. I prayed that she might sleep. I think she did, or feigned to, for she allowed me to return to the salon without a movement or a sign. In truth, I could not keep away from the window. The opening made by the broken slat, throwing a bar of sunlight upon the floor, a bright blotch on the boards, magnetized me. It drew me as steadily as a magician's wand. See I must.

I stood there long, my whole being revolted. I cannot write all that I saw. Shortly after four o'clock a man was killed under the Prison windows, another near the grille. They lay sprawling, inert, one in the grey coat they had left on him. The wine shop up the street was overflowing with custom. The murderers, as the afternoon wore on, became fatigued and must refresh themselves. I could see them as they passed in and out through

the grille. One wretch whom I recognized as being of the neighbourhood, a grocer in the Croix-Rouge, was splashed from his neck to his stockings with blood. The nightmare oppression of this cursed day weighed on me physically like an unbearable fatigue, yet I remained standing, unable to cease from staring at sights that tore at my manhood, my courage, my honour as with red-hot pincers. That a man could see and hear what I had seen and heard, and still live on, without one blow to avenge those pitiful victims—and how many more like them in Paris this summer Sunday?—one of whom lay there below in the grey coat, marked now with a deepening brown stain—it was unthinkable. I lost my head completely and wrenched open the door. I had no idea what I was going to do, but bare-headed, empty-handed, forgetting everything in a passion of disgust and hatred, I was prepared to pay the penalty the man below had paid, if I could but first kill some one with these hands of mine. How blood calls for blood! The next instant, sobered by one word, my own name on Adrienne's lips, my hot temper dropped. I had forgotten her. I was desperately ashamed. With infinite precaution I now relocked the door. The house was silent as the grave. I was not free; no one is free who carries a woman in his breast. So I came back softly to her side and lied to her. I said I had opened the door to hear better.

She was sitting up on the bed now, her hair loose and fragrant about her face. I swore to put out of my immediate memory what I had just seen, and to think only of her safety.

I sat down on the edge of the bed. Thank heaven, with the door between the two rooms closed, one could not hear so plainly. The sounds also were growing fainter and fainter, drawing off beyond the church, in the direction of the river. We could breathe more freely, but we must plan what to do. I must get Adrienne, I told her, back to the rue de la Chaise, where Marcelle was with Lucie. I had determined not to return to these rooms until I had seen Rativeau. As a last resort, I might throw myself on her mercy to help Adrienne. For a day or two, I could stay, I knew, in the stables of the de T— hôtel in the rue de Grenelle. A steward left in charge had been obliged by me on more than one occasion, and he would shelter me for a short time. Though suspect, I was not yet under surveillance. I was still not too dangerous a guest to harbour.

As we talked I grew calmer. Insensibly her familiar charm stole over my senses, blinding me, deafening me to what was happening without the narrow circle of this bare room. With death, perhaps, stalking at the stairhead, I made up my mind to drink my last moment to the full. She was sweetness itself, hiding for my sake her terror and

her hopelessness. Neither of us spoke of Morizot. Heaven knows I had cause to hate him, yet I could shudder at what the Abbey held for any prisoner within it that day. It grew a little cooler with the twilight, so we went back into the salon. The street was comparatively still. We sat on in the darkness, night falling to hide horrors, or to kindle again the lust for them. I must make a reconnaissance before venturing to take her into the streets. It was a desperate chance, but we could not stay where we were. Telling her to refasten the door after me, and not to open to anyone until I returned, I descended the stairs, much as usual. I have a notion that the house had been deserted early in the day; not a rustle behind the closed doors. The wreck of the antiquary shop was to my right. My one route must be to turn to the left down the rue des Ciseaux, and so on to Saint-Sulpice, whence, if the worst came to the worst, I could take her to the house in the rue des Fossoyeurs and contrive to make my way alone to the rue de la Chaise to warn Marcelle. Vaugirard and the Croix-Rouge would be sure to be dangerous. The rue des Ciseaux was black and tranquil, lights in one or two windows showing returning confidence. I must risk it now.

I returned to Adrienne, keeping close to the sides of the houses. Beyond the broken grille I could see the glare of torches carried hither and thither in the grounds of the Abbey. Adrienne was crouched on

the floor by the door, listening for me. I raised her, held her, crushed her to me. Then I told her we were to go. She nodded. I had a travelling cloak that she put around her to conceal her light gown. She hid her head in a black handkerchief, and would have left her hat, but there was no place to conceal it, so she fastened it against her side, under her wrappings. I left her for a moment to twist my kitchen knife through the buckled strap of my waistcoat. I told her to go on ahead and to walk straight in front of her. I would follow.

It was now too dark to see the bodies in the street. We got through at first safely, but there were too many people in the Place Saint-Sulpice for us to venture there. Adrienne could not hide her bearing, and I was afraid. We turned off into a side street, but we were getting further and further away from our destination. I told Adrienne that we must get to Maman Cartier. I thought we might venture along Vaugirard as far as the rue des Fossoyeurs. I remembered what Rativeau had said about the priests, and I did not dare approach nearer the rue Cassette. With her in safety, I could work my way around the other side of the gardens. I would see and tranquillize Marcelle and kiss the little Lucie.

I whispered this to Adrienne in the angle of a great gateway. She replied that she could not do as I wished; she would die rather. They would

take Lucie away and she would never see her again. She clung to my arm, trembling, beside herself. So we started together. Two hours must have elapsed, for we had doubled like hares, avoiding streets with open wine shops, seeking the darkest of ways. At last we gained the rue de Varenne and the end of our desperate pilgrimage.

The danger now was that we should have to arouse the concierge in order to get in. I hesitated, dreading the man's eyes, when the great black door opened an inch or two as I stared, and Marcelle beckoned to us, finger on lip. We glided in, groping our way, holding our breath like thieves, until we found ourselves in the antechamber where Marcelle had left a candle, guttering in the draught, on the pedestal by the bust. The incomparable creature had, in some way best known to herself, persuaded the wife of the concierge to allow her to perform the latter's duties at the door. The man had been away since early morning, she said, and the wife, distracted, had gone in search of him. We were safe for the moment. Marcelle vanished down the dark stair, and Adrienne flew to Lucie.

I took the candle and went into the salon. My brain was dulled and desperately tired. I sank into a chair, haunted with incoherent visions of what to-morrow might bring. Adrienne roused me with an arm about my neck. Lucie was sleeping. Must I go? How she tempted me! If Morizot had

spoken, if they were to come for us to-morrow, why not let them take us together?

I turned from her and walked to the window. The moonlight was streaming in, calm and beautiful. I leaned against the casement, the pallid flowers sending out their gusts of perfume. She came and stood beside me. Presently I put her out of my arms, my heart dead within me. I pushed her back, as I dragged the curtain to with my free hand. The tramp of feet resounded in the street. On they came. They were stopping—but where? Here? It was a patrol. At this ghastly moment we were calm enough. A rush on the stairs, through the antechamber, and Marcelle sprang upon us with a choking cry. Behind her, heavy mounting feet, the rattle of pikes or muskets, a great blow upon the door.

‘La citoyenne Morizot—’ cried a voice.

The huddling figures pressed in upon us, the foremost holding a candle high above his head. The blood rushed through me like a cataract. I would have thrown myself in front of Adrienne, but she seized my arm. ‘Lucie, my beloved, care for Lucie,’ she murmured.

Her voice seemed still to be in my ears when I came to myself in my own proper person once more. It was as though I were just recovering from a stunning blow. I was dizzy and numb, with a reeling head and——

Roger threw down his pen. He was horribly shaken. With each submergence his telepathic power increased, but this time Raoul had strung him to an unnatural pitch, this time an experience had been his that had moved him to the very depths of his being, this time all had been different. He wrenched his mind away from it; he was making his necessary readjustments with difficulty. He stared about the room, at the window, at the walls. Once more he heard the shouts of the *Septembriseurs*, bent to their bloody task. He had but to go to the window . . . He went, none too steadily, to breathe in the cool morning air, to gaze upon the early morning bustle of the modern boulevard, to catch sight of a crowded bus, type of the ugliness and practicality of the new century in which he lived. The eighteenth had sunk out of sight, and he crushed the passionate memories that lingered aching in his mind with the same instinctive movement for safety with which he would have trampled out a sudden spurt of flame. These rooms crowded with appeals to his already raw sensibility had become insupportable to him.

He walked away, down the boulevard, careless where he went, concerned merely to be in motion, to be surrounded by the clamours of everyday life, to be a part of the mob about him. The day was softly clouded, the wind fresh. He suddenly came to himself not far from the *Jardin des Plantes*. It

was years since he had been in this quarter, and he had a rueful recollection of the poor captive animals, restlessly pacing their narrow cages. There were few people about in the walks, and scarcely any children. He paced the sober alleys, strewn with melancholy leaves. His thoughts, eluding him, were once more busy with Adrienne. Raoul had shaken him to the very centre of his soul, had inoculated him with a gnawing craving. Roger's nerves, stimulated as they had never been before, would keep his mysterious door ever on the latch for Raoul.

It was with something like exultation that he told himself that he, too, this very afternoon, would be treading in those dead footsteps, would be at the antechamber door in the rue de la Chaise. He was conscious of a mental tumult that whipped his blood. A living woman would meet him there—Evelyn, with her subtle rapprochement to Adrienne, and now, with certain memories burning at his heart, he could think of nothing else. Fan never once crossed his mind. If he went early, he might catch Evelyn before she went out. With the saner part of him, he knew that he was slipping into a dangerous position with her, but he was reckless, willing to give the rein to instinct. To recapture the headlong rapture that had engulfed him when he was not himself, to seize, if only for an instant, hands that would lie in his as hers had—for this

Roger was prepared to give the lie to his whole temperament. To force Evelyn to reincarnate Adrienne was his mad plan. He was absorbed only in what the effect might be upon his own senses; he left hers quite out of account.

A mangy jackal lifted its head with a plaintive cry. The other animals started uneasily, padding with painful lurchings about their meagre cells. Roger turned from their vicinity with disgust.

In the distance, on a mound, a superb cedar displayed its velvet-hung branches; dahlias stuck with gorgeous quills like flowery porcupines made a blazing centre for the sun. On this September day, in the mild air, under the filmy autumnal sky, Paris was fair.

EVELYN HAD lunched alone. Fan being with the good Madame Berthe who would return her in time for Roger's hour. Now, curled on the sofa in her old attitude, she would not confess, even to herself, that Paris seemed a little flat and dreary. She was essentially feminine, and the lavish care, the opulent hospitality that had surrounded her all summer had taken off the edge of appetite for the long quiet days that seemed to stretch before her, broken by none of those crude yet vitalizing dashes into Tony's world and Tony's atmosphere. He had angered her and they had quarrelled, but now she found herself nervously restless, and could settle to none of those homely tasks into which she knew so well how to put a saving grace when her fingers touched them. She sighed, and picked up the book on which she had been half-lying. It was a study of old French houses and their decoration, and with it Evelyn drifted off upon an eighteenth-century dream, as her idle fingers flicked over one pleasant illustration after another. From the décor, it was but a step to the actors. What figures came and went as she spoke the cues! Her own Fan

called up the childish ghosts—the little Horace with Lucile, the small Eudora with Madame Roland. Here, this room where she lay, what hearts might not have beaten thickly to terror and pain in those hot summer days and nights! She wished, drowsily, that she knew the history of the house. Might not one look up such things in the Archives? She would ask Roger. Ah, Roger—if she could only make him lose that self-control of his, make him——

As though in answer to the pressure of her wish, Roger walked calmly into the room on the heels of Emilie. Evelyn noticed at once his quick, moved look, and all her woman's instinct sprang to meet it, but outwardly she merely curled more comfortably into her corner, and held up a hand to his. She, as well as he, had forgotten Fan. Now, if ever, was the moment to discover a new and troubling Roger under the old ceremonious one, a Roger who would make her hold her breath in a sudden rush of emotion.

She said nothing, waiting, and Roger with his back to the light was silent too. He was trying to recapture a vanished night when the shadows of this room had crept up around him, black and menacing. Another woman than this one had come to him, from behind that screen, had stood with him by that long window, had withdrawn herself from his arms. Now the cheerful activity

of early afternoon was busy in the air, yet he and a woman sat here together once more.

Evelyn waited; he was the musician, she could only put the instrument into his hand. As luck would have it, to break the silence that was beginning to unnerve her, she spoke of the house in which they sat, of her womanish curiosity as to its long-dead inhabitants, of this very apartment with its original panelling, its faded decoration. She pulled her book to her again and showed him some of the plates. Encouraged by the interest that leaped into his face, she drew upon her talks with Fan, of their search for the lodgings of eighteenth-century personages, of their tablet chases—true paper ones—half across Paris.

‘So often, when I am sitting here rather dully in the twilight, I feel as though I might have been some woman who lived here then, trembling and shuddering all through those dreadful years—in agony for another, lover or husband. Fan makes me think of the children, poor deserted little creatures, when their mothers were torn away from them.’

‘So you feel that too?’ said Roger in his ordinary voice. Then he suddenly leaned toward her with nothing ordinary in the expression of his eyes, in the abrupt, close pressure of his hand on hers. ‘You feel it too, and why not? Say that you remember the night they came for you, here in

this very room—say it, Adrienne! Oh, you didn't think of me, then, but of the child—not Fan, but the other.'

The curious words came rather huskily. He had both her hands now, holding them to his breast. She gave in to him, her eyes fixed on his. She saw quite plainly, with a tightened heart, that he was not making love to her. He was merely hanging her in some *revenant's* garments; some trick or fashion of her face recalled—whom? Roger was not losing his mind, but he was certainly ghost-hunting with a vivacity. If she could only get the whole story out of him! Of this scene, to be sure, she must remember only what he chose to acknowledge.

It was hard to keep her head with that compelling voice murmuring heaven knows what madness, with her hands repeatedly at his lips, with the whole feverish glamour of the episode creeping over her. Her heart leaped to his. His physical proximity, he who had always been so aloof, confused her judgment. The hidden attraction he had unconsciously exerted over her stirred and flooded her. She was wildly happy during these incredible, unreal moments to which she knew she must soon put an end. He was immersed with an ethereal Adrienne, but he held a living woman in his arms whose nerves warned her. She must bring him to

himself, but how, how? Suppose Emilie, or Fan——?

Slipping away from him, no longer meeting his eyes, she caught at the name of Lucie. 'I must go to Lucie,' she whispered, lingering by the screen to see how he would take it. He took it ill. Still in his dream he followed her. He would not let her go.

With a mingled feeling of relief and irritation, she heard Emilie's step in the antechamber. Was some one coming? She turned to Roger with an absurdly inane remark, but she called him by his name with pointed emphasis. That pulled him up. She saw his expression change, she saw him avoid her eyes. Her wounded romance, poor visionary thing, dropped between them at its last gasp. Luckily no visitor appeared, for no one, even the least sensitive, could have come upon Roger and herself at that moment without perceiving something electric in the atmosphere. His passion, though its real object had been dust these hundred years, was too vital not to set in motion those subtle waves that speak to the instinct, if not to the intellect, and those waves had dashed rather high in this tranquil room whose walls seemed made to hold just such reverberations.

Roger moved restlessly about, from screen to window and back again. More than ever he felt like one of those poor trapped creatures he had seen

that morning. He had rattled his bars furiously. There was not a doubt of that. Another moment and he might have won through, if Evelyn hadn't broken the spell. But what would he have gained, had he had his chance? To Evelyn, not to Adrienne, would he have found himself hopelessly committed. Why did she so bewilderingly seem to change before his very eyes? How must he appear to her, calling her passionately by a name not her own, showing her his infatuation with a nakedness that made him wince—now, when it was too late? Transfixed by his uneasy fears, he stood still and gazed at her. Could she ever be to him what Adrienne had been? To-day had shown him that in her proper person she could exert a magic——

But it was Fan who was to save him, bringing freshness and purity, as of Alpine air, to breathe upon his passionate bewilderment. She was as ice to his fever. She steadied him. Her first darting look on entering had been for him, not for her mother. He felt hemmed in, half-stifled. How could he give his innocent Fan her lesson here? He was mentally quivering with what had best be undefined. If Adrienne, re-created by his desperate ardour, were one day to invade Evelyn, to throw the latter into his arms in some maddening similitude of her lost self, what might he not do? And what might he not know of hideous disillusion-

ment when recovered sanity should make plain each ugly aspect of a liaison with, not Evelyn, but—the mother of Fan? It was unthinkable, therefore, subconsciously, it tortured him.

He was by Evelyn's side now, trying to say something that would not be too inept. But she stopped him with admirable comprehension. She could handle him now. 'You are tired. Don't stay shut up here. Take Fan with you. It will be good for her, too.'

Roger wrenched his mind away from the treacherous shadows out of which a dearer voice had bidden him care for another child. Living Fan held him fast, and the little Lucie sank away forgotten.

When they reached the street he could draw a normal breath again. Fan gazed up at him expectantly. Whatever he proposed to do would be the right thing. Her look of complete trust smoothed away the irritation of his violent impulse crushed back upon itself. Ignorant, yet wiser than the sages, she brewed for him her cup of healing. With her, he was conscious only of the almost prostrating relief of relaxation.

NOVEMBER BLUSTERED in over the housetops. Awake in the pale dripping dawn of All Saints' Day, Evelyn listened to the gale tearing at the trees in the garden, moaning and whistling in the chimney. In her present dull mood, all the souls of all the dead seemed to be riding furiously down that wind. Later in the morning it was not much better. She went to walk with Fan in the Luxembourg, where a grey mist, cold and clammy, hung visibly in the bare trees. There was frost in the earth paths under their feet. Near the fallow balustrade of the terrace, so sun-warmed in summer, so shaded by its thorn-trees, were huddled some of those little rush chairs that give themselves so coquettish an air of a spring afternoon. Now, under this lowering sky, in this autumnal fog, they looked like fragile pleasure-craft quite gone to wreck. Evelyn sighed to herself, and Fan pulled up her furs for her.

They paced silently about the fountain basin, the thin jet of water rising against the yellow mist in the long alley of the Observatoire. Soon, if this cold continued, it would resolve itself into a meagre

frozen column, sparkling water no longer, tossing up and up toward the blue-veined summer sky.

'It is too cold here, Fan, let us go home, but I do believe the sun is coming out after all.' It was, like the orange lantern of Japanese art. The water washing down the gutters ran clear as a spring, the strange blotted sunlight dashing it with impalpable gold-powder, no Paris gutter, surely, but some rivulet on Mount Ida. But to-day Evelyn felt shut away from all such charm. She said to herself bitterly that her youth was slipping away from her. Her vagrant thoughts persisted in gathering about Roger, Roger who was once more remote and inaccessible. She might never touch the primitive Roger again. So much for the passionate interlude that had released undreamed of sensations in her. With teasing memories for company, alone in the interminable afternoons while Fan was with Madame Berthe, she had caught her breath sometimes at a sound in the antechamber—Tony? Could it be possible that she was missing—Tony?

To-day, the light fading so early, she could stand it no longer alone. Dressing hurriedly she went out, not having Fan to worry about her wet feet. On one of the wind-swept bridges she waited to see the barges dragging by. In the distance the silhouette of Notre-Dame cut nobly through the haze. The mud was thick on the boulevards, but she trod it without a quaver. What did it matter?

Nothing, except to Emilie who would have to clean those same defaced shoes. The grey sky behind the trees near the Madeleine seemed to press down upon the greenish tiles of that great roof now streaming with moisture. A crowd moved slowly up and down the sloppy pavement, collecting about a camelot whose tiny mechanical figures pirouetted, or boxed, or balanced on a tight-rope, looking for all the world like impossible tropical insects, as Evelyn caught a glimpse of them between the legs of the gazers. Toward the Boulevard des Capucines a thin scaffolding rose into the mist with the effect of an Eiffel Tower in perspective. It was easily the most impressive object in the vicinity, plastered as it was from top to bottom with a brief announcement that called upon life—*La Vie! La Vie! La Vie!*—in massive letters rising one above another, up and up.

There was poor Evelyn, there was the crowd about the toy-seller on the greasy pavement, in the rainy gloom of late afternoon, the grey heavens scored across with this ironical plea, was it? demand, or warning? *La Vie! La Vie! La Vie!* Evelyn turned her back. She wanted something so much that life would never give her, that she felt as though she had been struck in the face. Oh—Life! How stupid and brutal it was, after all! Everyone who passed her, men and women alike, seemed to be asking, with bold eyes, with eager

hands, asking and never receiving. How much wiser to warm her chill fingers at the homely fire that offered itself near at hand, instead of rushing off, insatiable, to hunt for some impossible Hyperion who could only burn you up if you found him! Thus Evelyn, tired, half-frightened, half-defiant, bereft of that masculine prop that had chafed her when she had it, now moralizing to herself on that most unlikely spot—the boulevards at the hours of the *apéritif*. Her sense of humour drowsed, and never once sent out the tiniest spark.

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In this same deepening winter Roger armoured his self-control. The force with which Raoul had drawn him back into his own long-past agony—that of a torturing separation that could lead Adrienne's beloved head only to the shears of the miserable last toilette, to the hideous basket—was too violent to produce anything but a reaction in Roger. Now he did not dare to leave the door enticingly ajar for the guest who had such bitter bread to break with him. He was afraid.

Fan was his only refuge. One dark afternoon he and she had been wandering through the Marais where, in the slovenly old streets, they would stand to gaze at the blank windows, at the heavy portals of ancient houses within which extraordinary scenes might once have been enacted.

'Are we going to the Archives?' asked Fan. 'It is Thursday, you know.'

'Too late,' answered Roger, but that was not the reason. He could not trust himself to pass a certain table that he knew to be there in one of the galleries, a table with a scarred leather top that he could never see without an instantaneous vision of a body—Robespierre's—thrown upon it like a shadow picture, the knee breeches, the nankin coat, the stocking fallen down, the groping hand, the napkin at the face, the tortured jaw, the blood, the heat, the pain. No, in his present mood he simply did not dare to run the risk of it. His nerves were racking him, and the Cretan sedative was in frequent use.

No bus appearing in the rue Saint-Antoine that would suit their case, they mounted into a stuffy cab. The window on Fan's side would not open, but Roger said they need not stifle if they would fix their minds resolutely upon what the air must be like at, say, Saint-Moritz. This quip delighted Fan, and her imagination was busy at once with glorious winter sports that bore no relation to the damp and fog-bound Paris through which they were jolting. Suddenly in the press near the Louvre, a bus, lurching on the slippery roadway, began to plough its way into Roger's cab. There was the crack of breaking glass, and Fan's obstinate window opened now with a vengeance. Roger

caught the child to him just in time. The bus ground its wheels in the gutter, and the cabman presented its driver with a bouquet of untranslatable adjectives.

'It turns me cold to think that Fan might have been hurt while I was looking after her,' Roger said to Evelyn in an undertone, more emotion in his voice than the present little experience seemed to warrant. 'If you can ever trust her to me again——'

'Rather to you than to anyone,' replied Evelyn bravely, and she meant it.

But Roger had had his ghastly moment of fear for something that was dearer than himself. To see Fan menaced had given him a subtle shock. Of this he was but half aware.

After dining with a man he knew in the Beaux-Arts, he returned home alone, conscious by now of a dullish headache that would be better for darkness and quiet. He therefore left his lamp unlighted and lay in his long chair. Familiar shadows darkened the walls, but he did not heed them, nor did he notice, till an hour or two had passed, the dying of his fire. Then he got up to stuff a handful of resinous kindlings into the ashy coals. When he straightened himself the tiny flames were breaking into a Lilliputian glare, the best they could muster. It was enough to cause Roger to close his eyes for an instant.

A knock—on the door, was it? He looked up—gone the winter's gloom, the winter fire, gone the whole apartment. He, as Raoul, was sitting in a room strange to him, by a window through which came an almost summer-like warmth and light.

Later, oh, later, it was with an unsteady hand that he recorded Raoul's last breathing space before the end.

The child Lucie, in a little cotton frock striped brown and white, was on a stool at my feet. The room, very small, was high up in the house, for, as I glanced out of its narrow window, protected by drawn shutters, I could make out the dome of the Church of the Assumption on the rue Saint-Honoré, and, beyond, the tops of trees in the Tuileries gardens with the sunshiny river in the distance. The furniture, of the scantiest, was worn and dirty. The paper, a kind of speckled violet colour, was hanging here and there in torn patches from the walls.

'Some one is knocking,' whispered Lucie, hiding her face on my knees.

'The door is locked,' I murmured, trusting to the noise of the street to drown our voices. 'They will think we are out and go away.'

They may have reasoned so, for steps withdrew. But the child's sharp eyes had seen something that had escaped my own.

'But look, Monsieur Raoul,' she cried, springing up. 'There is a morsel of white paper under the door. Shall I bring it to you?'

I let the child go, the lassitude I felt making any movement painful. She was back at my side with the paper in her hand, folded over in the shape of a note. I opened it and the letters zigzagged before my eyes. The woman Rativeau again, with her menacing hold upon me. So she and her spies had tracked us here. The words were a warning to be gone, on the instant, to quit the lodging where I was. No more, no less. Was it a trap to catch us in the open? Or had the insatiable creature given way to the common woman's impulse to save, while showing her own power?

I was beset with a hideous doubt of what to do for Lucie's sake. As for myself, I desired only to be rid of a life that was now nothing but a torture. If I could place the child in safety, I would walk about openly again till they arrested me as the accomplice of Morizot. I would go the way that *she* had gone. I thought of the old steward in the rue de Grenelle. He might know of some woman who would look after the child (for I still had money) or who would smuggle her back to Caudebec. Why not pass the afternoon in the gardens, and when night came seek him out?

I stood up and told Lucie to put on her hat. We would sit under the trees, for it was hot in this

miserable room. The child obeyed at once, pleased at the idea of movement. With her hand in mine we descended the steep stairs, ill-smelling in the stale heat. The concierge looked hard at me as we passed, but made no attempt to stop me.

Instead of going at once to the gardens, we walked along the street in the direction of Robespierre's lodgings. There was no reason for this save that Lucie had caught sight of a woman over whose shoulder floated a bobbing convoy of those coloured bladders fixed to cords that children love. Would I buy her that crimson one? For so slight a thing, merely a blood-red bubble, we followed in the woman's wake. I had forgotten that Robespierre lodged nearby. Even had I remembered, why should I have cared? The street was no more dangerous to me than any other.

But presently I became aware of the pressure of people about us. One jostled me, as though to get a nearer view of my face. Lucie clung to me, her little hand stretched up to reach my arm. The crowd increased. The woman with the bladders had disappeared.

'We have missed her, Lucie,' I said. 'Let us turn back. I will buy you one in the gardens, and some lemonade. It is hot and we are thirsty.'

I turned about quickly, and found our passage disputed. Men and women had gathered from heaven knows where. I caught a whisper: 'Yes,

the man with the child.' We were in front of a low house with windows on each side of the entrance to the court. It was closely shuttered. The Duplay house, if I was not mistaken.

The moment and the place had been well-chosen. Whoever directed the movement was quick to see his opportunity. A vile word addressed to the child, an insolent gesture. The ruse succeeded. In a blind rage I struck the creature. A howl went up; my darling shrieked. A woman seized her as they fell upon me. With cries of 'Assassin! Assassin! He would kill the Citizen Robespierre!' I was dragged once more to my feet, bleeding, for I felt the drip on my hands.

They hustled me along the street, back in the direction we had come. I struggled with the men who held me, crying 'Lucie! Lucie!' I was mad at the thought of what they might do to her. The mob increased, idlers running to join it from every corner and alley. My head was bursting, my eyes obscured. I could not have walked had it not been for the ruffians who held me up on either side. What were they going to do with me? I was almost past thinking, only the torturing fear for Lucie remained with me—for her child whom she had given into my hands.

We were now once more almost in front of my lodgings. I saw the concierge look out, and then hasten to close his heavy door. No help from him.

Then came the first sinister whisper: 'Make an end of it now. The prisons are overcrowded; he will rot better here than there.' Then the name of Robespierre, with perfervid vows of devotion, of execration for his would-be assassin. The devilish train had been well laid. Rativeau's agents, Rativeau herself—who knows?—were on the spot to fan the blaze should it show signs of slackening.

What with loss of blood, with the sun on my bare head, I felt a sickening wave of faintness. When I could see again, I was being dragged toward the portico of the church. A rope could dangle as effectively from some projecting crotchet as from a lanterne. So that was it. With the mere remnant of a brute desire for life, I fought them. They closed on me again, infuriated. I fell, grasping the stone step, slippery with mud and blood. Agony—blind, pitiless. The man in me died hard . . . Lucie! Lucie! Your little arms around my neck—no, not yours, but your mother's . . . O my God!

Roger threw his pen aside and walked to the window. He was painfully moved, for what he had recorded had been stamped, not one detail lacking, upon the sensitive plate of his mind. Save that his own body was uninjured by the physical blows, he suffered now—suffered in spirit as then he had suffered in sensation—the utmost of Raoul's agony.

With Raoul's fall, he, Roger, had fallen, bruised and bleeding, with the lingering sensation even now in his finger-tips of a desperate, unavailing clutch. He had cried aloud upon the child, and had thought, blind and stunned as he was, to feel her hands upon his face. Suddenly, a great passionless immobility. Had he died then? Perhaps. Had the woman who had seized upon Lucie, following with her charge, permitted a last embrace, or was it a dying fantasy? He would never know. He had no wish to know. His one agonized desire now was to get to Evelyn, to Evelyn who had once been Adrienne. He was not sane enough to analyze: he could only feel.

But the day must pass. He would not go to the rue de la Chaise until night. Now he must have sleep, sleep soft as velvet, deep as the grave—he had it there in his pocket.

It was late when he knocked at the antechamber door. He was completely held by his fixed idea, and when Evelyn saw his face she knew in a rush what was upon her. But there was Fan, Fan, who at that moment came into the salon in her little dressing-gown and slippers to kiss her mother good night. She stared, amazed, not understanding. Her mother did not turn her head, but Roger caught her to him. 'Go to bed, my darling. Your mother—' He scarcely knew what he was saying.

Fan looked up at him and fled. Never before had she seen this Roger of the burning eyes and

hands. Sleepless in her small bed she decided desperately that she would never grow up to be a woman. Across the child's sensitive soul had been shot too sudden a glare from passion's eternal bon-fire. Her whole undeveloped understanding was in revolt.

With Fan's disappearance, Roger re-plunged into the mid-current of his dream, barely conscious as yet of its insidious dragging undertow, bent as he was upon deadening every sensibility save one. In this room, where he had seen Adrienne for the last time, this other woman was now maddeningly spreading that same subtle enervating atmosphere that he was beginning to crave. With her might he not again share the intoxication of possession? In her, as in an exquisite empty cup, might there not be poured for him again the undying seduction of Adrienne?

Without speaking, without waiting or caring for her consent or her resentment, he seized upon her, bending back her head so that he could get at her eyes, all dark and veiled, seeking there some mystic confirmation of his obsession. He stood, puzzled, baffled, questing his unnatural quarry, even while his hands trembled about this softly breathing human creature that they held. The sickening recoil from the death he had died with Raoul was shaking him still, deep down in those quicksand depths of the soul where grey surfaces dimple and

quiver horribly. The drugged sleep had only intensified his will to live, his will to drag from Evelyn some stupefying semblance of what he was determined to have. She must give him that for which he thirsted; she must appease this beast that came crouching to her, making itself appealing and insinuating . . . Oh, the misery of it! . . . He laughed quite low, and to Evelyn's bemused ear the sound was reassuring. They were on the sofa now, his head at her shoulder, his hands busy with hers, his whole personality, hitherto so guarded, so reserved, now flung open, bare to her gaze, giving up its secrets as at some last Judgment Day. That low insistent mutter of his voice in her ear shattered her self-control. She had no idea of what he was saying; she had no desire to know. His physical presence spoke for him far more explicitly than any combination of words; spoke with a blinding definiteness to that hidden Evelyn who was slowly uncoiling, unclosing, lifting, with ravishment, a hungry face to life and light.

Presently she drew her head away from his to look at him. In the dim candlelight his eyes, burningly alert, were not the eyes she knew; nor were those nervous impetuous hands. Never before had she heard this troubling call, still muffled, still soundless, that yet, without pause or rest, was echoing from him to her, from her to him. To the message carried by that implacable music she found

herself disquietingly responsive. Nevertheless, vulnerable as she was to him, her pride awoke. For what did he take her, for some inert model upon whom he could drape the garments of the dead woman who haunted him—her century-old rival? Evelyn, passionately in earnest now, roused by the equivocal ardour with which Roger pressed her—drowning happily in it, yet mistrustful—Evelyn determined to be simply herself. As on that other day when she had dissolved his morbid vision, so now she drew back from him, trying to undo those jealous arms. Her hair was tumbling in her eyes, her throat contracted, her shoulder bare . . . Ah, but this was different, triumphantly so! Never would he let her go! No calling of his name could shock him out of his dream, for now his dream was just herself, the vital woman, herself caught up against his breast, her own name in her ear—just her name over and over again, persistent, supplicating: Evelyn! Evelyn! Evelyn!

EVELYN, in the dusky salon had been all woman, absolute in the mystery of her sex in full flower, fragility masking enchantingly the flexible steel of her will.

And it was that masked will that was to hold Roger in the weeks to come, unconscious as he was of its dominion under the seductiveness of her surrender. His old life was completely disrupted, and he stepped out of its ruins with a kind of unnatural exhilaration whenever he could be alone with Evelyn. Their intercourse deadened thought, giving him at the same time the headiest sensation of well-being. But it tortured him now to see Fan. He felt subtly dishonoured, unworthy to be with her, an interloper, a poor pilferer, where once all had been fine and free. It cut him anew each time he was with her to see the look in her eyes. She avoided him, all her instinct ablaze.

Fan, for her part, saw her world in fragments at her feet. The child was overwhelmed by a bewildering half-knowledge mining her ignorance, by a tormenting consciousness of the depth of the change in her mother and in Roger, a change so tre-

mendous to be so hidden and secret. She shrank into herself, not daring to see, trying to stifle this pain that never left her at the loss of Roger, at the ceasing of their lessons without a word. All the range of her consciousness was being poisoned by a kind of miasma that hung over it, through which she could scarcely make out the essentials of her normal life. All was distorted, the so-adored figures of her mother and of Roger taking on disguises that hid them from her, that mysteriously put them out of the reach of hands and lips such as hers.

The child's instinctive recoil from mysteries that have their roots in the source of life itself drove her to a confused denial of their very existence. She was trying to balance herself on a plane either above or below them, never on a level with them, so that she could miserably pretend that on her horizon nothing new was to be seen.

IT WAS as much to get away from Fan's down-cast eyes, that cut and angered him irrationally, as it was to have Evelyn absolutely to himself in all the intoxicating freshness of their new relation, that Roger proposed going off together somewhere, anywhere, out of Paris, out of France. He put it to Evelyn one evening in the old salon, walking impatiently backwards and forwards, restless, unstable, realizing that his only safety from what he dared not yet define was in this woman, in her glamorous absorption in himself. He was tired of pretence, of the subterfuges their Paris life imposed upon them. Would she go away with him?

Material difficulties fell away before Evelyn's ardour when each of their snatched meetings proved to her her increasing power. She, too, was irked by the restraint of the old life, being too inexperienced to see in it the very safeguard of their passion. He was to precede her to a straggling resort of which he happened to know, on the coast below Viareggio, sure to be deserted at this season. Lodgings in some villa in the neighbourhood would not be hard to find. She would follow, presumably to join old

friends of her mother's in Lucca. Madame Berthe would come to the apartment to be with Fan. They pieced together their plans, eagerly, hurriedly. In each heart the corrosion of desire lit up an enchanting series of scenes in which they were to move, always together, alien to all the world.

Fan was too numbed even to cry when her mother caught her in her arms that last morning, with the cab at the door and Emilie busy with rug and dressing-case. Evelyn kissed her child as though an impalpable veil hung between their lips. A certain dark force had dissolved momentarily their intimate union, and nothing was left for her now but to put the child, like an ivory image, safe on some worshipful height, while she herself stood deep in earth, glad of the earthy stains that she felt must somehow be visible upon her.

Roger met her at Viareggio, and in their first deep look each recaptured the magic certainty of the other's sufficiency, that seemingly inexhaustible treasure, that enchanted currency their eyes and lips and hands were continually exchanging. So they seemed tied together, bond-slaves, bought, one of the other, by this same passionate gold. She recovered herself first, and became aware of a material environment, of porters, of luggage, of directions to be given, even of a luncheon to be eaten. Roger had never felt her so absorbingly his, as when they walked out of the station side by side, she,

gloveless, pale, with crumpled frock and disorderly hair under her little hat, yet with a kind of triumphant humility, ready to follow wherever he might lead.

That same afternoon they drove out to the villa that Roger had discovered beyond the town, mouldering away on the edge of a pine-wood near the sea. It had been built early in the eighteenth century for some sprig of the Bourbon-Parma family, and a great escutcheon was still to be seen over the monumental doorway. It was a gaunt yellowish pile with barred windows and a loggia with slender columns, screened on one side by a black wall of trees. It was like many another weather-stained baffling building in this old land, with something secret in its very lack of expression. As they approached it, shuttered and forlorn, they could see the great pines bordering either side of a sandy track that led straight down to the shore. A boat with a lateen sail came slowly in over the pale water. Driving into an open, grass-grown court they drew up before the blank façade, as though they were personages in some play, awaiting an event timed for their arrival. This was what Roger said to her, being himself excitedly aware that only by dramatizing their relations, by seeing himself constantly as her lover—that and nothing else—only so could he keep up the pitch of his intoxication. He had a horror of what might hap-

pen were he to return to the old disintegrating habit of analysis. So he clung closely to Evelyn, forcing from her, unconsciously, a heightening of her whole being. His constant presence stimulated her, his taking for granted a certain fineness, a fastidiousness of nature she did not really possess, whipped her to its simulation, so that they met and met again, feverishly, completely, on a plane that was not the normal one for either. Consequently, in the midst of the glamour in which a phantom love trembled towards an impossible birth, each hid a kind of hollowness, a vague emptiness, inimical to any true union. From slipping down into that dead sea both held back convulsively, seeing in the closest physical proximity their only chance of escape.

Nothing could have suited their state better than this villa, unoccupied for so many years that it had come to be forgotten. The caretaker and his wife supplied what was needed, gave them their meals and then disappeared into the cavern-like retreats of the ground floor. Above, Evelyn and Roger had the only habitable part of the building—a vast bedroom looking on the loggia, a dressing-room in the angle, and the loggia itself, deep and sheltered.

Evelyn, waking at night, would lie gazing up at the raftered ceiling, carved and painted, at the uneasy flames in the deep fireplace, at the shadows

of the giant armoires, of the tall chairs. The whole enormous room seemed hostile to her, who was a stranger to its family pieties. Her own she had crushed down into insensibility. Nothing and no one should stay her from Roger. And at first he responded with an ardour that was a kind of fulfilment in itself, without exclusive reference to the object of it. That he would never know the real Evelyn, that he would never have taken her had he not insanely hoped to find Adrienne in her, all this he dropped from him. She was now to him simply an exquisite woman who flattered his whole being with completion. It was as though she surrounded his nerves with the softest composed web, soft yet dense, so that no prick or goad of reason or remorse could pierce through.

One morning he left her very early to go down to the sea. It was warm for November and the sun behind the mists would soon be riding in a cloudless sky. He followed the rough track between the pines whose broad woven crests made a dark canopy over him. It was still dusky here, as in some gloomy gallery where lights were never brought. Presently the path lost itself in a kind of sandy amphitheatre about which certain groups of trees cut themselves off from their fellows because of their singular and fantastic shapes. The wind, ceaselessly busy, had bowed them to a travesty of suffering, as though their contortions, in reality be-

nign and immobile, were the expression of an actual state of agony.

How would it seem to stretch oneself out upon one of those plumed branches, to gaze down into some cave of the Cyclopes, or into the grey sea where the galley of Ulysses might be dragging under the cliff? With his hands behind his head Roger lay among the pine needles, looking up into the scented crowns of the trees. All external life seemed to flow by him without touching him; he was safe in the closed sphere of which his passion had made him free. He and Evelyn alone of all mankind presented cogent proofs of existence; he and she alone were really alive. Replete with her as he was at this moment, with intimate memories of an actuality almost too keen for pleasure—excessive sweetness sometimes staling into its opposite—he was totally unprepared for the morbid little experience that came to him. He was full awake, there was no vertigo to warn him as in the days of Raoul's power, but there, before his open eyes, where an instant before had been vacancy, there stood a woman with her back to him. His heart gave a choking leap, for he knew her. She was as mortal to his searching stare as Evelyn herself would have been. He saw the pine needles scattered where her feet were resting, he saw a dead leaf curled over by a fold of her long skirt. She wore the gown of that September day in his room. How he knew

the very consistency of that thin silk in his fingers! How he knew— But before he could seize her, leaping headlong to his feet, she had simply ceased to be. He knelt where she had stood, his hands full of the pine needles. Trembling, he knelt there, shaken to the depths, realizing, for one blinding instant, how poor was the stuff of his passion for Evelyn. He saw himself in the disguise of a miserable actor, mouthing and ranting in the rôle of a demigod. He and she were but playing their parts in an outer court, with the mummers and the valets, but that other woman and he, on that long dead day, had simply and proudly been themselves, caught up by some abnormal potency into the innermost shrine. He closed his eyes, still kneeling, his eager hands apart. But nothing happened. The day expanded about him, homely noises drifted down from the villa, fowls scattered here and there, a cock saluted. Two clumsy carts drove by along the upper road, the horses with knitted headstalls of dangling orange balls, one of the drivers furling his great pale green umbrella. All the sunny day was yet to come.

Roger scrambled to his feet confused, at a loss. Was he to sacrifice to a mirage all that the past few weeks had given him? Was the enticing flesh and blood of his delicate conquest to lose so soon its savour? Was he to slip back into the half-drugged hours from which Evelyn had saved him?

As though affected by Roger's subtle mental disturbance, Evelyn awoke suddenly to find herself alone. She dressed in haste, vaguely uneasy, and followed him to the beach. She came upon him unobserved, the sand muffling her movements. He was brushing pine needles off his knees, as though he had tripped and fallen like a child. She laughed. Ah, how she loved the look that transfigured his gravity, the feeling about her of his tightening arms and hands! She had recovered him without knowing that she had ever lost him, and he was more fully hers at that hour because he was afraid.

While the fine weather miraculously held, they made long dawdling excursions into the woods that stretched for miles in a thick back line along the shore. In that fragrant solitude they could wring out to the last drop what their intimate companionship meant to them. Deliberately cut off from every tie save the single violent one that bound them together, they ran the ever-present risk of satiety. Evelyn was now alive to the danger, but did not know how to conjure it away. Neither of them was of the stuff to prolong this passionate interlude into the solid fabric of their common life. They were intensely ill-mated, and only their present emotional instability enabled them to remain unconscious of this obvious fact. It began to pierce through, however, occasionally, to Evelyn, who was humble enough to imagine that her constant

presence might be wearing to Roger's nerves, he who was so used to being alone. She interpreted in this way his fashion of strolling out into the loggia and remaining there for an hour or more at a time, doing nothing, not even reading. He neither wrote nor received letters, having made as clean a cut of all worldly relations as if he were a dead man. She caught herself almost wishing she could be as consistent as he, as brutal in the assumption that nothing mattered save themselves. The one horribly sensitive moment of her day was when the post came in. She shivered with relief when there was no letter from Fan. She had given the child to understand that the old friends in Lucca had carried her with them to this villa. She was afraid not to have direct communication with the rue de la Chaise, but the thought of Fan tortured her, humiliated her. What was Roger thinking of out there in the loggia? Once he had idly picked up one of Fan's little missives, only to drop it as though it had burnt him when he saw what it was.

Their last good days were the ones that followed Roger's experience in the pine-wood. He was thrown back on Evelyn by a kind of premonitory turn in his blood. He was bent convulsively upon proving that normal joys with a normal woman would restore his hold upon life and sanity. Then there were golden hours in the vast room with the raftered ceiling; nights when the flaming logs kept

at bay importunate apparitions, all teasing, tempting thoughts, as though this domestic fire had given place to a heap of blazing brands in a desert, round which, at a given distance, gleamed devouring eyes.

The fine weather had broken, and now there seemed always to be the same straight curtain of rain, like grey *crêpe*, between them and the outer world. The wind called forth the secret voices of the pines and set Evelyn shivering. Sometimes he and she would be housed all day, ennui lying in wait for them like a thief by the door. If the clouds drew away toward sunset, they would walk up and down in the loggia, watching the light die out of the purplish-red sky, dead already where they stood, arms enlocked.

One morning Evelyn told Roger that she needed a few odds and ends that she could pick up in a shop in Viareggio, her mother-wit suggesting this diversion to give him a few hours to himself. So she went off, gaily enough, saying that she would lunch at the hotel and drive back in time for tea. Roger was too chivalrous to admit, even to himself, the almost gasping relief he felt at being once more alone. He savoured it in every relaxed nerve. Evelyn seemed to have carried away with her all the Paris atmosphere, all the *décor*, as it were, of his life since he had known her. He was back in Crete, in that stifling room in the house of Dr Riquetti. Why was this? Was there some subtle association

between his mental states of then and now? Was he still in a kind of dis-equilibrium?

He had thrown himself on a couch in the dressing-room, instinctively more at ease there. The walls were grey, painted in long panels, with red and black figures set in the midst, trophies and birds and horns of plenty. It had stopped raining, but the wind in the trees and the water on the shore sang and moaned uneasily together. Roger deliberately emptied his mind of content, able to rest completely for the first time in his soul since he had come to the villa . . . Perhaps he drowsed there, for he remembered Maria feebly telling him that luncheon was ready; but he had certainly eaten nothing, and now, as he sat bolt upright, the dusk had come, daylight was failing, it must be four o'clock, and soon Evelyn would be back. All this in a lucid flash, as though some one in his inner consciousness had suddenly pattered it off like a lesson. Where had he been, he, Roger, during those hours of insensibility? He was filled with the strangest, happiest feeling of returning from a long way off, from blissful adventures, from moments of fruition startlingly different from any he had ever considered such. He felt that he must carry on his person some mark, some sign of this marvellous experience. His hands ought to be perfumed with it, as though he had been touching—a woman's hair . . . That was it! A woman's hair,

Adrienne's! No memory here of Evelyn, of that soft mass, ashy-blond, lying about her little head. No, the hair he meant was vital, glittering. He had felt it stream over his hand that September day in his room. It had always seemed a desecration to powder it, and yet how lovely it was then, its metallic lustre dimmed as through snow, the black ribbon caught in it. Adrienne had come back. He must have been with her all those long hours since Evelyn had left him. He was trembling with the afterwash of it, and yet—he was conscious of nothing that his reason could clutch. He was quivering with desire—for what? Emptiness? Dusty death? Ah, never!

He got up, realizing that he must master himself. On the little table by the entrance to the loggia he saw the dishes and platters of his luncheon. He must get rid of them. Ringing for Maria, he told her to take all away and to say nothing about it. Finger on lip to an Italian was enough. The good romantic soul would think it sufficient reason for total loss of appetite that the Signora was not there.

The Signora? Evelyn? When Roger wrenched his mind around to her it was as though he made a gesture of despair. He was going to fail her so horribly. Since his moment of vision by the shore, he had known what was dogging him. Try as he would, cling to Evelyn in what abandonment, it

was never the living woman who could hold him, but only that other. She had shown herself with nameless charm in the wood (not even her face!) And now, to-day, he had been with her all through those hours that had passed like seconds, in what fields of Elysium where he was Raoul no longer, but—final touch of seduction—Roger himself? That was what moved him most poignantly. No longer must he wait upon Raoul to smuggle him into his paradise. Raoul was dead. Could anything be more glaring than that? Raoul was dead. But it was he, Roger, he in his personal identity, he as a living man who had triumphed.

He laughed quite happily and naturally, pacing from one end of the great room to the other, lost in his dreams. Into those he wove a thousand incoherent plans, that seemed to dovetail one into another with exquisite facility, only to slip apart again before he could give them the final touch. If he could only be alone here, what revelation might not gather and burst? The place was so lonely, he need see no one from week's end to week's end . . . She had followed him down the path to the water, she had known her way to this house, to that dressing-room . . . But what to do with Evelyn? He could not ask her to go back and leave him here. What must he say, what must he do when she came? Their miserable little romance hung on his hands with a piteousness he could feel

only abstractly, not actually. When he had seemed most sane, most human, when he and Evelyn had caught at each other in the way of all flesh, then it was, he saw clearly now, then it was that he had been fundamentally mad. But now he was sane again, luminously so; now he felt mentally in a superior dimension, on a plane from which he could quietly arrange everything, without discord or friction, once this slight dizziness and incoherence, like racing clouds, but exhilarating, had passed off.

Out of the side window he could see the brown evening fields, sodden with rain, the dusky pineta straggling to the beach. Where was all the magic of this land that men had so loved? All gone now. They, too, their love and they together . . . Yes, he must indeed have lost his head to bring Evelyn down here, Evelyn who now, in this new, disconcerting lucidity of his, seemed to glide back to the rue de la Chaise, to be no longer the Evelyn of the villa, no longer the woman of this vast bedchamber, but simply—the mother of Fan.

‘Damnation!’ Thought and word burned his very brain and lips. Fan!

EVELYN RAN up the stairs, her heart beating. The house had looked so flat and secret and forlorn. No one was in sight; no figure in the loggia. He knew she would be driving back just about this time. It was dark; no lamp. The first wave of what was coming caught her then; the first premonition that the iridescent bubble she had been so gallantly pretending diamantine hard was on the point of collapse.

‘Roger?’ She put out her hands to feel her way; the room was almost dark, full of gaunt shadows where the furniture must be. He stood suddenly in the dressing-room door . . . So he must have been there all the time. Evelyn was no adept, but she was sensitive enough to cringe at what came soundlessly breathing to her from the very air about him.

‘Wait till I light the lamp. I must have been asleep. Did you have a good day?’

From what depths came that cool, indifferent voice? He was fumbling with the matches. She rang for Maria and told her to bring up tea. She clung by instinct to the familiar ritual . . . Oh, what had happened to him?

She chattered away while she gave him his tea, hysterically afraid of the silence that seemed on the watch there in the background, ready to impose itself between them, as severing as a barricade. He had made no motion to touch her since she had come in, and now at ease on the other side of the table he was politely assuming an interest in what she was saying. She would not have started had he called her Mrs Wynne, so much was he deliberately enveloping himself in the atmosphere of the first days of their acquaintance. But his face, his eyes!

Gradually her vivacity dropped; she couldn't keep it up any longer. That night she knew that he took his drug again. So he had brought it with him. He had talked quite freely to her about it in Paris, but since their intimacy she had every reason to believe that he had given it up. Those odd attacks of his! Might they not come from this drug? Suppose he were to have one here? She clenched her hands in the darkness. The ache of it tore at her. She had lost him so soon.

But Evelyn was conventional enough, through all her terror for Roger, to envisage her position were anything to happen to him here, alone with her. She rent herself for it, but the panic persisted nevertheless. She tried to think that it was all on Fan's account, and now the idea of the child was consoling, not searing. She would creep back to

her, wounded but not showing it; subtly changed but all the more tender. She had been gone but these few poor weeks.

The next morning she flitted away early, saying she would be walking by the shore. She wished to give him a chance to pull himself together. After her first deep look at him in the daylight, she felt more reassured. His eyes were normal again after that death-like sleep, and he had lost the slightly exaggerated manner that had so distressed her. But he was silent, appallingly so. Not a word. In what strange dream was he held, so obviously absent from her? What should she do?

As though to mock her wretched loneliness, the day showed itself splendid, one of those happy combinations of light in sea and sky, that sometimes, in an Italian December, can bewilder and ravish. In the sandy amphitheatre, sheltered by its tall trees, by clumps of broom and creeping undergrowth, the sun fell warmly as in a nest. The cloud-banks on the far horizon were faintly rosy still, although the blue of sky and sea was deepening. There was a kind of silvery freshness in the air, as if dawn had unconsciously prolonged itself into broad day. A sea-bird, his breast a shining white, swooped and hung and dipped above the water. Evelyn, cruelly alone after the intense companionship of the past few weeks, felt incapable of doing more with her personal problem than to

wring her hands silently over it, as though she nursed it on her knees like a dying child. She felt intuitively that she had exhausted her peculiar little store of womanly power over Roger; he had been escaping her subtly, day by day. She had no more magic, novelty gone. She had seized him on the rebound from some mysterious preoccupation—so much she knew—and now she was too weak to hold him. What arms had she against those hauntings of his? That drug?

She lay back miserably in a hollow in the sand, glad of the warmth, letting the tears dry on her cheek.

He found her there, looking like a shot bird, so he said, as he let himself down beside her. He could scarcely have hit upon an apter image. With his hands clasped over his knees, he gazed out to sea, wrinkling his eyes . . . It was no use. He had made what had seemed to him the most stupendous effort to be natural, to follow her here to the beach, to talk to her, to see once more in her the woman with whom he could bedrowse, benumb himself, that deeper self that now rose up, fasting, famished, demanding, ah, what other flesh! She was sweetness itself, disarming in her gentleness. Perhaps she was waiting, like an inexperienced girl, for him to explain, to 'make it up.' Good God, how far he had drifted from any such rough and ready solution! She, intrinsically, was as remote

from him now as though she were some creature of the desert, as incapable of understanding him as a Bedouin woman might be. But he knew he must do something to put an end to this poor adventure of theirs. He must get her away from the villa . . . Something creeping seemed to have installed itself in his brain, brushing with, oh, the lightest yet most enervating touch, over his nerve-centres. It was worse when he was near Evelyn; it was as though the hidden something resented her. Yet how delicate her charm as she lay there in the sand hollow! Her frock was beige and her stockings, and the soft clear blue of her wool cape lapped up around her neck to meet the blue of the velvet *béret* pulled down over her hair. In her hands, in her restless fingers, were the long ends of the old yellowish batiste scarf she wore about her throat under the cape . . .

If she would only help him; if she would only talk as if nothing had happened. 'Won't you speak to me?' he heard himself saying, as if from a great way off. Evelyn, not daring to look at him, so odd was the request, so strange the tone in which it was made, began to say, at first, she knew not what. Then she fell upon some foolish tale of Maria and her own imperfect Italian; the costume that Maria was busy over, so as to have it in readiness for the next festa at San Giuseppe; the pink silk apron with the lace that she had bought

for her yesterday—‘Didn’t I show it to you?’ No answer. She toiled on. ‘Maria was in an ecstasy over it this morning, and I think even Pietro was a little less grumpy than usual because of it. How they love presents!’ Silence . . . Oh, what should she do?

He was quite oblivious of her now, looking with extreme intentness at the row of pines that bordered the hollow where they sat. She turned her eyes to do the same, so contagious was his stare. What did she expect to see? What he was seeing? She was convinced that he was finding something extremely intriguing where she had the power to perceive nothing but the empty air. There was a sudden kind of dreadful alertness about him; he was reining himself in with all his might so as not to tremble; his eyes were moving from one spot to another so quickly—like a dog on the scent. Oh, it was horrible. Roger! Roger! Had she called out to him aloud, or only in her soul?

He had scrambled to his feet and seemed to be waiting. He moved back a pace or two, as though to be sure to give something or some one plenty of room. She sat up. His lighted gaze was now full on her, on her, but he did not see her. Of that she was certain, for she looked directly up into his eyes, blank to all but their own peculiar vision. The concentrated stare was more than she was able to endure. She felt like hiding her face in her

hands. How much longer—but her answer to this was a physical one. Roger suddenly walked straight ahead and would have actually stepped on her, had she not drawn up her legs and flung herself sideways. Then he turned, quick as lightning, his hands out, smoothing down the air as though he were blind and were eagerly feeling for some object that he knew to be near. When he seized her, as he was bound to do, so close together were they in this sandy cup, he made the strangest passes over her shoulder and down her arm, visibly disturbed by the rough wool of her cape.

‘How absurd you are, dearest!’ she cried in his face, shaking as he held her. ‘Surely you know my old cape by this time . . . Roger!’ She was determined to bring him back to himself, out of this horrible masquerade, even if she had to strike him with her fists. To her enormous relief her voice reached him in whatever morbid retreat he was sojourning; for the unnatural stare faded, the whole expression oddly trembled back to the one she knew.

She pulled him down beside her, and he sat quite still, breathing as though he had been running. Then she talked—of what she never knew—talked and talked, letting the words tumble over one another to create that psychic shelter behind which poor Roger could once more make himself present-

able before re-entering their common world. The pity of it!

In the midst of her chatter, not heeding her, but smiling at her, he said suddenly that he had forgotten his cigarettes. She grasped at this diversion. 'It is time to go back to the house. I must make myself tidy for luncheon. Sprawling in the sand—' She was about to jump up when he seized the end of her batiste scarf. As he turned and twisted it absently in his strong fingers the delicate fabric, yellow with age, split away from its heavy embroidered edge. As though this were some mystic signal, he quite calmly, but with a sudden sharp relish, tore the scarf lengthwise, shredding apart as much as he could reach of it. Evelyn turned cold. The foolish destruction had been wrought so deliberately, it was impossible not to see the symbolism of it. Was he trying to give visible proof to himself or to some phantasm of his own imagining that just as easily, just as readily, with just as perverse a pleasure as he tore her scarf, so would he tear away her hands if she clung to him, if she would not let him go? She felt a sob rising in her throat. His arm was about her, brotherly fashion. 'What a beast I was to spoil your scarf, but the wretched stuff simply gave way in my fingers. You don't mind?' What could she say?

'Oh, no, it was such an old thing, but it was so—so deliciously soft—about my neck.' Her

voice would quiver in spite of her, all that she had lost rising up to choke her. He looked distressed, but only mildly so, as one might with an unreasonable child.

The lavish sun was sucking out the resinous smell from the pines; insects were busy in the clumps of broom, ants in a disciplined frenzy about their reddish-brown hills. Nearer the villa a few olives encircled with their smoky silhouettes one solitary cypress, pointed like a finger, solemn as death. In the coarse grass there might still be found some flower-cup, yellow or violet, if anyone had the curiosity to stoop to it. But neither Roger nor Evelyn was sensible of the shining world about them. They were imprisoned in the hot enclosure of their emotions, so that they walked the familiar earth as detached from it as though they were already ghosts.

After luncheon she was painfully conscious of the narrowness of their quarters, a matter of course in lovers' intimacy but infinitely exasperating when body and soul are straining to be free, as Roger's were. She pretended to be occupied with Maria, so as to give him an opportunity to do what he wished. Without hesitation he went into the dressing-room. Would he lie there till dusk, as he had done yesterday? . . . She must get her things together; she must go back to Paris. He was ill, mentally ill. Dare she leave him here alone?

But was not that just what he wanted most of all? She looked around the vast room, once transfigured by their passion, now re-emerging to its own true mouldy discomfort. How the minutes dragged!

She threw herself on the bed to hide her eyes in the pillow, to blur her inner vision of a motionless figure in the dressing-room.

Roger had retired there instinctively, with an almost childish faith that the experience of yesterday would be repeated, that to this place of secret rendezvous she would surely come again. But he was incapable of making himself receptive; his heart was beating jerkily, his nerves were beyond control. What he had seen that morning by the shore was repeated with an agonizing monotony behind the closed lids he forced down over his eyes. In these visions there was the utmost lifelike reproduction of movement, of colour, of sound. He heard again the sand crunch under his feet as it had done when he sprang up upon first observing her; he saw again the whole dazzling blue of the sea and sky, the black smear of the pines; he was again penetratingly conscious of the figure in process of materialization between the trunks of two of the trees on the edge of the little amphitheatre of sand . . .

But now the room was growing dark—and nothing had happened. He had come in here like a boy, so confident of his hidden pleasure, and noth-

ing had happened. Life would become insupportable if Evelyn and he remained here together. Nothing had happened because she was here, filling that other room with her presence, filling this one, too, for there on the dressing-table were all the impedimenta of her toilet, all those pots and vials; in that armoire her gowns; her very scent and perfume everywhere!

He got up and walked across the end of the bedroom to go out into the loggia. It was already so dusky that he could not be supposed to see Evelyn, if she were there, and so need not speak to her. How he wanted that air now blowing up from the sea, ineffably fresh! With its aid he would pull his wits together and try to form some workable plan, to suggest, to supplicate, to implore—no, that wouldn't do—to suggest, to suggest merely, that Evelyn should join her friends in Lucca, where she was really supposed to be. Certainly, that was it. Why, they must have been expecting her, must have been expecting her all these weeks.

LUCKILY FOR Roger, he was in pitiful hands. Evelyn had raised herself up in bed when she saw him come out of the dressing-room. It was unmistakably a bad sign that he had not called to her, or asked her what she was doing. Crying in bed would have been so cogent an answer. But during those melancholy hours she had made up her mind. In the state in which he obviously was it would be cruel to impose herself on him any longer. To the dullest vision he was suffering at her presence. Was it conceivable that scarcely a month had passed since those first radiant days with him here, when her whole nature had expanded, filling itself as at some sacred fount? How miserable to creep away, baffled, hurt, not really knowing who or what had given her woman-sorcery its quietus! . . . Perhaps it would be more natural to go to the Careys at Lucca, after all. She could very well let it be understood that she had simply stopped over to see them for a night on her way back to Paris from a sudden flight to Pisa. She couldn't leave Fan any longer—. Leave Fan! Oh, that was the hardest thing of all to bear. She

would have to tip her nerves with steel before she saw her child again; she would have to strangle this horrible feeling that because Roger had tired of her she was—what did they call it?—a light woman. If his love had lasted, she would have gloried in it, and so been herself glorified, but now——!

She got down from the great curtained bed and lit a candle to write out her telegram to the Careys. Pietro would take it to Viareggio the first thing in the morning. She hurriedly slipped into the dressing-room to bathe her eyes and put on another frock. Everything must seem simple and natural and—friendly.

When Maria announced their supper, laid on the little table by the opening to the loggia, it took all Evelyn's courage to face the Roger who slowly came up to her. The change in him in the last few hours was devastating. Although he visibly struggled to do so, it seemed impossible for him to speak to her. In the depths of those eyes still lingered, perhaps, some vestige of the Roger who had brought her to this villa, but on the surface there was only a stranger, vexed, impatient, eager to thrust her brutally out of his way.

Spurred to it, her cheeks flaming, she announced in a rush that she was going to Lucca on the morrow, that she would stay the night with the Careys,

who thought she had been in Pisa, and go on to Paris the next day. Roger let himself down into his chair, the exquisite relief that he felt at her words printing itself all too nakedly on his face. She had saved him, had pulled him out of the close prison where he lay, rattling his chain . . . He bent quickly over her, seized those liberating hands and kissed them. The breath of both came quickly; then the tension passed. It seemed incredible to Evelyn that they could actually eat their supper, but Roger's spirits now rose as abnormally as before they had been depressed. His nervous reactions were as sharply defined as day from night. He talked with a most unnatural vivacity, telling her long but amusing tales of the days before he knew her, ignoring with persistent skill any topic that might lead him to Paris and to her. It was as though in this river of words he washed himself luxuriously clean of some mental stain. His almost insane gratitude to her for taking herself off was rather pitiful. To put an end to his loquacity that was beginning seriously to disturb her, Evelyn said she must gather her things together, as the train left early in the morning and there was the drive in to Viareggio. She was trembling with impatience to be gone, now that her mind was made up. She could no longer bear to look at him—feverish, exalted. While he was smoking in the loggia, she emptied the dressing-room of her belongings. She

knew that he would spend the night there with his drugged dreams for company.

He was still sleeping the next morning when the time came for her to go. She went in and looked down at him. Beneath that relaxed composure what mad race was going on in his brain? He must have his secret compensations. That was why he could let her go without a word, without a sign. Tears filled her eyes and she knitted her fingers together to keep from touching him. She laid a little scrawled note on the table, a few commonplace words, such as she might have written in the rue de la Chaise days. That seemed to help her to drape her ignominious departure in a consoling guise. It was as though she had merely dropped in to say a friendly word, driving past the villa, en route to the Careys. No wonder women clung to dissimulation; it was so often the only rag men left them.

ROGER AWOKE much calmer, sufficiently so to feel a normal pang as he read her little note, savouring his actual isolation with less relish just because that note had come to be written in just that tone . . . well, that was over.

He looked about the vast room, throwing up his head to see how well the light was caught in the painted rafters, taking in the way each chair, each table, the bulk of the curtained bed made islands of themselves in the spaces of the great apartment. He had never really seen it properly before. Now he would have time, time, an incredible and bottomless reservoir of it, supreme animator of the Past, into which to plunge himself, keeping by him only those memories of a certain experience that, cleverly de-coded, spelt what but—invitation? Passionately as he longed for Adrienne, was he not as passionately desired? Gone from him every thought of Evelyn and the old life, even of Fan. He might never see Paris again if this villa proved propitious: benign to visible materializations . . .

He got through the morning well enough, just sufficiently excited with what he thought was in

store for him to hang back a bit from the revelation in order to increase the gusto. It was imminent, that marvellous encounter of sense and spirit incomparably subtilized, and he could afford to watch its leisurely approach. He avoided the pineta, striking back into the country, away from the sea. Soon the poplars began, bare poles now, but sufficient to themselves in the clear light, ready to compose to his eye, along with the blue distant mountains, the flat curve of the river into a Puvis de Chavannes; turn the poplars into oaks, Roman fashion, and it would be a Poussin. When he had had almost enough of it and noon was come, he was relieved to see a church ahead of him, stranded in a green flat waste. There would be some village, some inn there where he could eat, and then perhaps hire a cart to take him back to the villa. While they were preparing his meal he walked about the great gaunt church, with its strange double apse and Moorish-looking coloured tiles set in under the edge of the roof, with strips and fragments of antique carving appearing haphazard in the stone courses. There might be a certain interest in digging hereabouts; probably the church was built over the house of an early saint; seafaring men had passed by; Saint Peter? In this old land what might one not find, even now?

But Roger could no more keep up this flicker of an old interest out of his old life than he could

keep himself from a convulsive shiver of impatience in the cart, as they approached the villa. The peasant who drove him would think he had the Maremma fever. Fever it certainly was, but a blissful one, heightening his nerve tension, stringing him up to give out what rapturous sound when certain hands should touch him . . . Where would it be, that meeting—in the sands, in the dressing-room? Where should he go first?

All that afternoon he ranged about, incapable of remaining long in one place. The little amphitheatre grew forlorn in the dusk, that nest of warmth and scent and colour all fallen into ruin with the mere dropping of the sovereign light. The pines were now become so much dull wood under the miserable intensity of his stare. Nothing there; nothing. Such an emphasis on this 'nothing' as though to warn him that never again would there be a 'something.' In truth, the whole aspect of the visible scene was changing to his senses. Only yesterday everything had undulated ever so slightly to prove to him that the objective world was merely a covering stretched over a universe of infinite psychic possibilities. But now there was a blind, stupid stolidity about everything. He felt as though he would bruise his very knuckles to bleeding were he to strike out at the 'empty' air. He was beginning to be hemmed in by this strange

thickening of the atmosphere. It would be better indoors in the dim lamplight . . .

All night long he kept his vigil, forcing himself to quiescence, hour after hour, in the dressing-room, only to be driven forth again at last by a kind of inner aridity, the very blankness of defeat. He saw the dawn flush all the sky from the loggia, but day meant only a certain procession of hours to be passed in the kind of sleep he now indulged in.

For the rest of the week Roger hung on desperately, hoping against hope, but Evelyn's going seemed to have closed a door in his face . . . Was it possible, was it credible that Evelyn's presence had anything to do with certain—experiences? Could there be some tenuous connection between the two women? Jarred out of his habitual composure by Evelyn, exasperated by her, could it be that he had thereby been put in a favourable posture for a visitant since Raoul was no longer to be their go-between? Were he and she never to meet without an intermediary?

Haunt the pineta as he would, pace the great dim rooms all the night through, nature refused to be again an accomplice in the unnatural—no more miracles were to happen. Certainly they had ceased, with the finality of extinction. He grew to hate the villa, with its ancient air of blankness hiding its secret derision. He could no longer force himself to walk under the dark trees, or to lie in the

amphitheatre, remembering his discomfiture there when loveliness had melted away into the silence, just beyond the reach of his senses . . .

Now Maria and Pietro had taken to hanging about after him, almost as if they were watching him. He supposed his hours were a little irregular, but, good heavens, what was that to them? It was this annoyance, trivial but constant, that in the end decided him to go. He began to imagine his old rooms in Paris as cells of peace wherein he could drop, safe from all this Italian spying and whispering.

He had been back a week, seeing no one, scarcely stirring out at all. Then one afternoon he made his way mechanically to the rue de la Chaise. As he walked into the salon, rather taken aback by hearing voices—a fool to suppose she would be alone—the whole familiar scene seemed incredibly unreal. They were wraiths, all of them—Evelyn, those two men (one of them must be Tony), even his Fan—wraiths that looked perfectly solid and that made all the appropriate gestures of surprise (or was it dismay?), of greeting, of friendly interest. His own self-consciousness was so acute, so exaggerated, that he found no common ground on which to meet them. He was grappled to a life of which they could have no faintest inkling. Heaven knows what he said to them. Evelyn kept her back to the light, looking ready to cry; Fan slipped away

without a word. Their voices sounded kind. Tony wanted to walk back with him, but he evaded that. He must come again when there would be some chance of seeing Fan alone. He must make his peace with her before he went away.

Late one afternoon he let himself in with the key Evelyn had given him all those ages ago. He opened the salon door without rapping. The room was empty—no, there was Fan, all alone, over by the window. The child faced him in mid-flight. Then he called to her with that in his voice that set her trembling with joy: ‘Fan, Fan, I must see you. Don’t go!’

She went to him at once, for she was conscious, beneath the terrible outward change in him, that he himself, her own Mr Roger, had mysteriously come back to her. They took their old place on the sofa, she with her hand in his, speechless with happiness. As though some magic flowed from her, Roger’s dark preoccupations fell away from him for the moment, some balm washing them clean.

‘How have I lived all these months without you?’ he murmured.

Fan looked up at him, this time in a rapture, hearing not one word he said. It was enough that he was there beside her for all her world to fall into harmony once more. Love filled her, the highest she was ever to know, so that she turned and poured

it all through her eyes upon this man beside her, letting it ring out clear in her adoring voice.

So much of sanctification at least Roger had before he went to his sleep in the room where Adrienne had crouched beside him on that day of the killing in the Abbey-yard. He left no word behind him. An accidental overdose of a sedative was such a simple way to force a locked door. In kissing Fan good night he had made his wordless farewell to her mother. Yet before complete sleep took him he roused himself in a kind of terror, and cried out to the vacant walls: 'Don't tell Fan!'

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