

**ГЕНРИ
ДЖЕЙМС**

RODERICK

HUDSON

Генри Джеймс

Roderick Hudson

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Henry James

Roderick Hudson

CHAPTER I. Rowland

Mallet had made his arrangements to sail for Europe on the first of September, and having in the interval a fortnight to spare, he determined to spend it with his cousin Cecilia, the widow of a nephew of his father. He was urged by the reflection that an affectionate farewell might help to exonerate him from the charge of neglect frequently preferred by this lady. It was not that the young man disliked her; on the contrary, he regarded her with a tender admiration, and he had not forgotten how, when his cousin had brought her home on her marriage, he had seemed to feel the upward sweep of the empty bough from which the golden fruit had been plucked, and had then and there accepted the prospect of bachelorhood. The truth was, that, as it will be part of the entertainment of this narrative to exhibit, Rowland Mallet had an uncomfortably sensitive conscience, and that, in spite of the seeming paradox, his visits to Cecilia were rare because she and her misfortunes were often uppermost in it. Her misfortunes were three in number: first, she had lost her husband; second, she had lost her money (or the greater part of it); and third, she lived at Northampton, Massachusetts. Mallet's compassion was really wasted, because Cecilia was a very clever woman, and a most skillful counter-plotter to adversity. She had made herself a charming home, her economies were not obtrusive, and there was always a cheerful flutter in the folds of her crape. It was the consciousness of all this that puzzled Mallet whenever he felt tempted to put in his oar. He had money and he had time, but he never could decide just how to place these gifts gracefully at Cecilia's service. He no longer felt like marrying her: in these eight years that fancy had died a natural death. And yet her extreme cleverness seemed somehow to make charity difficult and patronage impossible. He would rather chop off his hand than offer her a check, a piece of useful furniture, or a black silk dress; and yet there was some sadness in seeing such a bright, proud woman living in such a small, dull way. Cecilia had, moreover, a turn for sarcasm, and her smile, which was her pretty feature, was never so pretty as when her sprightly phrase had a lurking scratch in it. Rowland remembered that, for him, she was all smiles, and suspected, awkwardly, that he ministered not a little to her sense of the irony of things. And in truth, with his means, his leisure, and his opportunities, what had he done? He had an unaffected suspicion of his uselessness. Cecilia, meanwhile, cut out her own dresses, and was personally giving her little girl the education of a princess.

This time, however, he presented himself bravely enough; for in the way of activity it was something definite, at least, to be going to Europe and to be meaning to spend the winter in Rome. Cecilia met him in the early dusk at the gate of her little garden, amid a studied combination of floral perfumes. A rosy widow of twenty-eight, half cousin, half hostess, doing the honors of an odorous cottage on a midsummer evening, was a phenomenon to which the young man's imagination was able to do ample justice. Cecilia was always gracious, but this evening she was almost joyous. She was in a happy mood, and Mallet imagined there was a private reason for it—a reason quite distinct from her pleasure in receiving her honored kinsman. The next day he flattered himself he was on the way to discover it.

For the present, after tea, as they sat on the rose-framed porch, while Rowland held his younger cousin between his knees, and she, enjoying her situation, listened timorously for the stroke of bedtime, Cecilia insisted on talking more about her visitor than about herself.

“What is it you mean to do in Europe?” she asked, lightly, giving a turn to the frill of her sleeve—just such a turn as seemed to Mallet to bring out all the latent difficulties of the question.

“Why, very much what I do here,” he answered. “No great harm.”

“Is it true,” Cecilia asked, “that here you do no great harm? Is not a man like you doing harm when he is not doing positive good?”

“Your compliment is ambiguous,” said Rowland.

“No,” answered the widow, “you know what I think of you. You have a particular aptitude for beneficence. You have it in the first place in your character. You are a benevolent person. Ask Bessie if you don’t hold her more gently and comfortably than any of her other admirers.”

“He holds me more comfortably than Mr. Hudson,” Bessie declared, roundly.

Rowland, not knowing Mr. Hudson, could but half appreciate the eulogy, and Cecilia went on to develop her idea. “Your circumstances, in the second place, suggest the idea of social usefulness. You are intelligent, you are well-informed, and your charity, if one may call it charity, would be discriminating. You are rich and unoccupied, so that it might be abundant. Therefore, I say, you are a person to do something on a large scale. Bestir yourself, dear Rowland, or we may be taught to think that virtue herself is setting a bad example.”

“Heaven forbid,” cried Rowland, “that I should set the examples of virtue! I am quite willing to follow them, however, and if I don’t do something on the grand scale, it is that my genius is altogether imitative, and that I have not recently encountered any very striking models of grandeur. Pray, what shall I do? Found an orphan asylum, or build a dormitory for Harvard College? I am not rich enough to do either in an ideally handsome way, and I confess that, yet awhile, I feel too young to strike my grand coup. I am holding myself ready for inspiration. I am waiting till something takes my fancy irresistibly. If inspiration comes at forty, it will be a hundred pities to have tied up my money-bag at thirty.”

“Well, I give you till forty,” said Cecilia. “It ‘s only a word to the wise, a notification that you are expected not to run your course without having done something handsome for your fellow-men.”

Nine o’clock sounded, and Bessie, with each stroke, courted a closer embrace. But a single winged word from her mother overleaped her successive intrenchments. She turned and kissed her cousin, and deposited an irrepressible tear on his moustache. Then she went and said her prayers to her mother: it was evident she was being admirably brought up. Rowland, with the permission of his hostess, lighted a cigar and puffed it awhile in silence. Cecilia’s interest in his career seemed very agreeable. That Mallet was without vanity I by no means intend to affirm; but there had been times when, seeing him accept, hardly less deferentially, advice even more peremptory than the widow’s, you might have asked yourself what had become of his vanity. Now, in the sweet-smelling starlight, he felt gently wooed to egotism. There was a project connected with his going abroad which it was on his tongue’s end to communicate. It had no relation to hospitals or dormitories, and yet it would have sounded very generous. But it was not because it would have sounded generous that poor Mallet at last puffed it away in the fumes of his cigar. Useful though it might be, it expressed most imperfectly the young man’s own personal conception of usefulness. He was extremely fond of all the arts, and he had an almost passionate enjoyment of pictures. He had seen many, and he judged them sagaciously. It had occurred to him some time before that it would be the work of a good citizen to go abroad and with all expedition and secrecy purchase certain valuable specimens of the Dutch and Italian schools as to which he had received private proposals, and then present his treasures out of hand to an American city, not unknown to aesthetic fame, in which at that time there prevailed a good deal of fruitless aspiration toward an art-museum. He had seen himself in imagination, more than once, in some mouldy old saloon of a Florentine palace, turning toward the deep embrasure of the window some scarcely-faded Ghirlandaio or Botticelli, while a host in reduced circumstances pointed out the lovely drawing of a hand. But he imparted none of these visions to Cecilia, and he suddenly swept them away with the declaration that he was of course an idle, useless creature, and that he would probably be even more so in Europe than at home. “The only thing is,” he said, “that there I shall seem to be doing something. I shall be better entertained, and shall be therefore, I suppose, in a better humor with life. You may say that that is just the humor a useless man should keep out of. He

should cultivate discontentment. I did a good many things when I was in Europe before, but I did not spend a winter in Rome. Every one assures me that this is a peculiar refinement of bliss; most people talk about Rome in the same way. It is evidently only a sort of idealized form of loafing: a passive life in Rome, thanks to the number and the quality of one's impressions, takes on a very respectable likeness to activity. It is still lotus-eating, only you sit down at table, and the lotuses are served up on rococo china. It 's all very well, but I have a distinct prevision of this—that if Roman life does n't do something substantial to make you happier, it increases tenfold your liability to moral misery. It seems to me a rash thing for a sensitive soul deliberately to cultivate its sensibilities by rambling too often among the ruins of the Palatine, or riding too often in the shadow of the aqueducts. In such recreations the chords of feeling grow tense, and after-life, to spare your intellectual nerves, must play upon them with a touch as dainty as the tread of Mignon when she danced her egg-dance."

"I should have said, my dear Rowland," said Cecilia, with a laugh, "that your nerves were tough, that your eggs were hard!"

"That being stupid, you mean, I might be happy? Upon my word I am not. I am clever enough to want more than I 've got. I am tired of myself, my own thoughts, my own affairs, my own eternal company. True happiness, we are told, consists in getting out of one's self; but the point is not only to get out—you must stay out; and to stay out you must have some absorbing errand. Unfortunately, I 've got no errand, and nobody will trust me with one. I want to care for something, or for some one. And I want to care with a certain ardor; even, if you can believe it, with a certain passion. I can't just now feel ardent and passionate about a hospital or a dormitory. Do you know I sometimes think that I 'm a man of genius, half finished? The genius has been left out, the faculty of expression is wanting; but the need for expression remains, and I spend my days groping for the latch of a closed door."

"What an immense number of words," said Cecilia after a pause, "to say you want to fall in love! I 've no doubt you have as good a genius for that as any one, if you would only trust it."

"Of course I 've thought of that, and I assure you I hold myself ready. But, evidently, I 'm not inflammable. Is there in Northampton some perfect epitome of the graces?"

"Of the graces?" said Cecilia, raising her eyebrows and suppressing too distinct a consciousness of being herself a rosy embodiment of several. "The household virtues are better represented. There are some excellent girls, and there are two or three very pretty ones. I will have them here, one by one, to tea, if you like."

"I should particularly like it; especially as I should give you a chance to see, by the profundity of my attention, that if I am not happy, it 's not for want of taking pains."

Cecilia was silent a moment; and then, "On the whole," she resumed, "I don't think there are any worth asking. There are none so very pretty, none so very pleasing."

"Are you very sure?" asked the young man, rising and throwing away his cigar-end.

"Upon my word," cried Cecilia, "one would suppose I wished to keep you for myself. Of course I am sure! But as the penalty of your insinuations, I shall invite the plainest and prosiest damsel that can be found, and leave you alone with her."

Rowland smiled. "Even against her," he said, "I should be sorry to conclude until I had given her my respectful attention."

This little profession of ideal chivalry (which closed the conversation) was not quite so fanciful on Mallet's lips as it would have been on those of many another man; as a rapid glance at his antecedents may help to make the reader perceive. His life had been a singular mixture of the rough and the smooth. He had sprung from a rigid Puritan stock, and had been brought up to think much more intently of the duties of this life than of its privileges and pleasures. His progenitors had submitted in the matter of dogmatic theology to the relaxing influences of recent years; but if Rowland's youthful consciousness was not chilled by the menace of long punishment for brief transgression, he had at least been made to feel that there ran through all things a strain of right and of wrong, as different, after all, in their complexions, as the texture, to the spiritual sense, of Sundays

and week-days. His father was a chip of the primal Puritan block, a man with an icy smile and a stony frown. He had always bestowed on his son, on principle, more frowns than smiles, and if the lad had not been turned to stone himself, it was because nature had blessed him, inwardly, with a well of vivifying waters. Mrs. Mallet had been a Miss Rowland, the daughter of a retired sea-captain, once famous on the ships that sailed from Salem and Newburyport. He had brought to port many a cargo which crowned the edifice of fortunes already almost colossal, but he had also done a little sagacious trading on his own account, and he was able to retire, prematurely for so sea-worthy a maritime organism, upon a pension of his own providing. He was to be seen for a year on the Salem wharves, smoking the best tobacco and eying the seaward horizon with an inveteracy which superficial minds interpreted as a sign of repentance. At last, one evening, he disappeared beneath it, as he had often done before; this time, however, not as a commissioned navigator, but simply as an amateur of an observing turn likely to prove oppressive to the officer in command of the vessel. Five months later his place at home knew him again, and made the acquaintance also of a handsome, blonde young woman, of redundant contours, speaking a foreign tongue. The foreign tongue proved, after much conflicting research, to be the idiom of Amsterdam, and the young woman, which was stranger still, to be Captain Rowland's wife. Why he had gone forth so suddenly across the seas to marry her, what had happened between them before, and whether—though it was of questionable propriety for a good citizen to espouse a young person of mysterious origin, who did her hair in fantastically elaborate plaits, and in whose appearance “figure” enjoyed such striking predominance—he would not have had a heavy weight on his conscience if he had remained an irresponsible bachelor; these questions and many others, bearing with varying degrees of immediacy on the subject, were much propounded but scantily answered, and this history need not be charged with resolving them. Mrs. Rowland, for so handsome a woman, proved a tranquil neighbor and an excellent housewife. Her extremely fresh complexion, however, was always suffused with an air of apathetic homesickness, and she played her part in American society chiefly by having the little squares of brick pavement in front of her dwelling scoured and polished as nearly as possible into the likeness of Dutch tiles. Rowland Mallet remembered having seen her, as a child—an immensely stout, white-faced lady, wearing a high cap of very stiff tulle, speaking English with a formidable accent, and suffering from dropsy. Captain Rowland was a little bronzed and wizened man, with eccentric opinions. He advocated the creation of a public promenade along the sea, with arbors and little green tables for the consumption of beer, and a platform, surrounded by Chinese lanterns, for dancing. He especially desired the town library to be opened on Sundays, though, as he never entered it on week-days, it was easy to turn the proposition into ridicule. If, therefore, Mrs. Mallet was a woman of an exquisite moral tone, it was not that she had inherited her temper from an ancestry with a turn for casuistry. Jonas Mallet, at the time of his marriage, was conducting with silent shrewdness a small, unpromising business. Both his shrewdness and his silence increased with his years, and at the close of his life he was an extremely well-dressed, well-brushed gentleman, with a frigid gray eye, who said little to anybody, but of whom everybody said that he had a very handsome fortune. He was not a sentimental father, and the roughness I just now spoke of in Rowland's life dated from his early boyhood. Mr. Mallet, whenever he looked at his son, felt extreme compunction at having made a fortune. He remembered that the fruit had not dropped ripe from the tree into his own mouth, and determined it should be no fault of his if the boy was corrupted by luxury. Rowland, therefore, except for a good deal of expensive instruction in foreign tongues and abstruse sciences, received the education of a poor man's son. His fare was plain, his temper familiar with the discipline of patched trousers, and his habits marked by an exaggerated simplicity which it really cost a good deal of money to preserve unbroken. He was kept in the country for months together, in the midst of servants who had strict injunctions to see that he suffered no serious harm, but were as strictly forbidden to wait upon him. As no school could be found conducted on principles sufficiently rigorous, he was attended at home by a master who set a high price on the understanding that he was to illustrate the beauty of abstinence not only

by precept but by example. Rowland passed for a child of ordinary parts, and certainly, during his younger years, was an excellent imitation of a boy who had inherited nothing whatever that was to make life easy. He was passive, pliable, frank, extremely slow at his books, and inordinately fond of trout-fishing. His hair, a memento of his Dutch ancestry, was of the fairest shade of yellow, his complexion absurdly rosy, and his measurement around the waist, when he was about ten years old, quite alarmingly large. This, however, was but an episode in his growth; he became afterwards a fresh-colored, yellow-bearded man, but he was never accused of anything worse than a tendency to corpulence. He emerged from childhood a simple, wholesome, round-eyed lad, with no suspicion that a less roundabout course might have been taken to make him happy, but with a vague sense that his young experience was not a fair sample of human freedom, and that he was to make a great many discoveries. When he was about fifteen, he achieved a momentous one. He ascertained that his mother was a saint. She had always been a very distinct presence in his life, but so ineffably gentle a one that his sense was fully opened to it only by the danger of losing her. She had an illness which for many months was liable at any moment to terminate fatally, and during her long-arrested convalescence she removed the mask which she had worn for years by her husband's order. Rowland spent his days at her side and felt before long as if he had made a new friend. All his impressions at this period were commented and interpreted at leisure in the future, and it was only then that he understood that his mother had been for fifteen years a perfectly unhappy woman. Her marriage had been an immitigable error which she had spent her life in trying to look straight in the face. She found nothing to oppose to her husband's will of steel but the appearance of absolute compliance; her spirit sank, and she lived for a while in a sort of helpless moral torpor. But at last, as her child emerged from babyhood, she began to feel a certain charm in patience, to discover the uses of ingenuity, and to learn that, somehow or other, one can always arrange one's life. She cultivated from this time forward a little private plot of sentiment, and it was of this secluded precinct that, before her death, she gave her son the key. Rowland's allowance at college was barely sufficient to maintain him decently, and as soon as he graduated, he was taken into his father's counting-house, to do small drudgery on a proportionate salary. For three years he earned his living as regularly as the obscure functionary in fustian who swept the office. Mr. Mallet was consistent, but the perfection of his consistency was known only on his death. He left but a third of his property to his son, and devoted the remainder to various public institutions and local charities. Rowland's third was an easy competence, and he never felt a moment's jealousy of his fellow-pensioners; but when one of the establishments which had figured most advantageously in his father's will bethought itself to affirm the existence of a later instrument, in which it had been still more handsomely treated, the young man felt a sudden passionate need to repel the claim by process of law. There was a lively tussle, but he gained his case; immediately after which he made, in another quarter, a donation of the contested sum. He cared nothing for the money, but he had felt an angry desire to protest against a destiny which seemed determined to be exclusively salutary. It seemed to him that he would bear a little spoiling. And yet he treated himself to a very modest quantity, and submitted without reserve to the great national discipline which began in 1861. When the Civil War broke out he immediately obtained a commission, and did his duty for three long years as a citizen soldier. His duty was obscure, but he never lost a certain private satisfaction in remembering that on two or three occasions it had been performed with something of an ideal precision. He had disentangled himself from business, and after the war he felt a profound disinclination to tie the knot again. He had no desire to make money, he had money enough; and although he knew, and was frequently reminded, that a young man is the better for a fixed occupation, he could discover no moral advantage in driving a lucrative trade. Yet few young men of means and leisure ever made less of a parade of idleness, and indeed idleness in any degree could hardly be laid at the door of a young man who took life in the serious, attentive, reasoning fashion of our friend. It often seemed to Mallet that he wholly lacked the prime requisite of a graceful flaneur—the simple, sensuous, confident relish of pleasure. He had frequent fits of extreme melancholy, in which

he declared that he was neither fish nor flesh nor good red herring. He was neither an irresponsibly contemplative nature nor a sturdily practical one, and he was forever looking in vain for the uses of the things that please and the charm of the things that sustain. He was an awkward mixture of strong moral impulse and restless aesthetic curiosity, and yet he would have made a most ineffective reformer and a very indifferent artist. It seemed to him that the glow of happiness must be found either in action, of some immensely solid kind, on behalf of an idea, or in producing a masterpiece in one of the arts. Oftenest, perhaps, he wished he were a vigorous young man of genius, without a penny. As it was, he could only buy pictures, and not paint them; and in the way of action, he had to content himself with making a rule to render scrupulous moral justice to handsome examples of it in others. On the whole, he had an incorruptible modesty. With his blooming complexion and his serene gray eye, he felt the friction of existence more than was suspected; but he asked no allowance on grounds of temper, he assumed that fate had treated him inordinately well and that he had no excuse for taking an ill-natured view of life, and he undertook constantly to believe that all women were fair, all men were brave, and the world was a delightful place of sojourn, until the contrary had been distinctly proved.

Cecilia's blooming garden and shady porch had seemed so friendly to repose and a cigar, that she reproached him the next morning with indifference to her little parlor, not less, in its way, a monument to her ingenious taste. "And by the way," she added as he followed her in, "if I refused last night to show you a pretty girl, I can at least show you a pretty boy."

She threw open a window and pointed to a statuette which occupied the place of honor among the ornaments of the room. Rowland looked at it a moment and then turned to her with an exclamation of surprise. She gave him a rapid glance, perceived that her statuette was of altogether exceptional merit, and then smiled, knowingly, as if this had long been an agreeable certainty.

"Who did it? where did you get it?" Rowland demanded.

"Oh," said Cecilia, adjusting the light, "it 's a little thing of Mr. Hudson's."

"And who the deuce is Mr. Hudson?" asked Rowland. But he was absorbed; he lost her immediate reply. The statuette, in bronze, something less than two feet high, represented a naked youth drinking from a gourd. The attitude was perfectly simple. The lad was squarely planted on his feet, with his legs a little apart; his back was slightly hollowed, his head thrown back, and both hands raised to support the rustic cup. There was a loosened fillet of wild flowers about his head, and his eyes, under their drooped lids, looked straight into the cup. On the base was scratched the Greek word Δίψα, Thirst. The figure might have been some beautiful youth of ancient fable,—Hylas or Narcissus, Paris or Endymion. Its beauty was the beauty of natural movement; nothing had been sought to be represented but the perfection of an attitude. This had been most attentively studied, and it was exquisitely rendered. Rowland demanded more light, dropped his head on this side and that, uttered vague exclamations. He said to himself, as he had said more than once in the Louvre and the Vatican, "We ugly mortals, what beautiful creatures we are!" Nothing, in a long time, had given him so much pleasure. "Hudson—Hudson," he asked again; "who is Hudson?"

"A young man of this place," said Cecilia.

"A young man? How old?"

"I suppose he is three or four and twenty."

"Of this place, you say—of Northampton, Massachusetts?"

"He lives here, but he comes from Virginia."

"Is he a sculptor by profession?"

"He 's a law-student."

Rowland burst out laughing. "He has found something in Blackstone that I never did. He makes statues then simply for his pleasure?"

Cecilia, with a smile, gave a little toss of her head. "For mine!"

“I congratulate you,” said Rowland. “I wonder whether he could be induced to do anything for me?”

“This was a matter of friendship. I saw the figure when he had modeled it in clay, and of course greatly admired it. He said nothing at the time, but a week ago, on my birthday, he arrived in a buggy, with this. He had had it cast at the foundry at Chicopee; I believe it ‘s a beautiful piece of bronze. He begged me to accept.”

“Upon my word,” said Mallet, “he does things handsomely!” And he fell to admiring the statue again.

“So then,” said Cecilia, “it ‘s very remarkable?”

“Why, my dear cousin,” Rowland answered, “Mr. Hudson, of Virginia, is an extraordinary—” Then suddenly stopping: “Is he a great friend of yours?” he asked.

“A great friend?” and Cecilia hesitated. “I regard him as a child!”

“Well,” said Rowland, “he ‘s a very clever child. Tell me something about him: I should like to see him.”

Cecilia was obliged to go to her daughter’s music-lesson, but she assured Rowland that she would arrange for him a meeting with the young sculptor. He was a frequent visitor, and as he had not called for some days it was likely he would come that evening. Rowland, left alone, examined the statuette at his leisure, and returned more than once during the day to take another look at it. He discovered its weak points, but it wore well. It had the stamp of genius. Rowland envied the happy youth who, in a New England village, without aid or encouragement, without models or resources, had found it so easy to produce a lovely work.

In the evening, as he was smoking his cigar on the veranda, a light, quick step pressed the gravel of the garden path, and in a moment a young man made his bow to Cecilia. It was rather a nod than a bow, and indicated either that he was an old friend, or that he was scantily versed in the usual social forms. Cecilia, who was sitting near the steps, pointed to a neighboring chair, but the young man seated himself abruptly on the floor at her feet, began to fan himself vigorously with his hat, and broke out into a lively objurgation upon the hot weather. “I ‘m dripping wet!” he said, without ceremony.

“You walk too fast,” said Cecilia. “You do everything too fast.”

“I know it, I know it!” he cried, passing his hand through his abundant dark hair and making it stand out in a picturesque shock. “I can’t be slow if I try. There ‘s something inside of me that drives me. A restless fiend!”

Cecilia gave a light laugh, and Rowland leaned forward in his hammock. He had placed himself in it at Bessie’s request, and was playing that he was her baby and that she was rocking him to sleep. She sat beside him, swinging the hammock to and fro, and singing a lullaby. When he raised himself she pushed him back and said that the baby must finish its nap. “But I want to see the gentleman with the fiend inside of him,” said Rowland.

“What is a fiend?” Bessie demanded. “It ‘s only Mr. Hudson.”

“Very well, I want to see him.”

“Oh, never mind him!” said Bessie, with the brevity of contempt.

“You speak as if you did n’t like him.”

“I don’t!” Bessie affirmed, and put Rowland to bed again.

The hammock was swung at the end of the veranda, in the thickest shade of the vines, and this fragment of dialogue had passed unnoticed. Rowland submitted a while longer to be cradled, and contented himself with listening to Mr. Hudson’s voice. It was a soft and not altogether masculine organ, and was pitched on this occasion in a somewhat plaintive and pettish key. The young man’s mood seemed fretful; he complained of the heat, of the dust, of a shoe that hurt him, of having gone on an errand a mile to the other side of the town and found the person he was in search of had left Northampton an hour before.

“Won’t you have a cup of tea?” Cecilia asked. “Perhaps that will restore your equanimity.”

“Aye, by keeping me awake all night!” said Hudson. “At the best, it ‘s hard enough to go down to the office. With my nerves set on edge by a sleepless night, I should perforce stay at home and be brutal to my poor mother.”

“Your mother is well, I hope.”

“Oh, she ‘s as usual.”

“And Miss Garland?”

“She ‘s as usual, too. Every one, everything, is as usual. Nothing ever happens, in this benighted town.”

“I beg your pardon; things do happen, sometimes,” said Cecilia. “Here is a dear cousin of mine arrived on purpose to congratulate you on your statuette.” And she called to Rowland to come and be introduced to Mr. Hudson. The young man sprang up with alacrity, and Rowland, coming forward to shake hands, had a good look at him in the light projected from the parlor window. Something seemed to shine out of Hudson’s face as a warning against a “compliment” of the idle, unpondered sort.

“Your statuette seems to me very good,” Rowland said gravely. “It has given me extreme pleasure.”

“And my cousin knows what is good,” said Cecilia. “He ‘s a connoisseur.”

Hudson smiled and stared. “A connoisseur?” he cried, laughing. “He ‘s the first I ‘ve ever seen! Let me see what they look like;” and he drew Rowland nearer to the light. “Have they all such good heads as that? I should like to model yours.”

“Pray do,” said Cecilia. “It will keep him a while. He is running off to Europe.”

“Ah, to Europe!” Hudson exclaimed with a melancholy cadence, as they sat down. “Happy man!”

But the note seemed to Rowland to be struck rather at random, for he perceived no echo of it in the boyish garrulity of his later talk. Hudson was a tall, slender young fellow, with a singularly mobile and intelligent face. Rowland was struck at first only with its responsive vivacity, but in a short time he perceived it was remarkably handsome. The features were admirably chiseled and finished, and a frank smile played over them as gracefully as a breeze among flowers. The fault of the young man’s whole structure was an excessive want of breadth. The forehead, though it was high and rounded, was narrow; the jaw and the shoulders were narrow; and the result was an air of insufficient physical substance. But Mallet afterwards learned that this fair, slim youth could draw indefinitely upon a mysterious fund of nervous force, which outlasted and outwearied the endurance of many a sturdier temperament. And certainly there was life enough in his eye to furnish an immortality! It was a generous dark gray eye, in which there came and went a sort of kindling glow, which would have made a ruder visage striking, and which gave at times to Hudson’s harmonious face an altogether extraordinary beauty. There was to Rowland’s sympathetic sense a slightly pitiful disparity between the young sculptor’s delicate countenance and the shabby gentility of his costume. He was dressed for a visit—a visit to a pretty woman. He was clad from head to foot in a white linen suit, which had never been remarkable for the felicity of its cut, and had now quite lost that crispness which garments of this complexion can as ill spare as the back-scene of a theatre the radiance of the footlights. He wore a vivid blue cravat, passed through a ring altogether too splendid to be valuable; he pulled and twisted, as he sat, a pair of yellow kid gloves; he emphasized his conversation with great dashes and flourishes of a light, silver-tipped walking-stick, and he kept constantly taking off and putting on one of those slouched sombreros which are the traditional property of the Virginian or Carolinian of romance. When this was on, he was very picturesque, in spite of his mock elegance; and when it was off, and he sat nursing it and turning it about and not knowing what to do with it, he could hardly be said to be awkward. He evidently had a natural relish for brilliant accessories, and appropriated what came to his hand. This was visible in his talk, which abounded in the florid and sonorous. He liked words with color in them.

Rowland, who was but a moderate talker, sat by in silence, while Cecilia, who had told him that she desired his opinion upon her friend, used a good deal of characteristic finesse in leading the young man to expose himself. She perfectly succeeded, and Hudson rattled away for an hour with a volubility in which boyish unconsciousness and manly shrewdness were singularly combined. He gave his opinion on twenty topics, he opened up an endless budget of local gossip, he described his repulsive routine at the office of Messrs. Striker and Spooner, counselors at law, and he gave with great felicity and gusto an account of the annual boat-race between Harvard and Yale, which he had lately witnessed at Worcester. He had looked at the straining oarsmen and the swaying crowd with the eye of the sculptor. Rowland was a good deal amused and not a little interested. Whenever Hudson uttered some peculiarly striking piece of youthful grandiloquence, Cecilia broke into a long, light, familiar laugh.

“What are you laughing at?” the young man then demanded. “Have I said anything so ridiculous?”

“Go on, go on,” Cecilia replied. “You are too delicious! Show Mr. Mallet how Mr. Striker read the Declaration of Independence.”

Hudson, like most men with a turn for the plastic arts, was an excellent mimic, and he represented with a great deal of humor the accent and attitude of a pompous country lawyer sustaining the burden of this customary episode of our national festival. The sonorous twang, the see-saw gestures, the odd pronunciation, were vividly depicted. But Cecilia’s manner, and the young man’s quick response, ruffled a little poor Rowland’s paternal conscience. He wondered whether his cousin was not sacrificing the faculty of reverence in her clever protegee to her need for amusement. Hudson made no serious rejoinder to Rowland’s compliment on his statuette until he rose to go. Rowland wondered whether he had forgotten it, and supposed that the oversight was a sign of the natural self-sufficiency of genius. But Hudson stood a moment before he said good night, twirled his sombrero, and hesitated for the first time. He gave Rowland a clear, penetrating glance, and then, with a wonderfully frank, appealing smile: “You really meant,” he asked, “what you said a while ago about that thing of mine? It is good—essentially good?”

“I really meant it,” said Rowland, laying a kindly hand on his shoulder. “It is very good indeed. It is, as you say, essentially good. That is the beauty of it.”

Hudson’s eyes glowed and expanded; he looked at Rowland for some time in silence. “I have a notion you really know,” he said at last. “But if you don’t, it does n’t much matter.”

“My cousin asked me to-day,” said Cecilia, “whether I supposed you knew yourself how good it is.”

Hudson stared, blushing a little. “Perhaps not!” he cried.

“Very likely,” said Mallet. “I read in a book the other day that great talent in action—in fact the book said genius—is a kind of somnambulism. The artist performs great feats, in a dream. We must not wake him up, lest he should lose his balance.”

“Oh, when he ‘s back in bed again!” Hudson answered with a laugh. “Yes, call it a dream. It was a very happy one!”

“Tell me this,” said Rowland. “Did you mean anything by your young Water-drinker? Does he represent an idea? Is he a symbol?”

Hudson raised his eyebrows and gently scratched his head. “Why, he ‘s youth, you know; he ‘s innocence, he ‘s health, he ‘s strength, he ‘s curiosity. Yes, he ‘s a good many things.”

“And is the cup also a symbol?”

“The cup is knowledge, pleasure, experience. Anything of that kind!”

“Well, he ‘s guzzling in earnest,” said Rowland.

Hudson gave a vigorous nod. “Aye, poor fellow, he ‘s thirsty!” And on this he cried good night, and bounded down the garden path.

“Well, what do you make of him?” asked Cecilia, returning a short time afterwards from a visit of investigation as to the sufficiency of Bessie’s bedclothes.

“I confess I like him,” said Rowland. “He ‘s very immature,—but there ‘s stuff in him.”

“He ‘s a strange being,” said Cecilia, musingly.

“Who are his people? what has been his education?” Rowland asked.

“He has had no education, beyond what he has picked up, with little trouble, for himself. His mother is a widow, of a Massachusetts country family, a little timid, tremulous woman, who is always on pins and needles about her son. She had some property herself, and married a Virginian gentleman of good estates. He turned out, I believe, a very licentious personage, and made great havoc in their fortune. Everything, or almost everything, melted away, including Mr. Hudson himself. This is literally true, for he drank himself to death. Ten years ago his wife was left a widow, with scanty means and a couple of growing boys. She paid her husband’s debts as best she could, and came to establish herself here, where by the death of a charitable relative she had inherited an old-fashioned ruinous house. Roderick, our friend, was her pride and joy, but Stephen, the elder, was her comfort and support. I remember him, later; he was an ugly, sturdy, practical lad, very different from his brother, and in his way, I imagine, a very fine fellow. When the war broke out he found that the New England blood ran thicker in his veins than the Virginian, and immediately obtained a commission. He fell in some Western battle and left his mother inconsolable. Roderick, however, has given her plenty to think about, and she has induced him, by some mysterious art, to abide, nominally at least, in a profession that he abhors, and for which he is about as fit, I should say, as I am to drive a locomotive. He grew up a la grace de Dieu, and was horribly spoiled. Three or four years ago he graduated at a small college in this neighborhood, where I am afraid he had given a good deal more attention to novels and billiards than to mathematics and Greek. Since then he has been reading law, at the rate of a page a day. If he is ever admitted to practice I ‘m afraid my friendship won’t avail to make me give him my business. Good, bad, or indifferent, the boy is essentially an artist—an artist to his fingers’ ends.”

“Why, then,” asked Rowland, “does n’t he deliberately take up the chisel?”

“For several reasons. In the first place, I don’t think he more than half suspects his talent. The flame is smouldering, but it is never fanned by the breath of criticism. He sees nothing, hears nothing, to help him to self-knowledge. He ‘s hopelessly discontented, but he does n’t know where to look for help. Then his mother, as she one day confessed to me, has a holy horror of a profession which consists exclusively, as she supposes, in making figures of people without their clothes on. Sculpture, to her mind, is an insidious form of immorality, and for a young man of a passionate disposition she considers the law a much safer investment. Her father was a judge, she has two brothers at the bar, and her elder son had made a very promising beginning in the same line. She wishes the tradition to be perpetuated. I ‘m pretty sure the law won’t make Roderick’s fortune, and I ‘m afraid it will, in the long run, spoil his temper.”

“What sort of a temper is it?”

“One to be trusted, on the whole. It is quick, but it is generous. I have known it to breathe flame and fury at ten o’clock in the evening, and soft, sweet music early on the morrow. It ‘s a very entertaining temper to observe. I, fortunately, can do so dispassionately, for I ‘m the only person in the place he has not quarreled with.”

“Has he then no society? Who is Miss Garland, whom you asked about?”

“A young girl staying with his mother, a sort of far-away cousin; a good plain girl, but not a person to delight a sculptor’s eye. Roderick has a goodly share of the old Southern arrogance; he has the aristocratic temperament. He will have nothing to do with the small towns-people; he says they ‘re ‘ignoble.’ He cannot endure his mother’s friends—the old ladies and the ministers and the tea-party people; they bore him to death. So he comes and lounges here and rails at everything and every one.”

This graceful young scoffer reappeared a couple of evenings later, and confirmed the friendly feeling he had provoked on Rowland's part. He was in an easier mood than before, he chattered less extravagantly, and asked Rowland a number of rather naif questions about the condition of the fine arts in New York and Boston. Cecilia, when he had gone, said that this was the wholesome effect of Rowland's praise of his statuette. Roderick was acutely sensitive, and Rowland's tranquil commendation had stilled his restless pulses. He was ruminating the full-flavored verdict of culture. Rowland felt an irresistible kindness for him, a mingled sense of his personal charm and his artistic capacity. He had an indefinable attraction—the something divine of unspotted, exuberant, confident youth. The next day was Sunday, and Rowland proposed that they should take a long walk and that Roderick should show him the country. The young man assented gleefully, and in the morning, as Rowland at the garden gate was giving his hostess Godspeed on her way to church, he came striding along the grassy margin of the road and out-whistling the music of the church bells. It was one of those lovely days of August when you feel the complete exuberance of summer just warned and checked by autumn. "Remember the day, and take care you rob no orchards," said Cecilia, as they separated.

The young men walked away at a steady pace, over hill and dale, through woods and fields, and at last found themselves on a grassy elevation studded with mossy rocks and red cedars. Just beneath them, in a great shining curve, flowed the goodly Connecticut. They flung themselves on the grass and tossed stones into the river; they talked like old friends. Rowland lit a cigar, and Roderick refused one with a grimace of extravagant disgust. He thought them vile things; he did n't see how decent people could tolerate them. Rowland was amused, and wondered what it was that made this ill-mannered speech seem perfectly inoffensive on Roderick's lips. He belonged to the race of mortals, to be pitied or envied according as we view the matter, who are not held to a strict account for their aggressions. Looking at him as he lay stretched in the shade, Rowland vaguely likened him to some beautiful, supple, restless, bright-eyed animal, whose motions should have no deeper warrant than the tremulous delicacy of its structure, and be graceful even when they were most inconvenient. Rowland watched the shadows on Mount Holyoke, listened to the gurgle of the river, and sniffed the balsam of the pines. A gentle breeze had begun to tickle their summits, and brought the smell of the mown grass across from the elm-dotted river meadows. He sat up beside his companion and looked away at the far-spreading view. It seemed to him beautiful, and suddenly a strange feeling of prospective regret took possession of him. Something seemed to tell him that later, in a foreign land, he would remember it lovingly and penitently.

"It 's a wretched business," he said, "this practical quarrel of ours with our own country, this everlasting impatience to get out of it. Is one's only safety then in flight? This is an American day, an American landscape, an American atmosphere. It certainly has its merits, and some day when I am shivering with ague in classic Italy, I shall accuse myself of having slighted them."

Roderick kindled with a sympathetic glow, and declared that America was good enough for him, and that he had always thought it the duty of an honest citizen to stand by his own country and help it along. He had evidently thought nothing whatever about it, and was launching his doctrine on the inspiration of the moment. The doctrine expanded with the occasion, and he declared that he was above all an advocate for American art. He did n't see why we should n't produce the greatest works in the world. We were the biggest people, and we ought to have the biggest conceptions. The biggest conceptions of course would bring forth in time the biggest performances. We had only to be true to ourselves, to pitch in and not be afraid, to fling Imitation overboard and fix our eyes upon our National Individuality. "I declare," he cried, "there 's a career for a man, and I 've twenty minds to decide, on the spot, to embrace it—to be the consummate, typical, original, national American artist! It 's inspiring!"

Rowland burst out laughing and told him that he liked his practice better than his theory, and that a saner impulse than this had inspired his little Water-drinker. Roderick took no offense, and three minutes afterwards was talking volubly of some humbler theme, but half heeded by his

companion, who had returned to his cogitations. At last Rowland delivered himself of the upshot of these. "How would you like," he suddenly demanded, "to go to Rome?"

Hudson stared, and, with a hungry laugh which speedily consigned our National Individuality to perdition, responded that he would like it reasonably well. "And I should like, by the same token," he added, "to go to Athens, to Constantinople, to Damascus, to the holy city of Benares, where there is a golden statue of Brahma twenty feet tall."

"Nay," said Rowland soberly, "if you were to go to Rome, you should settle down and work. Athens might help you, but for the present I should n't recommend Benares."

"It will be time to arrange details when I pack my trunk," said Hudson.

"If you mean to turn sculptor, the sooner you pack your trunk the better."

"Oh, but I 'm a practical man! What is the smallest sum per annum, on which one can keep alive the sacred fire in Rome?"

"What is the largest sum at your disposal?"

Roderick stroked his light moustache, gave it a twist, and then announced with mock pomposity: "Three hundred dollars!"

"The money question could be arranged," said Rowland. "There are ways of raising money."

"I should like to know a few! I never yet discovered one."

"One consists," said Rowland, "in having a friend with a good deal more than he wants, and not being too proud to accept a part of it."

Roderick stared a moment and his face flushed. "Do you mean—do you mean?".... he stammered. He was greatly excited.

Rowland got up, blushing a little, and Roderick sprang to his feet. "In three words, if you are to be a sculptor, you ought to go to Rome and study the antique. To go to Rome you need money. I 'm fond of fine statues, but unfortunately I can't make them myself. I have to order them. I order a dozen from you, to be executed at your convenience. To help you, I pay you in advance."

Roderick pushed off his hat and wiped his forehead, still gazing at his companion. "You believe in me!" he cried at last.

"Allow me to explain," said Rowland. "I believe in you, if you are prepared to work and to wait, and to struggle, and to exercise a great many virtues. And then, I 'm afraid to say it, lest I should disturb you more than I should help you. You must decide for yourself. I simply offer you an opportunity."

Hudson stood for some time, profoundly meditative. "You have not seen my other things," he said suddenly. "Come and look at them."

"Now?"

"Yes, we 'll walk home. We 'll settle the question."

He passed his hand through Rowland's arm and they retraced their steps. They reached the town and made their way along a broad country street, dusky with the shade of magnificent elms. Rowland felt his companion's arm trembling in his own. They stopped at a large white house, flanked with melancholy hemlocks, and passed through a little front garden, paved with moss-coated bricks and ornamented with parterres bordered with high box hedges. The mansion had an air of antiquated dignity, but it had seen its best days, and evidently sheltered a shrunken household. Mrs. Hudson, Rowland was sure, might be seen in the garden of a morning, in a white apron and a pair of old gloves, engaged in frugal horticulture. Roderick's studio was behind, in the basement; a large, empty room, with the paper peeling off the walls. This represented, in the fashion of fifty years ago, a series of small fantastic landscapes of a hideous pattern, and the young sculptor had presumably torn it away in great scraps, in moments of aesthetic exasperation. On a board in a corner was a heap of clay, and on the floor, against the wall, stood some dozen medallions, busts, and figures, in various stages of completion. To exhibit them Roderick had to place them one by one on the end of a long packing-box, which served as a pedestal. He did so silently, making no explanations, and looking at them himself with a strange air of quickened curiosity. Most of the things were portraits; and the three

at which he looked longest were finished busts. One was a colossal head of a negro, tossed back, defiant, with distended nostrils; one was the portrait of a young man whom Rowland immediately perceived, by the resemblance, to be his deceased brother; the last represented a gentleman with a pointed nose, a long, shaved upper lip, and a tuft on the end of his chin. This was a face peculiarly unadapted to sculpture; but as a piece of modeling it was the best, and it was admirable. It reminded Rowland in its homely veracity, its artless artfulness, of the works of the early Italian Renaissance. On the pedestal was cut the name—Barnaby Striker, Esq. Rowland remembered that this was the appellation of the legal luminary from whom his companion had undertaken to borrow a reflected ray, and although in the bust there was naught flagrantly set down in malice, it betrayed, comically to one who could relish the secret, that the features of the original had often been scanned with an irritated eye. Besides these there were several rough studies of the nude, and two or three figures of a fanciful kind. The most noticeable (and it had singular beauty) was a small modeled design for a sepulchral monument; that, evidently, of Stephen Hudson. The young soldier lay sleeping eternally, with his hand on his sword, like an old crusader in a Gothic cathedral.

Rowland made no haste to pronounce; too much depended on his judgment. “Upon my word,” cried Hudson at last, “they seem to me very good.”

And in truth, as Rowland looked, he saw they were good. They were youthful, awkward, and ignorant; the effort, often, was more apparent than the success. But the effort was signally powerful and intelligent; it seemed to Rowland that it needed only to let itself go to compass great things. Here and there, too, success, when grasped, had something masterly. Rowland turned to his companion, who stood with his hands in his pockets and his hair very much crumpled, looking at him askance. The light of admiration was in Rowland’s eyes, and it speedily kindled a wonderful illumination on Hudson’s handsome brow. Rowland said at last, gravely, “You have only to work!”

“I think I know what that means,” Roderick answered. He turned away, threw himself on a rickety chair, and sat for some moments with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands. “Work—work?” he said at last, looking up, “ah, if I could only begin!” He glanced round the room a moment and his eye encountered on the mantel-shelf the vivid physiognomy of Mr. Barnaby Striker. His smile vanished, and he stared at it with an air of concentrated enmity. “I want to begin,” he cried, “and I can’t make a better beginning than this! Good-by, Mr. Striker!” He strode across the room, seized a mallet that lay at hand, and before Rowland could interfere, in the interest of art if not of morals, dealt a merciless blow upon Mr. Striker’s skull. The bust cracked into a dozen pieces, which toppled with a great crash upon the floor. Rowland relished neither the destruction of the image nor his companion’s look in working it, but as he was about to express his displeasure the door opened and gave passage to a young girl. She came in with a rapid step and startled face, as if she had been summoned by the noise. Seeing the heap of shattered clay and the mallet in Roderick’s hand, she gave a cry of horror. Her voice died away when she perceived that Rowland was a stranger, but she murmured reproachfully, “Why, Roderick, what have you done?”

Roderick gave a joyous kick to the shapeless fragments. “I’ve driven the money-changers out of the temple!” he cried.

The traces retained shape enough to be recognized, and she gave a little moan of pity. She seemed not to understand the young man’s allegory, but yet to feel that it pointed to some great purpose, which must be an evil one, from being expressed in such a lawless fashion, and to perceive that Rowland was in some way accountable for it. She looked at him with a sharp, frank mistrust, and turned away through the open door. Rowland looked after her with extraordinary interest.

CHAPTER II. Roderick

Early on the morrow Rowland received a visit from his new friend. Roderick was in a state of extreme exhilaration, tempered, however, by a certain amount of righteous wrath. He had had a domestic struggle, but he had remained master of the situation. He had shaken the dust of Mr. Striker's office from his feet.

"I had it out last night with my mother," he said. "I dreaded the scene, for she takes things terribly hard. She does n't scold nor storm, and she does n't argue nor insist. She sits with her eyes full of tears that never fall, and looks at me, when I displease her, as if I were a perfect monster of depravity. And the trouble is that I was born to displease her. She does n't trust me; she never has and she never will. I don't know what I have done to set her against me, but ever since I can remember I have been looked at with tears. The trouble is," he went on, giving a twist to his moustache, "I've been too absurdly docile. I've been sprawling all my days by the maternal fireside, and my dear mother has grown used to bullying me. I've made myself cheap! If I'm not in my bed by eleven o'clock, the girl is sent out to explore with a lantern. When I think of it, I fairly despise my amiability. It's rather a hard fate, to live like a saint and to pass for a sinner! I should like for six months to lead Mrs. Hudson the life some fellows lead their mothers!"

"Allow me to believe," said Rowland, "that you would like nothing of the sort. If you have been a good boy, don't spoil it by pretending you don't like it. You have been very happy, I suspect, in spite of your virtues, and there are worse fates in the world than being loved too well. I have not had the pleasure of seeing your mother, but I would lay you a wager that that is the trouble. She is passionately fond of you, and her hopes, like all intense hopes, keep trembling into fears." Rowland, as he spoke, had an instinctive vision of how such a beautiful young fellow must be loved by his female relatives.

Roderick frowned, and with an impatient gesture, "I do her justice," he cried. "May she never do me less!" Then after a moment's hesitation, "I'll tell you the perfect truth," he went on. "I have to fill a double place. I have to be my brother as well as myself. It's a good deal to ask of a man, especially when he has so little talent as I for being what he is not. When we were both young together I was the curled darling. I had the silver mug and the biggest piece of pudding, and I stayed in-doors to be kissed by the ladies while he made mud-pies in the garden and was never missed, of course. Really, he was worth fifty of me! When he was brought home from Vicksburg with a piece of shell in his skull, my poor mother began to think she had n't loved him enough. I remember, as she hung round my neck sobbing, before his coffin, she told me that I must be to her everything that he would have been. I swore in tears and in perfect good faith that I would, but naturally I have not kept my promise. I have been utterly different. I have been idle, restless, egotistical, discontented. I have done no harm, I believe, but I have done no good. My brother, if he had lived, would have made fifty thousand dollars and put gas and water into the house. My mother, brooding night and day on her bereavement, has come to fix her ideal in offices of that sort. Judged by that standard I'm nowhere!"

Rowland was at loss how to receive this account of his friend's domestic circumstances; it was plaintive, and yet the manner seemed to him over-trenchant. "You must lose no time in making a masterpiece," he answered; "then with the proceeds you can give her gas from golden burners."

"So I have told her; but she only half believes either in masterpiece or in proceeds. She can see no good in my making statues; they seem to her a snare of the enemy. She would fain see me all my life tethered to the law, like a browsing goat to a stake. In that way I'm in sight. 'It's a more regular occupation!' that's all I can get out of her. A more regular damnation! Is it a fact that artists, in general, are such wicked men? I never had the pleasure of knowing one, so I could n't confute her with an example. She had the advantage of me, because she formerly knew a portrait-painter at Richmond, who did her miniature in black lace mittens (you may see it on the parlor table), who used to drink raw brandy and beat his wife. I promised her that, whatever I might do to my wife, I would

never beat my mother, and that as for brandy, raw or diluted, I detested it. She sat silently crying for an hour, during which I expended treasures of eloquence. It 's a good thing to have to reckon up one's intentions, and I assure you, as I pleaded my cause, I was most agreeably impressed with the elevated character of my own. I kissed her solemnly at last, and told her that I had said everything and that she must make the best of it. This morning she has dried her eyes, but I warrant you it is n't a cheerful house. I long to be out of it!"

"I 'm extremely sorry," said Rowland, "to have been the prime cause of so much suffering. I owe your mother some amends; will it be possible for me to see her?"

"If you 'll see her, it will smooth matters vastly; though to tell the truth she 'll need all her courage to face you, for she considers you an agent of the foul fiend. She does n't see why you should have come here and set me by the ears: you are made to ruin ingenuous youths and desolate doting mothers. I leave it to you, personally, to answer these charges. You see, what she can't forgive—what she 'll not really ever forgive—is your taking me off to Rome. Rome is an evil word, in my mother's vocabulary, to be said in a whisper, as you 'd say 'damnation.' Northampton is in the centre of the earth and Rome far away in outlying dusk, into which it can do no Christian any good to penetrate. And there was I but yesterday a doomed habitue of that repository of every virtue, Mr. Striker's office!"

"And does Mr. Striker know of your decision?" asked Rowland.

"To a certainty! Mr. Striker, you must know, is not simply a good-natured attorney, who lets me dog's-ear his law-books. He's a particular friend and general adviser. He looks after my mother's property and kindly consents to regard me as part of it. Our opinions have always been painfully divergent, but I freely forgive him his zealous attempts to unscrew my head-piece and set it on hind part before. He never understood me, and it was useless to try to make him. We speak a different language—we 're made of a different clay. I had a fit of rage yesterday when I smashed his bust, at the thought of all the bad blood he had stirred up in me; it did me good, and it 's all over now. I don't hate him any more; I 'm rather sorry for him. See how you 've improved me! I must have seemed to him wilfully, wickedly stupid, and I 'm sure he only tolerated me on account of his great regard for my mother. This morning I grasped the bull by the horns. I took an armful of law-books that have been gathering the dust in my room for the last year and a half, and presented myself at the office. 'Allow me to put these back in their places,' I said. 'I shall never have need for them more—never more, never more, never more!' 'So you 've learned everything they contain?' asked Striker, leering over his spectacles. 'Better late than never.' 'I 've learned nothing that you can teach me,' I cried. 'But I shall tax your patience no longer. I 'm going to be a sculptor. I 'm going to Rome. I won't bid you good-by just yet; I shall see you again. But I bid good-by here, with rapture, to these four detested walls—to this living tomb! I did n't know till now how I hated it! My compliments to Mr. Spooner, and my thanks for all you have not made of me!"

"I 'm glad to know you are to see Mr. Striker again," Rowland answered, correcting a primary inclination to smile. "You certainly owe him a respectful farewell, even if he has not understood you. I confess you rather puzzle me. There is another person," he presently added, "whose opinion as to your new career I should like to know. What does Miss Garland think?"

Hudson looked at him keenly, with a slight blush. Then, with a conscious smile, "What makes you suppose she thinks anything?" he asked.

"Because, though I saw her but for a moment yesterday, she struck me as a very intelligent person, and I am sure she has opinions."

The smile on Roderick's mobile face passed rapidly into a frown. "Oh, she thinks what I think!" he answered.

Before the two young men separated Rowland attempted to give as harmonious a shape as possible to his companion's scheme. "I have launched you, as I may say," he said, "and I feel as if I ought to see you into port. I am older than you and know the world better, and it seems well that we should voyage a while together. It 's on my conscience that I ought to take you to Rome, walk you

through the Vatican, and then lock you up with a heap of clay. I sail on the fifth of September; can you make your preparations to start with me?"

Roderick assented to all this with an air of candid confidence in his friend's wisdom that outshone the virtue of pledges. "I have no preparations to make," he said with a smile, raising his arms and letting them fall, as if to indicate his unencumbered condition. "What I am to take with me I carry here!" and he tapped his forehead.

"Happy man!" murmured Rowland with a sigh, thinking of the light stowage, in his own organism, in the region indicated by Roderick, and of the heavy one in deposit at his banker's, of bags and boxes.

When his companion had left him he went in search of Cecilia. She was sitting at work at a shady window, and welcomed him to a low chintz-covered chair. He sat some time, thoughtfully snipping tape with her scissors; he expected criticism and he was preparing a rejoinder. At last he told her of Roderick's decision and of his own influence in it. Cecilia, besides an extreme surprise, exhibited a certain fine displeasure at his not having asked her advice.

"What would you have said, if I had?" he demanded.

"I would have said in the first place, 'Oh for pity's sake don't carry off the person in all Northampton who amuses me most!' I would have said in the second place, 'Nonsense! the boy is doing very well. Let well alone!'"

"That in the first five minutes. What would you have said later?"

"That for a man who is generally averse to meddling, you were suddenly rather officious."

Rowland's countenance fell. He frowned in silence. Cecilia looked at him askance; gradually the spark of irritation faded from her eye.

"Excuse my sharpness," she resumed at last. "But I am literally in despair at losing Roderick Hudson. His visits in the evening, for the past year, have kept me alive. They have given a silver tip to leaden days. I don't say he is of a more useful metal than other people, but he is of a different one. Of course, however, that I shall miss him sadly is not a reason for his not going to seek his fortune. Men must work and women must weep!"

"Decidedly not!" said Rowland, with a good deal of emphasis. He had suspected from the first hour of his stay that Cecilia had treated herself to a private social luxury; he had then discovered that she found it in Hudson's lounging visits and boyish chatter, and he had felt himself wondering at last whether, judiciously viewed, her gain in the matter was not the young man's loss. It was evident that Cecilia was not judicious, and that her good sense, habitually rigid under the demands of domestic economy, indulged itself with a certain agreeable laxity on this particular point. She liked her young friend just as he was; she humored him, flattered him, laughed at him, caressed him—did everything but advise him. It was a flirtation without the benefits of a flirtation. She was too old to let him fall in love with her, which might have done him good; and her inclination was to keep him young, so that the nonsense he talked might never transgress a certain line. It was quite conceivable that poor Cecilia should relish a pastime; but if one had philanthropically embraced the idea that something considerable might be made of Roderick, it was impossible not to see that her friendship was not what might be called tonic. So Rowland reflected, in the glow of his new-born sympathy. There was a later time when he would have been grateful if Hudson's susceptibility to the relaxing influence of lovely women might have been limited to such inexpensive tribute as he rendered the excellent Cecilia.

"I only desire to remind you," she pursued, "that you are likely to have your hands full."

"I've thought of that, and I rather like the idea; liking, as I do, the man. I told you the other day, you know, that I longed to have something on my hands. When it first occurred to me that I might start our young friend on the path of glory, I felt as if I had an unimpeachable inspiration. Then I remembered there were dangers and difficulties, and asked myself whether I had a right to step in between him and his obscurity. My sense of his really having the divine flame answered the question. He is made to do the things that humanity is the happier for! I can't do such things myself, but when

I see a young man of genius standing helpless and hopeless for want of capital, I feel—and it 's no affectation of humility, I assure you—as if it would give at least a reflected usefulness to my own life to offer him his opportunity.”

“In the name of humanity, I suppose, I ought to thank you. But I want, first of all, to be happy myself. You guarantee us at any rate, I hope, the masterpieces.”

“A masterpiece a year,” said Rowland smiling, “for the next quarter of a century.”

“It seems to me that we have a right to ask more: to demand that you guarantee us not only the development of the artist, but the security of the man.”

Rowland became grave again. “His security?”

“His moral, his sentimental security. Here, you see, it 's perfect. We are all under a tacit compact to preserve it. Perhaps you believe in the necessary turbulence of genius, and you intend to enjoin upon your protege the importance of cultivating his passions.”

“On the contrary, I believe that a man of genius owes as much deference to his passions as any other man, but not a particle more, and I confess I have a strong conviction that the artist is better for leading a quiet life. That is what I shall preach to my protege, as you call him, by example as well as by precept. You evidently believe,” he added in a moment, “that he will lead me a dance.”

“Nay, I prophesy nothing. I only think that circumstances, with our young man, have a great influence; as is proved by the fact that although he has been fuming and fretting here for the last five years, he has nevertheless managed to make the best of it, and found it easy, on the whole, to vegetate. Transplanted to Rome, I fancy he 'll put forth a denser leafage. I should like vastly to see the change. You must write me about it, from stage to stage. I hope with all my heart that the fruit will be proportionate to the foliage. Don't think me a bird of ill omen; only remember that you will be held to a strict account.”

“A man should make the most of himself, and be helped if he needs help,” Rowland answered, after a long pause. “Of course when a body begins to expand, there comes in the possibility of bursting; but I nevertheless approve of a certain tension of one's being. It 's what a man is meant for. And then I believe in the essential salubrity of genius—true genius.”

“Very good,” said Cecilia, with an air of resignation which made Rowland, for the moment, seem to himself culpably eager. “We 'll drink then to-day at dinner to the health of our friend.”

* * *

Having it much at heart to convince Mrs. Hudson of the purity of his intentions, Rowland waited upon her that evening. He was ushered into a large parlor, which, by the light of a couple of candles, he perceived to be very meagrely furnished and very tenderly and sparingly used. The windows were open to the air of the summer night, and a circle of three persons was temporarily awed into silence by his appearance. One of these was Mrs. Hudson, who was sitting at one of the windows, empty-handed save for the pocket-handkerchief in her lap, which was held with an air of familiarity with its sadder uses. Near her, on the sofa, half sitting, half lounging, in the attitude of a visitor outstaying ceremony, with one long leg flung over the other and a large foot in a clumsy boot swinging to and fro continually, was a lean, sandy-haired gentleman whom Rowland recognized as the original of the portrait of Mr. Barnaby Striker. At the table, near the candles, busy with a substantial piece of needle-work, sat the young girl of whom he had had a moment's quickened glimpse in Roderick's studio, and whom he had learned to be Miss Garland, his companion's kinswoman. This young lady's limpid, penetrating gaze was the most effective greeting he received. Mrs. Hudson rose with a soft, vague sound of distress, and stood looking at him shrinkingly and waveringly, as if she were sorely tempted to retreat through the open window. Mr. Striker swung his long leg a trifle defiantly. No one, evidently, was used to offering hollow welcomes or telling polite fibs. Rowland introduced himself; he had come, he might say, upon business.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Hudson tremulously; “I know—my son has told me. I suppose it is better I should see you. Perhaps you will take a seat.”

With this invitation Rowland prepared to comply, and, turning, grasped the first chair that offered itself.

“Not that one,” said a full, grave voice; whereupon he perceived that a quantity of sewing-silk had been suspended and entangled over the back, preparatory to being wound on reels. He felt the least bit irritated at the curtness of the warning, coming as it did from a young woman whose countenance he had mentally pronounced interesting, and with regard to whom he was conscious of the germ of the inevitable desire to produce a responsive interest. And then he thought it would break the ice to say something playfully urbane.

“Oh, you should let me take the chair,” he answered, “and have the pleasure of holding the skeins myself!”

For all reply to this sally he received a stare of undisguised amazement from Miss Garland, who then looked across at Mrs. Hudson with a glance which plainly said: “You see he ‘s quite the insidious personage we feared.” The elder lady, however, sat with her eyes fixed on the ground and her two hands tightly clasped. But touching her Rowland felt much more compassion than resentment; her attitude was not coldness, it was a kind of dread, almost a terror. She was a small, eager woman, with a pale, troubled face, which added to her apparent age. After looking at her for some minutes Rowland saw that she was still young, and that she must have been a very girlish bride. She had been a pretty one, too, though she probably had looked terribly frightened at the altar. She was very delicately made, and Roderick had come honestly by his physical slimness and elegance. She wore no cap, and her flaxen hair, which was of extraordinary fineness, was smoothed and confined with Puritanic precision. She was excessively shy, and evidently very humble-minded; it was singular to see a woman to whom the experience of life had conveyed so little reassurance as to her own resources or the chances of things turning out well. Rowland began immediately to like her, and to feel impatient to persuade her that there was no harm in him, and that, twenty to one, her son would make her a well-pleased woman yet. He foresaw that she would be easy to persuade, and that a benevolent conversational tone would probably make her pass, fluttering, from distrust into an oppressive extreme of confidence. But he had an indefinable sense that the person who was testing that strong young eyesight of hers in the dim candle-light was less readily beguiled from her mysterious feminine preconceptions. Miss Garland, according to Cecilia’s judgment, as Rowland remembered, had not a countenance to inspire a sculptor; but it seemed to Rowland that her countenance might fairly inspire a man who was far from being a sculptor. She was not pretty, as the eye of habit judges prettiness, but when you made the observation you somehow failed to set it down against her, for you had already passed from measuring contours to tracing meanings. In Mary Garland’s face there were many possible ones, and they gave you the more to think about that it was not—like Roderick Hudson’s, for instance—a quick and mobile face, over which expression flickered like a candle in a wind. They followed each other slowly, distinctly, gravely, sincerely, and you might almost have fancied that, as they came and went, they gave her a sort of pain. She was tall and slender, and had an air of maidenly strength and decision. She had a broad forehead and dark eyebrows, a trifle thicker than those of classic beauties; her gray eye was clear but not brilliant, and her features were perfectly irregular. Her mouth was large, fortunately for the principal grace of her physiognomy was her smile, which displayed itself with magnificent amplitude. Rowland, indeed, had not yet seen her smile, but something assured him that her rigid gravity had a radiant counterpart. She wore a scanty white dress, and had a nameless rustic air which would have led one to speak of her less as a young lady than as a young woman. She was evidently a girl of a great personal force, but she lacked pliancy. She was hemming a kitchen towel with the aid of a large steel thimble. She bent her serious eyes at last on her work again, and let Rowland explain himself.

“I have become suddenly so very intimate with your son,” he said at last, addressing himself to Mrs. Hudson, “that it seems just I should make your acquaintance.”

“Very just,” murmured the poor lady, and after a moment’s hesitation was on the point of adding something more; but Mr. Striker here interposed, after a prefatory clearance of the throat.

“I should like to take the liberty,” he said, “of addressing you a simple question. For how long a period of time have you been acquainted with our young friend?” He continued to kick the air, but his head was thrown back and his eyes fixed on the opposite wall, as if in aversion to the spectacle of Rowland’s inevitable confusion.

“A very short time, I confess. Hardly three days.”

“And yet you call yourself intimate, eh? I have been seeing Mr. Roderick daily these three years, and yet it was only this morning that I felt as if I had at last the right to say that I knew him. We had a few moments’ conversation in my office which supplied the missing links in the evidence. So that now I do venture to say I ‘m acquainted with Mr. Roderick! But wait three years, sir, like me!” and Mr. Striker laughed, with a closed mouth and a noiseless shake of all his long person.

Mrs. Hudson smiled confusedly, at hazard; Miss Garland kept her eyes on her stitches. But it seemed to Rowland that the latter colored a little. “Oh, in three years, of course,” he said, “we shall know each other better. Before many years are over, madam,” he pursued, “I expect the world to know him. I expect him to be a great man!”

Mrs. Hudson looked at first as if this could be but an insidious device for increasing her distress by the assistance of irony. Then reassured, little by little, by Rowland’s benevolent visage, she gave him an appealing glance and a timorous “Really?”

But before Rowland could respond, Mr. Striker again intervened. “Do I fully apprehend your expression?” he asked. “Our young friend is to become a great man?”

“A great artist, I hope,” said Rowland.

“This is a new and interesting view,” said Mr. Striker, with an assumption of judicial calmness. “We have had hopes for Mr. Roderick, but I confess, if I have rightly understood them, they stopped short of greatness. We should n’t have taken the responsibility of claiming it for him. What do you say, ladies? We all feel about him here—his mother, Miss Garland, and myself—as if his merits were rather in the line of the”—and Mr. Striker waved his hand with a series of fantastic flourishes in the air—“of the light ornamental!” Mr. Striker bore his recalcitrant pupil a grudge, but he was evidently trying both to be fair and to respect the susceptibilities of his companions. But he was unversed in the mysterious processes of feminine emotion. Ten minutes before, there had been a general harmony of sombre views; but on hearing Roderick’s limitations thus distinctly formulated to a stranger, the two ladies mutely protested. Mrs. Hudson uttered a short, faint sigh, and Miss Garland raised her eyes toward their advocate and visited him with a short, cold glance.

“I ‘m afraid, Mrs. Hudson,” Rowland pursued, evading the discussion of Roderick’s possible greatness, “that you don’t at all thank me for stirring up your son’s ambition on a line which leads him so far from home. I suspect I have made you my enemy.”

Mrs. Hudson covered her mouth with her finger-tips and looked painfully perplexed between the desire to confess the truth and the fear of being impolite. “My cousin is no one’s enemy,” Miss Garland hereupon declared, gently, but with that same fine deliberateness with which she had made Rowland relax his grasp of the chair.

“Does she leave that to you?” Rowland ventured to ask, with a smile.

“We are inspired with none but Christian sentiments,” said Mr. Striker; “Miss Garland perhaps most of all. Miss Garland,” and Mr. Striker waved his hand again as if to perform an introduction which had been regrettably omitted, “is the daughter of a minister, the granddaughter of a minister, the sister of a minister.” Rowland bowed deferentially, and the young girl went on with her sewing, with nothing, apparently, either of embarrassment or elation at the promulgation of these facts. Mr. Striker continued: “Mrs. Hudson, I see, is too deeply agitated to converse with you freely. She will allow me to address you a few questions. Would you kindly inform her, as exactly as possible, just what you propose to do with her son?”

The poor lady fixed her eyes appealingly on Rowland's face and seemed to say that Mr. Striker had spoken her desire, though she herself would have expressed it less defiantly. But Rowland saw in Mr. Striker's many-wrinkled light blue eye, shrewd at once and good-natured, that he had no intention of defiance, and that he was simply pompous and conceited and sarcastically compassionate of any view of things in which Roderick Hudson was regarded in a serious light.

"Do, my dear madam?" demanded Rowland. "I don't propose to do anything. He must do for himself. I simply offer him the chance. He 's to study, to work—hard, I hope."

"Not too hard, please," murmured Mrs. Hudson, pleadingly, wheeling about from recent visions of dangerous leisure. "He 's not very strong, and I 'm afraid the climate of Europe is very relaxing."

"Ah, study?" repeated Mr. Striker. "To what line of study is he to direct his attention?" Then suddenly, with an impulse of disinterested curiosity on his own account, "How do you study sculpture, anyhow?"

"By looking at models and imitating them."

"At models, eh? To what kind of models do you refer?"

"To the antique, in the first place."

"Ah, the antique," repeated Mr. Striker, with a jocosely intonation. "Do you hear, madam? Roderick is going off to Europe to learn to imitate the antique."

"I suppose it 's all right," said Mrs. Hudson, twisting herself in a sort of delicate anguish.

"An antique, as I understand it," the lawyer continued, "is an image of a pagan deity, with considerable dirt sticking to it, and no arms, no nose, and no clothing. A precious model, certainly!"

"That 's a very good description of many," said Rowland, with a laugh.

"Mercy! Truly?" asked Mrs. Hudson, borrowing courage from his urbanity.

"But a sculptor's studies, you intimate, are not confined to the antique," Mr. Striker resumed. "After he has been looking three or four years at the objects I describe"—

"He studies the living model," said Rowland.

"Does it take three or four years?" asked Mrs. Hudson, imploringly.

"That depends upon the artist's aptitude. After twenty years a real artist is still studying."

"Oh, my poor boy!" moaned Mrs. Hudson, finding the prospect, under every light, still terrible.

"Now this study of the living model," Mr. Striker pursued. "Inform Mrs. Hudson about that."

"Oh dear, no!" cried Mrs. Hudson, shrinkingly.

"That too," said Rowland, "is one of the reasons for studying in Rome. It 's a handsome race, you know, and you find very well-made people."

"I suppose they 're no better made than a good tough Yankee," objected Mr. Striker, transposing his interminable legs. "The same God made us."

"Surely," sighed Mrs. Hudson, but with a questioning glance at her visitor which showed that she had already begun to concede much weight to his opinion. Rowland hastened to express his assent to Mr. Striker's proposition.

Miss Garland looked up, and, after a moment's hesitation: "Are the Roman women very beautiful?" she asked.

Rowland too, in answering, hesitated; he was looking straight at the young girl. "On the whole, I prefer ours," he said.

She had dropped her work in her lap; her hands were crossed upon it, her head thrown a little back. She had evidently expected a more impersonal answer, and she was dissatisfied. For an instant she seemed inclined to make a rejoinder, but she slowly picked up her work in silence and drew her stitches again.

Rowland had for the second time the feeling that she judged him to be a person of a disagreeably sophisticated tone. He noticed too that the kitchen towel she was hemming was terribly coarse. And yet his answer had a resonant inward echo, and he repeated to himself, "Yes, on the whole, I prefer ours."

“Well, these models,” began Mr. Striker. “You put them into an attitude, I suppose.”

“An attitude, exactly.”

“And then you sit down and look at them.”

“You must not sit too long. You must go at your clay and try to build up something that looks like them.”

“Well, there you are with your model in an attitude on one side, yourself, in an attitude too, I suppose, on the other, and your pile of clay in the middle, building up, as you say. So you pass the morning. After that I hope you go out and take a walk, and rest from your exertions.”

“Unquestionably. But to a sculptor who loves his work there is no time lost. Everything he looks at teaches or suggests something.”

“That ‘s a tempting doctrine to young men with a taste for sitting by the hour with the page unturned, watching the flies buzz, or the frost melt on the window-pane. Our young friend, in this way, must have laid up stores of information which I never suspected!”

“Very likely,” said Rowland, with an unresentful smile, “he will prove some day the completer artist for some of those lazy reveries.”

This theory was apparently very grateful to Mrs. Hudson, who had never had the case put for her son with such ingenious hopefulness, and found herself disrelishing the singular situation of seeming to side against her own flesh and blood with a lawyer whose conversational tone betrayed the habit of cross-questioning.

“My son, then,” she ventured to ask, “my son has great—what you would call great powers?”

“To my sense, very great powers.”

Poor Mrs. Hudson actually smiled, broadly, gleefully, and glanced at Miss Garland, as if to invite her to do likewise. But the young girl’s face remained serious, like the eastern sky when the opposite sunset is too feeble to make it glow. “Do you really know?” she asked, looking at Rowland.

“One cannot know in such a matter save after proof, and proof takes time. But one can believe.”

“And you believe?”

“I believe.”

But even then Miss Garland vouchsafed no smile. Her face became graver than ever.

“Well, well,” said Mrs. Hudson, “we must hope that it is all for the best.”

Mr. Striker eyed his old friend for a moment with a look of some displeasure; he saw that this was but a cunning feminine imitation of resignation, and that, through some untraceable process of transition, she was now taking more comfort in the opinions of this insinuating stranger than in his own tough dogmas. He rose to his feet, without pulling down his waistcoat, but with a wrinkled grin at the inconsistency of women. “Well, sir, Mr. Roderick’s powers are nothing to me,” he said, “nor no use he makes of them. Good or bad, he ‘s no son of mine. But, in a friendly way, I ‘m glad to hear so fine an account of him. I ‘m glad, madam, you ‘re so satisfied with the prospect. Affection, sir, you see, must have its guarantees!” He paused a moment, stroking his beard, with his head inclined and one eye half-closed, looking at Rowland. The look was grotesque, but it was significant, and it puzzled Rowland more than it amused him. “I suppose you ‘re a very brilliant young man,” he went on, “very enlightened, very cultivated, quite up to the mark in the fine arts and all that sort of thing. I ‘m a plain, practical old boy, content to follow an honorable profession in a free country. I did n’t go off to the Old World to learn my business; no one took me by the hand; I had to grease my wheels myself, and, such as I am, I ‘m a self-made man, every inch of me! Well, if our young friend is booked for fame and fortune, I don’t suppose his going to Rome will stop him. But, mind you, it won’t help him such a long way, either. If you have undertaken to put him through, there ‘s a thing or two you ‘d better remember. The crop we gather depends upon the seed we sow. He may be the biggest genius of the age: his potatoes won’t come up without his hoeing them. If he takes things so almighty easy as—well, as one or two young fellows of genius I ‘ve had under my eye—his produce will never gain the prize. Take the word for it of a man who has made his way inch by inch, and does n’t believe that

we 'll wake up to find our work done because we 've lain all night a-dreaming of it; anything worth doing is devilish hard to do! If your young protajay finds things easy and has a good time and says he likes the life, it 's a sign that—as I may say—you had better step round to the office and look at the books. That 's all I desire to remark. No offense intended. I hope you 'll have a first-rate time.”

Rowland could honestly reply that this seemed pregnant sense, and he offered Mr. Striker a friendly hand-shake as the latter withdrew. But Mr. Striker's rather grim view of matters cast a momentary shadow on his companions, and Mrs. Hudson seemed to feel that it necessitated between them some little friendly agreement not to be overawed.

Rowland sat for some time longer, partly because he wished to please the two women and partly because he was strangely pleased himself. There was something touching in their unworldly fears and diffident hopes, something almost terrible in the way poor little Mrs. Hudson seemed to flutter and quiver with intense maternal passion. She put forth one timid conversational venture after another, and asked Rowland a number of questions about himself, his age, his family, his occupations, his tastes, his religious opinions. Rowland had an odd feeling at last that she had begun to consider him very exemplary, and that she might make, later, some perturbing discovery. He tried, therefore, to invent something that would prepare her to find him fallible. But he could think of nothing. It only seemed to him that Miss Garland secretly mistrusted him, and that he must leave her to render him the service, after he had gone, of making him the object of a little firm derogation. Mrs. Hudson talked with low-voiced eagerness about her son.

“He 's very lovable, sir, I assure you. When you come to know him you 'll find him very lovable. He 's a little spoiled, of course; he has always done with me as he pleased; but he 's a good boy, I 'm sure he 's a good boy. And every one thinks him very attractive: I 'm sure he 'd be noticed, anywhere. Don't you think he 's very handsome, sir? He features his poor father. I had another—perhaps you 've been told. He was killed.” And the poor little lady bravely smiled, for fear of doing worse. “He was a very fine boy, but very different from Roderick. Roderick is a little strange; he has never been an easy boy. Sometimes I feel like the goose—was n't it a goose, dear?” and startled by the audacity of her comparison she appealed to Miss Garland—“the goose, or the hen, who hatched a swan's egg. I have never been able to give him what he needs. I have always thought that in more—in more brilliant circumstances he might find his place and be happy. But at the same time I was afraid of the world for him; it was so large and dangerous and dreadful. No doubt I know very little about it. I never suspected, I confess, that it contained persons of such liberality as yours.”

Rowland replied that, evidently, she had done the world but scanty justice. “No,” objected Miss Garland, after a pause, “it is like something in a fairy tale.”

“What, pray?”

“Your coming here all unknown, so rich and so polite, and carrying off my cousin in a golden cloud.”

If this was badinage Miss Garland had the best of it, for Rowland almost fell a-musing silently over the question whether there was a possibility of irony in that transparent gaze. Before he withdrew, Mrs. Hudson made him tell her again that Roderick's powers were extraordinary. He had inspired her with a clinging, caressing faith in his wisdom. “He will really do great things,” she asked, “the very greatest?”

“I see no reason in his talent itself why he should not.”

“Well, we 'll think of that as we sit here alone,” she rejoined. “Mary and I will sit here and talk about it. So I give him up,” she went on, as he was going. “I 'm sure you 'll be the best of friends to him, but if you should ever forget him, or grow tired of him, or lose your interest in him, and he should come to any harm or any trouble, please, sir, remember”—And she paused, with a tremulous voice.

“Remember, my dear madam?”

“That he is all I have—that he is everything—and that it would be very terrible.”

“In so far as I can help him, he shall succeed,” was all Rowland could say. He turned to Miss Garland, to bid her good night, and she rose and put out her hand. She was very straightforward, but he could see that if she was too modest to be bold, she was much too simple to be shy. “Have you no charge to lay upon me?” he asked—to ask her something.

She looked at him a moment and then, although she was not shy, she blushed. “Make him do his best,” she said.

Rowland noted the soft intensity with which the words were uttered. “Do you take a great interest in him?” he demanded.

“Certainly.”

“Then, if he will not do his best for you, he will not do it for me.” She turned away with another blush, and Rowland took his leave.

He walked homeward, thinking of many things. The great Northampton elms interarched far above in the darkness, but the moon had risen and through scattered apertures was hanging the dusky vault with silver lamps. There seemed to Rowland something intensely serious in the scene in which he had just taken part. He had laughed and talked and braved it out in self-defense; but when he reflected that he was really meddling with the simple stillness of this little New England home, and that he had ventured to disturb so much living security in the interest of a far-away, fantastic hypothesis, he paused, amazed at his temerity. It was true, as Cecilia had said, that for an unofficial man it was a singular position. There stirred in his mind an odd feeling of annoyance with Roderick for having thus peremptorily enlisted his sympathies. As he looked up and down the long vista, and saw the clear white houses glancing here and there in the broken moonshine, he could almost have believed that the happiest lot for any man was to make the most of life in some such tranquil spot as that. Here were kindness, comfort, safety, the warning voice of duty, the perfect hush of temptation. And as Rowland looked along the arch of silvered shadow and out into the lucid air of the American night, which seemed so doubly vast, somehow, and strange and nocturnal, he felt like declaring that here was beauty too—beauty sufficient for an artist not to starve upon it. As he stood, lost in the darkness, he presently heard a rapid tread on the other side of the road, accompanied by a loud, jubilant whistle, and in a moment a figure emerged into an open gap of moonshine. He had no difficulty in recognizing Hudson, who was presumably returning from a visit to Cecilia. Roderick stopped suddenly and stared up at the moon, with his face vividly illumined. He broke out into a snatch of song:—

“The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story!”

And with a great, musical roll of his voice he went swinging off into the darkness again, as if his thoughts had lent him wings. He was dreaming of the inspiration of foreign lands,—of castled crags and historic landscapes. What a pity, after all, thought Rowland, as he went his own way, that he should n't have a taste of it!

It had been a very just remark of Cecilia's that Roderick would change with a change in his circumstances. Rowland had telegraphed to New York for another berth on his steamer, and from the hour the answer came Hudson's spirits rose to incalculable heights. He was radiant with good-humor, and his kindly jollity seemed the pledge of a brilliant future. He had forgiven his old enemies and forgotten his old grievances, and seemed every way reconciled to a world in which he was going to count as an active force. He was inexhaustibly loquacious and fantastic, and as Cecilia said, he had suddenly become so good that it was only to be feared he was going to start not for Europe but for heaven. He took long walks with Rowland, who felt more and more the fascination of what he would have called his giftedness. Rowland returned several times to Mrs. Hudson's, and found the two ladies doing their best to be happy in their companion's happiness. Miss Garland, he thought, was succeeding better than her demeanor on his first visit had promised. He tried to have some especial talk with her, but her extreme reserve forced him to content himself with such response to his rather urgent overtures as might be extracted from a keenly attentive smile. It must be confessed, however, that if the response was vague, the satisfaction was great, and that Rowland, after his second visit,

kept seeing a lurking reflection of this smile in the most unexpected places. It seemed strange that she should please him so well at so slender a cost, but please him she did, prodigiously, and his pleasure had a quality altogether new to him. It made him restless, and a trifle melancholy; he walked about absently, wondering and wishing. He wondered, among other things, why fate should have condemned him to make the acquaintance of a girl whom he would make a sacrifice to know better, just as he was leaving the country for years. It seemed to him that he was turning his back on a chance of happiness—happiness of a sort of which the slenderest germ should be cultivated. He asked himself whether, feeling as he did, if he had only himself to please, he would give up his journey and—wait. He had Roderick to please now, for whom disappointment would be cruel; but he said to himself that certainly, if there were no Roderick in the case, the ship should sail without him. He asked Hudson several questions about his cousin, but Roderick, confidential on most points, seemed to have reasons of his own for being reticent on this one. His measured answers quickened Rowland's curiosity, for Miss Garland, with her own irritating half-suggestions, had only to be a subject of guarded allusion in others to become intolerably interesting. He learned from Roderick that she was the daughter of a country minister, a far-away cousin of his mother, settled in another part of the State; that she was one of a half-a-dozen daughters, that the family was very poor, and that she had come a couple of months before to pay his mother a long visit. "It is to be a very long one now," he said, "for it is settled that she is to remain while I am away."

The fermentation of contentment in Roderick's soul reached its climax a few days before the young men were to make their farewells. He had been sitting with his friends on Cecilia's veranda, but for half an hour past he had said nothing. Lounging back against a vine-wreathed column and gazing idly at the stars, he kept caroling softly to himself with that indifference to ceremony for which he always found allowance, and which in him had a sort of pleading grace. At last, springing up: "I want to strike out, hard!" he exclaimed. "I want to do something violent, to let off steam!"

"I'll tell you what to do, this lovely weather," said Cecilia. "Give a picnic. It can be as violent as you please, and it will have the merit of leading off our emotion into a safe channel, as well as yours."

Roderick laughed uproariously at Cecilia's very practical remedy for his sentimental need, but a couple of days later, nevertheless, the picnic was given. It was to be a family party, but Roderick, in his magnanimous geniality, insisted on inviting Mr. Striker, a decision which Rowland mentally applauded. "And we'll have Mrs. Striker, too," he said, "if she'll come, to keep my mother in countenance; and at any rate we'll have Miss Striker—the divine Petronilla!" The young lady thus denominated formed, with Mrs. Hudson, Miss Garland, and Cecilia, the feminine half of the company. Mr. Striker presented himself, sacrificing a morning's work, with a magnanimity greater even than Roderick's, and foreign support was further secured in the person of Mr. Whitefoot, the young Orthodox minister. Roderick had chosen the feasting-place; he knew it well and had passed many a summer afternoon there, lying at his length on the grass and gazing at the blue undulations of the horizon. It was a meadow on the edge of a wood, with mossy rocks protruding through the grass and a little lake on the other side. It was a cloudless August day; Rowland always remembered it, and the scene, and everything that was said and done, with extraordinary distinctness. Roderick surpassed himself in friendly jollity, and at one moment, when exhilaration was at the highest, was seen in Mr. Striker's high white hat, drinking champagne from a broken tea-cup to Mr. Striker's health. Miss Striker had her father's pale blue eye; she was dressed as if she were going to sit for her photograph, and remained for a long time with Roderick on a little promontory overhanging the lake. Mrs. Hudson sat all day with a little meek, apprehensive smile. She was afraid of an "accident," though unless Miss Striker (who indeed was a little of a romp) should push Roderick into the lake, it was hard to see what accident could occur. Mrs. Hudson was as neat and crisp and uncrumpled at the end of the festival as at the beginning. Mr. Whitefoot, who but a twelvemonth later became a convert to episcopacy and was already cultivating a certain conversational sonority, devoted himself to Cecilia. He had a little book in his pocket, out of which he read to her at intervals, lying stretched at her feet, and it was a

lasting joke with Cecilia, afterwards, that she would never tell what Mr. Whitefoot's little book had been. Rowland had placed himself near Miss Garland, while the feasting went forward on the grass. She wore a so-called gypsy hat—a little straw hat, tied down over her ears, so as to cast her eyes into shadow, by a ribbon passing outside of it. When the company dispersed, after lunch, he proposed to her to take a stroll in the wood. She hesitated a moment and looked toward Mrs. Hudson, as if for permission to leave her. But Mrs. Hudson was listening to Mr. Striker, who sat gossiping to her with relaxed magniloquence, his waistcoat unbuttoned and his hat on his nose.

“You can give your cousin your society at any time,” said Rowland. “But me, perhaps, you ‘ll never see again.”

“Why then should we wish to be friends, if nothing is to come of it?” she asked, with homely logic. But by this time she had consented, and they were treading the fallen pine-needles.

“Oh, one must take all one can get,” said Rowland. “If we can be friends for half an hour, it ‘s so much gained.”

“Do you expect never to come back to Northampton again?”

“‘Never’ is a good deal to say. But I go to Europe for a long stay.”

“Do you prefer it so much to your own country?”

“I will not say that. But I have the misfortune to be a rather idle man, and in Europe the burden of idleness is less heavy than here.”

She was silent for a few minutes; then at last, “In that, then, we are better than Europe,” she said. To a certain point Rowland agreed with her, but he demurred, to make her say more.

“Would n’t it be better,” she asked, “to work to get reconciled to America, than to go to Europe to get reconciled to idleness?”

“Doubtless; but you know work is hard to find.”

“I come from a little place where every one has plenty,” said Miss Garland. “We all work; every one I know works. And really,” she added presently, “I look at you with curiosity; you are the first unoccupied man I ever saw.”

“Don’t look at me too hard,” said Rowland, smiling. “I shall sink into the earth. What is the name of your little place?”

“West Nazareth,” said Miss Garland, with her usual sobriety. “It is not so very little, though it ‘s smaller than Northampton.”

“I wonder whether I could find any work at West Nazareth,” Rowland said.

“You would not like it,” Miss Garland declared reflectively. “Though there are far finer woods there than this. We have miles and miles of woods.”

“I might chop down trees,” said Rowland. “That is, if you allow it.”

“Allow it? Why, where should we get our firewood?” Then, noticing that he had spoken jestingly, she glanced at him askance, though with no visible diminution of her gravity. “Don’t you know how to do anything? Have you no profession?”

Rowland shook his head. “Absolutely none.”

“What do you do all day?”

“Nothing worth relating. That ‘s why I am going to Europe. There, at least, if I do nothing, I shall see a great deal; and if I ‘m not a producer, I shall at any rate be an observer.”

“Can’t we observe everywhere?”

“Certainly; and I really think that in that way I make the most of my opportunities. Though I confess,” he continued, “that I often remember there are things to be seen here to which I probably have n’t done justice. I should like, for instance, to see West Nazareth.”

She looked round at him, open-eyed; not, apparently, that she exactly supposed he was jesting, for the expression of such a desire was not necessarily facetious; but as if he must have spoken with an ulterior motive. In fact, he had spoken from the simplest of motives. The girl beside him pleased him unspeakably, and, suspecting that her charm was essentially her own and not reflected from social

circumstance, he wished to give himself the satisfaction of contrasting her with the meagre influences of her education. Miss Garland's second movement was to take him at his word. "Since you are free to do as you please, why don't you go there?"

"I am not free to do as I please now. I have offered your cousin to bear him company to Europe, he has accepted with enthusiasm, and I cannot retract."

"Are you going to Europe simply for his sake?"

Rowland hesitated a moment. "I think I may almost say so."

Miss Garland walked along in silence. "Do you mean to do a great deal for him?" she asked at last.

"What I can. But my power of helping him is very small beside his power of helping himself."

For a moment she was silent again. "You are very generous," she said, almost solemnly.

"No, I am simply very shrewd. Roderick will repay me. It 's an investment. At first, I think," he added shortly afterwards, "you would not have paid me that compliment. You distrusted me."

She made no attempt to deny it. "I did n't see why you should wish to make Roderick discontented. I thought you were rather frivolous."

"You did me injustice. I don't think I 'm that."

"It was because you are unlike other men—those, at least, whom I have seen."

"In what way?"

"Why, as you describe yourself. You have no duties, no profession, no home. You live for your pleasure."

"That 's all very true. And yet I maintain I 'm not frivolous."

"I hope not," said Miss Garland, simply. They had reached a point where the wood-path forked and put forth two divergent tracks which lost themselves in a verdurous tangle. Miss Garland seemed to think that the difficulty of choice between them was a reason for giving them up and turning back. Rowland thought otherwise, and detected agreeable grounds for preference in the left-hand path. As a compromise, they sat down on a fallen log. Looking about him, Rowland espied a curious wild shrub, with a spotted crimson leaf; he went and plucked a spray of it and brought it to Miss Garland. He had never observed it before, but she immediately called it by its name. She expressed surprise at his not knowing it; it was extremely common. He presently brought her a specimen of another delicate plant, with a little blue-streaked flower. "I suppose that 's common, too," he said, "but I have never seen it—or noticed it, at least." She answered that this one was rare, and meditated a moment before she could remember its name. At last she recalled it, and expressed surprise at his having found the plant in the woods; she supposed it grew only in open marshes. Rowland complimented her on her fund of useful information.

"It 's not especially useful," she answered; "but I like to know the names of plants as I do those of my acquaintances. When we walk in the woods at home—which we do so much—it seems as unnatural not to know what to call the flowers as it would be to see some one in the town with whom we were not on speaking terms."

"Apropos of frivolity," Rowland said, "I 'm sure you have very little of it, unless at West Nazareth it is considered frivolous to walk in the woods and nod to the nodding flowers. Do kindly tell me a little about yourself." And to compel her to begin, "I know you come of a race of theologians," he went on.

"No," she replied, deliberating; "they are not theologians, though they are ministers. We don't take a very firm stand upon doctrine; we are practical, rather. We write sermons and preach them, but we do a great deal of hard work beside."

"And of this hard work what has your share been?"

"The hardest part: doing nothing."

"What do you call nothing?"

“I taught school a while: I must make the most of that. But I confess I did n’t like it. Otherwise, I have only done little things at home, as they turned up.”

“What kind of things?”

“Oh, every kind. If you had seen my home, you would understand.”

Rowland would have liked to make her specify; but he felt a more urgent need to respect her simplicity than he had ever felt to defer to the complex circumstance of certain other women. “To be happy, I imagine,” he contented himself with saying, “you need to be occupied. You need to have something to expend yourself upon.”

“That is not so true as it once was; now that I am older, I am sure I am less impatient of leisure. Certainly, these two months that I have been with Mrs. Hudson, I have had a terrible amount of it. And yet I have liked it! And now that I am probably to be with her all the while that her son is away, I look forward to more with a resignation that I don’t quite know what to make of.”

“It is settled, then, that you are to remain with your cousin?”

“It depends upon their writing from home that I may stay. But that is probable. Only I must not forget,” she said, rising, “that the ground for my doing so is that she be not left alone.”

“I am glad to know,” said Rowland, “that I shall probably often hear about you. I assure you I shall often think about you!” These words were half impulsive, half deliberate. They were the simple truth, and he had asked himself why he should not tell her the truth. And yet they were not all of it; her hearing the rest would depend upon the way she received this. She received it not only, as Rowland foresaw, without a shadow of coquetry, of any apparent thought of listening to it gracefully, but with a slight movement of nervous deprecation, which seemed to betray itself in the quickening of her step. Evidently, if Rowland was to take pleasure in hearing about her, it would have to be a highly disinterested pleasure. She answered nothing, and Rowland too, as he walked beside her, was silent; but as he looked along the shadow-woven wood-path, what he was really facing was a level three years of disinterestedness. He ushered them in by talking composed civility until he had brought Miss Garland back to her companions.

He saw her but once again. He was obliged to be in New York a couple of days before sailing, and it was arranged that Roderick should overtake him at the last moment. The evening before he left Northampton he went to say farewell to Mrs. Hudson. The ceremony was brief. Rowland soon perceived that the poor little lady was in the melting mood, and, as he dreaded her tears, he compressed a multitude of solemn promises into a silent hand-shake and took his leave. Miss Garland, she had told him, was in the back-garden with Roderick: he might go out to them. He did so, and as he drew near he heard Roderick’s high-pitched voice ringing behind the shrubbery. In a moment, emerging, he found Miss Garland leaning against a tree, with her cousin before her talking with great emphasis. He asked pardon for interrupting them, and said he wished only to bid her good-by. She gave him her hand and he made her his bow in silence. “Don’t forget,” he said to Roderick, as he turned away. “And don’t, in this company, repent of your bargain.”

“I shall not let him,” said Miss Garland, with something very like gayety. “I shall see that he is punctual. He must go! I owe you an apology for having doubted that he ought to.” And in spite of the dusk Rowland could see that she had an even finer smile than he had supposed.

Roderick was punctual, eagerly punctual, and they went. Rowland for several days was occupied with material cares, and lost sight of his sentimental perplexities. But they only slumbered, and they were sharply awakened. The weather was fine, and the two young men always sat together upon deck late into the evening. One night, toward the last, they were at the stern of the great ship, watching her grind the solid blackness of the ocean into phosphorescent foam. They talked on these occasions of everything conceivable, and had the air of having no secrets from each other. But it was on Roderick’s conscience that this air belied him, and he was too frank by nature, moreover, for permanent reticence on any point.

“I must tell you something,” he said at last. “I should like you to know it, and you will be so glad to know it. Besides, it ‘s only a question of time; three months hence, probably, you would have guessed it. I am engaged to Mary Garland.”

Rowland sat staring; though the sea was calm, it seemed to him that the ship gave a great dizzying lurch. But in a moment he contrived to answer coherently: “Engaged to Miss Garland! I never supposed—I never imagined”—

“That I was in love with her?” Roderick interrupted. “Neither did I, until this last fortnight. But you came and put me into such ridiculous good-humor that I felt an extraordinary desire to tell some woman that I adored her. Miss Garland is a magnificent girl; you know her too little to do her justice. I have been quietly learning to know her, these past three months, and have been falling in love with her without being conscious of it. It appeared, when I spoke to her, that she had a kindness for me. So the thing was settled. I must of course make some money before we can marry. It ‘s rather droll, certainly, to engage one’s self to a girl whom one is going to leave the next day, for years. We shall be condemned, for some time to come, to do a terrible deal of abstract thinking about each other. But I wanted her blessing on my career and I could not help asking for it. Unless a man is unnaturally selfish he needs to work for some one else than himself, and I am sure I shall run a smoother and swifter course for knowing that that fine creature is waiting, at Northampton, for news of my greatness. If ever I am a dull companion and over-addicted to moping, remember in justice to me that I am in love and that my sweetheart is five thousand miles away.”

Rowland listened to all this with a sort of feeling that fortune had played him an elaborately-devised trick. It had lured him out into mid-ocean and smoothed the sea and stilled the winds and given him a singularly sympathetic comrade, and then it had turned and delivered him a thumping blow in mid-chest. “Yes,” he said, after an attempt at the usual formal congratulation, “you certainly ought to do better—with Miss Garland waiting for you at Northampton.”

Roderick, now that he had broken ground, was eloquent and rung a hundred changes on the assurance that he was a very happy man. Then at last, suddenly, his climax was a yawn, and he declared that he must go to bed. Rowland let him go alone, and sat there late, between sea and sky.

CHAPTER III. Rome

One warm, still day, late in the Roman autumn, our two young men were sitting beneath one of the high-stemmed pines of the Villa Ludovisi. They had been spending an hour in the mouldy little garden-house, where the colossal mask of the famous Juno looks out with blank eyes from that dusky corner which must seem to her the last possible stage of a lapse from Olympus. Then they had wandered out into the gardens, and were lounging away the morning under the spell of their magical picturesqueness. Roderick declared that he would go nowhere else; that, after the Juno, it was a profanation to look at anything but sky and trees. There was a fresco of Guercino, to which Rowland, though he had seen it on his former visit to Rome, went dutifully to pay his respects. But Roderick, though he had never seen it, declared that it could n't be worth a fig, and that he did n't care to look at ugly things. He remained stretched on his overcoat, which he had spread on the grass, while Rowland went off envying the intellectual comfort of genius, which can arrive at serene conclusions without disagreeable processes. When the latter came back, his friend was sitting with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands. Rowland, in the geniality of a mood attuned to the mellow charm of a Roman villa, found a good word to say for the Guercino; but he chiefly talked of the view from the little belvedere on the roof of the casino, and how it looked like the prospect from a castle turret in a fairy tale.

"Very likely," said Roderick, throwing himself back with a yawn. "But I must let it pass. I have seen enough for the present; I have reached the top of the hill. I have an indigestion of impressions; I must work them off before I go in for any more. I don't want to look at any more of other people's works, for a month—not even at Nature's own. I want to look at Roderick Hudson's. The result of it all is that I 'm not afraid. I can but try, as well as the rest of them! The fellow who did that gazing goddess yonder only made an experiment. The other day, when I was looking at Michael Angelo's Moses, I was seized with a kind of defiance—a reaction against all this mere passive enjoyment of grandeur. It was a rousing great success, certainly, that rose there before me, but somehow it was not an inscrutable mystery, and it seemed to me, not perhaps that I should some day do as well, but that at least I might!"

"As you say, you can but try," said Rowland. "Success is only passionate effort."

"Well, the passion is blazing; we have been piling on fuel handsomely. It came over me just now that it is exactly three months to a day since I left Northampton. I can't believe it!"

"It certainly seems more."

"It seems like ten years. What an exquisite ass I was!"

"Do you feel so wise now?"

"Verily! Don't I look so? Surely I have n't the same face. Have n't I a different eye, a different expression, a different voice?"

"I can hardly say, because I have seen the transition. But it 's very likely. You are, in the literal sense of the word, more civilized. I dare say," added Rowland, "that Miss Garland would think so."

"That 's not what she would call it; she would say I was corrupted."

Rowland asked few questions about Miss Garland, but he always listened narrowly to his companion's voluntary observations.

"Are you very sure?" he replied.

"Why, she 's a stern moralist, and she would infer from my appearance that I had become a cynical sybarite." Roderick had, in fact, a Venetian watch-chain round his neck and a magnificent Roman intaglio on the third finger of his left hand.

"Will you think I take a liberty," asked Rowland, "if I say you judge her superficially?"

"For heaven's sake," cried Roderick, laughing, "don't tell me she 's not a moralist! It was for that I fell in love with her, and with rigid virtue in her person."

“She is a moralist, but not, as you imply, a narrow one. That ‘s more than a difference in degree; it ‘s a difference in kind. I don’t know whether I ever mentioned it, but I admire her extremely. There is nothing narrow about her but her experience; everything else is large. My impression of her is of a person of great capacity, as yet wholly unmeasured and untested. Some day or other, I ‘m sure, she will judge fairly and wisely of everything.”

“Stay a bit!” cried Roderick; “you ‘re a better Catholic than the Pope. I shall be content if she judges fairly of me—of my merits, that is. The rest she must not judge at all. She ‘s a grimly devoted little creature; may she always remain so! Changed as I am, I adore her none the less. What becomes of all our emotions, our impressions,” he went on, after a long pause, “all the material of thought that life pours into us at such a rate during such a memorable three months as these? There are twenty moments a week—a day, for that matter, some days—that seem supreme, twenty impressions that seem ultimate, that appear to form an intellectual era. But others come treading on their heels and sweeping them along, and they all melt like water into water and settle the question of precedence among themselves. The curious thing is that the more the mind takes in, the more it has space for, and that all one’s ideas are like the Irish people at home who live in the different corners of a room, and take boarders.”

“I fancy it is our peculiar good luck that we don’t see the limits of our minds,” said Rowland. “We are young, compared with what we may one day be. That belongs to youth; it is perhaps the best part of it. They say that old people do find themselves at last face to face with a solid blank wall, and stand thumping against it in vain. It resounds, it seems to have something beyond it, but it won’t move! That ‘s only a reason for living with open doors as long as we can!”

“Open doors?” murmured Roderick. “Yes, let us close no doors that open upon Rome. For this, for the mind, is eternal summer! But though my doors may stand open to-day,” he presently added, “I shall see no visitors. I want to pause and breathe; I want to dream of a statue. I have been working hard for three months; I have earned a right to a reverie.”

Rowland, on his side, was not without provision for reflection, and they lingered on in broken, desultory talk. Rowland felt the need for intellectual rest, for a truce to present care for churches, statues, and pictures, on even better grounds than his companion, inasmuch as he had really been living Roderick’s intellectual life the past three months, as well as his own. As he looked back on these full-flavored weeks, he drew a long breath of satisfaction, almost of relief. Roderick, thus far, had justified his confidence and flattered his perspicacity; he was rapidly unfolding into an ideal brilliancy. He was changed even more than he himself suspected; he had stepped, without faltering, into his birthright, and was spending money, intellectually, as lavishly as a young heir who has just won an obstructive lawsuit. Roderick’s glance and voice were the same, doubtless, as when they enlivened the summer dusk on Cecilia’s veranda, but in his person, generally, there was an indefinable expression of experience rapidly and easily assimilated. Rowland had been struck at the outset with the instinctive quickness of his observation and his free appropriation of whatever might serve his purpose. He had not been, for instance, half an hour on English soil before he perceived that he was dressed like a rustic, and he had immediately reformed his toilet with the most unerring tact. His appetite for novelty was insatiable, and for everything characteristically foreign, as it presented itself, he had an extravagant greeting; but in half an hour the novelty had faded, he had guessed the secret, he had plucked out the heart of the mystery and was clamoring for a keener sensation. At the end of a month, he presented, mentally, a puzzling spectacle to his companion. He had caught, instinctively, the key-note of the old world. He observed and enjoyed, he criticised and rhapsodized, but though all things interested him and many delighted him, none surprised him; he had divined their logic and measured their proportions, and referred them infallibly to their categories. Witnessing the rate at which he did intellectual execution on the general spectacle of European life, Rowland at moments felt vaguely uneasy for the future; the boy was living too fast, he would have said, and giving alarming pledges to ennui in his later years. But we must live as our pulses are timed, and Roderick’s struck

the hour very often. He was, by imagination, though he never became in manner, a natural man of the world; he had intuitively, as an artist, what one may call the historic consciousness. He had a relish for social subtleties and mysteries, and, in perception, when occasion offered him an inch he never failed to take an ell. A single glimpse of a social situation of the elder type enabled him to construct the whole, with all its complex chiaroscuro, and Rowland more than once assured him that he made him believe in the metempsychosis, and that he must have lived in European society, in the last century, as a gentleman in a cocked hat and brocaded waistcoat. Hudson asked Rowland questions which poor Rowland was quite unable to answer, and of which he was equally unable to conceive where he had picked up the data. Roderick ended by answering them himself, tolerably to his satisfaction, and in a short time he had almost turned the tables and become in their walks and talks the accredited source of information. Rowland told him that when he turned sculptor a capital novelist was spoiled, and that to match his eye for social detail one would have to go to Honore de Balzac. In all this Rowland took a generous pleasure; he felt an especial kindness for his comrade's radiant youthfulness of temperament. He was so much younger than he himself had ever been! And surely youth and genius, hand in hand, were the most beautiful sight in the world. Roderick added to this the charm of his more immediately personal qualities. The vivacity of his perceptions, the audacity of his imagination, the picturesqueness of his phrase when he was pleased,—and even more when he was displeased,—his abounding good-humor, his candor, his unclouded frankness, his unfailing impulse to share every emotion and impression with his friend; all this made comradeship a pure felicity, and interfused with a deeper amenity their long evening talks at cafe doors in Italian towns.

They had gone almost immediately to Paris, and had spent their days at the Louvre and their evenings at the theatre. Roderick was divided in mind as to whether Titian or Mademoiselle Delaporte was the greater artist. They had come down through France to Genoa and Milan, had spent a fortnight in Venice and another in Florence, and had now been a month in Rome. Roderick had said that he meant to spend three months in simply looking, absorbing, and reflecting, without putting pencil to paper. He looked indefatigably, and certainly saw great things—things greater, doubtless, at times, than the intentions of the artist. And yet he made few false steps and wasted little time in theories of what he ought to like and to dislike. He judged instinctively and passionately, but never vulgarly. At Venice, for a couple of days, he had half a fit of melancholy over the pretended discovery that he had missed his way, and that the only proper vestment of plastic conceptions was the coloring of Titian and Paul Veronese. Then one morning the two young men had themselves rowed out to Torcello, and Roderick lay back for a couple of hours watching a brown-breasted gondolier making superb muscular movements, in high relief, against the sky of the Adriatic, and at the end jerked himself up with a violence that nearly swamped the gondola, and declared that the only thing worth living for was to make a colossal bronze and set it aloft in the light of a public square. In Rome his first care was for the Vatican; he went there again and again. But the old imperial and papal city altogether delighted him; only there he really found what he had been looking for from the first—the complete antipodes of Northampton. And indeed Rome is the natural home of those spirits with which we just now claimed fellowship for Roderick—the spirits with a deep relish for the artificial element in life and the infinite superpositions of history. It is the immemorial city of convention. The stagnant Roman air is charged with convention; it colors the yellow light and deepens the chilly shadows. And in that still recent day the most impressive convention in all history was visible to men's eyes, in the Roman streets, erect in a gilded coach drawn by four black horses. Roderick's first fortnight was a high aesthetic revel. He declared that Rome made him feel and understand more things than he could express: he was sure that life must have there, for all one's senses, an incomparable fineness; that more interesting things must happen to one than anywhere else. And he gave Rowland to understand that he meant to live freely and largely, and be as interested as occasion demanded. Rowland saw no reason to regard this as a menace of dissipation, because, in the first place, there was in all dissipation, refine it as one might, a grossness which would disqualify it for Roderick's favor, and because, in the second,

the young sculptor was a man to regard all things in the light of his art, to hand over his passions to his genius to be dealt with, and to find that he could live largely enough without exceeding the circle of wholesome curiosity. Rowland took immense satisfaction in his companion's deep impatience to make something of all his impressions. Some of these indeed found their way into a channel which did not lead to statues, but it was none the less a safe one. He wrote frequent long letters to Miss Garland; when Rowland went with him to post them he thought wistfully of the fortune of the great loosely-written missives, which cost Roderick unconscionable sums in postage. He received punctual answers of a more frugal form, written in a clear, minute hand, on paper vexatiously thin. If Rowland was present when they came, he turned away and thought of other things—or tried to. These were the only moments when his sympathy halted, and they were brief. For the rest he let the days go by unprotestingly, and enjoyed Roderick's serene efflorescence as he would have done a beautiful summer sunrise. Rome, for the past month, had been delicious. The annual descent of the Goths had not yet begun, and sunny leisure seemed to brood over the city.

Roderick had taken out a note-book and was roughly sketching a memento of the great Juno. Suddenly there was a noise on the gravel, and the young men, looking up, saw three persons advancing. One was a woman of middle age, with a rather grand air and a great many furbelows. She looked very hard at our friends as she passed, and glanced back over her shoulder, as if to hasten the step of a young girl who slowly followed her. She had such an expansive majesty of mien that Rowland supposed she must have some proprietary right in the villa and was not just then in a hospitable mood. Beside her walked a little elderly man, tightly buttoned in a shabby black coat, but with a flower in his lapet, and a pair of soiled light gloves. He was a grotesque-looking personage, and might have passed for a gentleman of the old school, reduced by adversity to playing cicerone to foreigners of distinction. He had a little black eye which glittered like a diamond and rolled about like a ball of quicksilver, and a white moustache, cut short and stiff, like a worn-out brush. He was smiling with extreme urbanity, and talking in a low, mellifluous voice to the lady, who evidently was not listening to him. At a considerable distance behind this couple strolled a young girl, apparently of about twenty. She was tall and slender, and dressed with extreme elegance; she led by a cord a large poodle of the most fantastic aspect. He was combed and decked like a ram for sacrifice; his trunk and haunches were of the most transparent pink, his fleecy head and shoulders as white as jeweler's cotton, and his tail and ears ornamented with long blue ribbons. He stepped along stiffly and solemnly beside his mistress, with an air of conscious elegance. There was something at first slightly ridiculous in the sight of a young lady gravely appended to an animal of these incongruous attributes, and Roderick, with his customary frankness, greeted the spectacle with a confident smile. The young girl perceived it and turned her face full upon him, with a gaze intended apparently to enforce greater deference. It was not deference, however, her face provoked, but startled, submissive admiration; Roderick's smile fell dead, and he sat eagerly staring. A pair of extraordinary dark blue eyes, a mass of dusky hair over a low forehead, a blooming oval of perfect purity, a flexible lip, just touched with disdain, the step and carriage of a tired princess—these were the general features of his vision. The young lady was walking slowly and letting her long dress rustle over the gravel; the young men had time to see her distinctly before she averted her face and went her way. She left a vague, sweet perfume behind her as she passed.

"Immortal powers!" cried Roderick, "what a vision! In the name of transcendent perfection, who is she?" He sprang up and stood looking after her until she rounded a turn in the avenue. "What a movement, what a manner, what a poise of the head! I wonder if she would sit to me."

"You had better go and ask her," said Rowland, laughing. "She is certainly most beautiful."

"Beautiful? She 's beauty itself—she 's a revelation. I don't believe she is living—she 's a phantasm, a vapor, an illusion!"

"The poodle," said Rowland, "is certainly alive."

"Nay, he too may be a grotesque phantom, like the black dog in Faust."

“I hope at least that the young lady has nothing in common with Mephistopheles. She looked dangerous.”

“If beauty is immoral, as people think at Northampton,” said Roderick, “she is the incarnation of evil. The mamma and the queer old gentleman, moreover, are a pledge of her reality. Who are they all?”

“The Prince and Princess Ludovisi and the principessina,” suggested Rowland.

“There are no such people,” said Roderick. “Besides, the little old man is not the papa.” Rowland smiled, wondering how he had ascertained these facts, and the young sculptor went on. “The old man is a Roman, a hanger-on of the mamma, a useful personage who now and then gets asked to dinner. The ladies are foreigners, from some Northern country; I won’t say which.”

“Perhaps from the State of Maine,” said Rowland.

“No, she ‘s not an American, I ‘ll lay a wager on that. She ‘s a daughter of this elder world. We shall see her again, I pray my stars; but if we don’t, I shall have done something I never expected to—I shall have had a glimpse of ideal beauty.” He sat down again and went on with his sketch of the Juno, scrawled away for ten minutes, and then handed the result in silence to Rowland. Rowland uttered an exclamation of surprise and applause. The drawing represented the Juno as to the position of the head, the brow, and the broad fillet across the hair; but the eyes, the mouth, the physiognomy were a vivid portrait of the young girl with the poodle. “I have been wanting a subject,” said Roderick: “there ‘s one made to my hand! And now for work!”

They saw no more of the young girl, though Roderick looked hopefully, for some days, into the carriages on the Pincian. She had evidently been but passing through Rome; Naples or Florence now happily possessed her, and she was guiding her fleecy companion through the Villa Reale or the Boboli Gardens with the same superb defiance of irony. Roderick went to work and spent a month shut up in his studio; he had an idea, and he was not to rest till he had embodied it. He had established himself in the basement of a huge, dusky, dilapidated old house, in that long, tortuous, and preeminently Roman street which leads from the Corso to the Bridge of St. Angelo. The black archway which admitted you might have served as the portal of the Augean stables, but you emerged presently upon a mouldy little court, of which the fourth side was formed by a narrow terrace, overhanging the Tiber. Here, along the parapet, were stationed half a dozen shapeless fragments of sculpture, with a couple of meagre orange-trees in terra-cotta tubs, and an oleander that never flowered. The unclean, historic river swept beneath; behind were dusky, reeking walls, spotted here and there with hanging rags and flower-pots in windows; opposite, at a distance, were the bare brown banks of the stream, the huge rotunda of St. Angelo, tipped with its seraphic statue, the dome of St. Peter’s, and the broad-topped pines of the Villa Doria. The place was crumbling and shabby and melancholy, but the river was delightful, the rent was a trifle, and everything was picturesque. Roderick was in the best humor with his quarters from the first, and was certain that the working mood there would be intenser in an hour than in twenty years of Northampton. His studio was a huge, empty room with a vaulted ceiling, covered with vague, dark traces of an old fresco, which Rowland, when he spent an hour with his friend, used to stare at vainly for some surviving coherence of floating draperies and clasping arms. Roderick had lodged himself economically in the same quarter. He occupied a fifth floor on the Ripetta, but he was only at home to sleep, for when he was not at work he was either lounging in Rowland’s more luxurious rooms or strolling through streets and churches and gardens.

Rowland had found a convenient corner in a stately old palace not far from the Fountain of Trevi, and made himself a home to which books and pictures and prints and odds and ends of curious furniture gave an air of leisurely permanence. He had the tastes of a collector; he spent half his afternoons ransacking the dusty magazines of the curiosity-mongers, and often made his way, in quest of a prize, into the heart of impecunious Roman households, which had been prevailed upon to listen—with closed doors and an impenetrably wary smile—to proposals for an hereditary

“antique.” In the evening, often, under the lamp, amid dropped curtains and the scattered gleam of firelight upon polished carvings and mellow paintings, the two friends sat with their heads together, criticising intaglios and etchings, water-color drawings and illuminated missals. Roderick’s quick appreciation of every form of artistic beauty reminded his companion of the flexible temperament of those Italian artists of the sixteenth century who were indifferently painters and sculptors, sonneteers and engravers. At times when he saw how the young sculptor’s day passed in a single sustained pulsation, while his own was broken into a dozen conscious devices for disposing of the hours, and intermingled with sighs, half suppressed, some of them, for conscience’ sake, over what he failed of in action and missed in possession—he felt a pang of something akin to envy. But Rowland had two substantial aids for giving patience the air of contentment: he was an inquisitive reader and a passionate rider. He plunged into bulky German octavos on Italian history, and he spent long afternoons in the saddle, ranging over the grassy desolation of the Campagna. As the season went on and the social groups began to constitute themselves, he found that he knew a great many people and that he had easy opportunity for knowing others. He enjoyed a quiet corner of a drawing-room beside an agreeable woman, and although the machinery of what calls itself society seemed to him to have many superfluous wheels, he accepted invitations and made visits punctiliously, from the conviction that the only way not to be overcome by the ridiculous side of most of such observances is to take them with exaggerated gravity. He introduced Roderick right and left, and suffered him to make his way himself—an enterprise for which Roderick very soon displayed an all-sufficient capacity. Wherever he went he made, not exactly what is called a favorable impression, but what, from a practical point of view, is better—a puzzling one. He took to evening parties as a duck to water, and before the winter was half over was the most freely and frequently discussed young man in the heterogeneous foreign colony. Rowland’s theory of his own duty was to let him run his course and play his cards, only holding himself ready to point out shoals and pitfalls, and administer a friendly propulsion through tight places. Roderick’s manners on the precincts of the Pincian were quite the same as his manners on Cecilia’s veranda: that is, they were no manners at all. But it remained as true as before that it would have been impossible, on the whole, to violate ceremony with less of lasting offense. He interrupted, he contradicted, he spoke to people he had never seen, and left his social creditors without the smallest conversational interest on their loans; he lounged and yawned, he talked loud when he should have talked low, and low when he should have talked loud. Many people, in consequence, thought him insufferably conceited, and declared that he ought to wait till he had something to show for his powers, before he assumed the airs of a spoiled celebrity. But to Rowland and to most friendly observers this judgment was quite beside the mark, and the young man’s undiluted naturalness was its own justification. He was impulsive, spontaneous, sincere; there were so many people at dinner-tables and in studios who were not, that it seemed worth while to allow this rare specimen all possible freedom of action. If Roderick took the words out of your mouth when you were just prepared to deliver them with the most effective accent, he did it with a perfect good conscience and with no pretension of a better right to being heard, but simply because he was full to overflowing of his own momentary thought and it sprang from his lips without asking leave. There were persons who waited on your periods much more deferentially, who were a hundred times more capable than Roderick of a reflective impertinence. Roderick received from various sources, chiefly feminine, enough finely-adjusted advice to have established him in life as an embodiment of the proprieties, and he received it, as he afterwards listened to criticisms on his statues, with unfaltering candor and good-humor. Here and there, doubtless, as he went, he took in a reef in his sail; but he was too adventurous a spirit to be successfully tamed, and he remained at most points the florid, rather strident young Virginian whose serene inflexibility had been the despair of Mr. Striker. All this was what friendly commentators (still chiefly feminine) alluded to when they spoke of his delightful freshness, and critics of harsher sensibilities (of the other sex) when they denounced his damned impertinence. His appearance enforced these impressions—his handsome face, his radiant, unaverted

eyes, his childish, unmodulated voice. Afterwards, when those who loved him were in tears, there was something in all this unspotted comeliness that seemed to lend a mockery to the causes of their sorrow.

Certainly, among the young men of genius who, for so many ages, have gone up to Rome to test their powers, none ever made a fairer beginning than Roderick. He rode his two horses at once with extraordinary good fortune; he established the happiest *modus vivendi* betwixt work and play. He wrestled all day with a mountain of clay in his studio, and chattered half the night away in Roman drawing-rooms. It all seemed part of a kind of divine facility. He was passionately interested, he was feeling his powers; now that they had thoroughly kindled in the glowing aesthetic atmosphere of Rome, the ardent young fellow should be pardoned for believing that he never was to see the end of them. He enjoyed immeasurably, after the chronic obstruction of home, the downright act of production. He kept models in his studio till they dropped with fatigue; he drew, on other days, at the Capitol and the Vatican, till his own head swam with his eagerness, and his limbs stiffened with the cold. He had promptly set up a life-sized figure which he called an "Adam," and was pushing it rapidly toward completion. There were naturally a great many wiseheads who smiled at his precipitancy, and cited him as one more example of Yankee crudity, a capital recruit to the great army of those who wish to dance before they can walk. They were right, but Roderick was right too, for the success of his statue was not to have been foreseen; it partook, really, of the miraculous. He never surpassed it afterwards, and a good judge here and there has been known to pronounce it the finest piece of sculpture of our modern era. To Rowland it seemed to justify superbly his highest hopes of his friend, and he said to himself that if he had invested his happiness in fostering a genius, he ought now to be in possession of a boundless complacency. There was something especially confident and masterly in the artist's negligence of all such small picturesque accessories as might serve to label his figure to a vulgar apprehension. If it represented the father of the human race and the primal embodiment of human sensation, it did so in virtue of its look of balanced physical perfection, and deeply, eagerly sentient vitality. Rowland, in fraternal zeal, traveled up to Carrara and selected at the quarries the most magnificent block of marble he could find, and when it came down to Rome, the two young men had a "celebration." They drove out to Albano, breakfasted boisterously (in their respective measure) at the inn, and lounged away the day in the sun on the top of Monte Cavo. Roderick's head was full of ideas for other works, which he described with infinite spirit and eloquence, as vividly as if they were ranged on their pedestals before him. He had an indefatigable fancy; things he saw in the streets, in the country, things he heard and read, effects he saw just missed or half-expressed in the works of others, acted upon his mind as a kind of challenge, and he was terribly restless until, in some form or other, he had taken up the glove and set his lance in rest.

The Adam was put into marble, and all the world came to see it. Of the criticisms passed upon it this history undertakes to offer no record; over many of them the two young men had a daily laugh for a month, and certain of the formulas of the connoisseurs, restrictive or indulgent, furnished Roderick with a permanent supply of humorous catch-words. But people enough spoke flattering good-sense to make Roderick feel as if he were already half famous. The statue passed formally into Rowland's possession, and was paid for as if an illustrious name had been chiseled on the pedestal. Poor Roderick owed every franc of the money. It was not for this, however, but because he was so gloriously in the mood, that, denying himself all breathing-time, on the same day he had given the last touch to the Adam, he began to shape the rough contour of an Eve. This went forward with equal rapidity and success. Roderick lost his temper, time and again, with his models, who offered but a gross, degenerate image of his splendid ideal; but his ideal, as he assured Rowland, became gradually such a fixed, vivid presence, that he had only to shut his eyes to behold a creature far more to his purpose than the poor girl who stood posturing at forty sous an hour. The Eve was finished in a month, and the feat was extraordinary, as well as the statue, which represented an admirably beautiful woman. When the spring began to muffle the rugged old city with its clambering festoons,

it seemed to him that he had done a handsome winter's work and had fairly earned a holiday. He took a liberal one, and lounged away the lovely Roman May, doing nothing. He looked very contented; with himself, perhaps, at times, a trifle too obviously. But who could have said without good reason? He was "flushed with triumph;" this classic phrase portrayed him, to Rowland's sense. He would lose himself in long reveries, and emerge from them with a quickened smile and a heightened color. Rowland grudged him none of his smiles, and took an extreme satisfaction in his two statues. He had the Adam and the Eve transported to his own apartment, and one warm evening in May he gave a little dinner in honor of the artist. It was small, but Rowland had meant it should be very agreeably composed. He thought over his friends and chose four. They were all persons with whom he lived in a certain intimacy.

One of them was an American sculptor of French extraction, or remotely, perhaps, of Italian, for he rejoiced in the somewhat fervid name of Gloriani. He was a man of forty, he had been living for years in Paris and in Rome, and he now drove a very pretty trade in sculpture of the ornamental and fantastic sort. In his youth he had had money; but he had spent it recklessly, much of it scandalously, and at twenty-six had found himself obliged to make capital of his talent. This was quite inimitable, and fifteen years of indefatigable exercise had brought it to perfection. Rowland admitted its power, though it gave him very little pleasure; what he relished in the man was the extraordinary vivacity and frankness, not to call it the impudence, of his ideas. He had a definite, practical scheme of art, and he knew at least what he meant. In this sense he was solid and complete. There were so many of the aesthetic fraternity who were floundering in unknown seas, without a notion of which way their noses were turned, that Gloriani, conscious and compact, unlimitedly intelligent and consummately clever, dogmatic only as to his own duties, and at once gracefully deferential and profoundly indifferent to those of others, had for Rowland a certain intellectual refreshment quite independent of the character of his works. These were considered by most people to belong to a very corrupt, and by many to a positively indecent school. Others thought them tremendously knowing, and paid enormous prices for them; and indeed, to be able to point to one of Gloriani's figures in a shady corner of your library was tolerable proof that you were not a fool. Corrupt things they certainly were; in the line of sculpture they were quite the latest fruit of time. It was the artist's opinion that there is no essential difference between beauty and ugliness; that they overlap and intermingle in a quite inextricable manner; that there is no saying where one begins and the other ends; that hideousness grimaces at you suddenly from out of the very bosom of loveliness, and beauty blooms before your eyes in the lap of vileness; that it is a waste of wit to nurse metaphysical distinctions, and a sadly meagre entertainment to caress imaginary lines; that the thing to aim at is the expressive, and the way to reach it is by ingenuity; that for this purpose everything may serve, and that a consummate work is a sort of hotch-potch of the pure and the impure, the graceful and the grotesque. Its prime duty is to amuse, to puzzle, to fascinate, to savor of a complex imagination. Gloriani's statues were florid and meretricious; they looked like magnified goldsmith's work. They were extremely elegant, but they had no charm for Rowland. He never bought one, but Gloriani was such an honest fellow, and withal was so deluged with orders, that this made no difference in their friendship. The artist might have passed for a Frenchman. He was a great talker, and a very picturesque one; he was almost bald; he had a small, bright eye, a broken nose, and a moustache with waxed ends. When sometimes he received you at his lodging, he introduced you to a lady with a plain face whom he called Madame Gloriani—which she was not.

Rowland's second guest was also an artist, but of a very different type. His friends called him Sam Singleton; he was an American, and he had been in Rome a couple of years. He painted small landscapes, chiefly in water-colors: Rowland had seen one of them in a shop window, had liked it extremely, and, ascertaining his address, had gone to see him and found him established in a very humble studio near the Piazza Barberini, where, apparently, fame and fortune had not yet found him out. Rowland took a fancy to him and bought several of his pictures; Singleton made few speeches, but was grateful. Rowland heard afterwards that when he first came to Rome he painted worthless daubs

and gave no promise of talent. Improvement had come, however, hand in hand with patient industry, and his talent, though of a slender and delicate order, was now incontestable. It was as yet but scantily recognized, and he had hard work to live. Rowland hung his little water-colors on the parlor wall, and found that, as he lived with them, he grew very fond of them. Singleton was a diminutive, dwarfish personage; he looked like a precocious child. He had a high, protuberant forehead, a transparent brown eye, a perpetual smile, an extraordinary expression of modesty and patience. He listened much more willingly than he talked, with a little fixed, grateful grin; he blushed when he spoke, and always offered his ideas in a sidelong fashion, as if the presumption were against them. His modesty set them off, and they were eminently to the point. He was so perfect an example of the little noiseless, laborious artist whom chance, in the person of a moneyed patron, has never taken by the hand, that Rowland would have liked to befriend him by stealth. Singleton had expressed a fervent admiration for Roderick's productions, but had not yet met the young master. Roderick was lounging against the chimney-piece when he came in, and Rowland presently introduced him. The little water-colorist stood with folded hands, blushing, smiling, and looking up at him as if Roderick were himself a statue on a pedestal. Singleton began to murmur something about his pleasure, his admiration; the desire to make his compliment smoothly gave him a kind of grotesque formalism. Roderick looked down at him surprised, and suddenly burst into a laugh. Singleton paused a moment and then, with an intenser smile, went on: "Well, sir, your statues are beautiful, all the same!"

Rowland's two other guests were ladies, and one of them, Miss Blanchard, belonged also to the artistic fraternity. She was an American, she was young, she was pretty, and she had made her way to Rome alone and unaided. She lived alone, or with no other duenna than a bushy-browed old serving-woman, though indeed she had a friendly neighbor in the person of a certain Madame Grandoni, who in various social emergencies lent her a protecting wing, and had come with her to Rowland's dinner. Miss Blanchard had a little money, but she was not above selling her pictures. These represented generally a bunch of dew-sprinkled roses, with the dew-drops very highly finished, or else a wayside shrine, and a peasant woman, with her back turned, kneeling before it. She did backs very well, but she was a little weak in faces. Flowers, however, were her speciality, and though her touch was a little old-fashioned and finical, she painted them with remarkable skill. Her pictures were chiefly bought by the English. Rowland had made her acquaintance early in the winter, and as she kept a saddle horse and rode a great deal, he had asked permission to be her cavalier. In this way they had become almost intimate. Miss Blanchard's name was Augusta; she was slender, pale, and elegant looking; she had a very pretty head and brilliant auburn hair, which she braided with classical simplicity. She talked in a sweet, soft voice, used language at times a trifle superfine, and made literary allusions. These had often a patriotic strain, and Rowland had more than once been irritated by her quotations from Mrs. Sigourney in the cork-woods of Monte Mario, and from Mr. Willis among the ruins of Veii. Rowland was of a dozen different minds about her, and was half surprised, at times, to find himself treating it as a matter of serious moment whether he liked her or not. He admired her, and indeed there was something admirable in her combination of beauty and talent, of isolation and tranquil self-support. He used sometimes to go into the little, high-niched, ordinary room which served her as a studio, and find her working at a panel six inches square, at an open casement, profiled against the deep blue Roman sky. She received him with a meek-eyed dignity that made her seem like a painted saint on a church window, receiving the daylight in all her being. The breath of reproach passed her by with folded wings. And yet Rowland wondered why he did not like her better. If he failed, the reason was not far to seek. There was another woman whom he liked better, an image in his heart which refused to yield precedence.

On that evening to which allusion has been made, when Rowland was left alone between the starlight and the waves with the sudden knowledge that Mary Garland was to become another man's wife, he had made, after a while, the simple resolution to forget her. And every day since, like a famous philosopher who wished to abbreviate his mourning for a faithful servant, he had said to himself in

substance—“Remember to forget Mary Garland.” Sometimes it seemed as if he were succeeding; then, suddenly, when he was least expecting it, he would find her name, inaudibly, on his lips, and seem to see her eyes meeting his eyes. All this made him uncomfortable, and seemed to portend a possible discord. Discord was not to his taste; he shrank from imperious passions, and the idea of finding himself jealous of an unsuspecting friend was absolutely repulsive. More than ever, then, the path of duty was to forget Mary Garland, and he cultivated oblivion, as we may say, in the person of Miss Blanchard. Her fine temper, he said to himself, was a trifle cold and conscious, her purity prudish, perhaps, her culture pedantic. But since he was obliged to give up hopes of Mary Garland, Providence owed him a compensation, and he had fits of angry sadness in which it seemed to him that to attest his right to sentimental satisfaction he would be capable of falling in love with a woman he absolutely detested, if she were the best that came in his way. And what was the use, after all, of bothering about a possible which was only, perhaps, a dream? Even if Mary Garland had been free, what right had he to assume that he would have pleased her? The actual was good enough. Miss Blanchard had beautiful hair, and if she was a trifle old-maidish, there is nothing like matrimony for curing old-maidishness.

Madame Grandoni, who had formed with the companion of Rowland's rides an alliance which might have been called defensive on the part of the former and attractive on that of Miss Blanchard, was an excessively ugly old lady, highly esteemed in Roman society for her homely benevolence and her shrewd and humorous good sense. She had been the widow of a German archaeologist, who had come to Rome in the early ages as an *attache* of the Prussian legation on the Capitoline. Her good sense had been wanting on but a single occasion, that of her second marriage. This occasion was certainly a momentous one, but these, by common consent, are not test cases. A couple of years after her first husband's death, she had accepted the hand and the name of a Neapolitan music-master, ten years younger than herself, and with no fortune but his fiddle-bow. The marriage was most unhappy, and the Maestro Grandoni was suspected of using the fiddle-bow as an instrument of conjugal correction. He had finally run off with a *prima donna assoluta*, who, it was to be hoped, had given him a taste of the quality implied in her title. He was believed to be living still, but he had shrunk to a small black spot in Madame Grandoni's life, and for ten years she had not mentioned his name. She wore a light flaxen wig, which was never very artfully adjusted, but this mattered little, as she made no secret of it. She used to say, “I was not always so ugly as this; as a young girl I had beautiful golden hair, very much the color of my wig.” She had worn from time immemorial an old blue satin dress, and a white crape shawl embroidered in colors; her appearance was ridiculous, but she had an interminable Teutonic pedigree, and her manners, in every presence, were easy and jovial, as became a lady whose ancestor had been cup-bearer to Frederick Barbarossa. Thirty years' observation of Roman society had sharpened her wits and given her an inexhaustible store of anecdotes, but she had beneath her crumpled bodice a deep-welling fund of Teutonic sentiment, which she communicated only to the objects of her particular favor. Rowland had a great regard for her, and she repaid it by wishing him to get married. She never saw him without whispering to him that Augusta Blanchard was just the girl.

It seemed to Rowland a sort of foreshadowing of matrimony to see Miss Blanchard standing gracefully on his hearth-rug and blooming behind the central bouquet at his circular dinner-table. The dinner was very prosperous and Roderick amply filled his position as hero of the feast. He had always an air of buoyant enjoyment in his work, but on this occasion he manifested a good deal of harmless pleasure in his glory. He drank freely and talked bravely; he leaned back in his chair with his hands in his pockets, and flung open the gates of his eloquence. Singleton sat gazing and listening open-mouthed, as if Apollo in person were talking. Gloriani showed a twinkle in his eye and an evident disposition to draw Roderick out. Rowland was rather regretful, for he knew that theory was not his friend's strong point, and that it was never fair to take his measure from his talk.

“As you have begun with Adam and Eve,” said Gloriani, “I suppose you are going straight through the Bible.” He was one of the persons who thought Roderick delightfully fresh.

“I may make a David,” said Roderick, “but I shall not try any more of the Old Testament people. I don’t like the Jews; I don’t like pendulous noses. David, the boy David, is rather an exception; you can think of him and treat him as a young Greek. Standing forth there on the plain of battle between the contending armies, rushing forward to let fly his stone, he looks like a beautiful runner at the Olympic games. After that I shall skip to the New Testament. I mean to make a Christ.”

“You ‘ll put nothing of the Olympic games into him, I hope,” said Gloriani.

“Oh, I shall make him very different from the Christ of tradition; more—more”—and Roderick paused a moment to think. This was the first that Rowland had heard of his Christ.

“More rationalistic, I suppose,” suggested Miss Blanchard.

“More idealistic!” cried Roderick. “The perfection of form, you know, to symbolize the perfection of spirit.”

“For a companion piece,” said Miss Blanchard, “you ought to make a Judas.”

“Never! I mean never to make anything ugly. The Greeks never made anything ugly, and I ‘m a Hellenist; I ‘m not a Hebraist! I have been thinking lately of making a Cain, but I should never dream of making him ugly. He should be a very handsome fellow, and he should lift up the murderous club with the beautiful movement of the fighters in the Greek friezes who are chopping at their enemies.”

“There ‘s no use trying to be a Greek,” said Gloriani. “If Phidias were to come back, he would recommend you to give it up. I am half Italian and half French, and, as a whole, a Yankee. What sort of a Greek should I make? I think the Judas is a capital idea for a statue. Much obliged to you, madame, for the suggestion. What an insidious little scoundrel one might make of him, sitting there nursing his money-bag and his treachery! There can be a great deal of expression in a pendulous nose, my dear sir, especially when it is cast in green bronze.”

“Very likely,” said Roderick. “But it is not the sort of expression I care for. I care only for perfect beauty. There it is, if you want to know it! That ‘s as good a profession of faith as another. In future, so far as my things are not positively beautiful, you may set them down as failures. For me, it ‘s either that or nothing. It ‘s against the taste of the day, I know; we have really lost the faculty to understand beauty in the large, ideal way. We stand like a race with shrunken muscles, staring helplessly at the weights our forefathers easily lifted. But I don’t hesitate to proclaim it—I mean to lift them again! I mean to go in for big things; that ‘s my notion of my art. I mean to do things that will be simple and vast and infinite. You ‘ll see if they won’t be infinite! Excuse me if I brag a little; all those Italian fellows in the Renaissance used to brag. There was a sensation once common, I am sure, in the human breast—a kind of religious awe in the presence of a marble image newly created and expressing the human type in superhuman purity. When Phidias and Praxiteles had their statues of goddesses unveiled in the temples of the AEgean, don’t you suppose there was a passionate beating of hearts, a thrill of mysterious terror? I mean to bring it back; I mean to thrill the world again! I mean to produce a Juno that will make you tremble, a Venus that will make you swoon!”

“So that when we come and see you,” said Madame Grandoni, “we must be sure and bring our smelling-bottles. And pray have a few soft sofas conveniently placed.”

“Phidias and Praxiteles,” Miss Blanchard remarked, “had the advantage of believing in their goddesses. I insist on believing, for myself, that the pagan mythology is not a fiction, and that Venus and Juno and Apollo and Mercury used to come down in a cloud into this very city of Rome where we sit talking nineteenth century English.”

“Nineteenth century nonsense, my dear!” cried Madame Grandoni. “Mr. Hudson may be a new Phidias, but Venus and Juno—that ‘s you and I—arrived to-day in a very dirty cab; and were cheated by the driver, too.”

“But, my dear fellow,” objected Gloriani, “you don’t mean to say you are going to make over in cold blood those poor old exploded Apollos and Hebes.”

“It won’t matter what you call them,” said Roderick. “They shall be simply divine forms. They shall be Beauty; they shall be Wisdom; they shall be Power; they shall be Genius; they shall be Daring. That ‘s all the Greek divinities were.”

“That ‘s rather abstract, you know,” said Miss Blanchard.

“My dear fellow,” cried Gloriani, “you ‘re delightfully young.”

“I hope you ‘ll not grow any older,” said Singleton, with a flush of sympathy across his large white forehead. “You can do it if you try.”

“Then there are all the Forces and Mysteries and Elements of Nature,” Roderick went on. “I mean to do the Morning; I mean to do the Night! I mean to do the Ocean and the Mountains; the Moon and the West Wind. I mean to make a magnificent statue of America!”

“America—the Mountains—the Moon!” said Gloriani. “You ‘ll find it rather hard, I ‘m afraid, to compress such subjects into classic forms.”

“Oh, there ‘s a way,” cried Roderick, “and I shall think it out. My figures shall make no contortions, but they shall mean a tremendous deal.”

“I ‘m sure there are contortions enough in Michael Angelo,” said Madame Grandoni. “Perhaps you don’t approve of him.”

“Oh, Michael Angelo was not me!” said Roderick, with sublimity. There was a great laugh; but after all, Roderick had done some fine things.

Rowland had bidden one of the servants bring him a small portfolio of prints, and had taken out a photograph of Roderick’s little statue of the youth drinking. It pleased him to see his friend sitting there in radiant ardor, defending idealism against so knowing an apostle of corruption as Gloriani, and he wished to help the elder artist to be confuted. He silently handed him the photograph.

“Bless me!” cried Gloriani, “did he do this?”

“Ages ago,” said Roderick.

Gloriani looked at the photograph a long time, with evident admiration.

“It ‘s deucedly pretty,” he said at last. “But, my dear young friend, you can’t keep this up.”

“I shall do better,” said Roderick.

“You will do worse! You will become weak. You will have to take to violence, to contortions, to romanticism, in self-defense. This sort of thing is like a man trying to lift himself up by the seat of his trousers. He may stand on tiptoe, but he can’t do more. Here you stand on tiptoe, very gracefully, I admit; but you can’t fly; there ‘s no use trying.”

“My ‘America’ shall answer you!” said Roderick, shaking toward him a tall glass of champagne and drinking it down.

Singleton had taken the photograph and was poring over it with a little murmur of delight.

“Was this done in America?” he asked.

“In a square white wooden house at Northampton, Massachusetts,” Roderick answered.

“Dear old white wooden houses!” said Miss Blanchard.

“If you could do as well as this there,” said Singleton, blushing and smiling, “one might say that really you had only to lose by coming to Rome.”

“Mallet is to blame for that,” said Roderick. “But I am willing to risk the loss.”

The photograph had been passed to Madame Grandoni. “It reminds me,” she said, “of the things a young man used to do whom I knew years ago, when I first came to Rome. He was a German, a pupil of Overbeck and a votary of spiritual art. He used to wear a black velvet tunic and a very low shirt collar; he had a neck like a sickly crane, and let his hair grow down to his shoulders. His name was Herr Schafgans. He never painted anything so profane as a man taking a drink, but his figures were all of the simple and slender and angular pattern, and nothing if not innocent—like this one of yours. He would not have agreed with Gloriani any more than you. He used to come and see me very often, and in those days I thought his tunic and his long neck infallible symptoms of genius. His talk was all of gilded aureoles and beatific visions; he lived on weak wine and biscuits, and wore a lock

of Saint Somebody's hair in a little bag round his neck. If he was not a Beato Angelico, it was not his own fault. I hope with all my heart that Mr. Hudson will do the fine things he talks about, but he must bear in mind the history of dear Mr. Schafgans as a warning against high-flown pretensions. One fine day this poor young man fell in love with a Roman model, though she had never sat to him, I believe, for she was a buxom, bold-faced, high-colored creature, and he painted none but pale, sickly women. He offered to marry her, and she looked at him from head to foot, gave a shrug, and consented. But he was ashamed to set up his menage in Rome. They went to Naples, and there, a couple of years afterwards, I saw him. The poor fellow was ruined. His wife used to beat him, and he had taken to drinking. He wore a ragged black coat, and he had a blotchy, red face. Madame had turned washerwoman and used to make him go and fetch the dirty linen. His talent had gone heaven knows where! He was getting his living by painting views of Vesuvius in eruption on the little boxes they sell at Sorrento."

"Moral: don't fall in love with a buxom Roman model," said Roderick. "I 'm much obliged to you for your story, but I don't mean to fall in love with any one."

Gloriani had possessed himself of the photograph again, and was looking at it curiously. "It 's a happy bit of youth," he said. "But you can't keep it up—you can't keep it up!"

The two sculptors pursued their discussion after dinner, in the drawing-room. Rowland left them to have it out in a corner, where Roderick's Eve stood over them in the shaded lamplight, in vague white beauty, like the guardian angel of the young idealist. Singleton was listening to Madame Grandoni, and Rowland took his place on the sofa, near Miss Blanchard. They had a good deal of familiar, desultory talk. Every now and then Madame Grandoni looked round at them. Miss Blanchard at last asked Rowland certain questions about Roderick: who he was, where he came from, whether it was true, as she had heard, that Rowland had discovered him and brought him out at his own expense. Rowland answered her questions; to the last he gave a vague affirmative. Finally, after a pause, looking at him, "You 're very generous," Miss Blanchard said. The declaration was made with a certain richness of tone, but it brought to Rowland's sense neither delight nor confusion. He had heard the words before; he suddenly remembered the grave sincerity with which Miss Garland had uttered them as he strolled with her in the woods the day of Roderick's picnic. They had pleased him then; now he asked Miss Blanchard whether she would have some tea.

When the two ladies withdrew, he attended them to their carriage. Coming back to the drawing-room, he paused outside the open door; he was struck by the group formed by the three men. They were standing before Roderick's statue of Eve, and the young sculptor had lifted up the lamp and was showing different parts of it to his companions. He was talking ardently, and the lamplight covered his head and face. Rowland stood looking on, for the group struck him with its picturesque symbolism. Roderick, bearing the lamp and glowing in its radiant circle, seemed the beautiful image of a genius which combined sincerity with power. Gloriani, with his head on one side, pulling his long moustache and looking keenly from half-closed eyes at the lighted marble, represented art with a worldly motive, skill unleavened by faith, the mere base maximum of cleverness. Poor little Singleton, on the other side, with his hands behind him, his head thrown back, and his eyes following devoutly the course of Roderick's elucidation, might pass for an embodiment of aspiring candor, with feeble wings to rise on. In all this, Roderick's was certainly the beau role.

Gloriani turned to Rowland as he came up, and pointed back with his thumb to the statue, with a smile half sardonic, half good-natured. "A pretty thing—a devilish pretty thing," he said. "It 's as fresh as the foam in the milk-pail. He can do it once, he can do it twice, he can do it at a stretch half a dozen times. But—but—"

He was returning to his former refrain, but Rowland intercepted him. "Oh, he will keep it up," he said, smiling, "I will answer for him."

Gloriani was not encouraging, but Roderick had listened smiling. He was floating unperturbed on the tide of his deep self-confidence. Now, suddenly, however, he turned with a flash of irritation in his eye, and demanded in a ringing voice, "In a word, then, you prophesy that I am to fail?"

Gloriani answered imperturbably, patting him kindly on the shoulder. "My dear fellow, passion burns out, inspiration runs to seed. Some fine day every artist finds himself sitting face to face with his lump of clay, with his empty canvas, with his sheet of blank paper, waiting in vain for the revelation to be made, for the Muse to descend. He must learn to do without the Muse! When the fickle jade forgets the way to your studio, don't waste any time in tearing your hair and meditating on suicide. Come round and see me, and I will show you how to console yourself."

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