

# ELEANOR \*

BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

## CHAPTER IX.

"MISS FOSTER is not getting up? How is she?"

"I believe Aunt Pattie only persuaded her to rest till after breakfast, and that was hard work. Aunt Pattie thought her rather shaken still."

The speakers were Manisty and Mrs. Burgoyne. Eleanor was sitting in the deep shade of the avenue that ran along the outer edge of the garden. Through the gnarled trunks to her right shone the blazing stretches of the Campagna, melting into the hot shimmer of the Mediterranean. A new volume of French memoirs, whereof not a page had yet been cut, was lying upon her knee.

Manisty, who had come out to consult with her, leant against the tree beside her. Presently he broke out impetuously:

"Eleanor, we must protect that girl! You know what I mean? You'll help me?"

"What are you afraid of?"

"Good heavens! I hardly know. But we must keep Alice away from Miss Foster. She mustn't walk with her, or sit with her, or be allowed to worry her in any way. I should be beside myself with alarm if Alice were to take a fancy to her."

Eleanor hesitated a moment. The slightest flush rose to her cheek, unnoticed in the shadow of her hat.

"You know, if you are in any real anxiety, Miss Foster could go to Florence. She told me yesterday that the Porters have friends there whom she could join."

Manisty fidgeted.

"Well, I hardly think that's necessary. It's a great pity she should miss Vallombrosa. I hoped I might settle her and Aunt Pattie there by about the middle of June."

Eleanor made so sudden a movement that her book fell to the ground.

"You are going to Vallombrosa? I thought you were due at home the beginning of June?"

"That was when I thought the book was coming out before the end of the month. But now—"

"Now that it isn't coming out at all, you feel there's no hurry?"

Manisty looked annoyed.

"I don't think that's a fair shot. Of course the book's coming out! But if it isn't June, it must be October. So there's no hurry."

The little cold laugh with which Eleanor had spoken her last words subsided. But she gave him no sign of assent. He pulled a stalk of grass, and nibbled at it uncomfortably.

"You think I'm a person easily discouraged?" he said presently.

"You take advice so oddly," she said, smiling; "sometimes so ill, sometimes so desperately well."

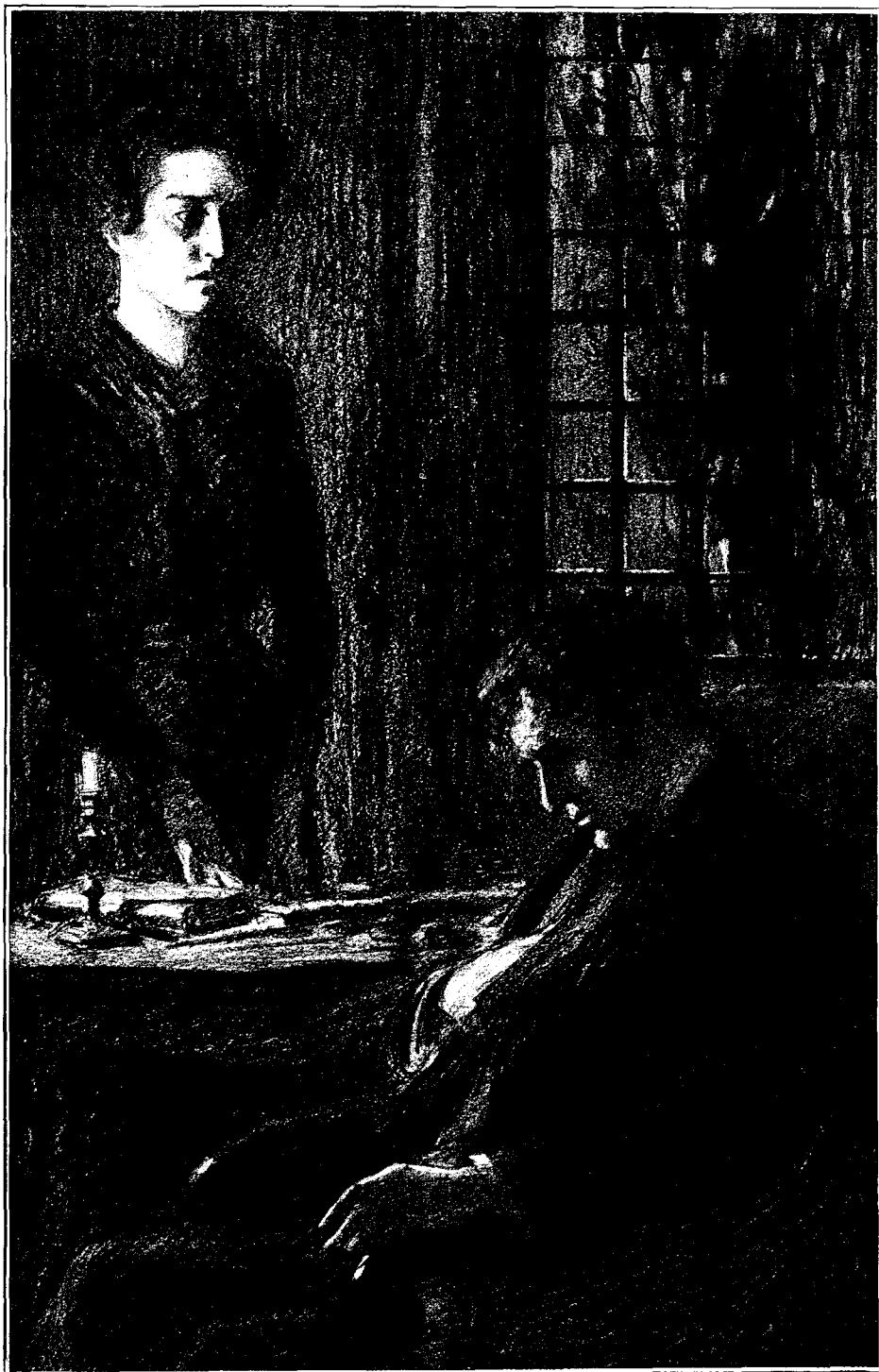
"I can't help it. I am made like that. When a man begins to criticise my work, I first hate him, then I'm all of his opinion—only more so."

"I know," said Eleanor, impatiently.

"It's this dreadful modern way—the fatal power we all have of seeing the other side. But an author is no good till he has thrown his critics out of window."

"Poor Neal!" said Manisty, with his broad sudden smile; "he would fall hard. However, to return to Miss Foster. There's no need to drive her away if we look after her. You'll help us, won't you, Eleanor?"

He sat down on a stone bench beside her. The momentary cloud had cleared away. He was his most charming, most handsome self. A shiver ran through Eleanor. Her thought flew to yesterday—compared the kind radiance of the face beside her, its look of brotherly confidence and appeal, with the look of yesterday, the hard evasiveness with which he had met all her poor woman's attempts to renew the old intimacy, re-knit the old bond. She thought of the solitary sleepless misery of the night she had just passed through. And here they were sitting in cousinly talk, as though nothing else were between them but this



MANISTY AND HIS SISTER.

polite anxiety for Miss Foster's peace of mind. What was behind that apparently frank brow, those sparkling gray-blue eyes? Manisty could always be a mystery when he chose, even to those who knew him best.

She drew a long inward breath, feeling the old inexorable compulsion that lies upon the decent woman who can only play the game as the man chooses to set it.

"I don't know what I can do," she said, slowly. "You think Alice is no better?"

Manisty shook his head. He looked at her sharply and doubtfully, as though measuring her, and then said, lowering his voice:

"I believe—I know I can trust you with this: I have some reason to suppose that there was an attempt at suicide at Venice. Her maid prevented it, and gave me the hint. I am in communication with the maid, though Alice has no idea of it."

"Ought she to come here at all?" said Eleanor, after a pause.

"I have thought of that—of meeting all the trains and turning her back. But you know her obstinacy. As long as she is in Rome and we here, we can't protect ourselves and the villa. There are a thousand ways of invading us. Better let her come, find out what she wants, pacify her if possible, and send her away. I am not afraid for ourselves, you included, Eleanor. She would do us no harm. A short annoyance, and it would be over. But Miss Foster is the weak point."

Eleanor looked at him inquiringly.

"It is one of the strongest signs of her unsound state," said Manisty, frowning, "the wild fancies that she takes for girls much younger than herself. There have been all sorts of difficulties in hotels. She will be absolutely silent with older people—or with you and me, for instance—but if she can captivate any quite young creature she will pour herself out to her, follow her, write to her, tease her, till she gets the pity and sympathy she craves. Poor, poor Alice!"

Manisty's voice had become almost a groan. His look betrayed a true and manly feeling.

"One must always remember," he resumed, "that she has still the power to attract a stranger. Her mind is in ruins,

but they are the ruins of what was once fine and noble. But it is all so wild and strange and desperate. A girl is first fascinated, and then terrified. She begins by listening and pitying. Then Alice pursues her, swears her to secrecy, talks to her of enemies and persecutors, of persons who wish her death, who open her letters and dog her footsteps, till the girl can't sleep at nights, and her own nerve begins to fail her. There was a case of this at Florence last year. Dalgetty—that's the maid—had to carry Alice off by main force. The parents of the girl threatened to set the doctors in motion, to get Alice sent to an asylum."

"But surely, surely," cried Mrs. Burgoyne, "that would be the right course!"

Manisty shook his head.

"Impossible!" he said, with energy. "Don't imagine that my lawyers and I haven't looked into everything. Unless the disease has made much progress since I last saw her, Alice will always baffle any attempts to put her in restraint. She is queer—eccentric—melancholy; she envelops the people she victimizes with a kind of moral poison; but you can't *prove*—so far, at least—that she is dangerous to herself or others. The evidence always falls short." He paused; then added, with cautious emphasis: "I don't speak without book. It has been tried."

"But the attempt at Venice?"

"No good. The maid's letter convinced me of two things—first, that she had attempted her life, and next, that there is no proof of it."

Eleanor bent forward.

"And the suitor—the man?" she said, lowering her voice.

"Ah!" said Manisty, "Aunt Pattie told you that? Oh! it goes on. I believe there have been two interviews lately. The first at Venice—probably connected with the attempt we know of. The second some weeks ago at Padua. The man by all accounts is a reputable person, though no doubt not insensible to the fact that Alice has some money. You know who he is?—a French artist she came across in Venice. He is melancholy and lonely, like herself. I believe he is genuinely attached to her. But after the last scene at Padua she told Dalgetty that she would never make him miserable by marrying him."

"What do you suppose she is coming here for?"



MANISTY AND LUCY FOSTER.

"Very likely to get me to do something for this man. She won't be his wife, but she likes to be his Providence. I shall promise anything, in return for her going quickly back to Venice—or Switzerland—where she often spends the summer. So long as she and Miss Foster are under one roof, I shall not have a moment free from anxiety. She passes very easily from a mad liking to a mad hate."

Eleanor sank back in her chair. She was silent, but her eye betrayed the bitter animation of the thoughts passing behind them—thoughts evoked not so much by what Manisty had said as by what he had *not* said. All alarm, all consideration to be concentrated on one point!—nothing, and no one else, to matter!

But again she fought down the rising agony, refused to be mastered by it, or to believe her own terrors. Another wave of feeling rose. It was so natural to her to love and help him!

"Tell me what you suggest. Of course we must all look after that child."

He brought his head nearer to hers, his brilliant eyes bent upon her intently.

"Never let her be alone with Miss Foster! Watch her. If you see any sign of persecution—if you can't check it—let me know at once. I shall keep Alice in play, of course. One day we can send Miss Foster into Rome—perhaps two. Ah! hush!—here she comes!"

Eleanor looked round. Lucy had just appeared in the cool darkness of the avenue. She walked slowly and with a languid grace, trailing her white skirts. The shy rusticity, the frank robustness of her earlier aspect were now either gone or temporarily merged in something more exquisite and more appealing. Her youth, too, had never been so apparent. She had been too strong, too self-reliant. The touch of physical delicacy seemed to have brought back the child.

Then, turning back to her companion, Eleanor saw the sudden softness in Manisty's face—the alert expectancy of his attitude.

"What a wonderful oval of the head and cheek!" he said, under his breath, half to himself, half to her. "Do you know, Eleanor, what she reminds me of?"

Eleanor shook her head.

"Of that little head—little face, rather—that I gave you at Nemi. Don't you see it?"

"I always said she was like your Greek bust," said Eleanor, slowly.

"Ah, that was in her first archaic stage! But now that she's more at ease with us—you see?—there's the purity of line just the same—but subtilized—humanized—somehow! It's the change from marble to terra-cotta, isn't it?"

His fancy pleased him, and his smile turned to hers for sympathy. Then, springing up, he went to meet Lucy.

"Oh, there can be nothing on his mind. He could not speak—look—smile—like that to *me*," thought Eleanor, with passionate relief.

Then as they approached she rose, and with kind solicitude forced Lucy to take her chair, on the plea that she herself was going back to the villa.

Lucy touched her hand gratefully. "I don't know what's happened to me," she said, half wistful, half smiling; "I never staid in bed to breakfast in my life before. At Greyridge they'd think I had gone out of my mind."

Eleanor inquired if it was an invariable sign of lunacy in America to take your breakfast in bed. Lucy couldn't say. All she knew was that nobody ever took it so in Greyridge, Vermont, unless they were on the point of death.

"I should never be any good any more," she said, with an energy that brought the red back to her cheeks, "if they were to spoil me at home as you spoil me here."

Eleanor waved her hand, smiled, and went her way.

As she moved farther and farther away from them down the long avenue, she saw them all the time, though she never once looked back—saw the eager inquiries of the man, the modest responsiveness of the girl. She was leaving them to themselves—at the bidding of her own pride—and they had the May morning before them. According to a telegram just received, Alice Manisty was not expected till after lunch.

Meanwhile Manisty was talking of his sister to Lucy, with coolness, and as much frankness as he thought necessary.

"She is very odd—and very depressing. She is now very little with us. There is no company she likes as well as her own. But in early days she and I were great friends. We were brought up in an old Yorkshire house together, and



a queer pair we were. I was never sent to school, and I got the better of most of my tutors. Alice was unmanageable too, and we spent most of our time rambling and reading as we pleased. Both of us dreamed awake half our time. I had shooting and fishing to take me out of myself; but Alice, after my mother's death, lived with her own fancies and got less like other people every day. There was a sort of garden-house in the park—a lonely overgrown kind of place. We put our books there, and used practically to live there for weeks together. That was just after I came into the place, before I went abroad. Alice was sixteen. I can see her now sitting in the doorway of the little house, hour after hour, staring into the woods like a somnambulist, one arm behind her head. One day I said to her, 'Alice, what are you thinking of?' 'Myself!' she said. So then I laughed at her and teased her. And she answered, quite quietly, 'I know it is a pity, but I can't help it.'

Lucy's eyes were wide with wonder. "But you ought to have given her something to do—or to learn—right away! Couldn't she have gone to school, or found some friends?"

"Oh, I dare say I ought to have done a thousand things," said Manisty, impatiently. "I was never a model brother, or a model anything! I grew up for myself and by myself, and I supposed Alice would do the same. You disapprove?"

He turned his sharp compelling eyes upon her, so that Lucy flinched a little. "I shouldn't dare," she said, laughing. "I don't know enough. But I'm sorry, anyway, for your sister."

"What did you think about at sixteen?"

Her sweet look wavered.

"I had mother then," she said, simply.

"Ah! then—I'm afraid you've no right to sit in judgment upon us. Alice and I had no mother—no one but ourselves. Of course all our relations and friends disapproved of us. But that, somehow, has never made much difference to either of us. Does it make much difference to you? Do you mind if people praise or blame you? What does it matter what anybody thinks? Who can know anything about you but yourself?—eh?"

He poured out his questions in a hurry, one tumbling over the other. And he had

already begun to bite the inevitable stalk of grass. Lucy, as usual, was conscious both of intimidation and attraction—she felt him at once absurd and magnetic.

"I'm sure we're meant to care what people think," she said, with spirit. "It helps us. It keeps us straight."

His eyes flashed.

"You think so? Then we disagree entirely, absolutely, and *in toto*! I don't want to be approved. I want to be happy. It never enters my head to judge other people. Why should they judge me?"

"But—but—" Then she laughed out, remembering his book and his political escapade. "Aren't you *always* judging other people?"

"Fighting them—yes! That's another matter. But I don't give myself superior airs. I don't judge; I just love—and hate."

Her attention followed the bronzed expressive face, so bold in outline, so delicate in detail, with a growing fascination.

"It seems to me you hate more than you love."

He considered it.

"Quite possible. It isn't an engaging world. But I don't hate readily; I hate slowly and by degrees. If anybody offends me, for instance, at first I hardly feel it—it doesn't seem to matter at all. Then it grows in my mind; gradually it becomes a weight—a burning fire—and drives everything else out. I hate the men, for instance, that I hated last year, in England, much worse now than I did then!"

Her steady lips, her sparkling eye, showed an opposition that must needs venture into the open.

"Why did you hate them? I have heard—"

"Yes?" he said, peremptorily, bending again towards her.

She trembled, but went on—

"That it was a great pity—that you lost influence—"

"I shall recover it," he said, briefly.

"Through your book?"

"That's only one means among many. The cause is so strong, the weapons hardly matter."

"What do you mean by 'the cause'?"

"Everything reactionary, foolish, and superstitious," he said, with malicious emphasis. "Everything that confounds

the wisdom of the wise—everything that your Puritan ancestors thought anathema—fasting, monkery, sacramentalism, relics, indulgences—everything that a snug, prosperous, Protestant England or America hates and despises—while all the time it is keeping the world going for Protestant England or America to wax fat in.”

She said nothing, but her face spoke for her.

“You think me mad?”

She turned aside, dumb, plucking at a root of cyclamen beside her.

“Insincere?”

“No. But you like to startle one—to make one angry!”

He shrugged his shoulders carelessly.

“Not at all. There is a certain joy always in pricking bubbles—in tripping people up where they think themselves most secure.”

“Even when those people are in earnest—and you—?”

“Are not? Charge home. I am prepared,” he said, smiling.

She opened her deep puzzled eyes upon him, glowing from an inward fire.

“You talk as though you were a Catholic—and you are not—you don’t believe—” she said, and then stopped, startled by her own rashness.

“You are quite right,” he said, with emphasis. “Not only do I not believe, but I find it impossible to understand how any educated man can possibly, conceivably, be a believer.”

Her face expressed her repulsion and bewilderment.

“Then why?—why?”

“It’s quite simple. Because the world can’t get on without morals, and Catholicism—Anglicanism too—the religious of authority, in short—are the great guardians of morals. They are the binding forces—the forces making for solidarity and continuity. Your cocksure, peering Protestant is the dissolvent—the force making for ruin. What’s his private judgment to me, or mine to him? But for the sake of it he’ll make everything mud and puddle! Of course you may say to me—it is perfectly open to you to say”—he looked away from her, half forgetting her, addressing with animation and pugnacity an imaginary opponent—“what do morals matter?—how do you know that the present moral judgments of the world represent any ultimate truth?

Ah, well!”—he shrugged his shoulders—“I can’t follow you there. Black may be really white, and white black; but I’m not going to admit it. It would make me too much of a dupe. I take my stand on morals. And if you give me morals, you must give me the only force that can guarantee them—Catholicism—more or less; and dogma, and ritual, and superstition, and all the foolish ineffable things that bind mankind together, and send them to ‘face the music’ in this world and the next!”

She sat silent, with twitching lips, excited, yet passionately scornful and antagonistic. Thoughts of her home; of the sturdy Methodist farmers she knew; of the hymns at meetings, and the deep inwardness of the faith and penitence expressed in them—the only utterance of a dour and silent race; of her uncle’s simple and personal piety—flashed thick and fast through her mind. Suddenly she covered her face with her hands, to hide a fit of laughter that had overtaken her.

“All that amuses you?” said Manisty, breathing a little faster.

“No—oh no! But—I was thinking of our friends—and my uncle. What you said of Protestants seemed all at once so odd—so—ridiculous!”

“Did it?” said Manisty. “Take care! I have seen you a Catholic once—for three minutes!”

“When?”

“In St. Peter’s.”

His smiling imperious eyes followed up their advantage.

“Forgive me! But I saw you overthrown. The great tradition swept upon you; you knelt like the rest of us.”

She was silent. Far within she was conscious of a kind of tremor. She threw herself on another subject.

“I hope you will finish the book,” she said, hastily, “for Mrs. Burgoyne’s sake.”

His expression changed. Throwing himself on his elbow, he lay full length on the marble bench beside her. His strong curls of black hair overhung a slightly frowning brow. But his frown was only a nervous trick. When he spoke it was with a smile.

“You think Mrs. Burgoyne cares about it so much?”

“But she worked so hard for it!” cried Lucy, indignant with something in his manner, though she could not have defined what. Her mind, indeed, was full

of vague and generous misgivings on the subject of Mrs. Burgoyne. First she had been angry with Mr. Manisty for what had seemed to her neglect and ingratitude. Now she was somehow dissatisfied with herself too.

"She worked too hard," said Manisty, gravely. "It is a good thing the pressure has been taken off. Have you found out yet, Miss Foster, what a remarkable woman my cousin is?"

He turned to her with a sharp look of inquiry.

"I admire her all day long," cried Lucy, warmly.

"That's right," said Manisty, slowly—"that's right. Do you know her history?"

"Mr. Brooklyn told me—"

"He doesn't know very much. Shall I tell it you?"

"If you ought—if Mrs. Burgoyne would like it," said Lucy, eager and yet hesitating, the color coming and going. There was a chivalrous feeling in the girl's mind that she was too new an acquaintance—that she had no right to the secrets of this friendship, and Manisty no right to speak of them.

But Manisty took no notice. With half-shut eyes, like a man looking into the past, he began to describe his cousin—first as a girl in her father's home; then in her married life, silent, unhappy, gentle; afterwards in the dumb years of her irreparable grief; and finally in this last phase of intellectual and spiritual energy, which had been such an amazement to himself—which had first revealed to him, indeed, the true Eleanor.

He spoke slowly, with a singular and scrupulous choice of words, building up the image of Mrs. Burgoyne's life and mind with an insight and a delicacy which presently held his listener spell-bound. Several things emerged and stamped themselves on the girl's astonished and vibrating sense—his affection for his cousin, and his detachment from her; the extraordinary closeness and penetration, moreover, of his moral judgment of women. Several times Lucy felt herself flooded with hot color.

"Does he guess so much about—about us all?" she asked herself with a secret excitement.

Suddenly Manisty said, with an entire change of tone, springing to his feet as he did so,

"In short, Miss Foster, my cousin Eleanor is one of the ablest and dearest of women, and she and I have been completely wasting each other's time this winter!"

Lucy stared at him in astonishment.

"Shall I tell you why? We have been too kind to each other!"

He waited, studying his companion's face with a hard, whimsical look.

"Eleanor gave my book too much sympathy. It wanted brutality. I have worn her out, and my book is in a mess. The best thing I could do for us both was to cut it short. It's too bad, isn't it, to complain of indulgence?"

Lucy was uncomfortably silent. Her thoughts went back to her first evening—to the criticism on the Nemi piece implied in Mrs. Burgoyne's gentle refraining from good words, and the evident annoyance of the writer. Manisty watched her closely, and probably divined her.

"There's no use in talking about it," he said, impatiently, with a shake of his great shoulders. "I am not meant to work in partnership. A word of blame depresses me, and I am led astray by praise. It was all a mistake. If only Eleanor could understand that it's my own fault—and I know it's my own fault—and not think me unjust and unkind. Miss Foster—"

Lucy looked up. In the glance she encountered, the vigorous and wilful personality beside her seemed to bring all its force to bear upon herself.

"—if Eleanor talks to you—"

"She never does!" cried Lucy.

"She might," said Manisty, coolly—"she might. If she does, persuade her of my admiration—my gratitude. Tell her that I know very well that I am not worth her help. Her inspiration would have led any other man to success. It only failed because I was I. I hate to seem to discourage and disavow what I once accepted so eagerly. But a man must find out his own mistakes and thrash his own blunders. She was too kind to thrash them, so I have appointed Neal to the office. Do you understand?"

She rose, full of wavering approvals and disapprovals, seized by him, and feeling with Mrs. Burgoyne.

"I understand only a very little," she said, lifting her candid, charming eyes to



his, "except that I never saw any one I—I cared for so much, in so short a time, as Mrs. Burgoyne."

"Ah! care for her!" he said, in another voice, with another aspect—"go on caring for her! She needs it."

They walked on together towards the villa, for Alfredo was on the balcony signalling to them that the twelve-o'clock breakfast was ready.

On the way Manisty turned upon her.

"Now you are to be obedient! You are not to pay any attention to my sister. She is not a happy person; but you are not to be sorry for her. You can't understand her, and I beg you will not try. You are, please, to leave her alone. Can I trust you?"

"Hadn't you better send me into Rome?" said Lucy, laughing and embarrassed.

"I always intended to," said Manisty, shortly.

Towards five o'clock Alice Manisty arrived, accompanied by an elderly maid. Lucy—before she escaped into the garden—was aware of a very tall woman, possessing a harshly expressive face, black eyes, and a thin, long-limbed frame. These black eyes—uneasily bright—searched the salon as she entered it, only to fasten, with a kind of grip in which there was no joy, upon her brother. Lucy saw her kiss him, with a cold perfunctoriness, bowed herself as her name was nervously pronounced by Miss Manisty, and then withdrew. Mrs. Burgoyne was in Rome for the afternoon.

But at dinner they all met, and Lucy could satisfy some of the natural curiosity that possessed her. Alice Manisty was dressed in black lace and satin, and carried herself with distinction. Her hair, raven-black like her brother's, though with a fine line of gray here and there, was of enormous abundance, and she wore it heavily coiled round her head in a mode which gave particular relief to the fire and restlessness of the eyes which flashed beneath it. Beside her, Eleanor Burgoyne, though she too was rather tall than short, suffered a curious eclipse. The plaintive distinction that made the charm of Eleanor's expression and movements seemed for the moment to mean and say nothing beside the tragic splendor of Alice Manisty.

The dinner was not agreeable. Manisty was clearly ill at ease, and seething with inward annoyance; Miss Manisty had the air of a frightened mouse; Alice Manisty talked not at all, and ate nothing except some poached eggs that she had apparently ordered for herself before dinner; and Eleanor—chattering of her afternoon in Rome—had to carry through the business as best she could, with occasional help from Lucy.

From the first it was unpleasantly evident to Manisty that his sister took notice of Miss Foster. Almost her only words at table were addressed to the girl sitting opposite to her; and her roving eyes returned again and again to Lucy's fresh young face and quiet brow.

After dinner Manisty followed the ladies into the salon, and asked his aunt's leave to smoke his cigarette with them.

Lucy wondered what had passed between him and his sister before dinner. He was polite to her; and yet she fancied that their relations were already strained.

Presently, as Lucy was busy with some embroidery on one of the settees against the wall of the salon, she was conscious of Alice Manisty's approach. The newcomer sat down beside her, bent over her work, asked her a few low, deep-voiced questions. Those strange eyes fastened upon her—stared at her, indeed.

But instantly Manisty was there, cigarette in hand, standing between them. He distracted his sister's attention, and at the same moment Eleanor called to Lucy from the piano:

"Won't you turn over for me? I can't play them by heart."

Lucy wondered at the scantiness of Mrs. Burgoyne's musical memory that night. She, who could play by the hour without note on most occasions, showed herself, on this, tied and bound to the printed page; and that page must be turned for her by Lucy, and Lucy only.

Meanwhile Manisty sat beside his sister smoking, throwing first the left leg over the right, then the right leg over the left, and making attempts at conversation with her, that Eleanor positively must not see, lest music and decorum both break down in a wreck of nervous laughter.

Alice Manisty scarcely responded; she sat motionless, her wild black head bent like that of a Maenad at watch, her gaze

fixed, her long thin hands grasping the arm of her chair with unconscious force.

"What is she thinking of?" thought Lucy once, with a momentary shiver. "Herself?"

When bedtime came, Manisty gave the ladies their candles. As he bade good-night to Lucy, he said in her ear: "You said you wished to see the Lateran Museum. My aunt will send Benson with you to-morrow."

His tone did not ask whether she wished for the arrangement, but simply imposed it.

Then, as Eleanor approached him, he raised his shoulders with a gesture that only she saw, and led her a few steps apart in the dimly lighted anteroom, where the candles were placed.

"She wants the most impossible things, my dear lady," he said in low-voiced despair—"things I can no more do than fly over the moon!"

"Edward!" said his sister from the open door of the salon, "I should like some further conversation with you before I go to bed."

Manisty, with the worst grace in the world, saw his aunt and Eleanor to their rooms, and then went back to surrender himself to Alice. He was a man who took family relations hardly, impatient of the slightest bond that was not of his own choosing. Yet it was Eleanor's judgment that, considering his temperament, he had not been a bad brother to this wild sister. He had spent both heart and thought upon her case; and at the root of his relation to her a deep and painful pity was easily to be divined.

Vast as the villa-apartment was, the rooms were all on one floor, and the doors fitted badly. Lucy's sleep was haunted for long by a distant sound of voices, generally low and restrained, but at moments rising and sharpening as though their owners forgot the hour and the night. In the morning it seemed to her that she had been last conscious of a burst of weeping, far distant—then of a sudden silence.

The following day, Lucy, in Benson's charge, paid her duty to the Sophocles of the Lateran Museum, and, armed with certain books lent her by Manisty, went wandering among the art and inscriptions of Christian Rome. She came home—inexplicably tired—through a glorious

Campagna splashed with poppies, embroidered with marigold and vetch; she climbed the Alban slopes from the heat below, and rejoiced in the keener air of the hills, and the *ponente*, as she drove from the station to the villa.

Mrs. Burgoyne was leaning over the balcony looking out for her. Lucy ran up to her, astonished at her own eagerness of foot, at the breath of home which seemed to issue from the great sun-beaten house.

Eleanor looked pale and tired, but she took the girl's hand kindly.

"Oh, you must keep all your gossip for dinner!" said Eleanor as they greeted. "It will help us through. It has been rather a hard day."

Lucy's face showed her sympathy, and the question she did not like to put into words.

"Oh, it has been a wrestle all day!" said Eleanor, wearily. "She wants Mr. Manisty to do certain things with her property that as her guardian he *cannot* do. She has the maddest ideas—she *is* mad. And when she is crossed she is terrible."

At dinner Lucy did her best to lighten the atmosphere, being indeed most truly sorry for her poor friends and their dilemma. But her pleasant girlish talk seemed to float above an abyss of trouble and discomfort, which threatened constantly to swallow it up.

Alice Manisty indeed responded. She threw off her silence and talked of Rome, exclusively to Lucy and with Lucy, showing in her talk a great deal of knowledge and a good deal of fine taste, mingled with occasional violence and extravagance. Her eyes, indeed, were wilder than ever. They shone with a miserable intensity that became a positive glare once or twice when Manisty addressed her. Her whole aspect breathed a tragic determination, crossed with an anger she was hardly able to restrain. Lucy noticed that she never spoke to or answered her brother if she could help it.

After dinner Lucy found herself the object of various embarrassing overtures on the part of the new-comer. But on each occasion Manisty interposed, at first adroitly, then roughly. On the last occasion Alice Manisty sprang to her feet, went to the side table where the candles were placed, disappeared, and did not return. Manisty, his aunt, and Mrs. Bur-

goyne drew together in a corner of the salon discussing the events of the day in low, anxious voices. Lucy thought herself in the way, and went to bed.

After some hours of sleep, Lucy awoke, conscious of movement somewhere near her. With the advent of the hot weather she had been moved to a room on the eastern side of the villa, in one of two small wings jutting out from the façade. She had locked her door, but the side window of her room, which overlooked the balcony towards the lake, was open, and slight sounds came from the balcony. Springing up, she crept softly towards the window. The wooden shutters had been drawn forward, but both they and the casements were ajar.

Through the chink she saw a strange sight. On the step leading from the house to the terrace of the balcony sat Alice Manisty. Her head was thrown back against the wall of the villa, and her hands were clasped upon her knee. Her marvellous hair fell round her shoulders, and a strange illumination, in which a first gleam of dawn mingled with the moonlight, searched the haggard whiteness of the face and struck upon the long emaciated hands emerging from the darkness of her loose black dress.

Was she asleep? Lucy, holding back so as not to be seen, peered with held breath. No!—the large eyes were wide open, though it seemed to Lucy that they saw nothing.

Minute after minute passed. The figure on the terrace sat motionless. There were two statues on either side of her, a pair of battered round-limbed nymphs, glorified by the moonlight into a grace of poetry not theirs by day. They seemed to be looking down upon the woman at their feet in a soft bewilderment—wondering at a creature so little like themselves; while from the terrace came up the scent of the garden, heavy with roses and bedrenched with dew.

Suddenly it seemed to Lucy as though that stricken face, those intolerable eyes, awoke—turned towards herself, penetrated her room, pursued her. The figure moved, and there was a low sound of words. Her window was in truth inaccessible from the terrace; but in a panic fear Lucy threw herself on the casement and the shutters, closed them, and drew the bolts—as noiselessly as she could—

still not without some noise. Then hurrying to her bed, she threw herself upon it, panting—in a terror she could neither explain nor compose.

## CHAPTER X.

“MY dear lady, there’s nothing to be done with her whatever. She will not yield one inch—and I cannot. But one thing at last is clear to me. The mischief has made progress—I fear, great progress.”

Manisty had drawn his cousin into the garden, and they were pacing the avenue. With his last words he turned upon her a grave, significant look.

The cause of Alice Manisty’s visit, indeed, had turned out to be precisely what Manisty supposed. The sister had come to Marinata in order to persuade her brother, as one of the trustees of her property, to co-operate with her in bestowing some of her money on the French artist, Monsieur Octave Vacherot, to whom, as she calmly avowed, her affections were indissolubly attached, though she did not ever intend to marry him, nor indeed to see much of him in the future. “I shall never do him the disservice of becoming his wife,” she announced, with her melancholy eyes full upon her brother. “But money is of no use to me. He is young and can employ it.” Manisty inquired whether the gentleman in question was aware of what she proposed. Alice replied that if money were finally settled upon him, he would accept it, whereas his pride did not allow him to receive perpetual small sums at her hands. “But if I settle a definite sum upon him, he will take it as an endowment of his genius. It would be giving to the public, not to him. His great ideas would get their chance.”

Manisty, in his way as excitable as she, had evidently found it difficult to restrain himself when M. Octave Vacherot’s views as to his own value were thus explained to him. Nevertheless, he seemed to have shown on the whole a creditable patience, to have argued with his sister, to have even offered her money of his own, for the temporary supply of M. Vacherot’s necessities. But all to no avail; and in the end it had come, of course, to his flatly refusing any help of his to such a scheme, and without it the scheme fell. For their father had been perfectly well aware of his daughter’s eccentricities, and

had placed her portion, by his will, in the hands of two trustees, of whom her brother was one, without whose consent she could not touch the capital.

"It always seemed to her a monstrous arrangement," said Manisty, "and I can see now it galls her to the quick to have to apply to me in this way. I don't wonder—but I can't help it. The duty's there—worse luck!—and I've got to face it, for my father's sake. Besides, if I were to consent, the other fellow—an old cousin of ours—would never dream of doing it. So what's the good? All the same, it makes me desperately anxious, to see the effect that this opposition of mine produces upon her."

"I saw yesterday that she must have been crying in the night," said Eleanor.

Her words evoked some emotion in Manisty.

"She cried in my presence, and I believe she cried most of the night afterwards," he said, in hasty pain. "That beast Vacherot!"

"Why doesn't she marry him?"

"For the noblest of reasons! She knows that her brain is clouded, and she won't let him run the risk."

Their eyes met in a quick sympathy. She saw that his poetic susceptibility, the romantic and dramatic elements in him, were all alive to his sister's case. How critically, sharply perceptive he was—or could be—with regard apparently to everybody in the world—save one! Often—as they talked—her heart stirred in this way, far out of sight, like a fluttering and wounded thing.

"It is the strangest madness," said Manisty, presently. "Many people would say it was only extravagance of imagination, unless they knew—what I know. She told me last night that she was not one person, but two, and the other self was a brother!—not the least like me—who constantly told her what to do and what not to do. She calls him quite calmly 'my brother John,' 'my heavenly brother.' She says that he often does strange things—things that she does not understand—but that he tells her the most wonderful secrets, and that he is a greater poet than any now living. She says that the first time she perceived him as separate from herself was one day in Venice, when a friend came for her to the hotel. She went out with the friend, or seemed to go out with her, and then suddenly she per-

ceived that she was lying on her bed, and that the other Alice had been John! He looks just herself—but for the eyes. The weirdness of her look as she tells these things! But she expresses herself often with an extraordinary poetry. I envy her the words and the phrases! It seemed to me, once or twice, that she had all sorts of things I wished to have. If one could only be a little mad, one might write good books!"

He turned upon his companion, with a wild brilliance in his own blue eyes, that, taken together with the subject of their conversation and his many points of physical likeness to his sister, sent an uncomfortable thrill through Eleanor. Nevertheless, as she knew well, at the very bottom of Manisty's being there lay a remarkable fund of ordinary capacity—an invincible sanity, in short—which had always so far rescued him in the long-run from that element which was extravagance in him and madness in his sister.

And certainly nothing could have been more reasonable, strong, and kind than his further talk about his sister. He confided to his cousin that his whole opinion of Alice's state had changed; that certain symptoms for which he had been warned to be on the watch had, in his judgment, appeared; that he had accordingly written to a specialist in Rome, asking him to come and see Alice, without warning, on the following day; and that he hoped to be able to persuade her, without too much conflict, to accept medical watching and treatment for a time.

"I feel that it is plotting against her," he said, not without emotion, "but it has gone too far; she is not safe for herself or others. One of the most anxious things is this night wandering which has taken possession of her. Did you hear her last night?"

"Last night?" said Eleanor, startled.

"I had been warned by Dalgetty," said Manisty. "And between three and four I thought I heard sounds somewhere in the direction of the Albano balcony. So I crept out through the salon into the library. And there, sitting on the step of the glass passage, was Alice, looking as though she were turned to marble, and staring at Miss Foster's room! To my infinite relief, I saw that Miss Foster's shutters and windows were fast closed. But I felt I could not leave Alice there.

I made a little noise in the library to warn her, and then I came out upon her. She showed no surprise, nor did I. I asked her to come and look at the sunrise striking over the Campagna. She made no objection, and I took her through my room and the salon to the salon balcony. The sight was marvellous; and first it gave her pleasure—she said a few things about it with her old grace and power. Then, in a minute, a veil seemed to fall over her eyes. The possessed, miserable look came back. She remembered that she hated me—that I had thwarted her. Yet I was able to persuade her to go back to her room. I promised that we would have more talk to-day. And when she had safely shut her own door—you know that tiled anteroom that leads to her room?—I found the key of it, and locked it safely from outside. That's one access to her. The other is through the room in which Dalgetty was sleeping. I'd have given a good deal to warn Dalgetty, but I dared not risk it. She had not heard Alice go out by the anteroom, but she told me the other day the smallest sound in her own room woke her. So I felt tolerably safe, and I went to bed. Eleanor! do you think that child saw or knew anything of it?"

"Lucy Foster? I noticed nothing."

The name, even on her own lips, struck Eleanor's aching sense like a sound of fate. It seemed now as if through every conversation she foresaw it—that all talk led up to it.

"She looks unlike herself still, this morning, don't you think?" said Manisty, in disquiet.

"Very possibly she got some chill at Nemi—some slight poison—which will pass off."

"Well, now," he said, after a pause, "how shall we get through the day? I shall have another scene with Alice, I suppose. I don't see how it is to be avoided. Meanwhile, will you keep Miss Foster here?"—he pointed to the garden—"out of the way?"

"I must think of Aunt Pattie, remember," said Eleanor, quickly.

"Ah! dear Aunt Pattie!—but bring her too. I see perfectly well that Alice has already marked Miss Foster. She has asked me many questions about her. She feels her innocence and freshness like a magnet—drawing out her own sorrows and grievances. My poor Alice!

What a wreck! Could I have done more?—could I?"

He walked on absently, his hands behind his back, his face working painfully.

Eleanor was touched. She did her best to help him throw off his misgivings; she defended him from himself; she promised him her help, not with the old effusion, but still with a cousinly kindness. And his mercurial nature soon passed into another mood—a mood of hopefulness that the doctor would set everything right, that Alice would consent to place herself under proper care, that the crisis would end well—and in twenty-four hours.

"Meanwhile, for this afternoon?" said Eleanor.

"Oh, we must be guided by circumstances. We understand each other. Eleanor!—what a prop, what a help you are!"

She shrank into herself. It was true, indeed, that she had passed through a good many disagreeable hours since Alice Manisty arrived, on her own account; for she had been left in charge several times, and she had a secret terror of madness. Manisty had not given her much thanks till now. His facile gratitude seemed to her a little tardy. She smiled and put it aside.

Manisty wrestled with his sister again that morning, while the other three ladies, all of them silent and perturbed, worked and read in the garden. Lucy debated with herself whether she should describe what she had seen the night before. But her instinct was always to make no unnecessary fuss. What harm was there in sitting out-of-doors on an Italian night in May? She would not add to the others' anxieties. Moreover, she felt a curious slackness and shrinking from exertion—even the exertion of talking. As Eleanor had divined, she had caught a slight chill at Nemi, and the effects of it were malarious, in the Italian way. She was conscious of a little shiveriness and languor, and of a wish to lie or sit quite still. But Aunt Pattie was administering quinine, and keeping a motherly eye upon her. There was nothing, according to her, to be alarmed about.

At the end of a couple of hours Manisty came out from his study much discom-



posed. Alice Manisty shut herself up in her room, and Manisty summoned Eleanor to walk up and down a distant path with him.

When luncheon came, Alice Manisty did not appear. Dalgetty brought a message excusing her, to which Manisty listened in silence.

Aunt Pattie slipped out to see that the visitor had everything she required. But she returned almost instantly, her little parchment face quivering with nervousness.

"Alice would not see me," she said to Manisty.

"We must leave her alone," he said, quickly. "Dalgetty will look after her."

The meal passed under a cloud of anxiety. For once Manisty exerted himself to make talk, but not with much success.

As the ladies left the dining-room he detained Lucy.

"Would it be too hot for you in the garden now? Would you mind returning there?"

Lucy fetched her hat. There was only one short stretch of sun-beaten path to cross, and then, beyond, one entered upon the deep shade of the ilexes, already penetrated, at the turn of the day, by the first breaths of the sea-wind from the west. Manisty carried her books, and arranged a chair for her. Then he looked round to see if any one was near. Yes. Two gardeners were cutting the grass in the central zone of the garden—well within call.

"My aunt or Mrs. Burgoyne will follow you very shortly," he said. "You do not mind being alone?"

"Please, don't think of me!" cried Lucy. "I am afraid I am in your way."

"It will be all right to-morrow," he said, following his own thoughts. "May I ask that you will stay here for the present?"

He bent over her with a most courteous, a most winning kindness. Lucy promised, and he went.

She was left to think first, to think many times, of these new manners of her host, which had now wholly driven from her mind the memory of her first experiences; then to ponder, with a growing fascination which her own state of slight fever and the sultry heat of the day seemed to make it impossible for her

to throw off, on Alice Manisty, on the incident of the night before, and on the meaning of the poor lady's state and behavior. She had taken Mrs. Burgoyne's word of "mad" in a general sense, as meaning eccentricity and temper. But surely they were gravely anxious, and everything was most strange and mysterious. The memory of the staring face under the moonlight appalled her. She tried not to think of it; but it haunted her.

Her nerves were not in their normal state, and, as she sat there in the cool dark, vague paralyzing fears swept across her, of which she was ashamed. One minute she longed to go back to them and help them. The next she recognized that the best help she could give was to stay where she was. She saw very well that she was a responsibility and a care to them.

"If it lasts, I must go away," she said to herself, firmly. "Certainly I must go."

But at the thought of going the tears came into her eyes. At most there was little more than a fortnight before the party broke up and she went with Aunt Pattie to Vallombrosa.

She took up the book upon her knee. It was a fine poem in Roman dialect on the immortal retreat of Garibaldi after '49. But after a few lines she let it drop again, listlessly. One of the motives which had entered into her reading of these things—a constant heat of antagonism and of protest—seemed to have gone out of her.

Meanwhile Aunt Pattie, Eleanor, and Manisty held conclave in Aunt Pattie's sitting-room, which was a little room at the southwestern corner of the apartment. It opened out of the salon and overlooked the Campagna.

On the northeastern side, Dalgetty, Alice Manisty's maid, sat sewing in a passage-room which commanded the entrance to the glass passage—her own door—the door of the anteroom that Manisty had spoken of to Eleanor, and close beside her a third door, which was half open, communicating with Manisty's library. The glass passage, or conservatory, led directly to the staircase and the garden, past the French windows of the library.

Dalgetty was a person of middle age, a strongly made Scotch woman, with a

high forehead and fashionable rolls of sandy hair. Her face was thin and freckled, and one might have questioned whether its expression was shrewd or self-important. She was clearly thinking of other matters than needle-work. Her eyes travelled constantly to one or other of the doors in sight, and her lips had the pinched tension that shows pre-occupation.

Her mind, indeed, harbored a good many disagreeable thoughts. In the first place, she was pondering the qualities of a certain drug lately recommended as a sedative to her mistress. It seemed to Dalgetty that its effect had not been good, but evil; or rather that it acted capriciously—exciting as often as it soothed. Yet Miss Alice would take it. On coming to her room after her interview with her brother, she had fallen first into a long fit of weeping, and then, after much restless pacing to and fro, she had put her hands to her head in a kind of despair, and had bade Dalgetty give her the new medicine. "I must lie down and sleep—*sleep!*" she had said, "or—"

And then she had paused, looking at Dalgetty with an aspect so piteous and wild that the maid's heart had quaked within her. Nevertheless, she had tried to keep the new medicine away from her mistress. But Miss Alice had shown such uncontrollable anger on being crossed that there was nothing for it but to yield. And as all was quiet in her room, Dalgetty hoped that this time the medicine would prove to be a friend, and not a foe, and that the poor lady would wake up calmer and less distraught.

She was certainly worse—much worse. The maid guessed at Mr. Manisty's opinion; she divined the approach of some important step. Very likely she would soon be separated from her mistress, and the thought depressed her. Not only because she had an affection for her poor charge, but also because she was a rather lazy and self-indulgent woman. Miss Alice had been very trying, certainly, but she was not exacting in the way of late hours and needle-work; she had plenty of money, and she liked moving about. All these qualities suited the tastes of the maid, who knew that she would not easily obtain another post so much to her mind.

The electric bell on the outer landing rang. Alfredo admitted the caller, and

Dalgetty presently perceived a tall priest standing in the library. He was an old man, with beautiful blue eyes, and he seemed to Dalgetty to have a nervous, timid air.

Alfredo had gone to ask Mr. Manisty whether he could receive this gentleman, and meanwhile the stranger stood there twisting his long bony hands and glancing about him with the shyness of a bird.

Presently Alfredo came back and conducted the priest to the salon.

He had not been gone five minutes before Mr. Manisty appeared. He came through the library, and stood in the doorway of the passage-room where she sat.

"All right, Dalgetty?" he said, stooping to her, and speaking in a whisper.

"I think and hope she's asleep, sir," said the maid, in his ear. "I have heard nothing this half-hour."

Manisty looked relieved, repeated his injunctions to be watchful, and went back to the salon. Dalgetty presently heard his voice in the distance, mingling with those of the priest and Mrs. Burgoyne.

A little while afterwards there was another ring. This time it proved to be a lady from Rome, an old friend and connection of Aunt Pattie's.

Aunt Pattie, very pale and incoherent, came bustling out to receive her.

After greeting her guest, Miss Manisty shut the door upon the landing where Dalgetty sat working, and the sound of the ladies' talking presently filled Dalgetty's ear and effaced the voices from the salon.

Now she had nothing left to amuse her but the view through the glass passage to the balcony and the lake. It was hot, and she was tired of her sewing. The balcony, however, was in deep shade, and a breath of cool air came up from the lake. Dalgetty could not resist it. She glanced at her mistress's door and listened a moment. All was silence.

She put down her work and slipped through the glass passage on to the broad stone balcony.

There her ears were suddenly greeted with a sound of riotous shouting and singing on the road, and Alfredo ran out from the dining-room to join her.

"*Festa!*" he said, nodding to her in a kindly patronage, and speaking as he might have spoken to a child—" *Festa!*"

And Dalgetty began to see a number of carts adorned with green boughs and filled with singing people coming along the road. Each cart had a band of girls dressed alike—red, white, orange, blue, and so forth.

Alfredo endeavored to explain that these were Romans, who, after visiting the church of the "Madonna del Divino Amore" in the plain, were now bound to an evening of merriment at Albano. According to him, it was not so much a case of "divino amore" as of "amore di vino," and he was very anxious that the English maid should understand his pun. She laughed—pretended—showed off her few words of Italian. She thought Alfredo a funny, handsome little man, a sort of toy wound up, of which she could not understand the works. But, after all, he was a man—and the time slipped by.

After ten minutes she remembered her duties with a start, and hastily crossing the glass passage, she returned to her post. All was just as she had left it. She listened at Miss Alice's door. Not a sound was to be heard, and she resumed her sewing.

Meanwhile Manisty and Eleanor were busy with Father Benecke. The poor priest had come full of a painful emotion, which broke its bounds as soon as he had Manisty's hand in his.

"You got my letter?" he said, eagerly. "That told you I was condemned. Well, I submitted—two days ago. They got me to write a letter, on condition that nothing more should be published than just the fact of my submission. Otherwise—I refused. They promised me the letter should be private. Only *they* would write nothing. So I wrote the letter they demanded. I placed myself, like a son, in the hands of the Holy Father. Now this morning there is my letter—the whole of it—in the *Osservatore Romano*! Tomorrow—I came to tell you—I withdraw it. I recant my recantation!"

He drew himself up, his blue eyes shining. Yet they were swollen with fatigue and sleeplessness, and over the whole man a blighting breath of age and pain had passed since the day in St. Peter's.

Manisty looked at him in silence a moment; then he said, "I'm sorry—heartily, heartily sorry!"

At this, Eleanor, thinking that the two

men would prefer to be alone, turned to leave the room. The priest perceived it.

"Don't leave us, madame, on my account. I have no secrets, and I know that you are acquainted with some at least of my poor history. But perhaps I am intruding—I am in your way?"

He looked round him in bewilderment. It was evident to Eleanor that he had come to Manisty in a condition almost as unconscious of outward surroundings as that of the sleep-walker. And she and Manisty, on their side, as they stood looking at him, lost the impression of the bodily man in the overwhelming impression of a wounded spirit struggling with mortal hurt.

"Come and sit down," she said to him, gently, and she led him to a chair. Then she went into the next room, poured out and brought him a cup of coffee. He took it with an unsteady hand and put it down beside him untouched. Then he looked at Manisty, and began in detail the story of all that had happened to him since the letter in which he had communicated to his English friend the certainty of his condemnation.

Nothing could have been more touching than his absorption in his own case, his entire unconsciousness of anything in Manisty's mind that could conflict with it. Eleanor, turning from his tragic simplicity to Manisty's ill-concealed worry and impatience, pitied both. That poor Father Benecke should have brought his grief to Manisty on this afternoon of all afternoons!

It had been impossible to refuse to see him. He had come on a pilgrimage from Rome, and could not be turned away. But she knew well that Manisty's ear was listening all the time for every sound in the direction of his sister's room; his anxieties, indeed, betrayed themselves in every restless movement as he sat with averted head listening.

Presently he got up, and with a hurried "Excuse me an instant," he left the room.

Father Benecke ceased to speak, his lips trembling. To find himself alone with Mrs. Burgoyne embarrassed him. He sat, folding his soutane upon his knee, answering in monosyllables to the questions that she put him. But her sympathy perhaps did more to help him unpack his heart than he knew; for when Manisty returned he began to talk rapidly

and well, a natural eloquence returning to him. He was a South German, but he spoke a fine literary English, of which the very stumbles and occasional naïvetés had a peculiar charm—like the faults which reveal a pure spirit even more plainly than its virtues.

He reached his climax in a flash of emotion. "My submission, you see—the bare fact of it—left my cause intact. It was the soldier falling by the wall. But my letter must necessarily be misunderstood—my letter betrays the cause. And for that I have no right. You understand? I thought of the Pope—the old man; they told me he was distressed—that the Holy Father had suffered—had lost sleep—through me! So I wrote out of my heart—like a son. And the paper this morning! See—I have brought it you—the *Osservatore Romano*. It is insolent—brutal—but not to me—no; it is all honey to me—but to the truth—to our ideas. No! I cannot suffer it! I take it back! I bear the consequences!"

And with trembling fingers he took a draft letter from his pocket, and handed it, with the newspaper, to Manisty.

Manisty read the letter, and returned it, frowning.

"Yes, you have been abominably treated—no doubt of that. But have you counted the cost? You know my point of view. It's a great game to me, and I the onlooker. Intellectually I am all with you; strategically, all with them. They can't give way; the smallest breach lets in the flood. And then chaos."

"But the flood is truth," said the old man, gazing at Manisty. There was a delicate spot of red on each wasted cheek. A fierce flame spoke in the eyes.

Manisty shrugged his shoulders, then dropped his eyes upon the ground, and sat pondering awhile in a moody silence. Eleanor looked at him in some astonishment. It was as though for the first time his habitual paradox hurt him in the wielding, or rather as though he shrank from using what was a conception of the intellect upon the flesh and blood before him. She had never yet seen him visited by a like compunction.

It was curious indeed to see that Father Benecke himself was not affected by Manisty's attitude. From the beginning he had always instinctively appealed from the pamphleteer to the man. Manisty had been frank, brutal even. But not

withstanding, the sensitive yet strong intelligence of the priest, had gone straight for some core of thought in the Englishman that it seemed only he divined. And it was clear that his own utter selflessness, his poetic and passionate detachment from all the objects of sense and ambition, made him a marvel to Manisty's more turbid and ambiguous nature. There had been a mystical attraction between them from the first; so that Manisty, even when he was most pugnacious, had yet a filial air and way towards the old man.

Eleanor too had often felt the spell. Yet to-day there were both in herself and Manisty hidden forces of fever and unrest which made the pure idealism, the intellectual tragedy of the priest almost unbearable. Neither—for different and hidden reasons—could respond; and it was an infinite relief to both when the old man at last rose to take his leave.

They accompanied him through the library to the glass passage.

"Keep me informed," said Manisty, wringing him by the hand, "and tell me if there is anything I can do."

Eleanor said some parting words of sympathy. The priest bowed to her with a grave courtesy in reply.

"It will be as God wills," he said, gently, and then went his way in a sad abstraction.

Eleanor was left a moment alone. She put her hands over her heart, and pressed them there. "He suffers from such high things," she said to herself in a sudden passion of misery; "and I?"

Manisty came hurrying back from the staircase, and crossed the library to the passage-room beyond. When he saw Dalgetty there, still peacefully sewing, his look of anxiety cleared again.

"All right?" he said to her.

"She hasn't moved, sir. It's the best sleep Miss Alice has had this many a day. After all, that stuff do seem to have done her good."

"Well, Eleanor, shall we go and look after Miss Foster?" he said, returning to her.

They entered the garden with cheered countenances. The secret terror of immediate and violent outbreak which had possessed Manisty since the morning subsided, and he breathed in the *ponente* with delight.

Suddenly, however, as they turned into

the avenue adorned by the battered bust of Domitian, Manisty's hand went up to his eyes. He stopped; he gave a cry.

"Good God!" he said; "she is there!"

And half-way down the shadowy space Eleanor saw two figures—one white, the other dark—close together.

She caught Manisty by the arm.

"Don't hurry! Don't excite her!"

They walked up quietly.

As they came nearer they saw that Lucy was still in the same low chair where Manisty had left her. Her head was thrown back against the cushions, and her face shone deathly white from the rich sun-warmed darkness shed by the overarching trees. And kneeling beside her, holding both her helpless wrists, bending over her in a kind of passionate triumphant possession, was Alice Manisty.

At the sound of the steps on the gravel she looked round, and at the sight of her brother she slowly let fall the hands she held—she slowly rose to her feet. Her tall emaciated form held itself defiantly erect; her eyes flashed hatred.

"Alice," said Manisty, approaching her, "I have something important to say to you. I have reconsidered our conversation of this morning, and I came to tell you so. Come back with me to the library, and let us go into matters again."

He spoke with gentleness, controlling her with a kind look. She shivered and hesitated, her eyes wavered. Then she began to say a number of rapid, incoherent things in an under-voice. Manisty drew her hand within his arm.

"Come," he said, and turned to the house.

She pulled herself angrily away.

"You are deceiving me," she said. "I won't go with you."

But Manisty captured her again.

"Yes, we must have our talk," he said, with firm cheerfulness; "there will be no time to-night."

She broke into some passionate reproach, speaking in a thick low voice almost inaudible.

He answered it, and she replied. It was a quiet dialogue, soothing on his side, wild on hers. Lucy, who had dragged herself from her attitude of mortal languor, sat with both hands grasping her chair, staring at the brother and

sister. Eleanor had eyes for none but Manisty. Never had she seen him so adequate, so finely master of himself.

He conquered. Alice dropped her head sullenly, and let herself be led away. Then Eleanor turned to Lucy, and the girl, with a great sob leant against her dress; and burst into uncontrollable tears.

"Has she been long here?" said Eleanor, caressing the black hair.

"Very nearly an hour, I think. It seemed interminable. She has been telling me of her enemies, her unhappiness, how all her letters are opened, how everybody hates her, especially Mr. Manisty. She was followed at Venice by people who wished to kill her. One night, she says, she got into her gondola in a dark canal, and found there a man with a dagger, who attacked her. She only just escaped. There were many other things—so—so—horrible," said Lucy, covering her eyes. But the next moment she raised them. "Surely," she said, imploringly—"surely she is insane?"

Eleanor looked down upon her, mutely nodding.

"There is a doctor coming to-morrow," she said, almost in a whisper.

Lucy shuddered.

"But we have to get through the night," said Eleanor.

"Oh, at night," said Lucy, "if one found her there beside one, one would die of it! I tried to shake her off just now several times, but it was impossible."

She tried to control herself, to complain no more, but she trembled from head to foot. It was evident that she was under some overmastering impression, some overthrow of her own will-power which had unnerved and disorganized her. Eleanor comforted her as best she could.

"Dalgetty and Manisty will take care of her to-night," she said. "And to-morrow she will be sent to some special care. How she escaped from her room this afternoon I cannot imagine. We were all three on the watch."

Lucy said nothing. She clung to Eleanor's hand, while long shuddering breaths, gradually subsiding, passed through her like the slow departure of some invading force.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]



# THE PROBLEM OF ASIA

## III.

BY CAPTAIN A. T. MAHAN, U.S.N.

THE accentuating rivalry between the states of our civilization arising from the unstable conditions of China, long uneasily felt, but not formally avowed, is now approaching a moment resembling that fixed for the unveiling of a statue. The presence of the statue is no secret, the very folds of the drapery betray its outlines, yet it is as it were ignored, until the date fixed for display. From yesterday to to-morrow things continue essentially as they have been; yet we all know by experience how profound the change, the increased sense of imminence and of responsibility, when the curtain falls, and facts long dissembled are looked straight in the face. Without moving, we have traversed years of event. Action that seemed susceptible of indefinite procrastination appears now to have been too long deferred. Opportunities which might have been seized are seen to have passed irretrievably, because in heedlessness or indolence we noted not the day of visitation. But, as has been remarked, it is not China alone that lies within the debatable zone. With but slight modification of phrase, what has been said of her may be affirmed of Afghanistan, of Persia, and of Asiatic Turkey, on the other flank of the line.

In contemplating the possibilities of action, it must be repeated that consideration for the populations involved should have precedence of the interests of external nations—even of the one, or ones, taking action. This is not said as a cover or an apology for measures the originating motive of which may be national self-interest. Self-interest is not only a legitimate, but a fundamental, cause for national policy; one which needs no cloak of hypocrisy. As a principle it does not require justification in general statement, although the propriety of its application to a particular instance may call for demonstration. But as a matter of preparation, for dealing wisely and righteously with this great question, against the

chance of occasion arising,—a mental preparation which no government can afford to postpone,—the very first element of a just and far-seeing decision must be the determination to bear in mind, and to give due precedence to, the natural rights and the future development of the peoples most directly affected. The phrase “natural rights” is chosen expressly, to indicate those that result from the simple fact of being born; in this distinct from political or legal rights, which depend upon other fitnesses than that of merely being a man. Thus the claim of an indigenous population to retain indefinitely control of territory depends not upon a natural right, but upon political fitness, shown in the political work of governing, administering, and developing, in such manner as to insure the natural right of the world at large that resources should not be left idle, but be utilized for the general good. Failure to do this justifies, in principle, compulsion from outside; the position to be demonstrated, in the particular instance, is that the necessary time and the fitting opportunity have arrived.

The interests of the populations in these countries is by no means necessarily identical with those of the present governments, nor with the continuance of the latter in either form or person. These are not representative, in the sense that they either embody the wishes or promote the best welfare of the subject. They represent at most the incapacity of the people to govern themselves, and in their defects are the results of generations of evolution from a false system, unmodified by healthy opposition. Being what they are, should necessity demand their discontinuance, there need be no tenderness in dealing with them as institutions, whatever consideration may be shown to the incumbents of the moment.

It is, in fact, the inefficiency of the governments that chiefly gives rise to the