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THE DWELLING-PLACE OF LIGHT

By WINSTON CHURCHILL

Volume 3.

CHAPTER XV

Occasionally the art of narrative may be improved by borrowing the method of the movies. Another night has passed, and we are called upon to imagine the watery sunlight of a mild winter afternoon filtering through bare trees on the heads of a multitude. A large portion of Hampton Common is black with the people of sixteen nationalities who have gathered there, trampling down the snow, to listen wistfully and eagerly to a new doctrine of salvation. In the centre of this throng on the bandstand—reminiscent of concerts on sultry, summer nights—are the itinerant apostles of the cult called Syndicalism, exhorting by turns in divers tongues. Antonelli had spoken, and many others, when Janet, impelled by a craving not to be denied, had managed to push her way little by little from the outskirts of the crowd until now she stood almost beneath the orator who poured forth passionate words in a language she recognized as Italian. Her curiosity was aroused, she was unable to classify this tall man whose long and narrow face was accentuated by a pointed brown beard, whose lips gleamed red as he spoke, whose slim hands were eloquent. The artist as propagandist—the unsuccessful artist with more facility than will. The nose was classic, and wanted strength; the restless eyes that at times seemed

fixed on her were smouldering windows of a burning house: the fire that stirred her was also consuming him. Though he could have been little more than five and thirty, his hair was thinned and greying at the temples. And somehow emblematic of this physiognomy and physique, summing it up and expressing it in terms of apparel, were the soft collar and black scarf tied in a flowing bow. Janet longed to know what he was saying. His phrases, like music, played on her emotions, and at last, when his voice rose in crescendo at the climax of his speech, she felt like weeping.

"Un poeta!" a woman beside her exclaimed.

"Who is he?" Janet asked.

"Rolfe," said the woman.

"But he's an Italian?"

The woman shrugged her shoulders. "It is his name that is all I know." He had begun to speak again, and now in English, with an enunciation, a distinctive manner of turning his phrases new to such gatherings in America, where labour intellectuals are little known; surprising to Janet, diverting her attention, at first, from the meaning of his words. "Labour," she heard, "labour is the creator of all wealth, and wealth belongs to the creator. The wage system must be abolished. You, the creators, must do battle against these self-imposed masters until you shall come into your own. You who toil miserably for nine hours and produce, let us say, nine dollars of wealth—do you receive it? No, what is given you is barely enough to keep the slave and the slave's family alive! The master, the capitalist, seizes the rightful reward of your labour and spends it on luxuries, on automobiles and fine houses and women, on food he can't eat, while you are hungry. Yes, you are slaves," he cried, "because you submit like slaves."

He waited, motionless and scornful, for the noise to die down. "Since I have come here to Hampton, I have heard some speak of the state, others of the unions. Yet the state is your enemy, it will not help you to gain your freedom. The legislature has shortened your hours,—but why? Because the politicians are afraid of you, and because they think you will be content with a little. And now that the masters have cut your wages, the state sends its soldiers to crush you. Only fifty cents, they say—only fifty cents most of you miss from your envelopes. What is fifty cents to them? But I who speak to you have been hungry, I know that fifty cents will buy ten loaves of bread, or three pounds of the neck of pork, or six quarts of milk for the babies. Fifty cents will help pay the rent of the rat-holes where you live." Once more he was interrupted by angry shouts of approval. "And the labour unions, have they aided you? Why not? I will tell you why—because they are the servile instruments of the masters. The unions say that capital has rights, bargain with it, but for us there can be only one bargain, complete surrender of the tools to the workers. For the capitalists are parasites who suck your blood and your children's blood. From now on there can be no compromise, no truce, no peace until they are exterminated. It is war." War! In Janet's soul the word resounded like a tocsin. And again, as when swept along East Street with the mob, that sense of identity with these people and their wrongs, of submergence with them in their cause possessed her. Despite her ancestry, her lot was cast with them. She, too, had been precariously close to poverty, had known the sordidness of life; she, too, and Lise and Hannah had been duped and cheated of the fairer things. Eagerly she had drunk in the vocabulary of that new and terrible philosophy. The master class must be exterminated! Was it not true, if she had been of that class, that Ditmar would not have dared to use and deceive her? Why had she never thought of these things before?... The light was beginning to fade, the great meeting was breaking up, and yet she lingered. At the foot of the bandstand steps, conversing with a small group of operatives that surrounded him, she perceived the man who had just spoken. And as she stood hesitating, gazing at him, a desire to hear more, to hear all of this creed he preached, that fed the fires in her soul, urged her forward. Her need, had she known it, was even greater than that of these toilers whom she now called comrades. Despite some qualifying reserve she felt, and which had had to do with the redness of his lips, he attracted her. He had a mind, an intellect, he must possess stores of the knowledge for which she thirsted; he appeared to her as one who had studied and travelled, who had ascended heights and gained the wider view denied her. A cynical cosmopolitanism would have left her cold, but here, apparently, was a cultivated man burning with a sense of the world's wrongs. Ditmar, who was to have led her out of captivity, had only thrust her the deeper into bondage.... She joined the group, halting on the edge of it, listening. Rolfe was arguing with a man about the labour unions, but almost at once she knew she had fixed his attention. From time to time, as he talked, his eyes sought hers boldly, and in their dark pupils were tiny points of light that stirred and confused her, made her wonder what was behind them, in his soul. When he had finished his argument, he singled her out.

"You do not work in the mills?" he asked.

"No, I'm a stenographer—or I was one."

"And now?"

"I've given up my place."

"You want to join us?"

"I was interested in what you said. I never heard anything like it before."

He looked at her intently.

"Come, let us walk a little way," he said. And she went along by his side, through the Common, feeling a neophyte's excitement in the freemasonry, the contempt for petty conventions of this newly achieved doctrine of brotherhood. "I will give you things to read, you shall be one of us."

"I'm afraid I shouldn't understand them," Janet replied. "I've read so little."

"Oh, you will understand," he assured her, easily. "There is too much learning, too much reason and intelligence in the world, too little impulse and feeling, intuition. Where do reason and intelligence lead us? To selfishness, to thirst for power-straight into the master class. They separate us from the mass of humanity. No, our fight is against those who claim more enlightenment than their fellowmen, who control the public schools and impose reason on our children, because reason leads to submission, makes us content with our station in life. The true syndicalist is an artist, a revolutionist!" he cried.

Janet found this bewildering and yet through it seemed to shine for her a gleam of light. Her excitement grew. Never before had she been in the presence of one who talked like this, with such assurance and ease. And the fact that he despised knowledge, yet possessed it, lent him glamour.

"But you have studied!" she exclaimed.

"Oh yes, I have studied," he replied, with a touch of weariness, "only to learn that life is simple, after all, and that what is needed for the social order is simple. We have only to take what belongs to us, we who work, to follow our feelings, our inclinations."

"You would take possession of the mills?" she asked.

"Yes," he said quickly, "of all wealth, and of the government. There would be no government—we should not need it. A little courage is all that is necessary, and we come into our own. You are a stenographer, you say. But you—you are not content, I can see it in your face, in your eyes. You have cause to hate them, too, these masters, or you would not have been herein this place, to-day. Is it not so?"

She shivered, but was silent.

"Is it not so?" he repeated. "They have wronged you, too, perhaps,—they have wronged us all, but some are too stupid, too cowardly to fight and crush them. Christians and slaves submit. The old religion teaches that the world is cruel for most of us, but if we are obedient and humble we shall be rewarded in heaven." Rolfe laughed. "The masters approve of that teaching. They would not have it changed. But for us it is war. We'll strike and keep on striking, we'll break their machinery, spoil their mills and factories, and drive them out. And even if we do not win at once, it is better to suffer and die fighting than to have the life ground out of us—is it not?"

"Yes, it is better!" she agreed. The passion in her voice did not escape him.

"Some day, perhaps sooner than we think, we shall have the true Armageddon, the general strike, when the last sleeping toiler shall have aroused himself from his lethargy to rise up and come into his inheritance." He seemed to detach himself from her, his eyes became more luminous.

"`Like unseen music in the night,'—so Sorel writes about it. They may scoff at it, the wise ones, but it will come. `Like music in the night!' You respond to that!"

Again she was silent. They had walked on, through familiar streets that now seemed strange.

"You respond—I can tell," he said. "And yet, you are not like these others, like me, even. You are an American. And yet you are not like most of your countrywomen."

"Why do you say that?"

"I will tell you. Because they are cold, most of them, and trivial, they do not feel. But you—you can feel, you can love and hate. You look calm and cold, but you are not—I knew it when I looked at you, when you came up to me."

She did not know whether to resent or welcome his clairvoyance, his assumption of intimacy, his air of appropriation. But her curiosity was tingling.

"And you?" she asked. "Your name is Rolfe, isn't it?"

He assented. "And yours?"

She told him.

"You have been in America long—your family?"

"Very long," she said. "But you speak Italian, and Rolfe isn't an Italian name."

"My father was an Englishman, an artist, who lived in Italy—my mother a peasant woman from Lombardy, such as these who come to work in the mills. When she was young she was beautiful—like a Madonna by an old master."

"An old master?"

"The old masters are the great painters who lived in Italy four hundred years ago. I was named after one of them—the greatest. I am called Leonard. He was Leonardo da Vinci."

The name, as Rolfe pronounced it, stirred her. And art, painting! It was a realm unknown to her, and yet the very suggestion of it evoked yearnings. And she recalled a picture in the window of Hartmann's book-store, a coloured print before which she used to stop on her way to and from the office, the copy of a landscape by a California artist. The steep hillside in the foreground was spread with the misty green of olive trees, and beyond—far beyond—a snow-covered peak, like some high altar, flamed red in the sunset. She had not been able to express her feeling for this picture, it had filled her with joy and sadness. Once she had ventured to enter and ask its price—ten dollars. And then came a morning when she had looked for it, and it was gone.

"And your father—did he paint beautiful pictures, too?"

"Ah, he was too much of a socialist. He was always away whey I was a child, and after my mother's death he used to take me with him. When I was seventeen we went to Milan to take part in the great strike, and there I saw the soldiers shooting down the workers by the hundreds, putting them in prison by the thousands. Then I went to live in England, among the socialists there, and I learned the printer's trade. When I first came to this country I was on a labour paper in New York, I set up type, I wrote articles, and once in a while I addressed meetings on the East Side. But even before I left London I had read a book on Syndicalism by one of the great Frenchmen, and after a while I began to realize that the proletariat would never get anywhere through socialism."

"The proletariat?" The word was new to Janet's ear.

"The great mass of the workers, the oppressed, the people you saw here to-day. Socialism is not for them. Socialism—political socialism —betrays them into the hands of the master class. Direct action is the thing, the general strike, war,—the new creed, the new religion that will bring salvation. I joined the Industrial Workers of the World that is the American organization of Syndicalism. I went west, to Colorado and California and Oregon, I preached to the workers wherever there was an uprising, I met the leaders, Ritter and Borkum and Antonelli and Jastro and Nellie Bond, I was useful to them, I understand Syndicalism as they do not. And now we are here, to sow the seed in the East. Come," he said, slipping his arm through hers, "I will take you to Headquarters, I will enlist you, you shall be my recruit. I will give you the cause, the religion you need."

She longed to go, and yet she drew back, puzzled. The man fired and fascinated her, but there were reservations, apprehensions concerning him, felt rather than reasoned. Because of her state of rebellion, of her intense desire to satisfy in action the emotion aroused by a sense of wrong, his creed had made a violent appeal, but in his voice, in his eyes, in his manner she had been quick to detect a personal, sexual note that disturbed and alarmed her, that implied in him a lack of unity.

"I can't, to-night," she said. "I must go home—my mother is all alone.
But I want to help, I want to do something."

They were standing on a corner, under a street lamp. And she averted her eyes from his glance.

"Then come to-morrow," he said eagerly. "You know where Headquarters is, in the Franco-Belgian Hall?"

"What could I do?" she asked.

"You? You could help in many ways—among the women. Do you know what picketing is?"

"You mean keeping the operatives out of the mills?"

"Yes, in the morning, when they go to work. And out of the Chippering Mill, especially. Ditmar, the agent of that mill, is the ablest of the lot, I'm told. He's the man we want to cripple."

"Cripple!" exclaimed Janet.

"Oh, I don't mean to harm him personally." Rolfe did not seem to notice her tone. "But he intends to crush the strike, and I understand he's importing scabs here to finish out an order—a big order. If it weren't for him, we'd have an easier fight; he stiffens up the others. There's always one man like that, in every place. And what we want to do is to make him shut down, especially."

"I see," said Janet.

"You'll come to Headquarters?" Rolfe repeated.

"Yes, I'll come, to-morrow," she promised.

After she had left him she walked rapidly through several streets, not heeding her direction—such was the driving power of the new ideas he had given her. Certain words and phrases he had spoken rang in her head, and like martial music kept pace with her steps. She strove to remember all that he had said, to grasp its purport; and because it seemed recondite, cosmic, it appealed to her and excited her the more. And he, the man himself, had exerted a kind of hypnotic force that partially had paralyzed her faculties and aroused her fears while still in his presence: her first feeling in escaping had been one of relief—and then she began to regret not having gone to Headquarters. Hadn't she been foolish? In the retrospect, the elements in him that had disturbed her were less disquieting, his intellectual fascination was enhanced: and in that very emancipation from cant and convention, characteristic of the Order to which he belonged, had lain much of his charm. She had attracted him as a woman, there was no denying that. He, who had studied and travelled and known life in many lands, had discerned in her, Janet Bumpus, some quality to make him desire her, acknowledge her as a comrade! Tremblingly she exulted in the possession of that quality —whatever it might be. Ditmar, too, had perceived it! He had not known how to value it. With this thought came a flaming suggestion—Ditmar should see her with this man Rolfe, she would make him scorch with the fires of jealousy. Ditmar should know that she had joined his enemies, the Industrial Workers of the World. Of the world! Her shackles had been cast off at last!… And then, suddenly, she felt tired. The prospect of returning to Fillmore Street, to the silent flat—made the more silent by her mother's tragic presence—overwhelmed her. The ache in her heart began to throb again. How could she wait until the dawn of another day?…

In the black hours of the morning, with the siren dinning in her ears a hoarse call to war, Janet leaped from her bed and began to dress. There is a degree of cold so sharp that it seems actually to smell, and as she stole down the stairs and out of the door she shivered, assailed by a sense of loneliness and fear. Yet an insistent voice urged her on, whispering that to remain at home, inactive, was to go mad; salvation and relief lay in plunging into the struggle, in contributing her share toward retribution and victory. Victory! In Faber Street the light of the electric arcs tinged the snow with blue, and the flamboyant advertisements of breakfast foods, cigarettes and ales seemed but the mockery of an activity now unrealizable. The groups and figures scattered here and there farther down the street served only to exaggerate its wide emptiness. What could these do, what could she accomplish against the mighty power of the mills? Gradually, as she stood gazing, she became aware of a beating of feet upon the snow; over her shoulder she caught the gleam of steel. A squad of soldiers muffled in heavy capes and woolen caps was marching along the car-tracks. She followed them. At the corner of West Street, in obedience to a sharp command she saw them halt, turn, and advance toward a small crowd gathered there. It scattered, only to collect again when the soldiers had passed on. Janet joined them. She heard men cursing the soldiers. The women stood a little aside; some were stamping to keep warm, and one, with a bundle in her arms which Janet presently perceived to be a child, sank down on a stone step and remained there, crouching, resigned.

"We gotta right to stay here, in the street. We gotta right to live, I guess." The girl's teeth were chattering, but she spoke with such vehemence and spirit as to attract Janet's attention. "You worked in the Chippering, like me—yes?" she asked.

Janet nodded. The faded, lemon-coloured shawl the girl had wrapped about her head emphasized the dark beauty of her oval face. She smiled, and her white teeth were fairly dazzling. Impulsively she thrust her arm through Janet's.

"You American—you comrade, you come to help?" she asked.

"I've never done any picketing."

"I showa you."

The dawn had begun to break, revealing little by little the outlines of cruel, ugly buildings, the great mill looming darkly at the end of the street, and Janet found it scarcely believable that only a little while ago she had hurried thither in the mornings with anticipation and joy in her heart, eager to see Ditmar, to be near him! The sight of two policemen hurrying toward them from the direction of the canal aroused her. With sullen murmurs the group started to disperse, but the woman with the baby, numb with cold, was slow in rising, and one of the policemen thrust out his club threateningly.

"Move on, you can't sit here," he said.

With a lithe movement like the spring of a cat the Italian girl flung herself between them—a remarkable exhibition of spontaneous inflammability; her eyes glittered like the points of daggers, and, as though they had been dagger points, the policeman recoiled a little. The act, which was absolutely natural, superb, electrified Janet, restored in an instant her own fierceness of spirit. The girl said something swiftly, in Italian, and helped the woman to rise, paying no more attention to the policeman. Janet walked on, but she had not covered half the block before she was overtaken by the girl; her anger had come and gone in a flash, her vivacity had returned, her vitality again found expression in an abundant good nature and good will. She asked Janet's name, volunteering the information that her own was Gemma, that she was a "fine speeder" in the Chippering Mill, where she had received nearly seven dollars a week. She had been among the first to walk out.

"Why did you walk out?" asked Janet curiously.

"Why? I get mad when I know that my wages is cut. I want the money—I get married."

"Is that why you are striking?" asked Janet curiously.

"That is why—of course."

"Then you haven't heard any of the speakers? They say it is for a cause —the workers are striking for freedom, some day they will own the mills. I heard a man named Rolfe yesterday—"

The girl gave her a radiant smile.

"Rolfe! It is beautiful, what Rolfe said. You think so? I think so. I am for the cause, I hate the capitalist. We will win, and get more money, until we have all the money. We will be rich. And you, why do you strike?"

"I was mad, too," Janet replied simply.

"Revenge!" exclaimed the girl, glittering again. "I understan'. Here come the scabs! Now I show you."

The light had grown, but the stores were still closed and barred. Along Faber Street, singly or in little groups, anxiously glancing around them, behind them, came the workers who still clung desperately to their jobs. Gemma fairly darted at two girls who sought the edge of the sidewalk, seizing them by the sleeves, and with piteous expressions they listened while she poured forth on them a stream of Italian. After a moment one tore herself away, but the other remained and began to ask questions. Presently she turned and walked slowly away in the direction from which she had come.

"I get her," exclaimed Gemma, triumphantly.

"What did you say?" asked Janet.

"Listen—that she take the bread from our mouths, she is traditore—scab.
We strike for them, too, is it not so?"

"It is no use for them to work for wages that starve. We win the strike, we get good wages for all. Here comes another—she is a Jewess—you try, you spik."

Janet failed with the Jewess, who obstinately refused to listen or reply as the two walked along with her, one on either side. Near West Street they spied a policeman, and desisted. Up and down Faber Street, everywhere, the game went on: but the police were watchful, and once a detachment of militia passed. The picketing had to be done quickly, in the few minutes that were to elapse before the gates should close. Janet's blood ran faster, she grew excited, absorbed, bolder as she perceived the apologetic attitude of the "scabs" and she began to despise them with Gemma's heartiness; and soon she had lost all sense of surprise at finding herself arguing, pleading, appealing to several women in turn, fluently, in the language of the industrial revolution. Some—because she was an American—

examined her with furtive curiosity; others pretended not to understand, accelerating their pace. She gained no converts that morning, but one girl, pale, anemic with high cheek bones evidently a Slav—listened to her intently.

"I gotta right to work," she said.

"Not if others will starve because you work," objected Janet.

"If I don't work I starve," said the girl.

"No, the Committee will take care of you—there will be food for all. How much do you get now?"

"Four dollar and a half."

"You starve now," Janet declared contemptuously. "The quicker you join us, the sooner you'll get a living wage."

The girl was not quite convinced. She stood for a while undecided, and then ran abruptly off in the direction of West Street. Janet sought for others, but they had ceased coming; only the scattered, prowling picketers remained.

Over the black rim of the Clarendon Mill to the eastward the sky had caught fire. The sun had risen, the bells were ringing riotously, resonantly in the clear, cold air. Another working day had begun.

Janet, benumbed with cold, yet agitated and trembling because of her unwonted experience of the morning, made her way back to Fillmore Street. She was prepared to answer any questions her mother might ask; as they ate their dismal breakfast, and Hannah asked no questions, she longed to blurt out where she had been, to announce that she had cast her lot with the strikers, the foreigners, to defend them and declare that these were not to blame for the misfortunes of the family, but men like Ditmar and the owners of the mills, the capitalists. Her mother, she reflected bitterly, had never once betrayed any concern as to her shattered happiness. But gradually, as from time to time she glanced covertly at Hannah's face, her resentment gave way to apprehension. Hannah did not seem now even to be aware of her presence; this persistent apathy filled her with a dread she did not dare to acknowledge.

"Mother!" she cried at last.

Hannah started. "Have you finished?" she asked.

"Yes."

"You've b'en out in the cold, and you haven't eaten much." Janet fought back her tears. "Oh yes, I have," she managed to reply, convinced of the futility of speech, of all attempts to arouse her mother to a realization of the situation. Perhaps—though her heart contracted at the thought perhaps it was a merciful thing! But to live, day after day, in the presence of that comfortless apathy!... Later in the morning she went out, to walk the streets, and again in the afternoon; and twice she turned her face eastward, in the direction of the Franco-Belgian Hall. Her courage failed her. How would these foreigners and the strange leaders who had come to organize them receive her, Ditmar's stenographer? She would have to tell them she was Ditmar's stenographer; they would find it out. And now she was filled with doubts about Rolfe. Had he really thought she could be of use to them! Around the Common, in front of the City Hall men went about their affairs alertly, or stopped one another to talk about the strike. In Faber Street, indeed, an air of suppressed excitement prevailed, newsboys were shouting out extras; but business went on as though nothing had happened to disturb it. There was, however, the spectacle, unusual at this time of day, of operatives mingling with the crowd, while policemen stood watchfully at the corners; a company of soldiers marched by, drawing the people in silence to the curb. Janet scanned the faces of these idle operatives; they seemed for the most part either calm or sullen, wanting the fire and passion of the enthusiasts who had come out to picket in the early hours of the day; she sought vainly for the Italian girl with whom she had made friends. Despondency grew in her, a sense of isolation, of lacking any one, now, to whom she might turn, and these feelings were intensified by the air of confidence prevailing here. The strike was crushed, injustice and wrong had triumphed—would always triumph. In front of the Banner office she heard a man say to an acquaintance who had evidently just arrived in town:—"The Chippering? Sure, that's running. By to-morrow Ditmar'll have a full force there. Now that the militia has come, I guess we've got this thing scotched..."

Just how and when that order and confidence of Faber Street began to be permeated by disquietude and alarm, Janet could not have said. Something was happening, somewhere—or about to happen. An obscure, apparently telepathic process was at work. People began to hurry westward, a few had abandoned the sidewalk and were running; while other pedestrians, more timid, were equally concerned to turn and hasten in the opposite direction. At the corner of West Street was gathering a

crowd that each moment grew larger and larger, despite the efforts of the police to disperse it. These were strikers, angry strikers. They blocked the traffic, halted the clanging trolleys, surged into the mouth of West Street, booing and cursing at the soldiers whose threatening line of bayonets stretched across that thoroughfare half-way down toward the canal, guarding the detested Chippering Mill. Bordering West Street, behind the company's lodging-houses on the canal, were certain low buildings, warehouses, and on their roofs tense figures could be seen standing out against the sky. The vanguard of the mob, thrust on by increasing pressure from behind, tumbled backward the thin cordon of police, drew nearer and nearer the bayonets, while the soldiers grimly held their ground. A voice was heard on the roof, a woman in the front rank of the mob gave a warning shriek, and two swift streams of icy water burst forth from the warehouse parapet, tearing the snow from the cobbles, flying in heavy, stinging spray as it advanced and mowed the strikers down and drove them like flies toward Faber Street. Screams of fright, curses of defiance and hate mingled with the hissing of the water and the noise of its impact with the ground—like the tearing of heavy sail-cloth. Then, from somewhere near the edge of the mob, came a single, sharp detonation, quickly followed by another—below the watchmen on the roof a window crashed. The nozzles on the roof were raised, their streams, sweeping around in a great semi-circle, bowled down the rioters below the tell-tale wisps of smoke, and no sooner had the avalanche of water passed than the policemen who, forewarned, had sought refuge along the walls, rushed forward and seized a man who lay gasping on the snow. Dazed, half drowned, he had dropped his pistol. They handcuffed him and dragged him away through the ranks of the soldiers, which opened for him to pass. The mob, including those who had been flung down, bruised and drenched, and who had painfully got to their feet again, had backed beyond the reach of the water, and for a while held that ground, until above its hoarse, defiant curses was heard, from behind, the throbbing of drums.

"Cossacks! More Cossacks!"

The cry was taken up by Canadians, Italians, Belgians, Poles, Slovaks, Jews, and Syrians. The drums grew louder, the pressure from the rear was relaxed, the throng in Faber Street began a retreat in the direction of the power plant. Down that street, now in double time, came three companies of Boston militia, newly arrived in Hampton, blue-taped, gaitered, slouch-hatted. From columns of fours they wheeled into line, and with bayonets at charge slowly advanced. Then the boldest of the mob, who still lingered, sullenly gave way, West Street was cleared, and on the wider thoroughfare the long line of traffic, the imprisoned trolleys began to move again....

Janet had wedged herself into the press far enough to gain a view down West Street of the warehouse roofs, to see the water turned on, to hear the screams and the curses and then the shots. Once more she caught the contagious rage of the mob; the spectacle had aroused her to fury; it seemed ignominious, revolting that human beings, already sufficiently miserable, should be used thus. As she retreated reluctantly across the car tracks her attention was drawn to a man at her side, a Slovak. His face was white and pinched, his clothes were wet. Suddenly he stopped, turned and shook his fist at the line of soldiers.

"The Cossack, the politzman belong to the boss, the capitalist!" he cried. "We ain't got no right to live. I say, kill the capitalist—kill Ditmar!"

A man with a deputy's shield ran toward them.

"Move on!" he said brutally. "Move on, or I'll roil you in." And Janet, once clear of the people, fled westward, the words the foreigner had spoken ringing in her ears. She found herself repeating them aloud, "Kill Ditmar!" as she hurried through the gathering dusk past the power house with its bottle-shaped chimneys, and crossed the little bridge over the stream beside the chocolate factory. She gained the avenue she had trod with Eda on that summer day of the circus. Here was the ragpicker's shop, the fence covered with bedraggled posters, the deserted grand-stand of the base-ball park spread with a milky-blue mantle of snow; and beyond, the monotonous frame cottages all built from one model. Now she descried looming above her the outline of Torrey's Hill blurred and melting into a darkening sky, and turned into the bleak lane where stood the Franco-Belgian Hall—Hampton Headquarters of the Industrial Workers of the World. She halted a moment at sight of the crowd of strikers loitering in front of it, then went on again, mingling with them excitedly beside the little building. Its lines were simple and unpretentious, and yet it had an exotic character all its own, differing strongly from the surrounding houses: it might have been transported from a foreign country and set down here. As the home of that odd, cooperative society of thrifty and gregarious Belgians it had stimulated her imagination, and once before she had gazed, as now, through the yellowed, lantern-like windows of the little store at the women and children waiting to fill their baskets with the day's provisions. In the middle of the building was an entrance leading up to the second floor. Presently she gathered the courage to enter. Her heart was pounding as she climbed the dark stairs and thrust open the door, and she stood a moment on the threshold almost choked by the fumes of tobacco, bewildered by the scene within, confused by the noise. Through a haze of smoke she beheld groups of swarthy foreigners

fiercely disputing among themselves—apparently on the verge of actual combat, while a sprinkling of silent spectators of both sexes stood at the back of the hall. At the far end was a stage, still set with painted, sylvan scenery, and seated there, alone, above the confusion and the strife, with a calmness, a detachment almost disconcerting, was a stout man with long hair and a loose black tie. He was smoking a cigar and reading a newspaper which he presently flung down, taking up another from a pile on the table beside him. Suddenly one of the groups, shouting and gesticulating, surged toward him and made an appeal through their interpreter. He did not appear to be listening; without so much as lowering his newspaper he spoke a few words in reply, and the group retired, satisfied. By some incomprehensible power he dominated. Panting, fascinated, loath to leave yet fearful, Janet watched him, breathing now deeply this atmosphere of smoke, of strife, and turmoil. She found it grateful, for the strike, the battle was in her own soul as well. Momentarily she had forgotten Rolfe, who had been in her mind as she had come hither, and then she caught sight of him in a group in the centre of the hall. He saw her, he was making his way toward her, he was holding her hands, looking down into her face with that air of appropriation, of possession she remembered. But she felt no resentment now, only a fierce exultation at having dared.

"You've come to join us!" he exclaimed. "I thought I'd lost you."

He bent closer to her that she might hear.

"We are having a meeting of the Committee," he said, and she smiled. Despite her agitation, this struck her as humorous. And Rolfe smiled back at her. "You wouldn't think so, but Antonelli knows how to manage them. He is a general. Come, I will enlist you, you shall be my recruit."

"But what can I do?" she asked.

"I have been thinking. You said you were a stenographer—we need stenographers, clerks. You will not be wasted. Come in here."

Behind her two box-like rooms occupying the width of the building had been turned into offices, and into one of these Rolfe led her. Men and women were passing in and out, while in a corner a man behind a desk sat opening envelopes, deftly extracting bills and post-office orders and laying them in a drawer. On the wall of this same room was a bookcase half filled with nondescript volumes.

"The Bibliotheque—that's French for the library of the Franco-Belgian Cooperative Association," explained Rolfe. "And this is Comrade Sanders. Sanders is easier to say than Czernowitz. Here is the young lady I told you about, who wishes to help us—Miss Bumpus."

Mr. Sanders stopped counting his money long enough to grin at her.

"You will be welcome," he said, in good English. "Stenographers are scarce here. When can you come?"

"To-morrow morning," answered Janet.

"Good," he said. "I'll have a machine for you. What kind do you use?"

She told him. Instinctively she took a fancy to this little man, whose flannel shirt and faded purple necktie, whose blue, unshaven face and tousled black hair seemed incongruous with an alert, business-like, and efficient manner. His nose, though not markedly Jewish, betrayed in him the blood of that vital race which has triumphantly survived so many centuries of bondage and oppression.

"He was a find, Czernowitz—he calls himself Sanders," Rolfe explained, as they entered the hall once more. "An Operative in the Patuxent, educated himself, went to night school—might have been a capitalist like so many of his tribe if he hadn't loved humanity. You'll get along with him."

"I'm sure I shall," she replied.

Rolfe took from his pocket a little red button with the letters I.W.W. printed across it. He pinned it, caressingly, on her coat.

"Now you are one of us!" he exclaimed. "You'll come to-morrow?"

"I'll come to-morrow," she repeated, drawing away from him a little.

"And—we shall be friends?"

She nodded. "I must go now, I think."

"Addio!" he said. "I shall look for you. For the present I must remain here, with the Committee."

When Janet reached Faber Street she halted on the corner of Stanley to stare into the window of the glorified drugstore. But she gave no heed to the stationery, the cameras and candy displayed there, being in the emotional state that reduces to unreality objects of the commonplace, everyday world. Presently, however, she became aware of a man standing beside her.

"Haven't we met before?" he asked. "Or—can I be mistaken?"

Some oddly familiar quizzical note in his voice stirred, as she turned to him, a lapsed memory. The hawklike yet benevolent and illuminating look he gave her recalled the man at Silliston whom she had thought a carpenter though he was dressed now in a warm suit of gray wool, and wore a white, low collar.

"In Silliston!" she exclaimed. "Why—what are you doing here?"

"Well—this instant I was just looking at those notepapers, wondering which I should choose if I really had good taste. But it's very puzzling—isn't it?—when one comes from the country. Now that saffron with the rough edges is very—artistic. Don't you think so?"

She looked at him and smiled, though his face was serious.

"You don't really like it, yourself," she informed him.

"Now you're reflecting on my taste," he declared.

"Oh no—it's because I saw the fence you were making. Is it finished yet?"

"I put the last pineapple in place the day before Christmas. Do you remember the pineapples?"

She nodded. "And the house? and the garden?"

"Oh, those will never be finished. I shouldn't have anything more to do."

"Is that—all you do?" she asked.

"It's more important than anything else. But you have you been back to
Silliston since I saw you? I've been waiting for another call."

"You haven't even thought of me since," she was moved to reply in the same spirit.

"Haven't I?" he exclaimed. "I wondered, when I came up here to Hampton, whether I mightn't meet you—and here you are! Doesn't that prove it?"

She laughed, somewhat surprised at the ease with which he had diverted her, drawn her out of the tense, emotional mood in which he had discovered her. As before, he puzzled her, but the absence of any flirtatious suggestion in his talk gave her confidence. He was just friendly.

"Sometimes I hoped I might see you in Hampton," she ventured.

"Well, here I am. I heard the explosion, and came."

"The explosion! The strike!" she exclaimed; suddenly enlightened. "Now I remember! You said something about Hampton being nitro-glycerine—human nitro-glycerine. You predicted this strike."

"Did I? perhaps I did," he assented. "Maybe you suggested the idea."

"I suggested it! Oh no, I didn't—it was new to me, it frightened me at the time, but it started me thinking about a lot of things that had never occurred to me."

"You might have suggested the idea without intending to, you know. There are certain people who inspire prophecies—perhaps you are one."

His tone was playful, but she was quick to grasp at an inference—since his glance was fixed on the red button she wore.

"You meant that I would explode, too!"

"Oh no—nothing so terrible as that," he disclaimed. "And yet most of us have explosives stored away inside of us—instincts, impulses and all that sort of thing that won't stand too much bottling-up."

"Yes, I've joined the strike." She spoke somewhat challengingly, though she had an uneasy feeling that defiance was somewhat out of place with him. "I suppose you think it strange, since I'm not a foreigner and haven't worked in the mills. But I don't see why that should make any difference if you believe that the workers haven't had a chance."

"No difference," he agreed, pleasantly, "no difference at all."

"Don't you sympathize with the strikers?" she insisted. "Or—are you on the other side, the side of the capitalists?"

"I? I'm a spectator—an innocent bystander."

"You don't sympathize with the workers?" she cried.

"Indeed I do. I sympathize with everybody."

"With the capitalists?"

"Why not?"

"Why not? Because they've had everything their own way, they've exploited the workers, deceived and oppressed them, taken all the profits." She was using glibly her newly acquired labour terminology.

"Isn't that a pretty good reason for sympathizing with them?" he inquired.

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I should think it might be difficult to be happy and have done all that. At any rate, it isn't my notion of happiness. Is it yours?"

For a moment she considered this.

"No—not exactly," she admitted. "But they seem happy," she insisted vehemently, "they have everything they want and they do exactly as they please without considering anybody except themselves. What do they care how many they starve and make miserable? You—you don't know, you can't know what it is to be driven and used and flung away!"

Almost in tears, she did not notice his puzzled yet sympathetic glance.

"The operatives, the workers create all the wealth, and the capitalists take it from them, from their wives and children."

"Now I know what you've been doing," he said accusingly. "You've been studying economics."

Her brow puckered.

"Studying what?"

"Economics—the distribution of wealth. It's enough to upset anybody."

"But I'm not upset," she insisted, smiling in spite of herself at his comical concern.

"It's very exciting. I remember reading a book once on economics and such things, and I couldn't sleep for a week. It was called `The Organization of Happiness,' I believe, and it described just how the world ought to be arranged—and isn't. I thought seriously of going to Washington and telling the President and Congress about it."

"It wouldn't have done any good," said Janet.

"No, I realized that."

"The only thing that will do any good is to strike and keep on striking until the workers own the mills—take everything away from the capitalists."

"It's very simple," he agreed, "much simpler than the book I read. That's what they call syndicalism, isn't it?"

"Yes." She was conscious of his friendliness, of the fact that his skepticism was not cynical, yet she felt a strong desire to convince him, to vindicate her new creed. "There's a man named Rolfe, an educated man who's lived in Italy and England, who explains it wonderfully. He's one of the I.W.W. leaders—you ought to hear him."

"Rolfe converted you? I'll go to hear him."

"Yes—but you have to feel it, you have to know what it is to be kept down and crushed. If you'd only stay here awhile."

"Oh, I intend to," he replied.

She could not have said why, but she felt a certain relief on hearing this.

"Then you'll see for yourself!" she cried. "I guess that's what you've come for, isn't it?"

"Well, partly. To tell the truth, I've come to open a restaurant."

"To open a restaurant!" Somehow she was unable to imagine him as the proprietor of a restaurant. "But isn't it rather a bad time?" she gasped.

"I don't look as if I had an eye for business—do I? But I have. No, it's a good time—so many people will be hungry, especially children. I'm going to open a restaurant for children. Oh, it will be very modest, of course—I suppose I ought to call it a soup kitchen."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, staring at him. "Then you really—" the sentence remained unfinished. "I'm sorry," she said simply. "You made me think—"

"Oh, you mustn't pay any attention to what I say. Come 'round and see my establishment, Number 77 Dey Street, one flight up, no elevator. Will you?"

She laughed tremulously as he took her hand.

"Yes indeed, I will," she promised. And she stood awhile staring after him. She was glad he had come to Hampton, and yet she did not even know his name.

CHAPTER XVI

She had got another place—such was the explanation of her new activities Janet gave to Hannah, who received it passively. And the question dreaded about Ditmar was never asked. Hannah had become as a child, performing her tasks by the momentum of habituation, occasionally talking simply of trivial, every-day affairs, as though the old life were going on continuously. At times, indeed, she betrayed concern about Edward, wondering whether he were comfortable at the mill, and she washed and darned the clothes he sent home by messenger. She hoped he would not catch cold. Her suffering seemed to have relaxed. It was as though the tortured portion of her brain had at length been seared. To Janet, her mother's condition when she had time to think of it—was at once a relief and a new and terrible source of anxiety.

Mercifully, however, she had little leisure to reflect on that tragedy, else her own sanity might have been endangered. As soon as breakfast was over she hurried across the city to the Franco-Belgian Hall, and often did not return until nine o'clock at night, usually so tired that she sank into bed and fell asleep. For she threw herself into her new labours with the desperate energy that seeks forgetfulness, not daring to pause to think about herself, to reflect upon what the future might hold for her when the strike should be over. Nor did she confine herself to typewriting, but, as with Ditmar, constantly assumed a greater burden of duty, helping Czernowitz—who had the work of five men—with his accounts, with the distribution of the funds to the ever-increasing number of the needy who were facing starvation. The money was paid out to them in proportion to the size of their families; as the strike became more and more effective their number increased until many mills had closed; other mills, including the Chippering, were still making a desperate attempt to operate their looms, and sixteen thousand operatives were idle. She grew to know these operatives who poured all day long in a steady stream through Headquarters; she heard their stories, she entered into their lives, she made decisions. Some, even in those early days of the strike, were frauds; were hiding their savings; but for the most part investigation revealed an appalling destitution, a resolution to suffer for the worker's cause. A few complained, the majority were resigned; some indeed showed exaltation and fire, were undaunted by the task of picketing in the cold mornings, by the presence of the soldiery. In this work of dealing with the operatives Janet had the advice and help of Anna Mower, a young woman who herself had been a skilled operative in the Clarendon Mill, and who was giving evidence of unusual qualities of organization and leadership. Anna, with no previous practise in oratory, had suddenly developed the

gift of making speeches, the more effective with her fellow workers because unstudied, because they flowed directly out of an experience she was learning to interpret and universalize. Janet, who heard her once or twice, admired and envied her. They became friends.

The atmosphere of excitement in which Janet now found herself was cumulative. Day by day one strange event followed another, and at times it seemed as if this extraordinary existence into which she had been plunged were all a feverish dream. Hither, to the absurd little solle de reunion of the Franco-Belgian Hall came notables from the great world, emissaries from an uneasy Governor, delegations from the Legislature, Members of the Congress of the United States and even Senators; students, investigators, men and women of prominence in the universities, magazine writers to consult with uncouth leaders of a rebellion that defied and upset the powers which hitherto had so serenely ruled, unchallenged. Rolfe identified these visitors, and one morning called her attention to one who he said was the nation's foremost authority on social science. Janet possessed all unconsciously the New England reverence for learning, she was stirred by the sight of this distinguished-looking person who sat on the painted stage, fingering his glasses and talking to Antonelli. The two men made a curious contrast. But her days were full of contrasts of which her mood exultingly approved. The politicians were received cavalierly. Toward these, who sought to act as go-betweens in the conflict, Antonelli was contemptuous; he behaved like the general of a conquering army, and his audacity was reflected in the other leaders, in Rolfe, in the Committee itself.

That Committee, a never-ending source of wonder to Janet, with its nine or ten nationalities and interpreters, was indeed a triumph over the obstacles of race and language, a Babel made successful; in a community of Anglo-Saxon traditions, an amazing anomaly. The habiliments of the west, the sack coats and sweaters, the slouch hats and caps, the so-called Derbies pulled down over dark brows and flashing eyes lent to these peasant types an incongruity that had the air of ferocity. The faces of most of them were covered with a blue-black stubble of beard. Some slouched in their chairs, others stood and talked in groups, gesticulating with cigars and pipes; yet a keen spectator, after watching them awhile through the smoke, might have been able to pick out striking personalities among them. He would surely have noticed Froment, the stout, limping man under whose white eyebrows flashed a pair of livid blue and peculiarly Gallic eyes; he held the Belgians in his hand: Lindtzki, the Pole, with his zealot's face; Radeau, the big Canadian in the checked Mackinaw; and Findley, the young American-less by any arresting quality of feature than by an expression suggestive of practical wisdom.

Imagine then, on an afternoon in the middle phase of the strike, some half dozen of the law-makers of a sovereign state, top-hatted and conventionally garbed in black, accustomed to authority, to conferring favours instead of requesting them, climbing the steep stairs and pausing on the threshold of that hall, fingering their watch chains, awaiting recognition by the representatives of the new and bewildering force that had arisen in an historic commonwealth. A "debate" was in progress. Some of the debaters, indeed, looked over their shoulders, but the leader, who sat above them framed in the sylvan setting of the stage, never so much as deigned to glance up from his newspaper. A half-burned cigar rolled between his mobile lips, he sat on the back of his neck, and yet he had an air Napoleonic; Nietzschean, it might better be said—although it is safe to assert that these moulders of American institutions knew little about that terrible philosopher who had raised his voice against the "slave morals of Christianity." It was their first experience with the superman.... It remained for the Canadian, Radeau, when a lull arrived in the turmoil, to suggest that the gentlemen be given chairs.

"Sure, give them chairs," assented Antonelli in a voice hoarse from speech-making. Breath-taking audacity to certain spectators who had followed the delegation hither, some of whom could not refrain from speculating whether it heralded the final scrapping of the machinery of the state; amusing to cynical metropolitan reporters, who grinned at one another as they prepared to take down the proceedings; evoking a fierce approval in the breasts of all rebels among whom was Janet. The Legislative Chairman, a stout and suave gentleman of Irish birth, proceeded to explain how greatly concerned was the Legislature that the deplorable warfare within the state should cease; they had come, he declared, to aid in bringing about justice between labour and capital.

"We'll get justice without the help of the state," remarked Antonelli curtly, while a murmur of approval ran through the back of the hall.

That was scarcely the attitude, said the Chairman, he had expected. He knew that such a strike as this had engendered bitterness, there had been much suffering, sacrifice undoubtedly on both sides, but he was sure, if Mr. Antonelli and the Committee would accept their services here he was interrupted.

Had the mill owners accepted their services?

The Chairman cleared his throat.

The fact was that the mill owners were more difficult to get together in a body. A meeting would be arranged—"When you arrange a meeting, let me know," said Antonelli.

A laugh went around the room. It was undoubtedly very difficult to keep one's temper under such treatment. The Chairman looked it.

"A meeting would be arranged," he declared, with a long-suffering expression. He even smiled a little. "In the meantime—"

"What can your committee do?" demanded one of the strike leaders, passionately—it was Findley. "If you find one party wrong, can your state force it to do right? Can you legislators be impartial when you have not lived the bitter life of the workers? Would you arbitrate a question of life and death? And are the worst wages paid in these mills anything short of death? Do you investigate because conditions are bad? or because the workers broke loose and struck? Why did you not come before the strike?"

This drew more approval from the rear. Why, indeed? The Chairman was adroit, he had pulled himself out of many tight places in the Assembly Chamber, but now he began to perspire, to fumble in his coat tails for a handkerchief. The Legislature, he maintained, could not undertake to investigate such matters until called to its attention….

Later on a tall gentleman, whom heaven had not blessed with tact, saw fit to deplore the violence that had occurred; he had no doubt the leaders of the strike regretted it as much as he, he was confident it would be stopped, when public opinion would be wholly and unreservedly on the side of the strikers.

"Public opinion!" savagely cried Lindtzki, who spoke English with only a slight accent. "If your little boy, if your little girl come to you and ask for shoes, for bread, and you say, `I have no shoes, I have no bread, but public opinion is with us,' would that satisfy you?"

This drew so much applause that the tall law-maker sat down again with a look of disgust on his face…. The Committee withdrew, and for many weeks thereafter the state they represented continued to pay some four thousand dollars daily to keep its soldiers on the streets of Hampton….

In the meanwhile Janet saw much of Rolfe. Owing to his facile command of language he was peculiarly fitted to draft those proclamations, bombastically worded in the French style, issued and circulated by the Strike Committee—appeals to the polyglot army to withstand the pangs of hunger, to hold out for the terms laid down, assurances that victory was at hand. Walking up and down the bibliotheque, his hands behind his back, his red lips gleaming as he spoke, he dictated these documents to Janet. In the ecstasy of this composition he had a way of shaking his head slowly from side to side, and when she looked up she saw his eyes burning, down at her. A dozen times a day, while she was at her other work, he would come in and talk to her. He excited her, she was divided between attraction and fear of him, and often she resented his easy assumption that a tie existed between them—the more so because this seemed to be taken for granted among certain of his associates. In their eyes, apparently, she was Rolfe's recruit in more senses than one. It was indeed a strange society in which she found herself, and Rolfe typified it. He lived on the plane of the impulses and intellect, discarded as inhibiting factors what are called moral standards, decried individual discipline and restraint. And while she had never considered these things, the spectacle of a philosophy—embodied in him—that frankly and cynically threw them overboard was disconcerting. He regarded her as his proselyte, he called her a Puritan, and he seemed more concerned that she should shed these relics of an ancestral code than acquire the doctrines of Sorel and Pouget. And yet association with him presented the allurement of a dangerous adventure. Intellectually he fascinated her; and still another motive—which she partially disguised from herself—prevented her from repelling him. That motive had to do with Ditmar. She tried to put Ditmar from her mind; she sought in desperation, not only to keep busy, but to steep and lose herself in this fierce creed as an antidote to the insistent, throbbing pain that lay ambushed against her moments of idleness. The second evening of her installation at Headquarters she had worked beyond the supper hour, helping Sanders with his accounts. She was loath to go home. And when at last she put on her hat and coat and entered the hall Rolfe, who had been talking to Jastro, immediately approached her. His liquid eyes regarded her solicitously.

"You must be hungry," he said. "Come out with me and have some supper."

But she was not hungry; what she needed was air. Then he would walk a little way with her—he wanted to talk to her. She hesitated, and then consented. A fierce hope had again taken possession of her, and when they came to Warren Street she turned into it.

"Where are you going?" Rolfe demanded.

"For a walk," she said. "Aren't you coming?"

"Will you have supper afterwards?"

"Perhaps."

He followed her, puzzled, yet piqued and excited by her manner, as with rapid steps she hurried along the pavement. He tried to tell her what her friendship meant to him; they were, he declared, kindred spirits—from the first time he had seen her, on the Common, he had known this. She scarcely heard him, she was thinking of Ditmar; and this was why she had led Rolfe into Warren Street they might meet Ditmar! It was possible that he would be going to the mill at this time, after his dinner! She scrutinized every distant figure, and when they reached the block in which he lived she walked more slowly. From within the house came to her, faintly, the notes of a piano—his daughter Amy was practising. It was the music, a hackneyed theme of Schubert's played heavily, that seemed to arouse the composite emotion of anger and hatred, yet of sustained attraction and wild regret she had felt before, but never so poignantly as now. And she lingered, perversely resolved to steep herself in the agony.

"Who lives here" Rolfe asked.

"Mr. Ditmar," she answered.

"The agent of the Chippering Mill?"

She nodded.

"He's the worst of the lot," Rolfe said angrily. "If it weren't for him, we'd have this strike won to-day. He owns this town, he's run it to suit himself, He stiffens up the owners and holds the other mills in line. He's a type, a driver, the kind of man we must get rid of. Look at him —he lives in luxury while his people are starving."

"Get rid of!" repeated Janet, in an odd voice.

"Oh, I don't mean to shoot him," Rolfe declared. "But he may get shot, for all I know, by some of these slaves he's made desperate."

"They wouldn't dare shoot him," Janet said. "And whatever he is, he isn't a coward. He's stronger than the others, he's more of a man."

Rolfe looked at her curiously.

"What do you know about him?" he asked.

"I—I know all about him. I was his stenographer."

"You! His stenographer! Then why are you herewith us?"

"Because I hate him!" she cried vehemently. "Because I've learned that it's true—what you say about the masters—they only think of themselves and their kind, and not of us. They use us."

"He tried to use you! You loved him!"

"How dare you say that!"

He fell back before her anger.

"I didn't mean to offend you," he exclaimed. "I was jealous—I'm jealous of every man you've known. I want you. I've never met a woman like you."

They were the very words Ditmar had used! She did not answer, and for a while they walked along in silence, leaving Warren Street and cutting across the city until they canoe in sight of the Common. Rolfe drew nearer to her.

"Forgive me!" he pleaded. "You know I would not offend you. Come, we'll have supper together, and I will teach you more of what you have to know."

"Where?" she asked.

"At the Hampton—it is a little cafe where we all go. Perhaps you've been there."

"No," said Janet.

"It doesn't compare with the cafes of Europe—or of New York. Perhaps we shall go to them sometime,

together. But it is cosy, and warm, and all the leaders will be there. You'll come—yes?"

"Yes, I'll come," she said....

The Hampton was one of the city's second-class hotels, but sufficiently pretentious to have, in its basement, a "cafe" furnished in the "mission" style of brass tacks and dull red leather. In the warm, food-scented air fantastic wisps of smoke hung over the groups; among them Janet made out several of the itinerant leaders of Syndicalism, loose-tied, debonnair, giving a tremendous impression of freedom as they laughed and chatted with the women. For there were women, ranging from the redoubtable Nellie Bond herself down to those who may be designated as camp-followers. Rolfe, as he led Janet to a table in a corner of the room, greeted his associates with easy camaraderie. From Miss Bond he received an illuminating smile. Janet wondered at her striking good looks, at the boldness and abandon with which she talked to Jastro or exchanged sallies across the room. The atmosphere of this tawdry resort, formerly frequented by shop girls and travelling salesmen, was magically transformed by the presence of this company, made bohemian, cosmopolitan, exhilarating. And Janet, her face flushed, sat gazing at the scene, while Rolfe consulted the bill of fare and chose a beefsteak and French fried potatoes. The apathetic waiter in the soiled linen jacket he addressed as "comrade." Janet protested when he ordered cocktails.

"You must learn to live, to relax, to enjoy yourself," he declared.

But a horror of liquor held her firm in her refusal. Rolfe drank his, and while they awaited the beefsteak she was silent, the prey of certain misgivings that suddenly assailed her. Lise, she remembered, had sometimes mentioned this place, though preferring Gruber's: and she was struck by the contrast between this spectacle and the grimness of the strike these people had come to encourage and sustain, the conflict in the streets, the suffering in the tenements. She glanced at Rolfe, noting the manner in which he smoked cigarettes, sensually, as though seeking to wring out of each all there was to be got before flinging it down and lighting another. Again she was struck by the anomaly of a religion that had indeed enthusiasms, sacrifices perhaps, but no disciplines. He threw it out in snatches, this religion, while relating the histories of certain persons in the room: of Jastro, for instance, letting fall a hint to the effect that this evangelist and bliss Bond were dwelling together in more than amity.

"Then you don't believe in marriage?" she demanded, suddenly.

Rolfe laughed.

"What is it," he exclaimed, "but the survival of the system of property? It's slavery, taboo, a device upheld by the master class to keep women in bondage, in superstition, by inducing them to accept it as a decree of God."

"Did the masters themselves ever respect it, or any other decrees of God they preached to the slaves? Read history, and you will see. They had their loves, their mistresses. Read the newspapers, and you will find out whether they respect it to-day. But they are very anxious to have you and me respect it and all the other Christian commandments, because they will prevent us from being discontented. They say that we must be satisfied with the situation in this world in which God has placed us, and we shall have our reward in the next."

She shivered slightly, not only at the ideas thus abruptly enunciated, but because it occurred to her that those others must be taking for granted a certain relationship between herself and Rolfe.... But presently, when the supper arrived, these feelings changed. She was very hungry, and the effect of the food, of the hot coffee was to dispel her doubt and repugnance, to throw a glamour over the adventure, to restore to Rolfe's arguments an exciting and alluring appeal. And with renewed physical energy she began to experience once more a sense of fellowship with these free and daring spirits who sought to avenge her wrongs and theirs.

"For us who create there are no rules of conduct, no conventions," Rolfe was saying, "we do not care for the opinions of the middle class, of the bourgeois. With us men and women are on an equality. It is fear that has kept the workers down, and now we have cast that off—we know our strength. As they say in Italy, il mondo e a chi se lo piglia, the world belongs to him who is bold."

"Italian is a beautiful language," she exclaimed.

"I will teach you Italian," he said.

"I want to learn—so much!" she sighed.

"Your soul is parched," he said, in a commiserating tone. "I will water it, I will teach you everything." His words aroused a faint, derisive echo: Ditmar had wish to teach her, too! But now she was strongly under the spell of the new ideas hovering like shining, gossamer spirits just beyond her reach, that she sought to grasp and correlate. Unlike the code which Rolfe condemned, they seemed not to be separate from life, opposed to it, but entered even into that most important of its elements, sex. In deference to that other code Ditmar had made her his mistress, and because he was concerned for his position and the security of the ruling class had sought to hide the fact.... Rolfe, with a cigarette between his red lips, sat back in his chair, regarding with sensuous enjoyment the evident effect of his arguments.

"But love?" she interrupted, when presently he had begun to talk again. She strove inarticulately to express an innate feminine objection to relationships that were made and broken at pleasure.

"Love is nothing but attraction between the sexes, the life-force working in us. And when that attraction ceases, what is left? Bondage. The hideous bondage of Christian marriage, in which women promise to love and obey forever."

"But women—women are not like men. When once they give themselves they do not so easily cease to love. They—they suffer."

He did not seem to observe the bitterness in her voice.

"Ah, that is sentiment," he declared, "something that will not trouble women when they have work to do, inspiring work. It takes time to change our ideas, to learn to see things as they are." He leaned forward eagerly. "But you will learn, you are like some of those rare women in history who have had the courage to cast off traditions. You were not made to be a drudge...."

But now her own words, not his, were ringing in her head—women do not so easily cease to love, they suffer. In spite of the new creed she had so eagerly and fiercely embraced, in which she had sought deliverance and retribution, did she still love Ditmar, and suffer because of him? She repudiated the suggestion, yet it persisted as she glanced at Rolfe's red lips and compared him with Ditmar. Love! Rolfe might call it what he would—the life-force, attraction between the sexes, but it was proving stronger than causes and beliefs. He too was making love to her; like Ditmar, he wanted her to use and fling away when he should grow weary. Was he not pleading for himself rather than for the human cause he professed? taking advantage of her ignorance and desperation, of her craving for new experience and knowledge? The suspicion sickened her. Were all men like that? Suddenly, without apparent premeditation or connection, the thought of the stranger from Silliston entered her mind. Was he like that?... Rolfe was bending toward her across the table, solicitously. "What's the matter?" he asked.

Her reply was listless.

"Nothing—except that I'm tired. I want to go home."

"Not now," he begged. "It's early yet."

But she insisted....

CHAPTER XVII

The next day at the noon hour Janet entered Dey Street. Cheek by jowl there with the tall tenements whose spindled-pillared porches overhung the darkened pavements were smaller houses of all ages and descriptions, their lower floors altered to accommodate shops; while in the very midst of the block stood a queer wooden building with two rows of dormer windows let into its high-pitched roof. It bore a curious resemblance to a town hall in the low countries. In front of it the street was filled with children gazing up at the doorway where a man stood surveying them —the stranger from Silliston. There was a rush toward him, a rush that drove Janet against the wall almost at his side, and he held up his hands in mock despair, gently impeding the little bodies that strove to enter. He bent over them to examine the numerals, printed on pasteboard, they wore on their breasts. His voice was cheerful, yet compassionate.

"It's hard to wait, I know. I'm hungry myself," he said. "But we can't all go up at once. The building would fall down! One to one hundred now, and the second hundred will be first for supper. That's fair,

isn't it?"

Dozens of hands were raised.

"I'm twenty-nine!"

"I'm three, mister!"

"I'm forty-one!"

He let them in, one by one, and they clattered up the stairs, as he seized a tiny girl bundled in a dark red muffler and set her on the steps above him. He smiled at Janet.

"This is my restaurant," he said.

But she could not answer. She watched him as he continued to bend over the children, and when the smaller ones wept because they had to wait, he whispered in their ears, astonishing one or two into laughter. Some ceased crying and clung to him with dumb faith. And after the chosen hundred had been admitted he turned to her again.

"You allow visitors?"

"Oh dear, yes. They'd come anyway. There's one up there now, a very swell lady from New York—so swell I don't know what to say to her. Talk to her for me."

"But I shouldn't know what to say, either," replied Janet. She smiled, but she had an odd desire to cry. "What is she doing here?"

"Oh, thrashing 'round, trying to connect with life—she's one of the unfortunate unemployed."

"Unemployed?"

"The idle rich," he explained. "Perhaps you can give her a job—enlist her in the I.W.W."

"We don't want that kind," Janet declared.

"Have pity on her," he begged. "Nobody wants them—that's why they're so pathetic."

She accompanied him up the narrow stairway to a great loft, the bareness of which had been tempered by draped American flags. From the trusses of the roof hung improvised electric lights, and the children were already seated at the four long tables, where half a dozen ladies were supplying them with enamelled bowls filled with steaming soup. They attacked it ravenously, and the absence of the talk and laughter that ordinarily accompany children's feasts touched her, impressed upon her, as nothing else had done, the destitution of the homes from which these little ones had come. The supplies that came to Hampton, the money that poured into Headquarters were not enough to allay the suffering even now. And what if the strike should last for months! Would they be able to hold out, to win? In this mood of pity, of anxiety mingled with appreciation and gratitude for what this man was doing, she turned to speak to him, to perceive on the platform at the end of the room a lady seated. So complete was the curve of her back that her pose resembled a letter u set sidewise, the gap from her crossed knee to her face being closed by a slender forearm and hand that held a lorgnette, through which she was gazing at the children with an apparently absorbed interest. This impression of willowy flexibility was somehow heightened by large, pear-shaped pendants hanging from her ears, by a certain filminess in her black costume and hat. Flung across the table beside her was a long coat of grey fur. She struck an odd note here, presented a strange contrast to Janet's friend from Silliston, with his rough suit and fine but rugged features.

"I'm sorry I haven't a table for you just at present," he was saying. "But perhaps you'll let me take your order,"—and he imitated the obsequious attitude of a waiter. "A little fresh caviar and a clear soup, and then a fish—?"

The lady took down her lorgnette and raised an appealing face.

"You're always joking, Brooks," she chided him, "even when you're doing things like this! I can't get you to talk seriously even when I come all the way from New York to find out what's going on here."

"How hungry children eat, for instance?" he queried.

"Dear little things, it's heartrending!" she exclaimed. "Especially when I think of my own children, who have to be made to eat. Tell me the nationality of that adorable tot at the end."

"Perhaps Miss Bumpus can tell you," he ventured. And Janet, though distinctly uncomfortable and hostile to the lady, was surprised and pleased that he should have remembered her name. "Brooks," she had called him. That was his first name. This strange and sumptuous person seemed intimate with him. Could it be possible that he belonged to her class? "Mrs. Brocklehurst, Miss Bumpus."

Mrs. Brocklehurst focussed her attention on Janet, through the lorgnette, but let it fall immediately, smiling on her brightly, persuasively.

"How d'ye do?" she said, stretching forth a slender arm and taking the girl's somewhat reluctant hand. "Do come and sit down beside me and tell me about everything here. I'm sure you know—you look so intelligent."

Her friend from Silliston shot at Janet an amused but fortifying glance and left them, going down to the tables. Somehow that look of his helped to restore in her a sense of humour and proportion, and her feeling became one of curiosity concerning this exquisitely soigneed being of an order she had read about, but never encountered—an order which her newly acquired views declared to be usurpers and parasites. But despite her palpable effort to be gracious perhaps because of it—Mrs. Brocklehurst had an air about her that was disconcerting! Janet, however, seemed composed as she sat down.

"I'm afraid I don't know very much. Maybe you will tell me something, first."

"Why, certainly," said Mrs. Brocklehurst, sweetly when she had got her breath.

"Who is that man?" Janet asked.

"Whom do you mean—Mr. Insall?"

"Is that his name? I didn't know. I've seen him twice, but he never told me."

"Why, my dear, do you mean to say you haven't heard of Brooks Insall?"

"Brooks Insall." Janet repeated the name, as her eyes sought his figure between the tables. "No."

"I'm sure I don't know why I should have expected you to hear of him," declared the lady, repentantly. "He's a writer—an author." And at this Janet gave a slight exclamation of pleasure and surprise. "You admire writers? He's done some delightful things."

"What does he write about?" Janet asked.

"Oh, wild flowers and trees and mountains and streams, and birds and humans—he has a wonderful insight into people."

Janet was silent. She was experiencing a swift twinge of jealousy, of that familiar rebellion against her limitations.

"You must read them, my dear," Mrs. Brocklehurst continued softly, in musical tones. "They are wonderful, they have such distinction. He's walked, I'm told, over every foot of New England, talking to the farmers and their wives and—all sorts of people." She, too, paused to let her gaze linger upon Insall laughing and chatting with the children as they ate. "He has such a splendid, `out-door' look don't you think? And he's clever with his hands he bought an old abandoned farmhouse in Silliston and made it all over himself until it looks as if one of our great-great-grandfathers had just stepped out of it to shoot an Indian only much prettier. And his garden is a dream. It's the most unique place I've ever known."

Janet blushed deeply as she recalled how she had mistaken him for a carpenter: she was confused, overwhelmed, she had a sudden longing to leave the place, to be alone, to think about this discovery. Yet she wished to know more.

"But how did he happen to come here to Hampton—to be doing this?" she asked.

"Well, that's just what makes him interesting, one never can tell what he'll do. He took it into his head to collect the money to feed these children; I suppose he gave much of it himself. He has an income of his own, though he likes to live so simply."

"This place—it's not connected with any organization?" Janet ejaculated.

"That's the trouble, he doesn't like organizations, and he doesn't seem to take any interest in the questions or movements of the day," Mrs. Brocklehurst complained. "Or at least he refuses to talk about them, though I've known him for many years, and his people and mine were friends. Now there are lots of things I want to learn, that I came up from New York to find out. I thought of course he'd introduce me to the strike leaders, and he tells me he doesn't know one of them. Perhaps you know

them," she added, with sudden inspiration.

"I'm only an employee at Strike Headquarters," Janet replied, stiffening a little despite the lady's importuning look—which evidently was usually effective.

"You mean the I.W.W.?"

"Yes."

Meanwhile Insall had come up and seated himself below them on the edge of the platform.

"Oh, Brooks, your friend Miss Bumpus is employed in the Strike Headquarters!" Mrs. Brocklehurst cried, and turning to Janet she went on. "I didn't realize you were a factory girl, I must say you don't look it."

Once more a gleam of amusement from Insall saved Janet, had the effect of compelling her to meet the affair somewhat after his own manner. He seemed to be putting the words into her mouth, and she even smiled a little, as she spoke.

"You never can tell what factory girls do look like in these days," she observed mischievously.

"That's so," Mrs. Brocklehurst agreed, "we are living in such extraordinary times, everything topsy turvy. I ought to have realized —it was stupid of me—I know several factory girls in New York, I've been to their meetings, I've had them at my house—shirtwaist strikers."

She assumed again the willowy, a position, her fingers clasped across her knee, her eyes supplicatingly raised to Janet. Then she reached out her hand and touched the I.W.W. button. "Do tell me all about the Industrial Workers, and what they believe," she pleaded.

"Well," said Janet, after a slight pause, "I'm afraid you won't like it much. Why do you want to know?"

"Because I'm so interested—especially in the women of the movement. I feel for them so, I want to help—to do something, too. Of course you're a suffragist."

"You mean, do I believe in votes for women? Yes, I suppose I do."

"But you must," declared Mrs. Brocklehurst, still sweetly, but with emphasis. "You wouldn't be working, you wouldn't be striking unless you did."

"I've never thought about it," said Janet.

"But how are you working girls ever going to raise wages unless you get the vote? It's the only way men ever get anywhere—the politicians listen to them." She produced from her bag a gold pencil and a tablet. "Mrs. Ned Carfax is here from Boston—I saw her for a moment at the hotel she's been here investigating for nearly three days, she tells me. I'll have her send you suffrage literature at once, if you'll give me your address."

"You want a vote?" asked Janet, curiously, gazing at the pearl earrings.

"Certainly I want one."

"Why?"

"Why?" repeated Mrs. Brocklehurst.

"Yes. You must have everything you want."

Even then the lady's sweet reasonableness did not desert her. She smiled winningly, displaying two small and even rows of teeth.

"On principle, my dear. For one reason, because I have such sympathy with women who toil, and for another, I believe the time has come when women must no longer be slaves, they must assert themselves, become individuals, independent."

"But you?" exclaimed Janet.

Mrs. Brocklehurst continued to smile encouragingly, and murmured "Yes?"

"You are not a slave."

A delicate pink, like the inside of a conch shell, spread over Mrs.

Brocklehurst's cheeks.

"We're all slaves," she declared with a touch of passion. "It's hard for you to realize, I know, about those of us who seem more fortunate than our sisters. But it's true. The men give us jewels and automobiles and clothes, but they refuse to give us what every real woman craves —liberty."

Janet had become genuinely interested.

"But what kind of liberty?"

"Liberty to have a voice, to take part in the government of our country, to help make the laws, especially those concerning working-women and children, what they ought to be."

Here was altruism, truly! Here were words that should have inspired Janet, yet she was silent. Mrs. Brocklehurst gazed at her solicitously.

"What are you thinking?" she urged—and it was Janet's turn to flush.

"I was just thinking that you seemed to have everything life has to give, and yet—and yet you're not happy."

"Oh, I'm not unhappy," protested the lady. "Why do you say that?"

"I don't know. You, too, seem to be wanting something."

"I want to be of use, to count," said Mrs. Brocklehurst,—and Janet was startled to hear from this woman's lips the very echo of her own desires.

Mrs. Brocklehurst's feelings had become slightly complicated. It is perhaps too much to say that her complacency was shaken. She was, withal, a person of resolution—of resolution taking the form of unswerving faith in herself, a faith persisting even when she was being carried beyond her depth. She had the kind of pertinacity that sever admits being out of depth, the happy buoyancy that does not require to feel the bottom under one's feet. She floated in swift currents. When life became uncomfortable, she evaded it easily; and she evaded it now, as she gazed at the calm but intent face of the girl in front of her, by a characteristic inner refusal to admit that she had accidentally come in contact with something baking. Therefore she broke the silence.

"Isn't that what you want—you who are striking?" she asked.

"I think we want the things that you've got," said Janet. A phrase one of the orators had used came into her mind, "Enough money to live up to American standards"—but she did not repeat it. "Enough money to be free, to enjoy life, to have some leisure and amusement and luxury." The last three she took from the orator's mouth.

"But surely," exclaimed Mrs. Brocklehurst, "surely you want more than that!"

Janet shook her head.

"You asked me what we believed, the I.W.W., the syndicalists, and I told you you wouldn't like it. Well, we believe in doing away with you, the rich, and taking all you have for ourselves, the workers, the producers. We believe you haven't any right to what you've got, that you've fooled and cheated us out of it. That's why we women don't care much about the vote, I suppose, though I never thought of it. We mean to go on striking until we've got all that you've got."

"But what will become of us?" said Mrs. Brocklehurst. "You wouldn't do away with all of us! I admit there are many who don't—but some do sympathize with you, will help you get what you want, help you, perhaps, to see things more clearly, to go about it less—ruthlessly."

"I've told you what we believe," repeated Janet.

"I'm so glad I came," cried Mrs. Brocklehurst. "It's most interesting! I never knew what the syndicalists believed. Why, it's like the French Revolution—only worse. How are you going to get rid of us? cut our heads off?"

Janet could not refrain from smiling.

"Let you starve, I suppose."

"Really!" said Mrs. Brocklehurst, and appeared to be trying to visualize the process. She was a true Athenian, she had discovered some new thing, she valued discoveries more than all else in life, she

collected them, though she never used them save to discuss them with intellectuals at her dinner parties. "Now you must let me come to Headquarters and get a glimpse of some of the leaders—of Antonelli, and I'm told there's a fascinating man named Rowe."

"Rolfe," Janet corrected.

"Rolfe—that's it." She glanced down at the diminutive watch, set with diamonds, on her wrist, rose and addressed Insall. "Oh dear, I must be going, I'm to lunch with Nina Carfax at one, and she's promised to tell me a lot of things. She's writing an article for Craven's Weekly all about the strike and the suffering and injustice—she says it's been horribly misrepresented to the public, the mill owners have had it all their own way. I think what you're doing is splendid, Brooks, only—" here she gave him an appealing, rather commiserating look—"only I do wish you would take more interest in—in underlying principles."

Insall smiled.

"It's a question of brains. You have to have brains to be a sociologist," he answered, as he held up for her the fur coat. With a gesture of gentle reproof she slipped into it, and turned to Janet.

"You must let me see more of you, my dear," she said. "I'm at the best hotel, I can't remember the name, they're all so horrible—but I'll be here until to-morrow afternoon. I want to find out everything. Come and call on me. You're quite the most interesting person I've met for a long time—I don't think you realize how interesting you are. Au revoir!" She did not seem to expect any reply, taking acquiescence for granted. Glancing once more at the rows of children, who had devoured their meal in an almost uncanny silence, she exclaimed, "The dears! I'm going to send you a cheque, Brooks, even if you have been horrid to me—you always are."

"Horrid!" repeated Insall, "put it down to ignorance."

He accompanied her down the stairs. From her willowy walk a sophisticated observer would have hazarded the guess that her search for an occupation had included a course of lessons in fancy dancing.

Somewhat dazed by this interview which had been so suddenly forced upon her, Janet remained seated on the platform. She had the perception to recognize that in Mrs. Brocklehurst and Insall she had come in contact with a social stratum hitherto beyond the bounds of her experience; those who belonged to that stratum were not characterized by the possession of independent incomes alone, but by an attitude toward life, a manner of not appearing to take its issues desperately. Ditmar was not like that. She felt convicted of enthusiasms, she was puzzled, rather annoyed and ashamed. Insall and Mrs. Brocklehurst, different though they were, had this attitude in common.... Insall, when he returned, regarded her amusedly.

"So you'd like to exterminate Mrs. Brocklehurst?" he asked.

And Janet flushed. "Well, she forced me to say it."

"Oh, it didn't hurt her," he said.

"And it didn't help her," Janet responded quickly.

"No, it didn't help her," Insall agreed, and laughed.

"But I'm not sure it isn't true," she went on, "that we want what she's got." The remark, on her own lips, surprised Janet a little. She had not really meant to make it. Insall seemed to have the quality of forcing one to think out loud.

"And what she wants, you've got," he told her.

"What have I got?"

"Perhaps you'll find out, some day."

"It may be too late," she exclaimed. "If you'd only tell me, it might help."

"I think it's something you'll have to discover for yourself," he replied, more gravely than was his wont.

She was silent a moment, and then she demanded: "Why didn't you tell me who you were? You let me think, when I met you in Silliston that day, that you were a carpenter. I didn't know you'd written books."

"You can't expect writers to wear uniforms, like policemen—though perhaps we ought to, it might be a little fairer to the public," he said. "Besides, I am a carpenter, a better carpenter than a writer.."

"I'd give anything to be an author!" she cried.

"It's a hard life," he assured her. "We have to go about seeking inspiration from others."

"Is that why you came to Hampton?"

"Well, not exactly. It's a queer thing about inspiration, you only find it when you're not looking for it."

She missed the point of this remark, though his eyes were on her. They were not like Rolfe's eyes, insinuating, possessive; they had the anomalistic quality, of being at once personal and impersonal, friendly, alight, evoking curiosity yet compelling trust.

"And you didn't tell me," he reproached her, "that you were at I.W.W.
Headquarters."

A desire for self-justification impelled her to exclaim: "You don't believe in Syndicalism—and yet you've come here to feed these children!"

"Oh, I think I understand the strike," he said.

"How? Have you seen it? Have you heard the arguments?"

"No. I've seen you. You've explained it."

"To Mrs. Brocklehurst?"

"It wasn't necessary," he replied—and immediately added, in semi-serious apology: "I thought it was admirable, what you said. If she'd talked to a dozen syndicalist leaders, she couldn't have had it put more clearly. Only I'm afraid she doesn't know the truth when she hears it."

"Now you're making fun of me!"

"Indeed I'm not," he protested.

"But I didn't give any of the arguments, any of the—philosophy," she pronounced the word hesitatingly. "I don't understand it yet as well as I should."

"You are it," he said. "It's not always easy to understand what we are —it's generally after we've become something else that we comprehend what we have been."

And while she was pondering over this one of the ladies who had been waiting on the table came toward Insall.

"The children have finished, Brooks," she informed him. "It's time to let in the others."

Insall turned to Janet. "This is Miss Bumpus—and this is Mrs. Maturin," he said. "Mrs. Maturin lives in Silliston."

The greeting of this lady differed from that of Mrs. Brocklehurst. She, too, took Janet's hand.

"Have you come to help us?" she asked.

And Janet said: "Oh, I'd like to, but I have other work."

"Come in and see us again," said Insall, and Janet, promising, took her leave....

"Who is she, Brooks?" Mrs. Maturin asked, when Janet had gone.

"Well," he answered, "I don't know. What does it matter?"

Mrs. Maturin smiled.

"I should say that it did matter," she replied. "But there's something unusual about her—where did you find her?"

"She found me." And Insall explained. "She was a stenographer, it seems, but now she's enlisted heart and soul with the syndicalists," he added.

"A history?" Mrs. Maturin queried. "Well, I needn't ask—it's written on her face."

"That's all I know," said Insall.

"I'd like to know," said Mrs. Maturin. "You say she's in the strike?"

"I should rather put it that the strike is in her."

"What do you mean, Brooks?"

But Insall did not reply.

Janet came away from Dey Street in a state of mental and emotional confusion. The encounter with Mrs. Brocklehurst had been upsetting; she had an uneasy feeling of having made a fool of herself in Insall's eyes; she desired his approval, even on that occasion when she had first met him and mistaken him for a workman she had been conscious of a compelling faculty in him, of a pressure he exerted demanding justification of herself; and to-day, because she was now pledged to Syndicalism, because she had made the startling discovery that he was a writer of some renown, she had been more than ever anxious to vindicate her cause. She found herself, indeed, wondering uneasily whether there were a higher truth of which he was in possession. And the fact that his attitude toward her had been one of sympathy and friendliness rather than of disapproval, that his insight seemed to have fathomed her case, apprehended it in all but the details, was even more disturbing—yet vaguely consoling. The consolatory element in the situation was somehow connected with the lady, his friend from Silliston, to whom he had introduced her and whose image now came before her the more vividly, perhaps, in contrast with that of Mrs. Brocklehurst. Mrs. Maturin—could Janet have so expressed her thought! had appeared as an extension of Insall's own personality. She was a strong, tall, vital woman with a sweet irregularity of feature, with a heavy crown of chestnut hair turning slightly grey, quaintly braided, becomingly framing her face. Her colour was high. The impression she conveyed of having suffered was emphasized by the simple mourning gown she wore, but the dominant note she had struck was one of dependability. It was, after all, Insall's dominant, too. Insall had asked her to call again; and the reflection that she might do so was curiously comforting. The soup kitchen in the loft, with these two presiding over it, took on something of the aspect of a sanctuary….

Insall, in some odd manner, and through the medium of that frivolous lady, had managed to reenforce certain doubts that had been stirring in Janet—doubts of Rolfe, of the verity of the doctrine which with such abandon she had embraced. It was Insall who, though remaining silent, just by being there seemed to have suggested her manner of dealing with Mrs. Brocklehurst. It had, indeed, been his manner of dealing with Mrs. Brocklehurst. Janet had somehow been using his words, his method, and thus for the first time had been compelled to look objectively on what she had deemed a part of herself. We never know what we are, he had said, until we become something else! He had forced her to use an argument that failed to harmonize, somehow, with Rolfe's poetical apologetics. Stripped of the glamour of these, was not Rolfe's doctrine just one of taking, taking? And when the workers were in possession of all, would not they be as badly off as Mrs. Brocklehurst or Ditmar? Rolfe, despite the inspiring intellectual creed he professed, lacked the poise and unity that go with happiness. He wanted things, for himself: whereas she beheld in Insall one who seemed emancipated from possessions, whose life was so organized as to make them secondary affairs. And she began to wonder what Insall would think of Ditmar.

These sudden flashes of tenderness for Ditmar startled and angered her. She had experienced them before, and always had failed to account for their intrusion into a hatred she cherished. Often, at her desk in the bibliotheque, she had surprised herself speculating upon what Ditmar might be doing at that moment; and it seemed curious, living in the same city with him, that she had not caught a glimpse of him during the strike. More than once, moved by a perverse impulse, she had ventured of an evening down West Street toward the guard of soldiers in the hope of catching sight of him. He had possessed her, and the memory of the wild joy of that possession, of that surrender to great strength, refused to perish. Why, at such moments, should she glory in a strength that had destroyed her and why, when she heard him cursed as the man who stood, more than any other, in the way of the strikers victory, should she paradoxically and fiercely rejoice? why should she feel pride when she was told of the fearlessness with which he went about the streets, and her heart stop beating when she thought of the possibility of his being shot? For these unwelcome phenomena within herself Janet could not account. When they disturbed and frightened her, she plunged into her work with the greater zeal….

As the weeks went by, the strain of the strike began to tell on the weak, the unprepared, on those who had many mouths to feed. Shivering with the cold of that hardest of winters, these unfortunates flocked to the Franco-Belgian Hall, where a little food or money in proportion to the size of their families was doled out to them. In spite of the contributions received by mail, of the soup kitchens and relief stations set up by various organizations in various parts of the city, the supply little more than sufficed to keep alive the more needy portion of the five and twenty thousand who now lacked all other means of support. Janet's heart was wrung as she gazed at the gaunt, bewildered faces growing daily

more tragic, more bewildered and gaunt; she marvelled at the animal-like patience of these Europeans, at the dumb submission of most of them to privations that struck her as appalling. Some indeed complained, but the majority recited in monotonous, unimpassioned tones their stories of suffering, or of ill treatment by the "Cossacks" or the police. The stipends were doled out by Czernowitz, but all through the week there were special appeals. Once it was a Polish woman, wan and white, who carried her baby wrapped in a frayed shawl.

"Wahna littel money for milk," she said, when at length their attention was drawn to her.

"But you get your money, every Saturday," the secretary informed her kindly.

She shook her head.

"Baby die, 'less I have littel milk—I show you."

Janet drew back before the sight of the child with its sunken cheeks and ghastly blue lips …. And she herself went out with the woman to buy the milk, and afterwards to the dive in Kendall Street which she called home—in one of those "rear" tenements separated from the front buildings by a narrow court reeking with refuse. The place was dank and cold, malodorous. The man of the family, the lodgers who lived in the other room of the kennel, were out on the streets. But when her eyes grew used to the darkness she perceived three silent children huddled in the bed in the corner….

On another occasion a man came running up the stairs of the Hall and thrust his way into a meeting of the Committee—one of those normally happy, irresponsible Syrians who, because of a love for holidays, are the despair of mill overseers. Now he was dazed, breathless, his great eyes grief-stricken like a wounded animal's.

"She is killidd, my wife—de polees, dey killidd her!"

It was Anna Mower who investigated the case. "The girl wasn't doing nothing but walk along Hudson Street when one of those hirelings set on her and beat her. She put out her hand because she thought he'd hit her —and he gave her three or four with his billy and left her in the gutter. If you'd see her you'd know she wouldn't hurt a fly, she's that gentle looking, like all the Syrian women. She had a `Don't be a scab' ribbon on—that's all she done! Somebody'll shoot that guy, and I wouldn't blame 'em." Anna stood beside Janet's typewriter, her face red with anger as she told the story.

"And how is the woman now?" asked Janet.

"In bed, with two ribs broken and a bruise on her back and a cut on her head. I got a doctor. He could hardly see her in that black place they live."…

Such were the incidents that fanned the hatred into hotter and hotter flame. Daily reports were brought in of arrests, of fines and imprisonments for picketing, or sometimes merely for booing at the remnant of those who still clung to their employment. One magistrate in particular, a Judge Hennessy, was hated above all others for giving the extreme penalty of the law, and even stretching it. "Minions, slaves of the capitalists, of the masters," the courts were called, and Janet subscribed to these epithets, beheld the judges as willing agents of a tyranny from which she, too, had suffered. There arrived at Headquarters frenzied bearers of rumours such as that of the reported intention of landlords to remove the windows from the tenements if the rents were not paid. Antonelli himself calmed these. "Let the landlords try it!" he said phlegmatically….

After a while, as the deadlock showed no signs of breaking, the siege of privation began to tell, ominous signs of discontent became apparent. Chief among the waverers were those who had come to America with visions of a fortune, who had practised a repulsive thrift in order to acquire real estate, who carried in their pockets dog-eared bank books recording payments already made. These had consented to the strike reluctantly, through fear, or had been carried away by the eloquence and enthusiasm of the leaders, by the expectation that the mill owners would yield at once. Some went back to work, only to be "seen" by the militant, watchful pickets—generally in their rooms, at night. One evening, as Janet was walking home, she chanced to overhear a conversation taking place in the dark vestibule of a tenement.

"Working to-day?"

"Yah."

"Work to-morrow?"

Hesitation. "I d'no."

"You work, I cut your throat." A significant noise. "Naw, I no work."

"Shake!"

She hurried on trembling, not with fear, but exultingly. Nor did she reflect that only a month ago such an occurrence would have shocked and terrified her. This was war.... On her way to Fillmore Street she passed, at every street corner in this district, a pacing sentry, muffled in greatcoat and woollen cap, alert and watchful, the ugly knife on the end of his gun gleaming in the blue light of the arc. It did not occur to her, despite the uniform, that the souls of many of these men were divided also, that their voices and actions, when she saw them threatening with their bayonets, were often inspired by that inner desperation characteristic of men who find themselves unexpectedly in false situations. Once she heard a woman shriek as the sharp knife grazed her skirt: at another time a man whose steps had been considerably hurried turned, at a safe distance, and shouted defiantly:

"Say, who are you working for? Me or the Wool Trust?"

"Aw, get along," retorted the soldier, "or I'll give you yours."

The man caught sight of Janet's button as she overtook him. He was walking backward.

"That feller has a job in a machine shop over in Barrington, I seen him there when I was in the mills. And here he is tryin' to put us out —ain't that the limit?"

The thud of horses' feet in the snow prevented her reply. The silhouettes of the approaching squad of cavalry were seen down the street, and the man fled precipitately into an alleyway....

There were ludicrous incidents, too, though never lacking in a certain pathos. The wife of a Russian striker had her husband arrested because he had burned her clothes in order to prevent her returning to the mill. From the police station he sent a compatriot with a message to Headquarters. "Oye, he fix her! She no get her jawb now—she gotta stay in bed!" this one cried triumphantly.

"She was like to tear me in pieces when I brought her the clothes," said Anna Mower, who related her experience with mingled feelings. "I couldn't blame her. You see, it was the kids crying with cold and starvation, and she got so she just couldn't stand it. I couldn't stand it, neither."

Day by day the element who wished to compromise and end the strike grew stronger, brought more and more pressure on the leaders. These people were subsidized, Antonelli declared, by the capitalists....

CHAPTER XVIII

A more serious atmosphere pervaded Headquarters, where it was realized that the issue hung in the balance. And more proclamations, a la Napoleon, were issued to sustain and hearten those who were finding bread and onions meagre fare, to shame the hesitating, the wavering. As has been said, it was Rolfe who, because of his popular literary gift, composed these appeals for the consideration of the Committee, dictating them to Janet as he paced up and down the bibliotheque, inhaling innumerable cigarettes and flinging down the ends on the floor. A famous one was headed "Shall Wool and Cotton Kings Rule the Nation?" "We are winning" it declared. "The World is with us! Forced by the unshaken solidarity of tens of thousands, the manufacturers offer bribes to end the reign of terror they have inaugurated.... Inhuman treatment and oppressive toil have brought all nationalities together into one great army to fight against a brutal system of exploitation. In years and years of excessive labour we have produced millions for a class of idle parasites, who enjoy all the luxuries of life while our wives have to leave their firesides and our children their schools to eke out a miserable existence." And this for the militia: "The lowest aim of life is to be a soldier! The `good' soldier never tries to distinguish right from wrong, he never thinks, he never reasons, he only obeys—"

"But," Janet was tempted to say, "your syndicalism declares that none of us should think or reason. We should only feel." She was beginning to detect Rolfe's inconsistencies, yet she refrained from interrupting the inspirational flow.

"The soldier is a blind, heartless, soulless, murderous machine." Rolfe was fond of adjectives. "All that is human in him, all that is divine has been sworn away when he took the enlistment oath. No man can fall lower than a soldier. It is a depth beyond which we cannot go."

"All that is human, all that is divine," wrote Janet, and thrilled a little at the words. Why was it that mere words, and their arrangement in certain sequences, gave one a delicious, creepy feeling up and down the spine? Her attitude toward him had become more and more critical, she had avoided him when she could, but when he was in this ecstatic mood she responded, forgot his red lips, his contradictions, lost herself in a medium she did not comprehend. Perhaps it was because, in his absorption in the task, he forgot her, forgot himself. She, too, despised the soldiers, fervently believed they had sold themselves to the oppressors of mankind. And Rolfe, when in the throes of creation, had the manner of speaking to the soldiers themselves, as though these were present in the lane just below the window; as though he were on the tribune. At such times he spoke with such rapidity that, quick though she was, she could scarcely keep up with him. "Most of you, Soldiers, are workingmen!" he cried. "Yesterday you were slaving in the mills yourselves. You will profit by our victory. Why should you wish to crush us? Be human!"

Pale, excited, he sank down into the chair by her side and lit another cigarette.

"They ought to listen to that!" he exclaimed. "It's the best one I've done yet."

Night had come. Czernowitz sat in the other room, talking to Jastro, a buzz of voices came from the hall through the thin pine panels of the door. All day long a sixty-mile gale had twisted the snow of the lane into whirling, fantastic columns and rattled the windows of Franco-Belgian Hall. But now the wind had fallen.... Presently, as his self-made music ceased to vibrate within him, Rolfe began to watch the girl as she sat motionless, with parted lips and eyes alight, staring at the reflection of the lamp in the blue-black window.

"Is that the end?" she asked, at length.

"Yes," he replied sensitively. "Can't you see it's a climax? Don't you think it's a good one?"

She looked at him, puzzled.

"Why, yes," she said, "I think it's fine. You see, I have to take it down so fast I can't always follow it as I'd like to."

"When you feel, you can do anything," he exclaimed. "It is necessary to feel."

"It is necessary to know," she told him.

"I do not understand you," he cried, leaning toward her. "Sometimes you are a flame—a wonderful, scarlet flame I can express it in no other way. Or again, you are like the Madonna of our new faith, and I wish I were a del Sarto to paint you. And then again you seem as cold as your New England snow, you have no feeling, you are an Anglo-Saxon—a Puritan."

She smiled, though she felt a pang of reminiscence at the word. Ditmar had called her so, too.

"I can't help what I am," she said.

"It is that which inhibits you," he declared. "That Puritanism. It must be eradicated before you can develop, and then—and then you will be completely wonderful. When this strike is over, when we have time, I will teach you many things—develop you. We will read Sorel together he is beautiful, like poetry —and the great poets, Dante and Petrarch and Tasso—yes, and d'Annunzio. We shall live."

"We are living, now," she answered. The look with which she surveyed him he found enigmatic. And then, abruptly, she rose and went to her typewriter.

"You don't believe what I say!" he reproached her.

But she was cool. "I'm not sure that I believe all of it. I want to think it out for myself—to talk to others, too."

"What others?"

"Nobody in particular—everybody," she replied, as she set her notebook on the rack.

"There is some one else!" he exclaimed, rising.

"There is every one else," she said.

As was his habit when agitated, he began to smoke feverishly, glancing at her from time to time as she fingered the keys. Experience had led him to believe that he who finds a woman in revolt and gives her a religion inevitably becomes her possessor. But more than a month had passed, he had not become

her possessor—and now for the first time there entered his mind a doubt as to having given her a religion! The obvious inference was that of another man, of another influence in opposition to his own; characteristically, however, he shrank from accepting this, since he was of those who believe what they wish to believe. The sudden fear of losing her—intruding itself immediately upon an ecstatic, creative mood—unnerved him, yet he strove to appear confident as he stood over her.

"When you've finished typewriting that, we'll go out to supper," he told her.

But she shook her head.

"Why not?"

"I don't want to," she replied—and then, to soften her refusal, she added, "I can't, to-night."

"But you never will come with me anymore. Why is it?"

"I'm very tired at night. I don't feel like going out." She sought to temporize.

"You've changed!" he accused her. "You're not the same as you were at first—you avoid me."

The swift gesture with which she flung over the carriage of her machine might have warned him.

"I don't like that Hampton Hotel," she flashed back. "I'm—I'm not a vagabond—yet."

"A vagabond!" he repeated.

She went on savagely with her work..

"You have two natures," he exclaimed. "You are still a bourgeoise, a Puritan. You will not be yourself, you will not be free until you get over that."

"I'm not sure I want to get over it."

He leaned nearer to her.

"But now that I have found you, Janet, I will not let you go."

"You've no rights over me," she cried, in sudden alarm and anger. "I'm not doing this work, I'm not wearing myself out here for you."

"Then—why are you doing it?" His suspicions rose again, and made him reckless.

"To help the strikers," she said.... He could get no more out of her, and presently, when Anna Mower entered the room, he left it....

More than once since her first visit to the soup kitchen in Dey Street Janet had returned to it. The universe rocked, but here was equilibrium. The streets were filled with soldiers, with marching strikers, terrible things were constantly happening; the tension at Headquarters never seemed to relax. Out in the world and within her own soul were strife and suffering, and sometimes fear; the work in which she sought to lose herself no longer sufficed to keep her from thinking, and the spectacle —when she returned home—of her mother's increasing apathy grew more and more appalling. But in Dey Street she gained calmness, was able to renew something of that sense of proportion the lack of which, in the chaos in which she was engulfed, often brought her to the verge of madness. At first she had had a certain hesitation about going back, and on the occasion of her second visit had walked twice around the block before venturing to enter. She had no claim on this man. He was merely a chance acquaintance, a stranger—and yet he seemed nearer to her, to understand her better than any one else she knew in the world. This was queer, because she had not explained herself; nor had he asked her for any confidences. She would have liked to confide in him—some things: he gave her the impression of comprehending life; of having, as his specialty, humanity itself; he should, she reflected, have been a minister, and smiled at the thought: ministers, at any rate, ought to be like him, and then one might embrace Christianity—the religion of her forefathers that Rolfe ridiculed. But there was about Insall nothing of religion as she had grown up to apprehend the term.

Now that she had taken her courage in her hands and renewed her visits, they seemed to be the most natural proceedings in the world. On that second occasion, when she had opened the door and palpitatingly climbed to the loft, the second batch of children were finishing their midday meal,—rather more joyously, she thought, than before,—and Insall himself was stooping over a small boy whom he had taken away from the table. He did not notice her at once, and Janet watched them. The child had a cough, his extreme thinness was emphasized by the coat he wore, several sizes too large for him.

"You come along with me, Marcus, I guess I can fit you out," Insall was saying, when he looked up and saw Janet.

"Why, if it isn't Miss Bumpus! I thought you'd forgotten us."

"Oh no," she protested. "I wanted to come."

"Then why didn't you?"

"Well, I have come," she said, with a little sigh, and he did not press her further. And she refrained from offering any conventional excuse, such as that of being interested in the children. She had come to see him, and such was the faith with which he inspired her—now that she was once more in his presence—that she made no attempt to hide the fact.

"You've never seen my clothing store, have you?" he asked. And with the child's hand in his he led the way into a room at the rear of the loft. A kit of carpenter's tools was on the floor, and one wall was lined with box-like compartments made of new wood, each with its label in neat lettering indicating the articles contained therein. "Shoes?" he repeated, as he ran his eye down the labels and suddenly opened a drawer. "Here we are, Marcus. Sit down there on the bench, and take off the shoes you have on."

The boy had one of those long faces of the higher Jewish type, intelligent, wistful. He seemed dazed by Insall's kindness. The shoes he wore were those of an adult, but cracked and split, revealing the cotton stocking and here and there the skin. His little blue hands fumbled with the knotted strings that served for facings until Insall, producing a pocket knife, deftly cut the strings.

"Those are summer shoes, Marcus—well ventilated."

"They're by me since August," said the boy.

"And now the stockings," prompted Insall. The old ones, wet, discoloured, and torn, were stripped off, and thick, woollen ones substituted. Insall, casting his eye over the open drawer, chose a pair of shoes that had been worn, but which were stout and serviceable, and taking one in his hand knelt down before the child. "Let's see how good a guesser I am," he said, loosening the strings and turning back the tongue, imitating good-humouredly the deferential manner of a salesman of footwear as he slipped on the shoe. "Why, it fits as if it were made for you! Now for the other one. Yes, your feet are mates—I know a man who wears a whole size larger on his left foot." The dazed expression remained on the boy's face. The experience was beyond him. "That's better," said Insall, as he finished the lacing. "Keep out of the snow, Marcus, all you can. Wet feet aren't good for a cough, you know. And when you come in to supper a nice doctor will be here, and we'll see if we can't get rid of the cough."

The boy nodded. He got to his feet, stared down at the shoes, and walked slowly toward the door, where he turned.

"Thank you, Mister Insall," he said.

And Insall, still sitting on his heels, waved his hand.

"It is not to mention it," he replied. "Perhaps you may have a clothing store of your own some day—who knows!" He looked up at Janet amusedly and then, with a spring, stood upright, his easy, unconscious pose betokening command of soul and body. "I ought to have kept a store," he observed. "I missed my vocation."

"It seems to me that you missed a great many vocations," she replied. Commonplaces alone seemed possible, adequate. "I suppose you made all those drawers yourself."

He bowed in acknowledgment of her implied tribute. With his fine nose and keen eyes—set at a slightly downward angle, creased at the corners —with his thick, greying hair, despite his comparative youth he had the look one associates with portraits of earlier, patriarchal Americans.... These calls of Janet's were never of long duration. She had fallen into the habit of taking her lunch between one and two, and usually arrived when the last installment of youngsters were finishing their meal; sometimes they were filing out, stopping to form a group around Insall, who always managed to say something amusing—something pertinent and good-naturedly personal. For he knew most of them by name, and had acquired a knowledge of certain individual propensities and idiosyncrasies that delighted their companions.

"What's the trouble, Stepan—swallowed your spoon?" Stepan was known to be greedy. Or he would suddenly seize an unusually solemn boy from behind and tickle him until the child screamed with laughter. It was, indeed, something of an achievement to get on terms of confidence with these alien

children of the tenements and the streets who from their earliest years had been forced to shift for themselves, and many of whom had acquired a precocious suspicion of Greeks bearing gifts. Insall himself had used the phrase, and explained it to Janet. That sense of caveat donor was perhaps their most pathetic characteristic. But he broke it down; broke down, too, the shyness accompanying it, the shyness and solemnity emphasized in them by contact with hardship and poverty, with the stark side of life they faced at home. He had made them—Mrs. Maturin once illuminatingly remarked—more like children. Sometimes he went to see their parents,—as in the case of Marcus—to suggest certain hygienic precautions in his humorous way; and his accounts of these visits, too, were always humorous. Yet through that humour ran a strain of pathos that clutched—despite her smile—at Janet's heartstrings. This gift of emphasizing and heightening tragedy while apparently dealing in comedy she never ceased to wonder at. She, too, knew that tragedy of the tenements, of the poor, its sordidness and cruelty. All her days she had lived precariously near it, and lately she had visited these people, had been torn by the sight of what they endured. But Insall's jokes, while they stripped it of sentimentality of which she had an instinctive dislike—made it for her even more poignant. One would have thought, to have such an insight into it, that he too must have lived it, must have been brought up in some dirty alley of a street. That gift, of course, must be a writer's gift.

When she saw the waifs trooping after him down the stairs, Mrs. Maturin called him the Pied Piper of Hampton.

As time went on, Janet sometimes wondered over the quiet manner in which these two people, Insall and Mrs. Maturin, took her visits as though they were matters of course, and gave her their friendship. There was, really, no obvious excuse for her coming, not even that of the waifs for food—and yet she came to be fed. The sustenance they gave her would have been hard to define; it flowed not so much from what they said, as from what they were; it was in the atmosphere surrounding them. Sometimes she looked at Mrs. Maturin to ask herself what this lady would say if she knew her history, her relationship with Ditmar—which had been her real reason for entering the ranks of the strikers. And was it fair for her, Janet, to permit Mrs. Maturin to bestow her friendship without revealing this? She could not make up her mind as to what this lady would say. Janet had had no difficulty in placing Ditmar; not much trouble, after her first surprise was over, in classifying Rolfe and the itinerant band of syndicalists who had descended upon her restricted world. But Insall and Mrs. Maturin were not to be ticketed. What chiefly surprised her, in addition to their kindliness, to their taking her on faith without the formality of any recommendation or introduction, was their lack of intellectual narrowness. She did not, of course, so express it. But she sensed, in their presence, from references casually let fall in their conversation, a wider culture of which they were in possession, a culture at once puzzling and exciting, one that she despaired of acquiring for herself. Though it came from reading, it did not seem "literary," according to the notion she had conceived of the term. Her speculations concerning it must be focussed and interpreted. It was a culture, in the first place, not harnessed to an obvious Cause: something like that struck her. It was a culture that contained tolerance and charity, that did not label a portion of mankind as its enemy, but seemed, by understanding all, to forgive all. It had no prejudices; nor did it boast, as the Syndicalists boasted, of its absence of convention. And little by little Janet connected it with Silliston.

"It must be wonderful to live in such a place as that," she exclaimed, when the Academy was mentioned. On this occasion Insall had left for a moment, and she was in the little room he called his "store," alone with Mrs. Maturin, helping to sort out a batch of garments just received.

"It was there you first met Brooks, wasn't it?" She always spoke of him as Brooks. "He told me about it, how you walked out there and asked him about a place to lunch." Mrs. Maturin laughed. "You didn't know what to make of him, did you?"

"I thought he was a carpenter!" said Janet. "I—I never should have taken him for an author. But of course I don't know any other authors."

"Well, he's not like any of them, he's just like himself. You can't put a tag on people who are really big."

Janet considered this. "I never thought of that. I suppose not," she agreed.

Mrs. Maturin glanced at her. "So you liked Sflliston," she said.

"I liked it better than any place I ever saw. I haven't seen many places, but I'm sure that few can be nicer."

"What did you like about it, Janet?" Mrs. Maturin was interested.

"It's hard to say," Janet replied, after a moment. "It gave me such a feeling of peace—of having come

home, although I lived in Hampton. I can't express it."

"I think you're expressing it rather well," said Mrs. Maturin.

"It was so beautiful in the spring," Janet continued, dropping the coat she held into the drawer. "And it wasn't just the trees and the grass with the yellow dandelions, it was the houses, too—I've often wondered why those houses pleased me so much. I wanted to live in every one of them. Do you know that feeling?" Mrs. Maturin nodded. "They didn't hurt your eyes when you looked at them, and they seemed to be so much at home there, even the new ones. The new ones were like the children of the old."

"I'll tell the architect. He'll be pleased," said Mrs. Maturin.

Janet flushed.

"Am I being silly?" she asked.

"No; my dear," Mrs. Maturin replied. "You've expressed what I feel about Silliston. What do you intend to do when the strike is over?"

"I hadn't thought." Janet started at the question, but Mrs. Maturin did not seem to notice the dismay in her tone. "You don't intend to—to travel around with the I. W. W. people, do you?"

"I—I hadn't thought," Janet faltered. It was the first time Mrs. Maturin had spoken of her connection with Syndicalism. And she surprised herself by adding: "I don't see how I could. They can get stenographers anywhere, and that's all I'm good for." And the question occurred to her—did she really wish to?

"What I was going to suggest," continued Mrs. Maturin, quietly, "was that you might try Silliston. There's a chance for a good stenographer there, and I'm sure you are a good one. So many of the professors send to Boston."

Janet stood stock still. Then she said: "But you don't know anything about me, Mrs. Maturin."

Kindliness burned in the lady's eyes as she replied: "I know more now —since you've told me I know nothing. Of course there's much I don't know, how you, a stenographer, became involved in this strike and joined the I. W. W. But you shall tell me or not, as you wish, when we become better friends."

Janet felt the blood beating in her throat, and an impulse to confess everything almost mastered her. From the first she had felt drawn toward Mrs. Maturin, who seemed to hold out to her the promise of a woman's friendship—for which she had felt a life-long need: a woman friend who would understand the insatiate yearning in her that gave her no rest in her search for a glittering essence never found, that had led her only to new depths of bitterness and despair. It would destroy her, if indeed it had not already done so. Mrs. Maturin, Insall, seemed to possess the secret that would bring her peace—and yet, in spite of something urging her to speak, she feared the risk of losing them. Perhaps, after all, they would not understand! perhaps it was too late!

"You do not believe in the Industrial Workers of the World," was what she said.

Mrs. Maturin herself, who had been moved and excited as she gazed at Janet, was taken by surprise. A few moments elapsed before she could gather herself to reply, and then she managed to smile.

"I do not believe that wisdom will die with them, my dear. Their—their doctrine is too simple, it does not seem as if life, the social order is to be so easily solved."

"But you must sympathize with them, with the strikers." Janet's gesture implied that the soup kitchen was proof of this.

"Ah," replied Mrs. Maturin, gently, "that is different to understand them. There is one philosophy for the lamb, and another for the wolf."

"You mean," said Janet, trembling, "that what happens to us makes us inclined to believe certain things?"

"Precisely," agreed Mrs. Maturin, in admiration. "But I must be honest with you, it was Brooks who made me see it."

"But—he never said that to me. And I asked him once, almost the same question."

"He never said it to me, either," Mrs. Maturin confessed. "He doesn't tell you what he believes; I

simply gathered that this is his idea. And apparently the workers can only improve their condition by strikes, by suffering—it seems to be the only manner in which they can convince the employers that the conditions are bad. It isn't the employers' fault."

"Not their fault!" Janet repeated.

"Not in a large sense," said Mrs. Maturin. "When people grow up to look at life in a certain way, from a certain viewpoint, it is difficult, almost impossible to change them. It's—it's their religion. They are convinced that if the world doesn't go on in their way, according to their principles, everything will be destroyed. They aren't inhuman. Within limits everybody is more than willing to help the world along, if only they can be convinced that what they are asked to do will help."

Janet breathed deeply. She was thinking of Ditmar.

And Mrs. Maturin, regarding her, tactfully changed the subject.

"I didn't intend to give you a lecture on sociology or psychology, my dear," she said. "I know nothing about them, although we have a professor who does. Think over what I've said about coming to Silliston. It will do you good—you are working too hard here. I know you would enjoy Silliston. And Brooks takes such an interest in you," she added impulsively. "It is quite a compliment."

"But why?" Janet demanded, bewildered.

"Perhaps it's because you have—possibilities. You may be typewriting his manuscripts. And then, I am a widow, and often rather lonely—you could come in and read to me occasionally."

"But—I've never read anything."

"How fortunate!" said Insall, who had entered the doorway in time to hear Janet's exclamation. "More than half of modern culture depends on what one shouldn't read."

Mrs. Maturin laughed. But Insall waved his hand deprecatingly.

"That isn't my own," he confessed. "I cribbed it from a clever
Englishman. But I believe it's true."

"I think I'll adopt her," said Mrs. Maturin to Insall, when she had repeated to him the conversation. "I know you are always convicting me of enthusiasms, Brooks, and I suppose I do get enthusiastic."

"Well, you adopt her—and I'll marry her," replied Insall, with a smile, as he cut the string from the last bundle of clothing.

"You might do worse. It would be a joke if you did—!"

His friend paused to consider this preposterous possibility. "One never can tell whom a man like you, an artist, will marry."

"We've no business to marry at all," said Insall, laughing. "I often wonder where that romantic streak will land you, Augusta. But you do have a delightful time!"

"Don't begrudge it me, it makes life so much more interesting," Mrs. Maturin begged, returning his smile. "I haven't the faintest idea that you will marry her or any one else. But I insist on saying she's your type—she's the kind of a person artists do dig up and marry—only better than most of them, far better."

"Dig up?" said Insall.

"Well, you know I'm not a snob—I only mean that she seems to be one of the surprising anomalies that sometimes occur in—what shall I say?—in the working-classes. I do feel like a snob when I say that. But what is it? Where does that spark come from? Is it in our modern air, that discontent, that desire, that thrusting forth toward a new light —something as yet unformulated, but which we all feel, even at small institutions of learning like Silliston?"

"Now you're getting beyond me."

"Oh no, I'm not," Mrs. Maturin retorted confidently. "If you won't talk about it, I will, I have no shame. And this girl has it—this thing I'm trying to express. She's modern to her finger tips, and yet she's extraordinarily American—in spite of her modernity, she embodies in some queer way our tradition. She loves our old houses at Silliston—they make her feel at home—that's her own expression."

"Did she say that?"

"Exactly. And I know she's of New England ancestry, she told me so. What I can't make out is, why she joined the I.W.W. That seems so contradictory."

"Perhaps she was searching for light there," Insall hazarded. "Why don't you ask her?"

"I don't know," replied Mrs. Maturin, thoughtfully. "I want to, my curiosity almost burns me alive, and yet I don't. She isn't the kind you can ask personal questions of—that's part of her charm, part of her individuality. One is a little afraid to intrude. And yet she keeps coming here—of course you are a sufficient attraction, Brooks. But I must give her the credit of not flirting with you."

"I've noticed that, too," said Insall, comically.

"She's searching for light," Mrs. Maturin went on, struck by the phrase. "She has an instinct we can give it to her, because we come from an institution of learning. I felt something of the kind when I suggested her establishing herself in Silliston. Well, she's more than worth while experimenting on, she must have lived and breathed what you call the `movie atmosphere' all her life, and yet she never seems to have read and absorbed any sentimental literature or cheap religion. She doesn't suggest the tawdry. That part of her, the intellectual part, is a clear page to be written upon."

"There's my chance," said Insall.

"No, it's my chance—since you're so cynical."

"I'm not cynical," he protested.

"I don't believe you really are. And if you are, there may be a judgment upon you," she added playfully. "I tell you she's the kind of woman artists go mad about. She has what sentimentalists call temperament, and after all we haven't any better word to express dynamic desires. She'd keep you stirred up, stimulated, and you could educate her."

"No, thanks, I'll leave that to you. He who educates a woman is lost. But how about Syndicalism and all the mysticism that goes with it? There's an intellectual over at Headquarters who's been talking to her about Bergson, the life-force, and the World-We-Ourselves-Create."

Mrs. Maturin laughed.

"Well, we go wrong when we don't go right. That's just it, we must go some way. And I'm sure, from what I gather, that she isn't wholly satisfied with Syndicalism."

"What is right?" demanded Insall.

"Oh, I don't intend to turn her over to Mr. Worrall and make a sociologist and a militant suffragette out of her. She isn't that kind, anyhow. But I could give her good literature to read—yours, for instance," she added maliciously.

"You're preposterous, Augusta," Insall exclaimed.

"I may be, but you've got to indulge me. I've taken this fancy to her —of course I mean to see more of her. But—you know how hard it is for me, sometimes, since I've been left alone."

Insall laid his hand affectionately on her shoulder.

"I remember what you said the first day I saw her, that the strike was in her," Mrs. Maturin continued. "Well, I see now that she does express and typify it—and I don't mean the `labour movement' alone, or this strike in Rampton, which is symptomatic, but crude. I mean something bigger —and I suppose you do—the protest, the revolt, the struggle for self-realization that is beginning to be felt all over the nation, all over the world today, that is not yet focussed and self-conscious, but groping its way, clothing itself in any philosophy that seems to fit it. I can imagine myself how such a strike as this might appeal to a girl with a sense of rebellion against sordidness and lack of opportunity—especially if she has had a tragic experience. And sometimes I suspect she has had one."

"Well, it's an interesting theory," Insall admitted indulgently.

"I'm merely amplifying your suggestions, only you won't admit that they are yours. And she was your protegee." "And you are going to take her off my hands." "I'm not so sure," said Mrs. Maturin.

CHAPTER XIX

The Hampton strike had reached the state of grim deadlock characteristic of all stubborn wars. There were aggressions, retaliations on both sides, the antagonism grew more intense. The older labour unions were accused by the strikers of playing the employers' game, and thus grew to be hated even more than the "capitalists." These organizations of the skilled had entered but half-heartedly into a struggle that now began to threaten, indeed, their very existence, and when it was charged that the Textile Workers had been attempting to secure recruits from the ranks of the strikers, and had secretly offered the millowners a scale of demands in the hope that a sufficient number of operatives would return to work, and so break the strike; a serious riot was barely averted. "Scab-hunting agencies," the unions were called. One morning when it was learned that the loom-fixers, almost to a man, had gone back to the mills, a streetcar was stopped near the power house at the end of Faber Street, and in a twinkling, before the militia or police could interfere, motorman, conductor, and passengers were dragged from it and the trolley pole removed. This and a number of similar aggressive acts aroused the mill-owners and their agents to appeal with renewed vigour to the public through the newspapers, which it was claimed they owned or subsidized. Then followed a series of arraignments of the strike leaders calculated to stir the wildest prejudices and fears of the citizens of Hampton. Antonelli and Jastro—so rumour had it—in various nightly speeches had advised their followers to "sleep in the daytime and prowl like wild animals at night"; urged the power house employees to desert and leave the city in darkness; made the declaration, "We will win if we raise scaffolds on every street!" insisted that the strikers, too, should have "gun permits," since the police hirelings carried arms. And the fact that the mill-owners replied with pamphlets whose object was proclaimed to be one of discrediting their leaders in the eyes of the public still further infuriated the strikers. Such charges, of course, had to be vehemently refuted, the motives behind them made clear, and counter-accusations laid at the door of the mill-owners.

The atmosphere at Headquarters daily grew more tense. At any moment the spark might be supplied to precipitate an explosion that would shake the earth. The hungry, made more desperate by their own sufferings or the spectacle of starving families, were increasingly difficult to control: many wished to return to work, others clamoured for violence, nor were these wholly discouraged by a portion of the leaders. A riot seemed imminent—a riot Antonelli feared and firmly opposed, since it would alienate the sympathy of that wider public in the country on which the success of the strike depended. Watchful, yet apparently unconcerned, unmoved by the quarrels, the fierce demands for "action," he sat on the little stage, smoking his cigars and reading his newspapers.

Janet's nerves were taut. There had been times during the past weeks when she had been aware of new and vaguely disquieting portents. Inexperience had led her to belittle them, and the absorbing nature of her work, the excitement due to the strange life of conflict, of new ideas, into which she had so unreservedly flung herself, the resentment that galvanized her—all these had diverted her from worry. At night, hers had been the oblivious slumber of the weary.... And then, as a desperate wayfarer, pressing on, feels a heavy drop of rain and glances up to perceive the clouds that have long been gathering, she awoke in the black morning hours, and fear descended upon her. Suddenly her brain became hideously active as she lay, dry-upped, staring into the darkness, striving to convince herself that it could not be. But the thing had its advocate, also, to summon ingeniously, in cumulative array, those omens she had ignored: to cause her to piece together, in this moment of torture, portions of the knowledge of sexual facts that prudery banishes from education, a smattering of which reaches the ears of such young women as Janet in devious, roundabout ways. Several times, in the month just past, she had had unwonted attacks of dizziness, of faintness, and on one occasion Anna Mower, alarmed, had opened the window of the bibliotheque and thrust her into the cold air. Now, with a pang of fear she recalled what Anna had said:—"You're working too hard—you hadn't ought to stay here nights. If it was some girls I've met, I'd know what to think."

Strange that the significance of this sentence had failed to penetrate her consciousness until now! "If it was some girls I've met, I'd know what to think!" It had come into her mind abruptly; and always, when she sought to reassure herself, to declare her terror absurd, it returned to confront her. Heat waves pulsed through her, she grew intolerably warm, perspiration started from her pores, and she flung off the blankets. The rain from the roofs was splashing on the bricks of the passage.... What would Mr. Insall say, if he knew? and Mrs. Maturin? She could never see them again. Now there was no one to whom to turn, she was cut off, utterly, from humanity, an outcast. Like Lise! And only a little while ago she and Lise had lain in that bed together! Was there not somebody —God? Other people believed in God, prayed to him. She tried to say, "Oh God, deliver me from this thing!" but the words seemed a mockery. After all, it was mechanical, it had either happened or it hadn't happened. A life-long experience in an environment where only unpleasant things occurred, where miracles were unknown, had effaced a fleeting, childhood belief in miracles. Cause and effect were the rule. And if

there were a God who did interfere, why hadn't he interfered before this thing happened? Then would have been the logical time. Why hadn't he informed her that in attempting to escape from the treadmill in which he had placed her, in seeking happiness, she had been courting destruction? Why had he destroyed Lise? And if there were a God, would he comfort her now, convey to her some message of his sympathy and love? No such message, alas, seemed to come to her through the darkness.

After a while—a seemingly interminable while—the siren shrieked, the bells jangled loudly in the wet air, another day had come. Could she face it—even the murky grey light of this that revealed the ashes and litter of the back yard under the downpour? The act of dressing brought a slight relief; and then, at breakfast, a numbness stole over her—suggested and conveyed, perchance, by the apathy of her mother. Something had killed suffering in Hannah; perhaps she herself would mercifully lose the power to suffer! But the thought made her shudder. She could not, like her mother, find a silly refuge in shining dishes, in cleaning pots and pans, or sit idle, vacant-minded, for long hours in a spotless kitchen. What would happen to her?... Howbeit, the ache that had tortured her became a dull, leaden pain, like that she had known at another time—how long ago—when the suffering caused by Ditmar's deception had dulled, when she had sat in the train on her way back to Hampton from Boston, after seeing Lise. The pain would throb again, unsupportably, and she would wake, and this time it would drive her—she knew not where.

She was certain, now, that the presage of the night was true....

She reached Franco-Belgian Hall to find it in an uproar. Anna Mower ran up to her with the news that dynamite had been discovered by the police in certain tenements of the Syrian quarter, that the tenants had been arrested and taken to the police station where, bewildered and terrified, they had denied any knowledge of the explosive. Dynamite had also been found under the power house, and in the mills—the sources of Hampton's prosperity. And Hampton believed, of course, that this was the inevitable result of the anarchistic preaching of such enemies of society as Jastro and Antonelli if these, indeed, had not incited the Syrians to the deed. But it was a plot of the mill-owners, Anna insisted—they themselves had planted the explosive, adroitly started the rumours, told the police where the dynamite was to be found. Such was the view that prevailed at Headquarters, pervaded the angrily buzzing crowd that stood outside—heedless of the rain—and animated the stormy conferences in the Salle de Reunion.

The day wore on. In the middle of the afternoon, as she was staring out of the window, Anna Mower returned with more news. Dynamite had been discovered in Hawthorne Street, and it was rumoured that Antonelli and Jastro were to be arrested.

"You ought to go home and rest, Janet," she said kindly.

Janet shook her head.

"Rolfe's back," Anna informed her, after a moment. "He's talking to Antonelli about another proclamation to let people know who's to blame for this dynamite business. I guess he'll be in here in a minute to dictate the draft. Say, hadn't you better let Minnie take it, and go home?"

"I'm not sick," Janet repeated, and Anna reluctantly left her.

Rolfe had been absent for a week, in New York, consulting with some of the I.W.W. leaders; with Lockhart, the chief protagonist of Syndicalism in America, just returned from Colorado, to whom he had given a detailed account of the Hampton strike. And Lockhart, next week, was coming to Hampton to make a great speech and look over the ground for himself. All this Rolfe told Janet eagerly when he entered the bibliotheque. He was glad to get back; he had missed her.

"But you are pale!" he exclaimed, as he seized her hand, "and how your eyes burn! You do not take care of yourself when I am not here to watch you." His air of solicitude, his assumption of a peculiar right to ask, might formerly have troubled and offended her. Now she was scarcely aware of his presence. "You feel too much—that is it you are like a torch that consumes itself in burning. But this will soon be over, we shall have them on their knees, the capitalists, before very long, when it is known what they have done to-day. It is too much—they have overreached themselves with this plot of the dynamite."

"You have missed me, a little?"

"I have been busy," she said, releasing her hand and sitting down at her desk and taking up her notebook.

"You are not well," he insisted.

"I'm all right," she replied.

He lit a cigarette and began to pace the room—his customary manner of preparing himself for the creative mood. After a while he began to dictate—but haltingly. He had come here from Antonelli all primed with fervour and indignation, but it was evident that this feeling had ebbed, that his mind refused to concentrate on what he was saying. Despite the magnificent opportunity to flay the capitalists which their most recent tactics afforded him, he paused, repeated himself, and began again, glancing from time to time reproachfully, almost resentfully at Janet. Usually, on these occasions, he was transported, almost inebriated by his own eloquence; but now he chafed at her listlessness, he was at a loss to account for the withdrawal of the enthusiasm he had formerly been able to arouse. Lacking the feminine stimulus, his genius limped. For Rolfe there had been a woman in every strike—sometimes two. What had happened, during his absence, to alienate the most promising of all neophytes he had ever encountered?

"The eyes of the world are fixed on the workers of Hampton! They must be true to the trust their fellows have placed in them! To-day the mill-owners, the masters, are at the end of their tether. Always unscrupulous, they have descended to the most despicable of tactics in order to deceive the public. But truth will prevail!..." Rolfe lit another cigarette, began a new sentence and broke it off. Suddenly he stood over her. "It's you!" he said. "You don't feel it, you don't help me, you're not in sympathy."

He bent over her, his red lips gleaming through his beard, a terrible hunger in his lustrous eyes—the eyes of a soul to which self-denial was unknown. His voice was thick with uncontrolled passion, his hand was cold.

"Janet, what has happened? I love you, you must love me—I cannot believe that you do not. Come with me. We shall work together for the workers—it is all nothing without you."

For a moment she sat still, and then a pain shot through her, a pain as sharp as a dagger thrust. She drew her hand away.

"I can't love—I can only hate," she said.

"But you do not hate me!" Rolfe repudiated so gross a fact. His voice caught as in a sob. "I, who love you, who have taught you!"

She dismissed this—what he had taught her—with a gesture which, though slight, was all-expressive. He drew back from her.

"Shall I tell you who has planned and carried out this plot?" he cried. "It is Ditmar. He is the one, and he used Janes, the livery stable keeper, the politician who brought the dynamite to Hampton, as his tool. Half an hour before Janes got to the station in Boston he was seen by a friend of ours talking to Ditmar in front of the Chippering offices, and Janes had the satchel with him then. Ditmar walked to the corner with him."

Janet, too, had risen.

"I don't believe it," she said.

"Ah, I thought you wouldn't! But we have the proof that dynamite was in the satchel, we've found the contractor from whom it was bought. I was a fool—I might have known that you loved Ditmar."

"I hate him!" said Janet.

"It is the same thing," said Rolfe.

She did not answer.... He watched her in silence as she put on her hat and coat and left the room.

The early dusk was gathering when she left the hall and made her way toward the city. The huge bottle-shaped chimneys of the power plant injected heavy black smoke into the wet air. In Faber Street the once brilliant signs above the "ten-foot" buildings seemed dulled, the telegraph poles starker, nakeder than ever, their wires scarcely discernible against the smeared sky. The pedestrians were sombrely garbed, and went about in "rubbers"—the most depressing of all articles worn by man. Sodden piles of snow still hid the curb and gutters, but the pavements were trailed with mud that gleamed in the light from the shop windows. And Janet, lingering unconsciously in front of that very emporium where Lisehad been incarcerated, the Bagatelle, stared at the finery displayed there, at the blue tulle dress that might be purchased, she read, for $22.99. She found herself repeating, in meaningless, subdued tones, the words, "twenty-two ninety-nine." She even tried—just to see if it were possible—to concentrate her mind on that dress, on the fur muffs and tippets in the next window; to act as if this were just an ordinary, sad February afternoon, and she herself once more just an ordinary

stenographer leading a monotonous, uneventful existence. But she knew that this was not true, because, later on, she was going to do something—to commit some act. She didn't know what this act would be. Her head was hot, her temples throbbed....

Night had fallen, the electric arcs burned blue overhead, she was in another street—was it Stanley? Sounds of music reached her, the rumble of marching feet; dark, massed figures were in the distance swimming toward her along the glistening line of the car tracks, and she heard the shrill whistling of the doffer boys, who acted as a sort of fife corps in these parades—which by this time had become familiar to the citizens of Hampton. And Janet remembered when the little red book that contained the songs had arrived at Headquarters from the west and had been distributed by thousands among the strikers. She recalled the words of this song, though the procession was as yet too far away for her to distinguish them:—

"The People's flag is deepest red,
It shrouded oft our martyred dead,
And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
Their life-blood dyed its every fold."

The song ceased, and she stood still, waiting for the procession to reach her. A group of heavy Belgian women were marching together. Suddenly, as by a simultaneous impulse, their voices rang out in the Internationale—the terrible Marseillaise of the workers:—

"Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise, ye wretched of the earth!"

And the refrain was taken up by hundreds of throats:—

"'Tis the final conflict,
Let each stand in his place!"

The walls of the street flung it back. On the sidewalk, pressed against the houses, men and women heard it with white faces. But Janet was carried on.... The scene changed, now she was gazing at a mass of human beings hemmed in by a line of soldiers. Behind the crowd was a row of old-fashioned brick houses, on the walls of which were patterned, by the cold electric light, the branches of the bare elms ranged along the sidewalk. People leaned out of the windows, like theatregoers at a play. The light illuminated the red and white bars of the ensign, upheld by the standard bearer of the regiment, the smaller flags flaunted by the strikers—each side clinging hardily to the emblem of human liberty. The light fell, too, harshly and brilliantly, on the workers in the front rank confronting the bayonets, and these seemed strangely indifferent, as though waiting for the flash of a photograph. A little farther on a group of boys, hands in pockets, stared at the soldiers with bravado. From the rear came that indescribable "booing" which those who have heard never forget, mingled with curses and cries:—"Vive la greve!"

"To hell with the Cossacks!"

"Kahm on—shoot!"

The backs of the soldiers, determined, unyielding, were covered with heavy brown capes that fell below the waist. As Janet's glance wandered down the line it was arrested by the face of a man in a visored woollen cap—a face that was almost sepia, in which large white eyeballs struck a note of hatred. And what she seemed to see in it, confronting her, were the hatred and despair of her own soul! The man might have been a Hungarian or a Pole; the breadth of his chin was accentuated by a wide, black moustache, his attitude was tense,—that of a maddened beast ready to spring at the soldier in front of him. He was plainly one of those who had reached the mental limit of endurance.

In contrast with this foreigner, confronting him, a young lieutenant stood motionless, his head cocked on one side, his hand grasping the club held a little behind him, his glance meeting the other's squarely, but with a different quality of defiance. All his faculties were on the alert. He wore no overcoat, and the uniform fitting close to his figure, the broad-brimmed campaign hat of felt served to bring into relief the physical characteristics of the American Anglo-Saxon, of the individualist who became the fighting pioneer. But Janet, save to register the presence of the intense antagonism between the two, scarcely noticed her fellow countryman.... Every moment she expected to see the black man spring,—and yet movement would have marred the drama of that consuming hatred....

Then, by one of those bewildering, kaleidoscopic shifts to which crowds are subject, the scene changed, more troops arrived, little by little the people were dispersed to drift together again by chance—in smaller numbers—several blocks away. Perhaps a hundred and fifty were scattered over the space formed by the intersection of two streets, where three or four special policemen with night sticks

urged them on. Not a riot, or anything approaching it. The police were jeered, but the groups, apparently, had already begun to scatter, when from the triangular vestibule of a saloon on the corner darted a flame followed by an echoing report, a woman bundled up in a shawl screamed and sank on the snow. For an instant the little French-Canadian policeman whom the shot had missed gazed stupidly down at her….

As Janet ran along the dark pavements the sound of the shot and of the woman's shriek continued to ring in her ears. At last she stopped in front of the warehouse beyond Mr. Tiernan's shop, staring at the darkened windows of the flat—of the front room in which her mother now slept alone. For a minute she stood looking at these windows, as though hypnotized by some message they conveyed—the answer to a question suggested by the incident that had aroused and terrified her. They drew her, as in a trance, across the street, she opened the glass-panelled door, remembering mechanically the trick it had of not quite closing, turned and pushed it to and climbed the stairs. In the diningroom the metal lamp, brightly polished, was burning as usual, its light falling on the chequered red table-cloth, on her father's empty chair, on that somewhat battered heirloom, the horsehair sofa. All was so familiar, and yet so amazingly unfamiliar, so silent! At this time Edward should be reading the Banner, her mother bustling in and out, setting the table for supper. But not a dish was set. The ticking of the ancient clock only served to intensify the silence. Janet entered, almost on tiptoe, made her way to the kitchen door, and looked in. The stove was polished, the pans bright upon the wall, and Hannah was seated in a corner, her hands folded across a spotless apron. Her scant hair was now pure white, her dress seemed to have fallen away from her wasted neck, which was like a trefoil column.

"Is that you, Janet? You hain't seen anything of your father?"

The night before Janet had heard this question, and she had been puzzled as to its meaning—whether in the course of the day she had seen her father, or whether Hannah thought he was coming home.

"He's at the mill, mother. You know he has to stay there."

"I know," replied Hannah, in a tone faintly reminiscent of the old aspersion. "But I've got everything ready for him in case he should come—any time—if the strikers hain't killed him."

"But he's safe where he is."

"I presume they will try to kill him, before they get through," Hannah continued evenly. "But in case he should come at any time, and I'm not here, you tell him all those Bumpus papers are put away in the drawer of that old chest, in the corner. I can't think what he'd do without those papers. That is," she added, "if you're here yourself."

"Why shouldn't you be here?" asked Janet, rather sharply.

"I dunno, I seem to have got through." She glanced helplessly around the kitchen. "There don't seem to be much left to keep me alive…. I guess you'll be wanting your supper, won't you? You hain't often home these days—whatever it is you're doing. I didn't expect you."

Janet did not answer at once.

"I—I have to go out again, mother," she said.

Hannah accepted the answer as she had accepted every other negative in life, great and small.

"Well, I guessed you would."

Janet made a step toward her.

"Mother!" she said, but Hannah gazed at her uncomprehendingly. Janet stooped convulsively, and kissed her. Straightening up, she stood looking down at her mother for a few moments, and went out of the room, pausing in the dining-room, to listen, but Hannah apparently had not stirred. She took the box of matches from its accustomed place on the shelf beside the clock, entered the dark bedroom in the front of the flat, closing the door softly behind her. The ghostly blue light from a distant arc came slanting in at the window, glinting on the brass knobs of the chest of drawers-another Bumpus heirloom. She remembered that chest from early childhood; it was one of the few pieces that, following them in all their changes of residence, had been faithful to the end: she knew everything in it, and the place for everything. Drawing a match from the box, she was about to turn on the gas—but the light from the arc would suffice. As she made her way around the walnut bed she had a premonition of poignant anguish as yet unrealized, of anguish being held at bay by a stronger, fiercer, more imperative emotion now demanding expression, refusing at last to be denied. She opened the top drawer of the chest, the drawer in which Hannah, breaking tradition, had put the Bumpus genealogy. Edward had

never kept it there. Would the other things be in place? Groping with her hands in the left-hand corner, her fingers clasped exultantly something heavy, something wrapped carefully in layers of flannel. She had feared her father might have taken it to the mill! She drew it out, unwound the flannel, and held to the light an old-fashioned revolver, the grease glistening along its barrel. She remembered, too, that the cartridges had lain beside it, and thrusting her hand once more into the drawer found the box, extracting several, and replacing the rest, closed the drawer, and crept through the dining-room to her bedroom, where she lit the gas in order to examine the weapon —finally contriving, more by accident than skill, to break it. The cartridges, of course, fitted into the empty cylinder. But before inserting them she closed the pistol once more, cocked it, and held it out. Her arm trembled violently as she pulled the trigger. Could she do it? As though to refute this doubt of her ability to carry out an act determined upon, she broke the weapon once more, loaded and closed it, and thrust it in the pocket of her coat. Then, washing the grease from her hands, she put on her gloves, and was about to turn out the light when she saw reflected in the glass the red button of the I.W.W. still pinned on her coat. This she tore off, and flung on the bureau.

When she had kissed her mother, when she had stood hesitatingly in the darkness of the familiar front bedroom in the presence of unsummoned memories of a home she had believed herself to resent and despise, she had nearly faltered. But once in the street, this weakness suddenly vanished, was replaced by a sense of wrong that now took complete and furious possession of her, driving her like a gale at her back. She scarcely felt on her face the fine rain that had begun to fall once more. Her feet were accustomed to the way. When she had turned down West Street and almost gained the canal, it was with a shock of surprise that she found herself confronted by a man in a long cape who held a rifle and barred her path. She stared at him as at an apparition.

"You can't get by here," he said. "Don't you know that?"

She did not reply. He continued to look at her, and presently asked, in a gentler tone:—"Where did you wish to go, lady?"

"Into the mill," she replied, "to the offices."

"But there can't anybody go through here unless they have a pass. I'm sorry, but that's the order."

Her answer came so readily as to surprise her.

"I was Mr. Ditmar's private stenographer. I have to see him."

The sentry hesitated, and then addressed another soldier, who was near the bridge.

"Hi, sergeant!" he called. The sergeant came up—a conscientious Boston clerk who had joined the militia from a sense of duty and a need for exercise. While the sentry explained the matter he gazed at Janet. Then he said politely:—"I'm sorry, Miss, but I can't disobey orders."

"But can't you send word to Mr. Ditmar, and tell him I want to see him?" she asked.

"Why, I guess so," he answered, after a moment. "What name shall I say?"

"Miss Bumpus."

"Bumpus," he repeated. "That's the gatekeeper's name."

"I'm his daughter—but I want to see Mr. Ditmar."

"Well," said the sergeant, "I'm sure it's all right, but I'll have to send in anyway. Orders are orders. You understand?"

She nodded as he departed. She saw him cross the bridge like a ghost through the white mist rising from the canal. And through the mist she could make out the fortress-like mass of the mill itself, and the blurred, distorted lights in the paymaster's offices smeared on the white curtain of the vapour.

"Nasty weather," the sentry remarked, in friendly fashion. He appeared now, despite his uniform, as a good-natured, ungainly youth.

Janet nodded.

"You'd ought to have brought an umbrella," he said. "I guess it'll rain harder, before it gets through. But it's better than ten below zero, anyhow."

She nodded again, but he did not seem to resent her silence. He talked about the hardship of patrolling in winter, until the sergeant came back.

"It's all right, Miss Bumpus," he said, and touched his hat as he escorted her to the bridge. She crossed the canal and went through the vestibule without replying to the greeting of the night-watchman, or noticing his curious glance; she climbed the steel-clad stairway, passed the paymaster's offices and Mr. Orcutt's, and gained the outer office where she had worked as a stenographer. It was dark, but sufficient light came through Ditmar's open door to guide her beside the rail. He had heard her step, and as she entered his room he had put his hands heavily on his desk, in the act of rising from his chair.

"Janet!" he said, and started toward her, but got no farther than the corner of the desk. The sight of her heaving breast, of the peculiar light that flashed from beneath her lashes stopped him suddenly. Her hands were in her pockets. "What is it?" he demanded stupidly.

But she continued to stand there, breathing so heavily that she could not speak. It was then that he became aware of an acute danger. He did not flinch.

"What is it?" he repeated.

Still she was silent. One hand was thrust deeper into its pocket, he saw a shudder run through her, and suddenly she burst into hysterical weeping, sinking into a chair. He stood for some moments helplessly regarding her before he gained the presence of mind to go to the door and lock it, returning to bend over her.

"Don't touch me!" she said, shrinking from him.

"For God's sake tell me what's the matter," he begged.

She looked up at him and tried to speak, struggling against the sobs that shook her.

"I—I came here to—to kill you—only I can't do it."

"To kill me!" he said, after a pause. In spite of the fact that he had half divined her intention, the words shocked him. Whatever else may be said of him, he did not lack courage, his alarm was not of a physical nature. Mingled with it were emotions he himself did not understand, caused by the unwonted sight of her loss of self-control, of her anger, and despair. "Why did you want to kill me?"

And again he had to wait for an answer.

"Because you've spoiled my life—because I'm going to have a child!"

"What do you mean? Are you?... it can't be possible."

"It is possible, it's true—it's true. I've waited and waited, I've suffered, I've almost gone crazy—and now I know. And I said I'd kill you if it were so, I'd kill myself—only I can't. I'm a coward." Her voice was drowned again by weeping.

A child! He had never imagined such a contingency! And as he leaned back against the desk, his emotions became chaotic. The sight of her, even as she appeared crazed by anger, had set his passion aflame—for the intensity and fierceness of her nature had always made a strong appeal to dominant qualities in Ditmar's nature. And then—this announcement! Momentarily it turned his heart to water. Now that he was confronted by an exigency that had once vicariously yet deeply disturbed him in a similar affair of a friend of his, the code and habit of a lifetime gained an immediate ascendency—since then he had insisted that this particular situation was to be avoided above all others. And his mind leaped to possibilities. She had wished to kill him—would she remain desperate enough to ruin him? Even though he were not at a crisis in his affairs, a scandal of this kind would be fatal.

"I didn't know," he said desperately, "I couldn't guess. Do you think I would have had this thing happen to you? I was carried away—we were both carried away—"

"You planned it!" she replied vehemently, without looking up. "You didn't care for me, you only—wanted me."

"That isn't so—I swear that isn't so. I loved you I love you."

"Oh, do you think I believe that?" she exclaimed.

"I swear it—I'll prove it!" he protested. Still under the influence of an acute anxiety, he was finding it difficult to gather his wits, to present his case. "When you left me that day the strike began—when you left me without giving me a chance—you'll never know how that hurt me."

"You'll never know how it hurt me!" she interrupted.

"Then why, in God's name, did you do it? I wasn't myself, then, you ought to have seen that. And when I heard from Caldwell here that you'd joined those anarchists—"

"They're no worse than you are—they only want what you've got," she said.

He waved this aside. "I couldn't believe it—I wouldn't believe it until somebody saw you walking with one of them to their Headquarters. Why did you do it?"

"Because I know how they feel, I sympathize with the strikers, I want them to win—against you!" She lifted her head and looked at him, and in spite of the state of his feelings he felt a twinge of admiration at her defiance.

"Because you love me!" he said.

"Because I hate you," she answered.

And yet a spark of exultation leaped within him at the thought that love had caused this apostasy. He had had that suspicion before, though it was a poor consolation when he could not reach her. Now she had made it vivid. A woman's logic, or lack of logic—her logic.

"Listen!" he pleaded. "I tried to forget you—I tried to keep myself going all the time that I mightn't think of you, but I couldn't help thinking of you, wanting you, longing for you. I never knew why you left me, except that you seemed to believe I was unkind to you, and that something had happened. It wasn't my fault—" he pulled himself up abruptly.

"I found out what men were like," she said. "A man made my sister a woman of the streets—that's what you've done to me."

He winced. And the calmness she had regained, which was so characteristic of her, struck him with a new fear.

"I'm not that kind of a man," he said.

But she did not answer. His predicament became more trying.

"I'll take care of you," he assured her, after a moment. "If you'll only trust me, if you'll only come to me I'll see that no harm comes to you."

She regarded him with a sort of wonder—a look that put a fine edge of dignity and scorn to her words when they came.

"I told you I didn't want to be taken care of—I wanted to kill you, and kill myself. I don't know why I can't what prevents me." She rose. "But I'm not going to trouble you any more—you'll never hear of me again."

She would not trouble him, she was going away, he would never hear of her again! Suddenly, with the surge of relief he experienced, came a pang. He could not let her go—it was impossible. It seemed that he had never understood his need of her, his love for her, until now that he had brought her to this supreme test of self-revelation. She had wanted to kill him, yes, to kill herself—but how could he ever have believed that she would stoop to another method of retaliation? As she stood before him the light in her eyes still wet with tears—transfigured her.

"I love you, Janet," he said. "I want you to marry me."

"You don't understand," she answered. "You never did. If I had married you, I'd feel just the same—but it isn't really as bad as if we had been married."

"Not as bad!" he exclaimed.

"If we were married, you'd think you had rights over me," she explained, slowly. "Now you haven't any, I can go away. I couldn't live with you. I know what happened to me, I've thought it all out, I wanted to get away from the life I was leading—I hated it so, I was crazy to have a chance, to see the world, to get nearer some of the beautiful things I knew were there, but couldn't reach.... And you came along. I did love you, I would have done anything for you—it was only when I saw that you didn't really love me that I began to hate you, that I wanted to get away from you, when I saw that you only wanted me until you should get tired of me. That's your nature, you can't help it. And it would have been the same if we were married, only worse, I couldn't have stood it any more than I can now—I'd have left you. You say you'll marry me now, but that's because you're sorry for me—since I've said I'm not going to trouble you any more. You'll be glad I've gone. You may—want me now, but that isn't love. When you say you love me, I can't believe you."

"You must believe me! And the child, Janet,—our child—"

"If the world was right," she said, "I could have this child and nobody would say anything. I could support it—I guess I can anyway. And when I'm not half crazy I want it. Maybe that's the reason I couldn't do what I tried to do just now. It's natural for a woman to want a child —especially a woman like me, who hasn't anybody or anything."

Ditmar's state of mind was too complicated to be wholly described. As the fact had been gradually brought home to him that she had not come as a supplicant, that even in her misery she was free, and he helpless, there revived in him wild memories of her body, of the kisses he had wrung from her—and yet this physical desire was accompanied by a realization of her personality never before achieved. And because he had hitherto failed to achieve it, she had escaped him. This belated, surpassing glimpse of what she essentially was, and the thought of the child their child—permeating his passion, transformed it into a feeling hitherto unexperienced and unimagined. He hovered over her, pitifully, his hands feeling for her, yet not daring to touch her.

"Can't you see that I love you?" he cried, "that I'm ready to marry you now, to-night. You must love me, I won't believe that you don't after —after all we have been to each other."

But even then she could not believe. Something in her, made hard by the intensity of her suffering, refused to melt. And her head was throbbing, and she scarcely heard him.

"I can't stay any longer," she said, getting to her feet. "I can't bear it."

"Janet, I swear I'll care for you as no woman was ever cared for. For God's sake listen to me, give me a chance, forgive me!" He seized her arm; she struggled, gently but persistently, to free herself from his hold.

"Let me go, please." All the passionate anger had gone out of her, and she spoke in a monotone, as one under hypnosis, dominated by a resolution which, for the present at least, he was powerless to shake.

"But to-morrow?" he pleaded. "You'll let me see you to-morrow, when you've had time to think it over, when you realize that I love you and want you, that I haven't meant to be cruel—that you've misjudged me —thought I was a different kind of a man. I don't blame you for that, I guess something happened to make you believe it. I've got enemies. For the sake of the child, Janet, if for nothing else, you'll come back to me! You're—you're tired tonight, you're not yourself. I don't wonder, after all you've been through. If you'd only come to me before! God knows what I've suffered, too!"

"Let me go, please," she repeated, and this time, despairingly, he obeyed her, a conviction of her incommunicability overwhelming him. He turned and, fumbling with the key, unlocked the door and opened it. "I'll see you to-morrow," he faltered once more, and watched her as she went through the darkened outer room until she gained the lighted hallway beyond and disappeared. Her footsteps died away into silence. He was trembling. For several minutes he stood where she had left him, tortured by a sense of his inability to act, to cope with this, the great crisis of his life, when suddenly the real significance of that strange last look in her eyes was borne home to him. And he had allowed her to go out into the streets alone! Seizing his hat and coat, he fairly ran out of the office and down the stairs and across the bridge.

"Which way did that young lady go?" he demanders of the sergeant.

"Why—uh, West Street, Mr. Ditmar."

He remembered where Fillmore Street was; he had, indeed, sought it out one evening in the hope of meeting her. He hurried toward it now, his glance strained ahead to catch sight of her figure under a lamp. But he reached Fillmore Street without overtaking her, and in the rain he stood gazing at the mean houses there, wondering in which of them she lived, and whether she had as yet come home….

After leaving Ditmar Janet, probably from force of habit, had indeed gone through West Street, and after that she walked on aimlessly. It was better to walk than to sit alone in torment, to be gnawed by that Thing from which she had so desperately attempted to escape, and failed. She tried to think why she had failed…. Though the rain fell on her cheeks, her mouth was parched; and this dryness of her palate, this physical sense of lightness, almost of dizziness, were intimately yet incomprehensibly part and parcel of the fantastic moods into which she floated. It was as though, in trying to solve a problem, she caught herself from time to time falling off to sleep. In her waking moments she was terror-stricken. Scarce an hour had passed since, in a terrible exaltation at having found a solution, she had gone to Ditmar's office in the mill. What had happened to stay her? It was when she tried to find the

cause of the weakness that so abruptly had overtaken her, or to cast about for a plan to fit the new predicament to which her failure had sentenced her, that the fantasies intruded. She heard Ditmar speaking, the arguments were curiously familiar—but they were not Ditmar's! They were her father's, and now it was Edward's voice to which she listened, he was telling her how eminently proper it was that she should marry Ditmar, because of her Bumpus blood. And this made her laugh.... Again, Ditmar was kissing her hair. He had often praised it. She had taken it down and combed it out for him; it was like a cloud, he said—so fine; its odour made him faint—and then the odour changed, became that of the detested perfume of Miss Lottie Myers! Even that made Janet smile! But Ditmar was strong, he was powerful, he was a Fact, why not go back to him and let him absorb and destroy her? That annihilation would be joy....

It could not have been much later than seven o'clock when she found herself opposite the familiar, mulberry-shingled Protestant church. The light from its vestibule made a gleaming square on the wet sidewalk, and into this area, from the surrounding darkness, came silhouetted figures of men and women holding up umbrellas; some paused for a moment's chat, their voices subdued by an awareness of the tabernacle. At the sight of this tiny congregation something stirred within her. She experienced a twinge of surprise at the discovery that other people in the world, in Hampton, were still leading tranquil, untormented existences. They were contented, prosperous, stupid, beyond any need of help from God, and yet they were going to prayer-meeting to ask something! He refused to find her in the dark streets. Would she find Him if she went in there? and would He help her?

The bell in the tower began to clang, with heavy, relentless strokes —like physical blows from which she flinched—each stirring her reluctant, drowsy soul to a quicker agony. From the outer blackness through which she fled she gazed into bright rooms of homes whose blinds were left undrawn, as though to taunt and mock the wanderer. She was an outcast! Who henceforth would receive her save those, unconformed and unconformable, sentenced to sin in this realm of blackness? Henceforth from all warmth and love she was banished.... In the middle of the Stanley Street bridge she stopped to lean against the wet rail; the mill lights were scattered, dancing points of fire over the invisible swift waters, and she raised her eyes presently to the lights themselves, seeking one unconsciously—Ditmar's! Yes, it was his she sought; though it was so distant, sometimes it seemed to burn like a red star, and then to flicker and disappear. She could not be sure.... Something chill and steely was in the pocket of her coat —it made a heavy splash in the water when she dropped it. The river could not be so very cold! She wished she could go down like that into forgetfulness. But she couldn't.... Where was Lise now?... It would be so easy just to drop over that parapet and be whirled away, and down and down. Why couldn't she? Well, it was because—because—she was going to have a child. Well, if she had a child to take care of, she would not be so lonely—she would have something to love. She loved it now, as though she felt it quickening within her, she wanted it, to lavish on it all of a starved affection. She seemed actually to feel in her arms its soft little body pressed against her. Claude Ditmar's child! And she suddenly recalled, as an incident of the remote past, that she had told him she wanted it!

This tense craving for it she felt now was somehow the answer to an expressed wish which had astonished her. Perhaps that was the reason why she had failed to do what she had tried to do, to shoot Ditmar and herself! It was Ditmar's child, Ditmar's and hers! He had loved her, long ago, and just now —was it just now?—he had said he loved her still, he had wanted to marry her. Then why had she run away from him? Why had she taken the child into outer darkness, to be born without a father,—when she loved Ditmar? Wasn't that one reason why she wanted the child? why, even in her moments of passionate hatred she recalled having been surprised by some such yearning as now came over her? And for an interval, a brief interval, she viewed him with startling clarity. Not because he embodied any ideal did she love him, but because he was what he was, because he had overcome her will, dominated and possessed her, left his mark upon her indelibly. He had been cruel to her, willing to sacrifice her to his way of life, to his own desires, but he loved her, for she had seen, if not heeded in his eyes the look that a woman never mistakes! She remembered it now, and the light in his window glowed again, like a star to guide her back to him. It was drawing her, irresistibly....

The sentry recognized her as she came along the canal.

"Mr. Ditmar's gone," he told her.

"Gone!" she repeated. "Gone!"

"Why, yes, about five minutes after you left he was looking for you—he asked the sergeant about you."

"And—he won't be back?"

"I guess not," answered the man, sympathetically. "He said good-night."

She turned away dully. The strength and hope with which she had been so unexpectedly infused while gazing from the bridge at his window had suddenly ebbed; her legs ached, her feet were wet, and she shivered, though her forehead burned. The world became distorted, people flitted past her like weird figures of a dream, the myriad lights of Faber Street were blurred and whirled in company with the electric signs. Seeking to escape from their confusion she entered a side street leading north, only to be forcibly seized by some one who darted after her from the sidewalk.

"Excuse me, but you didn't see that automobile," he said, as he released her.

Shaken, she went on through several streets to find herself at length confronted by a pair of shabby doors that looked familiar, and pushing one of them open, baited at the bottom of a stairway to listen. The sound of cheerful voices camp to her from above; she started to climb—even with the help of the rail it seemed as if she would never reach the top of that stairway. But at last she stood in a loft where long tables were set, and at the end of one of these, sorting out spoons and dishes, three women and a man were chatting and laughing together. Janet was troubled because she could not remember who the man was, although she recognized his bold profile, his voice and gestures.... At length one of the women said something in a low tone, and he looked around quickly and crossed the room.

"Why, it's you!" he said, and suddenly she recalled his name.

"Mr. Insall!"

But his swift glance had noticed the expression in her eyes, the sagged condition of her clothes, the attitude that proclaimed exhaustion. He took her by the arm and led her to the little storeroom, turning on the light and placing her in a chair. Darkness descended on her....

Mrs. Maturin, returning from an errand, paused for an instant in the doorway, and ran forward and bent over Janet.

"Oh, Brooks, what is it—what's happened to her?"

"I don't know," he replied, "I didn't have a chance to ask her. I'm going for a doctor."

"Leave her to me, and call Miss Hay." Mrs. Maturin was instantly competent .... And when Insall came back from the drug store where he had telephoned she met him at the head of the stairs. "We've done everything we can, Edith Hay has given her brandy, and gone off for dry clothes, and we've taken all the children's things out of the drawers and laid her on the floor, but she hasn't come to. Poor child, —what can have happened to her? Is the doctor coming?"

"Right away," said Insall, and Mrs. Maturin went back into the storeroom.
Miss Hay brought the dry clothes before the physician arrived.

"It's probably pneumonia," he explained to Insall a little later. "She must go to the hospital—but the trouble is all our hospitals are pretty full, owing to the sickness caused by the strike." He hesitated. "Of course, if she has friends, she could have better care in a private institution just now."

"Oh, she has friends," said Mrs. Maturin. "Couldn't we take her to our little hospital at Silliston, doctor? It's only four miles—that isn't much in an automobile, and the roads are good now."

"Well, the risk isn't much greater, if you have a closed car, and she would, of course, be better looked after," the physician consented.

"I'll see to it at once," said Insall....

CHAPTER XX

The Martha Wootton Memorial Hospital was the hobby of an angel alumnus of Silliston. It was situated in Hovey's Lane, but from the window of the white-enameled room in which she lay Janet could see the bare branches of the Common elms quivering to the spring gusts, could watch, day by day, the grass changing from yellow-brown to vivid green in the white sunlight. In the morning, when the nurse opened the blinds, that sunlight swept radiantly into the room, lavish with its caresses; always spending, always giving, the symbol of a loving care that had been poured out on her, unasked and unsought. It was sweet to rest, to sleep. And instead of the stringent monster-cry of the siren, of the

discordant clamour of the mill bells, it was sweet yet strange to be awakened by silvertoned chimes proclaiming peaceful hours. At first she surrendered to the spell, and had no thought of the future. For a little while every day, Mrs. Maturin read aloud, usually from books of poetry. And knowing many of the verses by heart, she would watch Janet's face, framed in the soft dark hair that fell in two long plaits over her shoulders. For Janet little guessed the thought that went into the choosing of these books, nor could she know of the hours spent by this lady pondering over library shelves or consulting eagerly with Brooks Insall. Sometimes Augusta Maturin thought of Janet as a wildflower—one of the rare, shy ones, hiding under its leaves; sprung up in Hampton, of all places, crushed by a heedless foot, yet miraculously not destroyed, and already pushing forth new and eager tendrils. And she had transplanted it. To find the proper nourishment, to give it a chance to grow in a native, congenial soil, such was her breathless task. And so she had selected "The Child's Garden of Verses."

"I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow"…

When she laid down her book it was to talk, perhaps, of Silliston. Established here before the birth of the Republic, its roots were bedded in the soil of a racial empire, to a larger vision of which Augusta Maturin clung: an empire of Anglo-Saxon tradition which, despite disagreements and conflicts—nay, through them—developed imperceptibly toward a sublimer union, founded not on dominion, but on justice and right. She spoke of the England she had visited on her wedding journey, of the landmarks and literature that also through generations have been American birthrights; and of that righteous self-assertion and independence which, by protest and even by war, America had contributed to the democracy of the future. Silliston, indifferent to cults and cataclysms, undisturbed by the dark tides flung westward to gather in deposits in other parts of the land, had held fast to the old tradition, stood ready to do her share to transform it into something even nobler when the time should come. Simplicity and worth and beauty—these elements at least of the older Republic should not perish, but in the end prevail.

She spoke simply of these things, connecting them with a Silliston whose spirit appealed to all that was inherent and abiding in the girl. All was not chaos: here at least, a beacon burned with a bright and steady flame. And she spoke of Andrew Silliston, the sturdy colonial prototype of the American culture, who had fought against his King, who had spent his modest fortune to found this seat of learning, believing as he did that education is the cornerstone of republics; divining that lasting unity is possible alone by the transformation of the individual into the citizen through voluntary bestowal of service and the fruits of labour. Samuel Wootton, the Boston merchant who had given the hospital, was Andrew's true descendant, imbued with the same half-conscious intuition that builds even better that it reeks. And Andrew, could he have returns to earth in his laced coat and long silk waistcoat, would still recognize his own soul in Silliston Academy, the soul of his creed and race.

"Away down the river,
A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore."…

Janet drew in a great breath, involuntarily. These were moments when it seemed that she could scarcely contain what she felt of beauty and significance, when the ecstasy and pain were not to be borne. And sometimes, as she listened to Mrs. Maturin's voice, she wept in silence. Again a strange peace descended on her, the peace of an exile come home; if not to remain, at least to know her own land and people before faring forth. She would not think of that faring yet awhile, but strive to live and taste the present—and yet as life flowed back into her veins that past arose to haunt her, she yearned to pour it out to her new friend, to confess all that had happened to her. Why couldn't she? But she was grateful because Mrs. Maturin betrayed no curiosity. Janet often lay watching her, puzzled, under the spell of a frankness, an ingenuousness, a simplicity she had least expected to find in one who belonged to such a learned place as that of Silliston. But even learning, she was discovering, could be amazingly simple. Freely and naturally Mrs. Maturin dwelt on her own past, on the little girl of six taken from her the year after her husband died, on her husband himself, once a professor here, and who, just before his last illness, had published a brilliant book on Russian literature which resulted in his being called to Harvard. They had gone to Switzerland instead, and Augusta Maturin had come back to Silliston. She told Janet of the loon-haunted lake, hemmed in by the Laurentian hills, besieged by forests, where she had spent her girlhood summers with her father, Professor Wishart, of the University of Toronto. There, in search of health, Gifford Maturin had come at her father's suggestion to camp.

Janet, of course, could not know all of that romance, though she tried to picture it from what her friend told her. Augusta Wishart, at six and twenty, had been one of those magnificent Canadian women who are most at home in the open; she could have carried Gifford Maturinout of the wilderness on her back. She was five feet seven, modelled in proportion, endowed by some Celtic ancestor with

that dark chestnut hair which, because of its abundance, she wore braided and caught up in a heavy knot behind her head. Tanned by the northern sun, kneeling upright in a canoe, she might at a little distance have been mistaken for one of the race to which the forests and waters had once belonged. The instinct of mothering was strong in her, and from the beginning she had taken the shy and delicate student under her wing, recognizing in him one of the physically helpless dedicated to a supreme function. He was forever catching colds, his food disagreed with him, and on her own initiative she discharged his habitant cook and supplied him with one of her own choosing. When overtaken by one of his indispositions she paddled him about the lake with lusty strokes, first placing a blanket over his knees, and he submitted: he had no pride of that sort, he was utterly indifferent to the figure he cut beside his Amazon. His gentleness of disposition, his brilliant conversations with those whom, like her father, he knew and trusted, captivated Augusta. At this period of her life she was awakening to the glories of literature and taking a special course in that branch. He talked to her of Gogol, Turgenief, and Dostoievsky, and seated on the log piazza read in excellent French "Dead Souls," "Peres et Enfants," and "The Brothers Karamazoff." At the end of August he went homeward almost gaily, quite ignorant of the arrow in his heart, until he began to miss Augusta Wishart's ministrations—and Augusta Wishart herself.... Then had followed that too brief period of intensive happiness....

The idea of remarriage had never occurred to her. At eight and thirty, though tragedy had left its mark, it had been powerless to destroy the sweetness of a nature of such vitality as hers. The innate necessity of loving remained, and as time went on had grown more wistful and insistent. Insall and her Silliston neighbours were wont, indeed, gently to rally her on her enthusiasms, while understanding and sympathizing with this need in her. A creature of intuition, Janet had appealed to her from the beginning, arousing first her curiosity, and then the maternal instinct that craved a mind to mould, a soul to respond to her touch....

Mrs. Maturin often talked to Janet of Insall, who had, in a way, long been connected with Silliston. In his early wandering days, when tramping over New England, he used unexpectedly to turn up at Dr. Ledyard's, the principal's, remain for several weeks and disappear again. Even then he, had been a sort of institution, a professor emeritus in botany, bird lore, and woodcraft, taking the boys on long walks through the neighbouring hills; and suddenly he had surprised everybody by fancying the tumble-down farmhouse in Judith's Lane, which he had restored with his own hands into the quaintest of old world dwellings. Behind it he had made a dam in the brook, and put in a water wheel that ran his workshop. In play hours the place was usually overrun by boys.... But sometimes the old craving for tramping would overtake him, one day his friends would find the house shut up, and he would be absent for a fortnight, perhaps for a month—one never knew when he was going, or when he would return. He went, like his hero, Silas Simpkins, through the byways of New England, stopping at night at the farm-houses, or often sleeping out under the stars. And then, perhaps, he would write another book. He wrote only when he felt like writing.

It was this book of Insall's, "The Travels of Silas Simpkins", rather than his "Epworth Green" or "The Hermit of Blue Mountain," that Mrs. Maturin chose to read to Janet. Unlike the sage of Walden, than whom he was more gregarious, instead of a log house for his castle Silas Simpkins chose a cart, which he drove in a most leisurely manner from the sea to the mountains, penetrating even to hamlets beside the silent lakes on the Canadian border, and then went back to the sea again. Two chunky grey horses with wide foreheads and sagacious eyes propelled him at the rate of three miles an hour; for these, as their master, had learned the lesson that if life is to be fully savoured it is not to be bolted. Silas cooked and ate, and sometimes read under the maples beside the stone walls: usually he slept in the cart in the midst of the assortment of goods that proclaimed him, to the astute, an expert in applied psychology. At first you might have thought Silos merely a peddler, but if you knew your Thoreau you would presently begin to perceive that peddling was the paltry price he paid for liberty. Silos was in a way a sage—but such a human sage! He never intruded with theories, he never even hinted at the folly of the mortals who bought or despised his goods, or with whom he chatted by the wayside, though he may have had his ideas on the subject: it is certain that presently one began to have one's own: nor did he exclaim with George Sand, "Il n'y a rien de plus betement mechant que l'habitant des petites villes!" Somehow the meannesses and jealousies were accounted for, if not excused. To understand is to pardon.

It was so like Insall, this book, in its whimsicality, in its feeling of space and freedom, in its hidden wisdom that gradually revealed itself as one thought it over before falling off to sleep! New England in the early summer! Here, beside the tender greens of the Ipswich downs was the sparkling cobalt of the sea, and she could almost smell its cool salt breath mingling with the warm odours of hay and the pungent scents of roadside flowers. Weathered grey cottages were scattered over the landscape, and dark copses of cedars, while oceanward the eye was caught by the gleam of a lighthouse or a lonely sail.

Even in that sandy plain, covered with sickly, stunted pines and burned patches, stretching westward from the Merrimac, Silas saw beauty and colour, life in the once prosperous houses not yet

abandoned.... Presently, the hills, all hyacinth blue, rise up against the sunset, and the horses' feet are on the "Boston Road"—or rud, according to the authorized pronunciation of that land. Hardly, indeed, in many places, a "rud" to-day, reverting picturesquely into the forest trail over which the early inland settlers rode their horses or drove their oxen with upcountry produce to the sea. They were not a people who sought the easiest way, and the Boston Road reflects their characters: few valleys are deep enough to turn it aside; few mountains can appal it: railroads have given it a wide berth. Here and there the forest opens out to reveal, on a knoll or "flat," a forgotten village or tavern-stand. Over the high shelf of Washington Town it runs where the air is keen and the lakes are blue, where long-stemmed wild flowers nod on its sunny banks, to reach at length the rounded, classic hills and sentinel mountain that mark the sheep country of the Connecticut....

It was before Janet's convalescence began that Mrs. Maturin had consulted Insall concerning her proposed experiment in literature. Afterwards he had left Silliston for a lumber camp on a remote river in northern Maine, abruptly to reappear, on a mild afternoon late in April, in Augusta Maturin's garden. The crocuses and tulips were in bloom, and his friend, in a gardening apron, was on her knees, trowel in hand, assisting a hired man to set out marigolds and snapdragons.

"Well, it's time you were home again," she exclaimed, as she rose to greet him and led him to a chair on the little flagged terrace beside the windows of her library. "I've got so much to tell you about our invalid."

"Our invalid!" Insall retorted.

"Of course. I look to you to divide the responsibility with me, and you've shirked by running off to Maine. You found her, you know—and she's really remarkable."

"Now see here, Augusta, you can't expect me to share the guardianship of an attractive and—well, a dynamic young woman. If she affects you this way, what will she do to me? I'm much too susceptible."

"Susceptible" she scoffed. "But you can't get out of it. I need you. I've never been so interested and so perplexed in my life."

"How is she?" Insall asked.

"Frankly, I'm worried," said Mrs. Maturin. "At first she seemed to be getting along beautifully. I read to her, a little every day, and it was wonderful how she responded to it. I'll tell you about that I've got so much to tell you! Young Dr. Trent is puzzled, too, it seems there are symptoms in the case for which he cannot account. Some three weeks ago he asked me what I made out of her, and I can't make anything—that's the trouble, except that she seems pathetically grateful, and that I've grown absurdly fond of her. But she isn't improving as fast as she should, and Dr. Trent doesn't know whether or not to suspect functional complications. Her constitution seems excellent, her vitality unusual. Trent's impressed by her, he inclines to the theory that she has something on her mind, and if this is so she should get rid of it, tell it to somebody—in short, tell it to me. I know she's fond of me, but she's so maddeningly self-contained, and at moments when I look at her she baffles me, she makes me feel like an atom. Twenty times at least I've almost screwed up my courage to ask her, but when it comes to the point, I simply can't do it."

"You ought to be able to get at it, if any one can," said Insall.

"I've a notion it may be connected with the strike," Augusta Maturin continued. "I never could account for her being mixed up in that, plunging into Syndicalism. It seemed so foreign to her nature. I wish I'd waited a little longer before telling her about the strike, but one day she asked me how it had come out—and she seemed to be getting along so nicely I didn't see any reason for not telling her. I said that the strike was over, that the millowners had accepted the I.W.W. terms, but that Antonelli and Jastro had been sent to jail and were awaiting trial because they had been accused of instigating the murder of a woman who was shot by a striker aiming at a policeman. It seems that she had seen that! She told me so quite casually. But she was interested, and I went on to mention how greatly the strikers were stirred by the arrests, how they paraded in front of the jail, singing, and how the feeling was mostly directed against Mr. Ditmar, because he was accused of instigating the placing of dynamite in the tenements."

"And you spoke of Mr. Ditmar's death?" Insall inquired.

"Why yes, I told her how he had been shot in Dover Street by a demented Italian, and if it hadn't been proved that the Italian was insane and not a mill worker, the result of the strike might have been different."

"How did she take it?"

"Well, she was shocked, of course. She sat up in bed, staring at me, and then leaned back on the pillows again. I pretended not to notice it—but I was sorry I'd said anything about it."

"She didn't say anything?"

"Not a word."

"Didn't you know that, before the strike, she was Ditmar's private stenographer?"

"No!" Augusta Maturin exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"It never occurred to me to tell you," Insall replied.

"That must have something to do with it!" said Mrs. Maturin.

Insall got up and walked to the end of the terrace, gazing at a bluebird on the edge of the lawn.

"Well, not necessarily," he said, after a while. "Did you ever find out anything about her family?"

"Oh, yes, I met the father once, he's been out two or three times, on Sunday, and came over here to thank me for what I'd done. The mother doesn't come—she has some trouble, I don't know exactly what. Brooks, I wish you could see the father, he's so typically unique—if one may use the expression. A gatekeeper at the Chippering Mills!"

"A gatekeeper?"

"Yes, and I'm quite sure he doesn't understand to this day how he became one, or why. He's delightfully naive on the subject of genealogy, and I had the Bumpus family by heart before he left. That's the form his remnant of the intellectual curiosity of his ancestors takes. He was born in Dolton, which was settled by the original Bumpus, back in the Plymouth Colony days, and if he were rich he'd have a library stuffed with gritty, yellow-backed books and be a leading light in the Historical Society. He speaks with that nicety of pronunciation of the old New Englander, never slurring his syllables, and he has a really fine face, the kind of face one doesn't often see nowadays. I kept looking at it, wondering what was the matter with it, and at last I realized what it lacked—will, desire, ambition,—it was what a second-rate sculptor might have made of Bradford, for instance. But there is a remnant of fire in him. Once, when he spoke of the strike, of the foreigners, he grew quite indignant."

"He didn't tell you why his daughter had joined the strikers?" Insall asked.

"He was just as much at sea about that as you and I are. Of course I didn't ask him—he asked me if I knew. It's only another proof of her amazing reticence. And I can imagine an utter absence of sympathy between them. He accounts for her, of course; he's probably the unconscious transmitter of qualities the Puritans possessed and tried to smother. Certainly the fires are alight in her, and yet it's almost incredible that he should have conveyed them. Of course I haven't seen the mother."

"It's curious he didn't mention her having been Ditmar's stenographer,"
Insall put in. "Was that reticence?"

"I hardly think so," Augusta Maturin replied. "It may have been, but the impression I got was of an incapacity to feel the present. All his emotions are in the past, most of his conversation was about Bumpuses who are dead and buried, and his pride in Janet—for he has a pride—seems to exist because she is their representative. It's extraordinary, but he sees her present situation, her future, with extraordinary optimism; he apparently regards her coming to Silliston, even in the condition in which we found her, as a piece of deserved fortune for which she has to thank some virtue inherited from her ancestors! Well, perhaps he's right. If she were not unique, I shouldn't want to keep her here. It's pure selfishness. I told Mr. Bumpus I expected to find work for her."

Mrs. Maturin returned Insall's smile. "I suppose you're too polite to say that I'm carried away by my enthusiasms. But you will at least do me the justice to admit that they are rare and—discriminating, as a connoisseur's should be. I think even you will approve of her."

"Oh, I have approved of her—that's the trouble."

Mrs. Maturin regarded him for a moment in silence.

"I wish you could have seen her when I began to read those verses of
Stevenson's. It was an inspirations your thinking of them."

"Did I think of them?"

"You know you did. You can't escape your responsibility. Well, I felt like—like a gambler, as though I were staking everything on a throw. And, after I began, as if I were playing on some rare instrument. She lay there, listening, without uttering a word, but somehow she seemed to be interpreting them for me, giving them a meaning and a beauty I hadn't imagined. Another time I told her about Silliston, and how this little community for over a century and a half had tried to keep its standard flying, to carry on the work begun by old Andrew, and I thought of those lines,

"Other little children
Shall bring my boats ashore."

That particular application just suddenly, occurred to me, but she inspired it."

"You're a born schoolma'am," Insall laughed.

"I'm much too radical for a schoolmam," she declared. "No board of trustees would put up with me—not even Silliston's! We've kept the faith, but we do move slowly, Brooks. Even tradition grows, and sometimes our blindness here to changes, to modern, scientific facts, fairly maddens me. I read her that poem of Moody's—you know it:—

'Here, where the moors stretch free
In the high blue afternoon,
Are the marching sun and the talking sea.'

and those last lines:—

'But thou, vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbour town for thee?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls,
Shall crowd the banks to see?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly?
Or shall a haggard, ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to,
While the many broken souls of me
Fester down in the slaver's pen,
And nothing to say or do?'"

"I was sorry afterwards, I could see that she was tremendously excited. And she made me feel as if I, too, had been battened down in that hold and bruised and almost strangled. I often wonder whether she has got out of it into the light—whether we can rescue her." Mrs. Maturin paused.

"What do you mean?" Insall asked.

"Well, it's difficult to describe, what I feel—she's such a perplexing mixture of old New England and modernity, of a fatalism, and an aliveness that fairly vibrates. At first, when she began to recover, I was conscious only of the vitality—but lately I feel the other quality. It isn't exactly the old Puritan fatalism, or even the Greek, it's oddly modern, too, almost agnostic, I should say,—a calm acceptance of the hazards of life, of nature, of sun and rain and storm alike—very different from the cheap optimism one finds everywhere now. She isn't exactly resigned—I don't say that—I know she can be rebellious. And she's grateful for the sun, yet she seems to have a conviction that the clouds will gather again.... The doctor says she may leave the hospital on Monday, and I'm going to bring her over here for awhile. Then," she added insinuatingly, "we can collaborate."

"I think I'll go back to Maine," Insall exclaimed.

"If you desert me, I shall never speak to you again," said Mrs. Maturin.

"Janet," said Mrs. Maturin the next day, as she laid down the book from which she was reading, "do you remember that I spoke to you once in Hampton of coming here to Silliston? Well, now we've got you here, we don't want to lose you. I've been making inquiries; quite a number of the professors have typewriting to be done, and they will be glad to give their manuscripts to you instead of sending them to Boston. And there's Brooks Insall too—if he ever takes it into his head to write another book. You wouldn't have any trouble reading his manuscript, it's like script. Of course it has to be copied. You can board with Mrs. Case —I've arranged that, too. But on Monday I'm going to take you to my house, and keep you until you're strong enough to walk."

Janet's eyes were suddenly bright with tears.

"You'll stay?"

"I can't," answered Janet. "I couldn't."

"But why not? Have you any other plans?"

"No, I haven't any plans, but—I haven't the right to stay here." Presently she raised her face to her friend. "Oh Mrs. Maturin, I'm so sorry! I didn't want to bring any sadness here—it's all so bright and beautiful! And now I've made you sad!"

It was a moment before Augusta Maturin could answer her.

"What are friends for, Janet," she asked, "if not to share sorrow with? And do you suppose there's any place, however bright, where sorrow has not come? Do you think I've not known it, too? And Janet, I haven't sat here all these days with you without guessing that something worries you. I've been waiting, all this time, for you to tell me, in order that I might help you."

"I wanted to," said Janet, "every day I wanted to, but I couldn't. I couldn't bear to trouble you with it, I didn't mean ever to tell you. And then—it's so terrible, I don't know what you'll think."

"I think I know you, Janet," answered Mrs. Maturin. "Nothing human, nothing natural is terrible, in the sense you mean. At least I'm one of those who believe so."

Presently Janet said, "I'm going to have a child."

Mrs. Maturin sat very still. Something closed in her throat, preventing her immediate reply.

"I, too, had a child, my dear," she answered. "I lost her." She felt the girl's clasp tighten on her fingers.

"But you—you had a right to it—you were married. Children are sacred things," said Augusta Maturin.

"Sacred! Could it be that a woman like Mrs. Maturity thought that this child which was coming to her was sacred, too?

"However they come?" asked Janet. "Oh, I tried to believe that, too! At first—at first I didn't want it, and when I knew it was coming I was driven almost crazy. And then, all at once, when I was walking in the rain, I knew I wanted it to have—to keep all to myself. You understand?"

Augusta Maturity inclined her head.

"But the father?" she managed to ask, after a moment. "I don't wish to pry, my dear, but does he—does he realize? Can't he help you?"

"It was Mr. Ditmar."

"Perhaps it will help you to tell me about it, Janet."

"I'd—I'd like to. I've been so unhappy since you told me he was dead —and I felt like a cheat. You see, he promised to marry me, and I know now that he loved me, that he really wanted to marry me, but something happened to make me believe he wasn't going to, I saw—another girl who'd got into trouble, and then I thought he'd only been playing with me, and I couldn't stand it. I joined the strikers—I just had to do something."

Augusta Maturity nodded, and waited.

"I was only a stenographer, and we were very poor, and he was rich and lived in a big house, the most important man in Hampton. It seemed too good to be true—I suppose I never really thought it could happen. Please don't think I'm putting all the blame on him, Mrs. Maturity—it was my fault just as much as his. I ought to have gone away from Hampton, but I didn't have the strength. And I shouldn't have—" Janet stopped.

"But—you loved him?"

"Yes, I did. For a long time, after I left him, I thought I didn't, I thought I hated him, and when I found out what had happened to me—that night I came to you—I got my father's pistol and went to the mill to shoot him. I was going to shoot myself, too."

"Oh!" Mrs. Maturity gasped. She gave a quick glance of sheer amazement at Janet, who did not seem to notice it; who was speaking objectively, apparently with no sense of the drama in her announcement.

"But I couldn't," she went on. "At the time I didn't know why I couldn't, but when I went out I understood it was because I wanted the child, because it was his child. And though he was almost out of his head, he seemed so glad because I'd come back to him, and said he'd marry me right away."

"And you refused!" exclaimed Mrs. Maturity.

"Well, you see, I was out of my head, too, I still thought I hated him —but I'd loved him all the time. It was funny! He had lots of faults, and he didn't seem to understand or care much about how poor people feel, though he was kind to them in the mills. He might have come to understand—I don't know—it wasn't because he didn't want to, but because he was so separated from them, I guess, and he was so interested in what he was doing. He had ambition, he thought everything of that mill, he'd made it. I don't know why I loved him, it wasn't because he was fine, like Mr. Insall, but he was strong and brave, and he needed me and just took me."

"One never knows!" Augusta Maturity murmured.

"I went back that night to tell him I'd marry him—and he'd gone. Then I came to you, to the soup kitchen. I didn't mean to bother you, I've never quite understood how I got there. I don't care so much what happens to me, now that I've told you," Janet added. "It was mean, not to tell you, but I'd never had anything like this—what you were giving me—and I wanted all I could get."

"I'm thankful you did come to us!" Augusta Maturin managed to reply.

"You mean—?" Janet exclaimed.

"I mean, that we who have been more—fortunate don't look at these things quite as we used to, that the world is less censorious, is growing to understand situations it formerly condemned. And—I don't know what kind of a monster you supposed me to be, Janet."

"Oh, Mrs. Maturin!"

"I mean that I'm a woman, too, my dear, although my life has been sheltered. Otherwise, what has happened to you might have happened to me. And besides, I am what is called unconventional, I have little theories of my own about life, and now that you have told me everything I understand you and love you even more than I did before."

Save that her breath came fast, Janet lay still against the cushions of the armchair. She was striving to grasp the momentous and unlooked-for fact of her friend's unchanged attitude. Then she asked: —"Mrs. Maturin, do you believe in God?"

Augusta Maturin was startled by the question. "I like to think of Him as light, Janet, and that we are plants seeking to grow toward Him—no matter from what dark crevice we may spring. Even in our mistakes and sins we are seeking Him, for these are ignorances, and as the world learns more, we shall know Him better and better. It is natural to long for happiness, and happiness is self-realization, and self-realization is knowledge and light."

"That is beautiful," said Janet at length.

"It is all we can know about God," said Mrs. Maturin, "but it is enough." She had been thinking rapidly. "And now," she went on, "we shall have to consider what is to be done. I don't pretend that the future will be easy, but it will not be nearly as hard for you as it might have been, since I am your friend, and I do not intend to desert you. I'm sure you will not let it crush you. In the first place, you will have something to go on with—mental resources, I mean, for which you have a natural craving, books and art and nature, the best thoughts and the best interpretations. We can give you these. And you will have your child, and work to do, for I'm sure you're industrious. And of course I'll keep your secret, my dear."

"But—how?" Janet exclaimed.

"I've arranged it all. You'll stay here this spring, you'll come to my house on Monday, just as we planned, and later on you may go to Mrs. Case's, if it will make you feel more independent, and do typewriting until the spring term is over. I've told you about my little camp away up in Canada, in the heart of the wilderness, where I go in summer. We'll stay there until the autumn, until your baby comes, and, after that, I know it won't be difficult to get you a position in the west, where you can gain your living and have your child. I have a good friend in California who I'm sure will help you. And even if your secret should eventually be discovered—which is not probable—you will have earned respect, and society is not as stern as it used to be. And you will always have me for a friend. There, that's the bright side of it. Of course it isn't a bed of roses, but I've lived long enough to observe that the people

who lie on roses don't always have the happiest lives. Whenever you want help and advice, I shall always be here, and from time to time I'll be seeing you. Isn't that sensible?"

"Oh, Mrs. Maturin—if you really want me—still?"

"I do want you, Janet, even more than I did—before, because you need me more," Mrs. Maturin replied, with a sincerity that could not fail to bring conviction….

CHAPTER XXI

As the spring progressed, Janet grew stronger, became well again, and through the kindness of Dr. Ledyard, the principal, was presently installed with a typewriter in a little room in an old building belonging to the Academy in what was called Bramble Street, and not far from the Common. Here, during the day, she industriously copied manuscripts' or, from her notebook, letters dictated by various members of the faculty. And she was pleased when they exclaimed delightedly at the flawless copies and failed to suspect her of frequent pilgrimages to the dictionary in the library in order to familiarize herself with the meaning and manner of spelling various academic words. At first it was almost bewildering to find herself in some degree thus sharing the Silliston community life; and an unpremeditated attitude toward these learned ones, high priests of the muses she had so long ignorantly worshipped, accounted perhaps for a great deal in their attitude toward her. Her fervour, repressed yet palpable, was like a flame burning before their altars—a flattery to which the learned, being human, are quick to respond. Besides, something of her history was known, and she was of a type to incite a certain amount of interest amongst these discerning ones. Often, after she had taken their dictation, or brought their manuscripts home, they detained her in conversation. In short, Silliston gave its approval to this particular experiment of Augusta Maturin. As for Mrs. Maturin herself, her feeling was one of controlled pride not unmixed with concern, always conscious as she was of the hidden element of tragedy in the play she had so lovingly staged. Not that she had any compunction in keeping Janet's secret, even from Insall; but sometimes as she contemplated it the strings of her heart grew tight. Silliston was so obviously where Janet belonged, she could not bear the thought of the girl going out again from this sheltered spot into a chaotic world of smoke and struggle.

Janet's own feelings were a medley. It was not, of course, contentment she knew continually, nor even peace, although there were moments when these stole over her. There were moments, despite her incredible good fortune, of apprehension when she shrank from the future, when fear assailed her; moments of intense sadness at the thought of leaving her friends, of leaving this enchanted place now that miraculously she had found it; moments of stimulation, of exaltation, when she forgot. Her prevailing sense, as she found herself again, was of thankfulness and gratitude, of determination to take advantage of, to drink in all of this wonderful experience, lest any precious memory be lost.

Like a jewel gleaming with many facets, each sunny day was stored and treasured. As she went from Mrs. Case's boarding-house forth to her work, the sweet, sharp air of these spring mornings was filled with delicious smells of new things, of new flowers and new grass and tender, new leaves of myriad shades, bronze and crimson, fuzzy white, primrose, and emerald green. And sometimes it seemed as though the pink and white clouds of the little orchards were wafted into swooning scents. She loved best the moment when the Common came in view, when through the rows of elms the lineaments of those old houses rose before her, lineaments seemingly long familiar, as of old and trusted friends, and yet ever stirring new harmonies and new visions. Here, in their midst, she belonged, and here, had the world been otherwise ordained, she might have lived on in one continuous, shining spring. At the corner of the Common, foursquare, ample, painted a straw colour trimmed with white, with its high chimneys and fan-shaped stairway window, its balustraded terrace porch open to the sky, was the eighteenth century mansion occupied by Dr. Ledyard. What was the secret of its flavour? And how account for the sense of harmony inspired by another dwelling, built during the term of the second Adams, set in a frame of maples and shining white in the morning sun? Its curved portico was capped by a wrought-iron railing, its long windows were touched with purple, and its low garret—set like a deckhouse on the wide roof—suggested hidden secrets of the past. Here a Motley or a Longfellow might have dwelt, a Bryant penned his "Thanatopsis." Farther on, chequered by shade, stood the quaint brick row of professors' houses, with sloping eaves and recessed entrances of granite—a subject for an old English print…. Along the border of the Common were interspersed among the ancient dormitories and halls the new and dignified buildings of plum-coloured brick that still preserved the soul of Silliston. And to it the soul of Janet responded.

In the late afternoon, when her tasks were finished, Janet would cross the Common to Mrs. Maturin's —a dwelling typical of the New England of the past, with the dimensions of a cottage and something of the dignity of a mansion. Fluted white pilasters adorned the corners, the windows were protected by tiny eaves, the roof was guarded by a rail; the classically porched entrance was approached by a path between high clipped hedges of hemlock; and through the library, on the right, you reached the flagged terrace beside a garden, rioting in the carnival colours of spring. By September it would have changed. For there is one glory of the hyacinth, of the tulip and narcissus and the jonquil, and another of the Michaelmas daisy and the aster.

Insall was often there, and on Saturdays and Sundays he took Mrs. Maturin and Janet on long walks into the country. There were afternoons when the world was flooded with silver light, when the fields were lucent in the sun; and afternoons stained with blue,—the landscape like a tapestry woven in delicate grins on a ground of indigo. The arbutus, all aglow and fragrant beneath its leaves, the purple fringed polygala were past, but they found the pale gold lily of the bellwort, the rust-red bloom of the ginger. In the open spaces under the sky were clouds of bluets, wild violets, and white strawberry flowers clustering beside the star moss all a-shimmer with new green. The Canada Mayflower spread a carpet under the pines; and in the hollows where the mists settled, where the brooks flowed, where the air was heavy with the damp, ineffable odour of growing things, they gathered drooping adder's-tongues, white-starred bloodroots and foam-flowers. From Insall's quick eye nothing seemed to escape. He would point out to them the humming-bird that hovered, a bright blur, above the columbine, the woodpecker glued to the trunk of a maple high above their heads, the red gleam of a tanager flashing through sunlit foliage, the oriole and vireo where they hid. And his was the ear that first caught the exquisite, distant note of the hermit. Once he stopped them, startled, to listen to the cock partridge drumming to its mate….

Sometimes, of an evening, when Janet was helping Mrs. Maturin in her planting or weeding, Insall would join them, rolling up the sleeves of his flannel shirt and kneeling beside them in the garden paths. Mrs. Maturin was forever asking his advice, though she did not always follow it.

"Now, Brooks," she would say, "you've just got to suggest something to put in that border to replace the hyacinths."

"I had larkspur last year—you remember—and it looked like a chromo in a railroad folder."

"Let me see—did I advise larkspur?" he would ask.

"Oh, I'm sure you must have—I always do what you tell me. It seems to me I've thought of every possible flower in the catalogue. You know, too, only you're so afraid of committing yourself."

Insall's comic spirit, betrayed by his expressions, by the quizzical intonations of his voice, never failed to fill Janet with joy, while it was somehow suggestive, too, of the vast fund of his resource. Mrs. Maturin was right, he could have solved many of her questions offhand if he had so wished, but he had his own method of dealing with appeals. His head tilted on one side, apparently in deep thought over the problem, he never answered outright, but by some process of suggestion unfathomable to Janet, and by eliminating, not too deprecatingly, Mrs. Maturin's impatient proposals, brought her to a point where she blurted out the solution herself.

"Oriental poppies! How stupid of me not to think of them!"

"How stupid of me!" Insall echoed—and Janet, bending over her weeding, made sure they had been in his mind all the while.

Augusta Maturin's chief extravagance was books; she could not bear to await her turn at the library, and if she liked a book she wished to own it. Subscribing to several reviews, three English and one American, she scanned them eagerly every week and sent in orders to her Boston bookseller. As a consequence the carved walnut racks on her library table were constantly being strained. A good book, she declared, ought to be read aloud, and discussed even during its perusal. And thus Janet, after an elementary and decidedly unique introduction to worth-while literature in the hospital, was suddenly plunged into the vortex of modern thought. The dictum Insall quoted, that modern culture depended largely upon what one had not read, was applied to her; a child of the new environment fallen into skilful hands, she was spared the boredom of wading through the so-called classics which, though useful as milestones, as landmarks for future reference, are largely mere reminders of an absolute universe now vanished. The arrival of a novel, play, or treatise by one of that small but growing nucleus of twentieth century seers was an event, and often a volume begun in the afternoon was taken up again after supper. While Mrs. Maturin sat sewing on the other side of the lamp, Janet had her turn at reading. From the first she had been quick to note Mrs. Maturin's inflections, and the relics of a high-school manner were rapidly eliminated. The essence of latter-day realism and pragmatism, its

courageous determination to tear away a veil of which she had always been dimly aware, to look the facts of human nature in the face, refreshed her: an increasing portion of it she understood; and she was constantly under the spell of the excitement that partially grasps, that hovers on the verge of inspiring discoveries. This excitement, whenever Insall chanced to be present, was intensified, as she sat a silent but often quivering listener to his amusing and pungent comments on these new ideas. His method of discussion never failed to illuminate and delight her, and often, when she sat at her typewriter the next day, she would recall one of his quaint remarks that suddenly threw a bright light on some matter hitherto obscure.... Occasionally a novel or a play was the subject of their talk, and then they took a delight in drawing her out, in appealing to a spontaneous judgment unhampered by pedagogically implanted preconceptions. Janet would grow hot from shyness.

"Say what you think, my dear," Mrs. Maturin would urge her. "And remember that your own opinion is worth more than Shakespeare's or Napoleon's!"

Insall would escort her home to Mrs. Case's boarding house....

One afternoon early in June Janet sat in her little room working at her letters when Brooks Insall came in. "I don't mean to intrude in business hours, but I wanted to ask if you would do a little copying for me," he said, and he laid on her desk a parcel bound with characteristic neatness.

"Something you've written?" she exclaimed, blushing with pleasure and surprise. He was actually confiding to her one of his manuscripts!

"Well—yes," he replied comically, eyeing her.

"I'll be very careful with it. I'll do it right away."

"There's no particular hurry," he assured her. "The editor's waited six months for it—another month or so won't matter."

"Another month or so!" she ejaculated,—but he was gone. Of course she couldn't have expected him to remain and talk about it; but this unexpected exhibition of shyness concerning his work—so admired by the world's choicer spirits—thrilled yet amused her, and made her glow with a new understanding. With eager fingers she undid the string and sat staring at the regular script without taking in, at first, the meaning of a single sentence. It was a comparatively short sketch entitled "The Exile," in which shining, winged truths and elusive beauties flitted continually against a dark-background of Puritan oppression; the story of one Basil Grelott, a dreamer of Milton's day, Oxford nurtured, who, casting off the shackles of dogma and man-made decrees, sailed with his books to the New England wilderness across the sea. There he lived, among the savages, in peace and freedom until the arrival of Winthrop and his devotees, to encounter persecution from those who themselves had fled from it. The Lord's Brethren, he averred, were worse than the Lord's Bishops—Blackstone's phrase. Janet, of course, had never heard of Blackstone, some of whose experiences Insall had evidently used. And the Puritans dealt with Grelott even as they would have served the author of "Paradise Lost" himself, especially if he had voiced among them the opinions set forth in his pamphlet on divorce. A portrait of a stern divine with his infallible Book gave Janet a vivid conception of the character of her ancestors; and early Boston, with yellow candlelight gleaming from the lantern-like windows of the wooden, Elizabethan houses, was unforgettably etched. There was an inquisition in a freezing barn of a church, and Basil Grelott banished to perish amid the forest in his renewed quest for freedom.... After reading the manuscript, Janet sat typewriting into the night, taking it home with her and placing it besides her bed, lest it be lost to posterity. By five the next evening she had finished the copy.

A gentle rain had fallen during the day, but had ceased as she made her way toward Insall's house. The place was familiar now: she had been there to supper with Mrs. Maturin, a supper cooked and served by Martha Vesey, an elderly, efficient and appallingly neat widow, whom Insall had discovered somewhere in his travels and installed as his housekeeper. Janet paused with her hand on the gate latch to gaze around her, at the picket fence on which he had been working when she had walked hither the year before. It was primly painted now, its posts crowned with the carved pineapples; behind the fence old-fashioned flowers were in bloom, lupins and false indigo; and the retaining wall of blue-grey slaty stone, which he had laid that spring, was finished. A wind stirred the maple, releasing a shower of heavy drops, and she opened the gate and went up the path and knocked at the door. There was no response—even Martha must be absent, in the village! Janet was disappointed, she had looked forward to seeing him, to telling him how great had been her pleasure in the story he had written, at the same time doubting her courage to do so. She had never been able to speak to him about his work and what did her opinion matter to him? As she turned away the stillness was broken by a humming sound gradually rising to a crescendo, so she ventured slowly around the house and into the orchard of gnarled apple trees on the slope until she came insight of a little white building beside the brook. The weathervane perched on the gable, and veering in the wet breeze, seemed like a live fish swimming in

its own element; and through the open window she saw Insall bending over a lathe, from which the chips were flying. She hesitated. Then he looked up, and seeing her, reached above his head to pull the lever that shut off the power.

"Come in," he called out, and met her at the doorway. He was dressed in a white duck shirt, open at the neck, and a pair of faded corduroy trousers. "I wasn't looking for this honour," he told her, with a gesture of self-deprecation, "or I'd have put on a dinner coat."

And, despite her eagerness and excitement, she laughed.

"I didn't dare to leave this in the house," she explained. Mrs. Vesey wasn't home. And I thought you might be here."

"You haven't made the copy already!"

"Oh, I loved doing it!" she replied, and paused, flushing. She might have known that it would be simply impossible to talk to him about it! So she laid it down on the workbench, and, overcome by a sudden shyness, retreated toward the door.

"You're not going!" he exclaimed.

"I must—and you're busy."

"Not at all," he declared, "not at all, I was just killing time until supper. Sit down!" And he waved her to a magisterial-looking chair of Jacobean design, with turned legs, sandpapered and immaculate, that stood in the middle of the shop.

"Oh, not in that!" Janet protested. "And besides, I'd spoil it—I'm sure my skirt is wet."

But he insisted, thrusting it under her. "You've come along just in time, I wanted a woman to test it—men are no judges of chairs. There's a vacuum behind the small of your back, isn't there? Augusta will have to put a cushion in it."

"Did you make it for Mrs. Maturin? She will be Pleased!" exclaimed Janet, as she sat down. "I don't think it's uncomfortable."

"I copied it from an old one in the Boston Art Museum. Augusta saw it there, and said she wouldn't be happy until she had one like it. But don't tell her."

"Not for anything!" Janet got to her feet again. "I really must be going."

"Going where?"

"I told Mrs. Maturin I'd read that new book to her. I couldn't go yesterday—I didn't want to go," she added, fearing he might think his work had kept her.

"Well, I'll walk over with you. She asked me to make a little design for a fountain, you know, and I'll have to get some measurements."

As they emerged from the shop and climbed the slope Janet tried to fight off the sadness that began to invade her. Soon she would have to be leaving all this! Her glance lingered wistfully on the old farmhouse with its great centre chimney from which the smoke was curling, with its diamond-paned casements Insall had put into the tiny frames.

"What queer windows!" she said. "But they seem to go with the house, beautifully."

"You think so?" His tone surprised her; it had a touch more of earnestness than she had ever before detected. "They belong to that type of house the old settlers brought the leaded glass with them. Some people think they're cold, but I've arranged to make them fairly tight. You see, I've tried to restore it as it must have been when it was built."

"And these?" she asked, pointing to the millstones of different diameters that made the steps leading down to the garden.

"Oh, that's an old custom, but they are nice," he agreed. "I'll just put this precious manuscript inside and get my foot rule," he added, opening the door, and she stood awaiting him on the threshold, confronted by the steep little staircase that disappeared into the wall half way up. At her left was the room where he worked, and which once had been the farmhouse kitchen. She took a few steps into it, and while he was searching in the table drawer she halted before the great chimney over which, against the panel, an old bell-mouthed musket hung. Insall came over beside her.

"Those were trees!" he said. "That panel's over four feet across, I measured it once. I dare say the pine it was cut from grew right where we are standing, before the land was cleared to build the house."

"But the gun?" she questioned. "You didn't have it the night we came to supper."

"No, I ran across it at a sale in Boston. The old settler must have owned one like that. I like to think of him, away off here in the wilderness in those early days."

She thought of how Insall had made those early days live for her, in his story of Basil Grelott. But to save her soul, when with such an opening, she could not speak of it.

"He had to work pretty hard, of course," Insall continued, "but I dare say he had a fairly happy life, no movies, no Sunday supplements, no automobiles or gypsy moths. His only excitement was to trudge ten miles to Dorset and listen to a three hour sermon on everlasting fire and brimstone by a man who was supposed to know. No wonder he slept soundly and lived to be over ninety!"

Insall was standing with his head thrown back, his eyes stilt seemingly fixed on the musket that had suggested his remark—a pose eloquent, she thought, of the mental and physical balance of the man. She wondered what belief gave him the free mastery of soul and body he possessed. Some firm conviction, she was sure, must energise him yet she respected him the more for concealing it.

"It's hard to understand such a terrible religion!" she cried. "I don't see how those old settlers could believe in it, when there are such beautiful things in the world, if we only open our eyes and look for them. Oh Mr. Insall, I wish I could tell you how I felt when I read your story, and when Mrs. Maturin read me those other books of yours."

She stopped breathlessly, aghast at her boldness—and then, suddenly, a barrier between them seemed to break down, and for the first time since she had known him she felt near to him. He could not doubt the sincerity of her tribute.

"You like them as much as that, Janet?" he said, looking at her.

"I can't tell you how much, I can't express myself. And I want to tell you something else, Mr. Insall, while I have the chance—how just being with you and Mrs. Maturin has changed me. I can face life now, you have shown me so much in it I never saw before."

"While you have the chance?" he repeated.

"Yes." She strove to go on cheerfully, "Now I've said it, I feel better, I promise not to mention it again. I knew—you didn't think me ungrateful. It's funny," she added, "the more people have done for you-when they've given you everything, life and hope,—the harder it is to thank them." She turned her face away, lest he might see that her eyes were wet. "Mrs. Maturin will be expecting us."

"Not yet," she heard him say, and felt his hand on her arm. "You haven't thought of what you're doing for me."

"What I'm doing for you!" she echoed. "What hurts me most, when I think about it, is that I'll never be able to do anything."

"Why do you say that?" he asked.

"If I only could believe that some day I might be able to help you—just a little—I should be happier. All I have, all I am I owe to you and Mrs. Maturin."

"No, Janet," he answered. "What you are is you, and it's more real than anything we could have put into you. What you have to give is —yourself." His fingers trembled on her arm, but she saw him smile a little before he spoke again. "Augusta Maturin was right when she said that you were the woman I needed. I didn't realize it then perhaps she didn't—but now I'm sure of it. Will you come to me?"

She stood staring at him, as in terror, suddenly penetrated by a dismay that sapped her strength, and she leaned heavily against the fireplace, clutching the mantel-shelf.

"Don't!" she pleaded. "Please don't—I can't."

"You can't!… Perhaps, after a while, you may come to feel differently —I didn't mean to startle you," she heard him reply gently. This humility, in him, was unbearable.

"Oh, it isn't that—it isn't that! If I could, I'd be willing to serve you all my life—I wouldn't ask for anything more. I never thought that this would happen. I oughtn't to have stayed in Silliston."

"You didn't suspect that I loved you?"

"How could I? Oh, I might have loved you, if I'd been fortunate—if I'd deserved it. But I never thought, I always looked up to you—you are so far above me!" She lifted her face to him in agony. "I'm sorry—I'm sorry for you—I'll never forgive myself!"

"It's—some one else?" he asked.

"I was—going to be married to—to Mr. Ditmar," she said slowly, despairingly.

"But even then—" Insall began.

"You don't understand!" she cried. "What will you think of me?—Mrs. Maturin was to have told you, after I'd gone. It's—it's the same as if I were married to him—only worse."

"Worse!" Insall repeated uncomprehendingly.... And then she was aware that he had left her side. He was standing by the window.

A thrush began to sing in the maple. She stole silently toward the door, and paused to look back at him, once to meet his glance. He had turned.

"I can't—I can't let you go like this!" she heard him say, but she fled from him, out of the gate and toward the Common....

When Janet appeared, Augusta Maturin was in her garden. With an instant perception that something was wrong, she went to the girl and led her to the sofa in the library. There the confession was made.

"I never guessed it," Janet sobbed. "Oh, Mrs. Maturin, you'll believe me—won't you?"

"Of course I believe you, Janet," Augusta Maturity replied, trying to hide her pity, her own profound concern and perplexity. "I didn't suspect it either. If I had—"

"You wouldn't have brought me here, you wouldn't have asked me to stay with you. But I was to blame, I oughtn't to have stayed, I knew all along that something would happen—something terrible that I hadn't any right to stay."

"Who could have foreseen it!" her friend exclaimed helplessly. "Brooks isn't like any other man I've ever known—one can never tell what he has in mind. Not that I'm surprised as I look back upon it all!"

"I've hurt him!"

Augusta Maturity was silent awhile. "Remember, my dear," she begged, "you haven't only yourself to think about, from now on."

But comfort was out of the question, the task of calming the girl impossible. Finally the doctor was sent for, and she was put to bed....

Augusta Maturity spent an agonized, sleepless night, a prey of many emotions; of self-reproach, seeing now that she had been wrong in not telling Brooks Insall of the girl's secret; of sorrow and sympathy for him; of tenderness toward the girl, despite the suffering she had brought; of unwonted rebellion against a world that cheated her of this cherished human tie for which she had longed the first that had come into her life since her husband and child had gone. And there was her own responsibility for Insall's unhappiness—when she recalled with a pang her innocent sayings that Janet was the kind of woman he, an artist, should marry! And it was true—if he must marry. He himself had seen it. Did Janet love him? or did she still remember Ditmar? Again and again, during the summer that followed, this query was on her lips, but remained unspoken....

The next day Insall disappeared. No one knew where he had gone, but his friends in Silliston believed he had been seized by one of his sudden, capricious fancies for wandering. For many months his name was not mentioned between Augusta Maturity and Janet. By the middle of June they had gone to Canada....

In order to reach the camp on Lac du Sablier from the tiny railroad station at Saint Hubert, a trip of some eight miles up the decharge was necessary. The day had been when Augusta Maturity had done her share of paddling and poling, with an habitant guide in the bow. She had foreseen all the needs of this occasion, warm clothes for Janet, who was wrapped in blankets and placed on cushions in the middle of a canoe, while she herself followed in a second, from time to time exclaiming, in a reassuring voice, that one had nothing to fear in the hands of Delphin and Herve, whom she had known intimately for more than twenty years. It was indeed a wonderful, exciting, and at moments seemingly perilous journey up the forested aisle of the river: at sight of the first roaring reach of rapids Janet held her

breath—so incredible did it appear that any human power could impel and guide a boat up the white stairway between the boulders! Was it not courting destruction? Yet she felt a strange, wild delight in the sense of danger, of amazement at the woodsman's eye that found and followed the crystal paths through the waste of foam.... There were long, quiet stretches, hemmed in by alders, where the canoes, dodging the fallen trees, glided through the still water... No such silent, exhilarating motion Janet had ever known. Even the dipping paddles made no noise, though sometimes there was a gurgle, as though a fish had broken the water behind them; sometimes, in the shining pools ahead, she saw the trout leap out. At every startling flop Delphin would exclaim: "Un gros!" From an upper branch of a spruce a kingfisher darted like an arrow into the water, making a splash like a falling stone. Once, after they had passed through the breach of a beaver dam, Herve nodded his head toward a mound of twigs by the bank and muttered something. Augusta Maturin laughed.

"Cabane de castor, he says—a beaver cabin. And the beavers made the dam we just passed. Did you notice, Janet, how beautifully clean those logs had been cut by their sharp teeth?"

At moments she conversed rapidly with Delphin in the same patois Janet had heard on the streets of Hampton. How long ago that seemed!

On two occasions, when the falls were sheer, they had to disembark and walk along little portages through the green raspberry bushes. The prints of great hooves in the black silt betrayed where wild animals had paused to drink. They stopped for lunch on a warm rock beside a singing waterfall, and at last they turned an elbow in the stream and with suddenly widened vision beheld the lake's sapphire expanse and the distant circle of hills. "Les montagnes," Herve called them as he flung out his pipe, and this Janet could translate for herself. Eastward they lay lucent in the afternoon light; westward, behind the generous log camp standing on a natural terrace above the landing, they were in shadow. Here indeed seemed peace, if remoteness, if nature herself might bestow it.

Janet little suspected that special preparations had been made for her comfort. Early in April, while the wilderness was still in the grip of winter, Delphin had been summoned from a far-away lumber camp to Saint Hubert, where several packing-cases and two rolls of lead pipe from Montreal lay in a shed beside the railroad siding. He had superintended the transportation of these, on dog sledges, up the frozen decharge, accompanied on his last trip by a plumber of sorts from Beaupre, thirty miles down the line; and between them they had improvised a bathroom, and attached a boiler to the range! Only a week before the arrival of Madame the spring on the hillside above the camp had been tapped, and the pipe laid securely underground. Besides this unheard-of luxury for the Lac du Sablier there were iron beds and mattresses and little wood stoves to go in the four bedrooms, which were more securely chinked with moss. The traditions of that camp had been hospitable. In Professor Wishart's day many guests had come and gone, or pitched their tents nearby; and Augusta Maturin, until this summer, had rarely been here alone, although she had no fears of the wilderness, and Delphin brought his daughter Delphine to do the housework and cooking. The land for miles round about was owned by a Toronto capitalist who had been a friend of her father, and who could afford as a hobby the sparing of the forest. By his permission a few sportsmen came to fish or shoot, and occasionally their campfires could be seen across the water, starlike glows in the darkness of the night, at morning and evening little blue threads of smoke that rose against the forest; "bocane," Delphin called it, and Janet found a sweet, strange magic in these words of the pioneer.

The lake was a large one, shaped like an hourglass, as its name implied, and Augusta Maturin sometimes paddled Janet through the wide, shallow channel to the northern end, even as she had once paddled Gifford. Her genius was for the helpless. One day, when the waters were high, and the portages could be dispensed with, they made an excursion through the Riviere des Peres to the lake of that name, the next in the chain above. For luncheon they ate the trout Augusta caught; and in the afternoon, when they returned to the mouth of the outlet, Herve, softly checking the canoe with his paddle, whispered the word "Arignal!" Thigh deep in the lush grasses of the swamp was an animal with a huge grey head, like a donkey's, staring foolishly in their direction—a cow moose. With a tremendous commotion that awoke echoes in the forest she tore herself from the mud and disappeared, followed by her panic-stricken offspring, a caricature of herself....

By September the purple fireweed that springs up beside old camps, and in the bois brute, had bloomed and scattered its myriad, impalpable thistledowns over crystal floors. Autumn came to the Laurentians. In the morning the lake lay like a quicksilver pool under the rising mists, through which the sun struck blinding flashes of light. A little later, when the veil had lifted, it became a mirror for the hills and crags, the blue reaches of the sky. The stinging air was spiced with balsam. Revealed was the incredible brilliance of another day,—the arsenic-green of the spruce, the red and gold of the maples, the yellow of the alders bathing in the shallows, of the birches, whose white limbs could be seen gleaming in the twilight of the thickets. Early, too early, the sun fell down behind the serrated forest-edge of the western hill, a ball of orange fire.... One evening Delphin and Herve, followed by two other

canoes, paddled up to the landing. New visitors had arrived, Dr. McLeod, who had long been an intimate of the Wishart family, and with him a buxom, fresh-complexioned Canadian woman, a trained nurse whom he had brought from Toronto.

There, in nature's wilderness, Janet knew the supreme experience of women, the agony, the renewal and joy symbolic of nature herself. When the child was bathed and dressed in the clothes Augusta Maturin herself had made for it, she brought it into the room to the mother.

"It's a daughter," she announced.

Janet regarded the child wistfully. "I hoped it would be a boy," she said. "He would have had—a better chance." But she raised her arms, and the child was laid in the bed beside her.

"We'll see that she has a chance, my dear," Augusta Maturin replied, as she kissed her.

Ten days went by, Dr. McLeod lingered at Lac du Sablier, and Janet was still in bed. Even in this life-giving air she did not seem to grow stronger. Sometimes, when the child was sleeping in its basket on the sunny porch, Mrs. Maturin read to her; but often when she was supposed to rest, she lay gazing out of the open window into silver space listening to the mocking laughter of the loons, watching the ducks flying across the sky; or, as evening drew on, marking in the waters a steely angle that grew and grew —the wake of a beaver swimming homeward in the twilight. In the cold nights the timbers cracked to the frost, she heard the owls calling to one another from the fastnesses of the forest, and thought of life's inscrutable mystery. Then the child would be brought to her. It was a strange, unimagined happiness she knew when she felt it clutching at her breasts, at her heart, a happiness not unmixed with yearning, with sadness as she pressed it to her. Why could it not remain there always, to comfort her, to be nearer her than any living thing? Reluctantly she gave it back to the nurse, wistfully her eyes followed it....

Twice a week, now, Delphin and Herve made the journey to Saint Hubert, and one evening, after Janet had watched them paddling across the little bay that separated the camp from the outlet's mouth, Mrs. Maturin appeared, with an envelope in her hand.

"I've got a letter from Brooks Insall, Janet," she said, with a well-disguised effort to speak naturally. "It's not the first one he's sent me, but I haven't mentioned the others. He's in Silliston—and I wrote him about the daughter."

"Yes," said Janet.

"Well—he wants to come up here, to see you, before we go away. He asks me to telegraph your permission."

"Oh no, he mustn't, Mrs. Maturin!"

"You don't care to see him?"

"It isn't that. I'd like to see him if things had been different. But now that I've disappointed him—hurt him, I couldn't stand it. I know it's only his kindness."

After a moment Augusta Maturin handed Janet a sealed envelope she held in her hand.

"He asked me to give you this," she said, and left the room. Janet read it, and let it fall on the bedspread, where it was still lying when her friend returned and began tidying the room. From the direction of the guide's cabin, on the point, came the sounds of talk and laughter, broken by snatches of habitant songs. Augusta Maturin smiled. She pretended not to notice the tears in Janet's eyes, and strove to keep back her own.

"Delphin and Herve saw a moose in the decharge," she explained. "Of course it was a big one, it always is! They're telling the doctor about it."

"Mrs. Maturin," said Janet, "I'd like to talk to you. I think I ought to tell you what Mr. Insall says."

"Yes, my dear," her friend replied, a little faintly, sitting down on the bed.

"He asks me to believe what—I've done makes no difference to him. Of course he doesn't put it in so many words, but he says he doesn't care anything about conventions," Janet continued slowly. "What I told him when he asked me to marry him in Silliston was a shock to him, it was so —so unexpected. He went away, to Maine, but as soon as he began to think it all over he wanted to come and tell me that he loved me in spite of it, but he felt he couldn't, under the circumstances, that he had to wait until—now. Although I didn't give him any explanation, he wants me to know that he trusts me, he understands—

it's because, he says, I am what I am. He still wishes to marry me, to take care of me and the child. We could live in California, at first—he's always been anxious to go there, he says."

"Well, my dear?" Augusta Maturin forced herself to say at last.

"It's so generous—so like him!" Janet exclaimed. "But of course I couldn't accept such a sacrifice, even if—" She paused. "Oh, it's made me so sad all summer to think that he's unhappy because of me!"

"I know, Janet, but you should realize, as I told you in Silliston, that it isn't by any deliberate act of your own, it's just one of those things that occur in this world and that can't be foreseen or avoided." Augusta Maturin spoke with an effort. In spite of Janet's apparent calm, she had never been more acutely aware of the girl's inner suffering.

"I know," said Janet. "But it's terrible to think that those things we unintentionally do, perhaps because of faults we have previously committed, should have the same effect as acts that are intentional."

"The world is very stupid. All suffering, I think, is brought about by stupidity. If we only could learn to look at ourselves as we are! It's a stupid, unenlightened society that metes out most of our punishments and usually demands a senseless expiation." Augusta Maturin waited, and presently Janet spoke again.

"I've been thinking all summer, Mrs. Maturin. There was so much I wanted to talk about with you, but I wanted to be sure of myself first. And now, since the baby came, and I know I'm not going to get well, I seem to see things much more clearly."

"Why do you say you're not going to get well, Janet? In this air, and with the child to live for!"

"I know it. Dr. McLeod knows it, or he wouldn't be staying here, and you've both been too kind to tell me. You've been so kind, Mrs. Maturin —I can't talk about it. But I'm sure I'm going to die, I've really known it ever since we left Silliston. Something's gone out of me, the thing that drove me, that made me want to live—I can't express what I mean any other way. Perhaps it's this child, the new life—perhaps I've just been broken, I don't know. You did your best to mend me, and that's one thing that makes me sad. And the thought of Mr. Insall's another. In some ways it would have been worse to live—I couldn't have ruined his life. And even if things had been different, I hadn't come to love him, in that way—it's queer, because he's such a wonderful person. I'd like to live for the child, if only I had the strength, the will left in me—but that's gone. And maybe I could save her from—what I've been through."

Augusta Maturin took Janet's hand in hers.

"Janet," she said, "I've been a lonely woman, as you know, with nothing to look forward to. I've always wanted a child since my little Edith went. I wanted you, my dear, I want your child, your daughter—as I want nothing else in the world. I will take her, I will try to bring her up in the light, and Brooks Insall will help me…."

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