

The Temple of Bacchus

hoarsely. "I've not been all I might have been. I see it now. But perhaps . . . it isn't . . . too late. . . ."

And suddenly he seized me violently by the hand. Then I found myself alone in the shadow of the wall which had once borne a fresco by Nollkins, and I stood like a man awakened from a dream. In the flattering moonlight, the sham survivals of the other century might have been thousands of years old, their suburban setting some sylvan corner of the Roman campagna. . . . Then once more I heard the nightingale, and it sang me back into contemporary realities. I wondered if it had been singing all the time. I had not heard less of it during the hour that Uvo and I had spent under this very wood, four summers ago!

That was on the first night of our life at Witching Hill, and this was to be our last. I arranged it beautifully when I got in and had tried to explain how entirely I had lost my bearings in the wood. I told Uvo, and it happened to be true, that I had been wondering why on earth he would not come up north with me next day. And before midnight he had packed.

Then we sat up together for the last time in that back room of his on the first floor, and watched