

my taking of the air. It was a soft November day, full of blue mist, and invested with a dying grace by a pale sunshine struggling through thin, grey rain-cloud. It was a faded lady of a day—a lady of waxen cheeks, attired in pearl-grey and old lace, her dim eyes illumined by a last smile. It gave an air of unreality to the perspective of tall buildings, and treated with indulgent irony the passing show of humans—on foot, on omnibuses, in cabs and motors—turning them into shadow shapes tending no whither. I laughed to myself. They all fancied themselves so real. They all had schemes in their heads, as if they were going to live a thousand years. I walked westwards past the great clubs, moralising as I went, and feeling the reaction from the excitement of Murglebed-on-Sea. I looked up at one of my own clubs, a comfortable resting-place, and it struck me as possessing more attractions than the family vault in Highgate Cemetery. An acquaintance at the window waved his hand to me. I thought him a lucky beggar to have that window to stand by when the street will be flooded with summer sunshine and the trees in the Green Park opposite wave in their verdant bravery. A little further a radiant being, all chiffons and millinery, on her way to Bond Street for more millinery and chiffons, smiled at me and put forth a delicately-gloved hand.

"Oh, Mr. de Gex, you're the very man I was longing to see!"

"How simply are some human aspirations satisfied!" said I.

"Farfax"—that's her husband, Farfax Glenn, a Member on my side of the House—"Farfax and I are making plans already for the Easter recess. We are going to motor to Athens, and you must come with us. You can tell us all about everything as we pass by."

I looked grave. "Easter is late next year."