

to a hero-worshiper. Something finer in nature than she had ever been touched by in a more civilized life had come to her through him in those last days—not through the man as men knew him, and not through the love he had borne her—but through the spirit she thought she saw there.

It may have been in part an illusion—women have so many—but it was strong in her. It raised up her life to touch the thing she had placed on the heights, and something of the elation that had come to him through that last sacrifice filled her, and forbade her return into the narrowed valleys of existence.

His wasted life! It had been given at last to the wild places he loved. It had left its mark on the humanity of them, and the mark had not been a mean one. The girl, thinking of what it had done for her, wondered often if the other lives of the valley that winter could live on without carrying indelible coloring from grateful, remorseful emotions born there. She did not realize how transient emotions are in some people; and then she had grown to idealize him so greatly. She fancied herself surely one of many, while really she was one alone.

"Yes, lass—a woeful waste," repeated the old man; and her thoughts wandered back to their starting-place.

"No!" she answered with the sturdy certainty of faith. "The prodigality there was not wastefulness, and was not without a method—not a method of his own, but that something beyond us we call God or Fate. The lives he lived or died for may seem of mighty little consequence individually, but what is, is more than likely to be right, Davy MacDougall, even if we can't see it from our point of view."