

would have been like had Giorgio been otherwise than a materialist. Even then, imagination might fail at times to grasp the character of the man who could sit so calmly through the spring evenings, with the flowers breaking into bloom in the long grass, and the garden full of the whispers of eternal resurrection.

So Paul went back to Naomi to tell her she was free, and told her also as little of the story as might be, but even the little was grim and ugly enough, and bad telling. He had chosen to tell her, or she chose to hear out in the garden in her favourite arbour, and when it was told, she sat still with locked fingers and a grey look of pain on her face, as if the shadows that were crowding together in the garden gathered her within their ever-widening boundaries.

The shadows crept on, deepening from grey to black in obscure corners, and with unobtrusive insistence joining grey to grey, till Paul could only see the white face so still and unmovable and unreadable.

How was the knowledge of her freedom affecting her? He had not the least means of knowing. With a vast sense of humiliation and grief he realised he knew next to nothing of the working of her mind, that the years had built a barrier between them—over which he could but grope blindly. It was dumb anguish to feel his lack of power to aid her in this hour, a humiliation beyond his dreams to leave her to face it alone, knowing himself impotent to help.

Her white hands moved restlessly now and then as if the right fingers were seeking something on the other hand, and it flashed on him that he had never seen her wear a wedding ring. Yet one might think the restless fingers sought for it now.

She spoke at last, low and bitterly, as one whose sorrow has no side that is not ugly, sordid, and cruel.

"If I had had in me one part of Anne's courage, one drop of any good woman's courage, all this would