

rooms, he went out into the crowded streets. At first he found himself envying everybody he passed—the cabman on his box, the rough young fellows escaped from the factory, the man who sold matches and had no cares beyond food and a bed. But presently he forgot them all and walked among shadows. He was at Blent in spirit, sometimes with Adlie Tristram, sometimes with Cecily. His imagination undid what his hand had done; he was smiling again at the efforts of Duplay to frighten or to displace him. Thus he would be happy for a moment, till reality came back and a dead dulness settled on his soul. Half afraid of himself, he turned round and made for home again; he could not be sure of his self-control. But again he mastered that, and again paced the streets, now in a grim resolution to tire mind and body, so that these visions should have nothing to work on and, finding blank, unresponsive weariness, should go their ways and leave him in an insensible fatigue. Ever since he disclaimed his inheritance he had been living in a stress of excitement that had given him a fortitude half unnatural; now this support seemed to fail, and with it went the power to bear.

The remedy worked well; at eight o'clock he found himself very tired, very hungry, unexpectedly composed. He turned into a little restaurant to dine. The place was crowded, and rather shamefacedly (as is the national way) he sat down at a small table opposite a girl in a light-blue blouse and a very big hat, who was eating risotto and drinking lager beer. She assumed an air of exaggerated primness and gentility, keeping her eyes down towards her plate, and putting very small quantities into her mouth at a time. Glad of distraction, Harry watched her with amusement. At last she glanced up stealthily.

"A fine evening," he said, as he started on his chop.

"Very seasonable," she began in a mincing tone; but suddenly she broke off to exclaim in a voice and accent more natural and spontaneous, "Good gracious, I've seen you before, haven't I?"

"I'm not aware that I ever had the honour," said Harry.