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he hesitated : it was not fair to the girl, he thought, though what he had intended was for her good. He felt he had no right to assume that Liddall knew how things were. The occasion slipped by.

But the same matter had been in his mind when, later, he asked, "What is the worst thing that can happen to a man?"

Liddall looked at him long, and then said : "To stand between two fires."

Pierre smiled: it was an answer after his own heart. Liddall remembered it very well in the future.

"What is the thing to do in such a case?" Pierre asked.

"It is not good to stand still."

"But what if you are stunned, or do not care?"

"You should care. It is not wise to strain a situation."

Pierre rose, walked up and down the room once or twice, then stood still, his arms folded, and spoke in a low tone. "Once in the Rockies I was lost. I crept into a cave at night. I knew it was the nest of some wild animal; but I was nearly dead with hunger and fatigue. I fell asleep. When I woke—it was towards morning—I saw two yellow stars glaring where the mouth of the cave had been. They were all hate : like nothing you could imagine: passion as it is first made—yes. There was also a rumbling sound. It was terrible, and yet I was not