

"No. It was nobody but myself. It was my own folly."

Seymour and his father-in-law had met again "in the same old place."

You climbed stairs to reach the place, but directly you were inside it you forgot, you could not believe that you were above ground. The longer you stayed in it, the firmer grew the impression of being sunk far down beneath the surface of the earth. Everything aided the impression—the airlessness, the lofty windowless walls, the disproportionate height, the remote glass, instead of a ceiling, dimly perceived above one's lifted head.

Compared with these depths, the tankish House of Lords might be a bright and airy upper chamber in a tower at the top of a mountain. This morning he thought the Lord Chief Justice's Court like a fantastic buried room, excavated and decorated by people who were confused in their recollections of rooms on the face of the earth. Latticed bookcases round the walls, reminiscence of a library; something suggestive of an old-fashioned inn bedroom about the Judge's bench and the dusty green curtains through which he went in and out; a monstrously too big clock, a vague memory of the clock at a railway station—these men had forgotten the daylight world when they made for themselves this deep-sunk temple of ceaseless talk.

He looked about him.—The men had forgotten daylight clothes: they wore wigs and gowns. They were an underground race, for ever banished from the sun's rays. Imagination could not enable one to see them employed otherwise than here: one could not conceive of them breathing good air, or riding fast across open fields. They had no colour. Their faces were like haked earth; their mobile mouths were like indiarubber; their swiftly turning eyes were like tarnished glass.

... "I shall, my lord, say little more about these presents—these extraordinary complimentary gifts offered to all and sundry who had the checking, the valuing, or the estimating, or the inventorying of all this mass of furniture—of this furniture." ...

He looked about him.—There was no colour anywhere. It was something to do with the atmosphere—a successful resistance to the filtration of the feebly descending light.