

"I thought all that was settled long ago," he said. "I'm such a useless creature. You give me something to think about, and the boy, and his education, and his teeth, and he'll have whooping-cough, and measles, and breeches, and things, and it will be frightfully interesting."

Emmy, elbow on table and chin in hand, smiled at him with a touch of audacity in her forget-me-not eyes.

"I believe you're more interested in the boy than you are in me."

Septimus reddened and stammered, unable, as usual, to express his feelings. He kept to the question of interest.

"It's so different," said he "I look on the boy as a kind of invention."

She persisted. "And what am I?"

He had one of his luminous inspirations.

"You," said he, "are a discovery."

Emmy laughed and lit a cigarette. "I do believe you like me a little bit, after all."

"You've such beautiful finger-nails," said he.

Madame Bolivard brought in the coffee. Septimus, in the act of lifting the cup from tray to table, let it fall through his nervous fingers, and the coffee streamed over the dainty tablecloth. Madame Bolivard appealed fervently to the Deity, but Emmy smiled proudly, as if the spilling of coffee was a rare social accomplishment.

Soon after this Septimus went to his club, with orders to return for tea, leaving Emmy to prepare