

Their Hearts' Desire

On his return he found that almost everybody had gone. He looked around for Mrs. Strong. He had not thought of her before, but now wondered where she had been all afternoon. He wished to bid her good-night, as instructed by Jane; a vague idea of having strayed from the straight and narrow path on divers occasions, firing his passion for implicit obedience as a finish.

Learning from Jo that his mother was upstairs, he followed the example of the other guests and advanced to pay his respects to Her, offering a limp, perfunctory hand.

She took it and smiled down upon him. "Good-night," she said.

John said nothing. It all seemed so meaningless, so inadequate. It was not at all the way he wished to say good-night. He raised hungry expectant eyes to her face.

"I hope you have had a happy time," she