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*The Man in Asbestos*

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great revolt, their desire to be like the men. Had that begun in your time ? ”

“ Only a little,” I answered ; “ they were beginning to ask for votes and equality.”

“ That’s it,” said my acquaintance, “ I couldn’t think of the word. Your women, I believe, were something awful, were they not ? Covered with feathers and skins and dazzling colours made of dead things all over them ? And they laughed, did they not, and had foolish teeth, and at any moment they could inveigle you into one of those contracts ! Ugh ! ”

He shuddered.

“ Asbestos,” I said (I knew no other name to call him), as I turned on him in wrath, “ Asbestos, do you think that those jelly-bag Equalities out on the street there, with their ash-barrel suits, can be compared for one moment with our unredeemed, unreformed, heaven-created, hobble-skirted women of the twentieth century ? ”

Then, suddenly, another thought flashed into my mind—