

grey wrinkles the still green waters of enchantment wherein some mortal has been gazing, so Hilary's reason suddenly swept across the situation, and showed it once more as it was. Quick to mark every shade that passed across his face, the girl made as though she would again burst into tears; then, since tears had been so useless, she pressed her hand over her eyes.

Hilary looked at that round, not too cleanly hand. He could see her watching him between her fingers. It was uncanny, almost horrible, like the sight of a cat watching a bird; and he stood appalled at the terrible reality of his position, at the sight of his own future with this girl, with her traditions, customs, life, the thousand and one things that he did not know about her, that he would have to live with if he once took her. A minute passed, which seemed eternity, for into it was condensed every force of her long pursuit, her instinctive clutching at something that she felt to be security, her reaching upwards, her twining round him.

Conscious of all this, held back by that vision of his future, yet whipped towards her by his senses, Hilary swayed like a drunken man. And suddenly she sprang at him, wreathed her arms round his neck, and fastened her mouth to his. The touch of her lips was moist and hot. The scent of stale violet powder came from her, warmed by her humanity. It penetrated to Hilary's heart. He started back in sheer physical revolt.

Thus repulsed, the girl stood rigid, her breast heaving, her eyes unnaturally dilated, her mouth still loosened by the kiss. Snatching from his pocket a roll of notes, Hilary flung them on the bed.

'I can't take you!' he almost groaned. 'It's madness! it's impossible!' And he went out into the passage. He ran down the steps and got into his cab. An immense time seemed to pass before it began to