

Norman Edgar . . . the thousand and one times when we were so happy together we could hardly believe we were awake, . . . all our love. . . . I've often wished I could meet you again for the first time, Margie. And in a way that's happening . . . I wished I could live again through that evening in your house when I realized I was in love with you . . . and when I found, . . . though it was too much to believe at first, that you were in love with me too. . . . And that's happened, Margie: I've seen . . . the dawn of love . . . a second time."

As he tried to lead her downstairs, she threw her arms round his neck:

"But *I'm* not the same, Norman!"

"I don't think anything could change you. . . . And nothing could ever change my love for you."

It was their last day but one before moving with all their luggage to London and, a week later, to Southampton. After a hurried luncheon, Margery went back to her clothes and papers, while Norman closeted himself in the library first with his solicitor and then with May-Kingston. Not until dinner-time had he made his last arrangements; and not until dinner was over could he escape with his own thoughts.

Then, as always, the square flat roof above the lantern promised him complete isolation. Pacing slowly from corner to corner, looking down on the grey stone cross from north and south, east and west, he bade farewell to his kingdom for five years or ten or as many more as any one chose to keep him exiled. Perhaps in five years' time Margery could come back without having to hang her head, though never again would she wish or dare to take her place in the life of the county; in less than five years' time the Melbys might have deserted Gloucestershire, Freddie might be dead or divorced; or he might still be alive, they might still be in occupation, still vested with power of proscription.

Presumably the power would pass with the lives of the present generation; in thirty years' time Norman Edgar Cartwright could return to a place where the name of Cartwright was being fast forgotten and where the Cartwright tradition was dying out.

Looking over the grey, moon-lit grass to the shadowy heights of Poplar Ridge, Norman tried for the thousandth time to find reason or right in the punishment that had been accorded him for trying to live on terms of friendship with his neighbour: first Gloria, then Margery, now Newbridge were taken from him.