

tedium? She would probably have gone down to Port Said that day, for it chanced that he knew an Italian mail-boat was to sail on the Thursday morning, and to-day was Wednesday. To-morrow, therefore, she would be left alone; and then anything might happen.

Perhaps she would not have the courage; and yet he had noticed a sort of determination, a masked strength, about her which now troubled him greatly. He asked himself why he should allow the fate of a woman so essentially belonging to the world to disturb the even tenor of his life and arouse him to action. What had he in common with this exotic little piece of humanity, disgorged from a back street of Port Said and left to drift about the world, without morals, without a knowledge of right and wrong, without God? True, she was an interesting character; and her sudden arrival out of the Egyptian dusk and her departure again into the darkness had left on his mind an impression full of significance. Moreover, he did not disguise from himself the fact that her beauty and grace were altogether exceptional; and this gave her, like a work of art, a certain value, a certain ability to command attention.

He recalled her ineffable charm and dignity in the rôle of Mary Magdalene in London, he saw again her small figure demurely facing the storm of applause from the vast audience; and he remembered how deeply he had been stirred by her portrayal of the sorrow of this woman of sorrow. Yet, even so, he could not account altogether for his anxiety to save her from herself; and he was forced at last to attribute it simply to the attraction of her remarkable personality, and to the natural interest in a lost sheep which a follower of the Good Shepherd must feel.

When Morland returned with the railway guide,