

THE PITFALL

come to her there as he had so often done before. The roses were well nigh over, but in their place the sweet white faces of the Japanese anemones were crowding up round the old grey sundial. The sunny, windless air was full of the cawing of rooks. It was the time and the place where a desultory love might come by chance and linger awhile; not where a desperate love, brought to bay, would wage one of his pitched battles. Peace and rest were close at hand. Why had she been fearful? Surely all was well, and he was coming back. He was coming back!

She waited, as it seemed to her, for hours before she heard the faint sound of his dogcart. She should see him in a moment. He would speak to his parents, and then ask where she was, and then come out to her. O! how she loved him! But she must appear calm, and not too glad to see him! She heard his step, strong, light, alert, as it used to be of old; not the slow, dragging, aimless step of the last two months.

He came quickly round the yew hedge and stood before her. She raised her eyes slowly from her book to meet his, a smile parting her lips.