

DISJECTA MEMBRA POETAE

his grandfather, Sir Joseph Harden, the Master of Lazarus, he was convinced (erroneously) that he was a Harden by blood and by temperament, and of course if he had only been a Harden by name, and not a Jewdwine, Court House and the great Harden Library would have been his instead of his cousin Lucia's. He knew that his grandfather had wished them to be his. Lucia's mother was dead long ago; and when his uncle Sir Frederick definitely renounced the domestic life, Lucia and Lucia alone stood between him and the inheritance that should have been his. This hardly constituted a reason for being fond of Lucia.

His grandfather had wished him to be fond of her. But not until Jewdwine was five and twenty and began to feel the primordial manhood stirring in his scholarly blood did he perceive that his cousin Lucia was not a hindrance but a way. The way was so obvious that it was no wonder that he did not see it all at once. He did not really see it till Sir Joseph sent for him on his death-bed.

"There's been some mistake, Horace," Sir Joseph had then said. "Your mother should have been the boy and your uncle Frederick the girl. Then Lucia would have been a Jewdwine, and you a Harden."

And Horace had said, "I'm afraid I can't be a Harden, sir; but is there any reason why Lucia——?"

"I was coming to that," said Sir Joseph. But he never came to it. Horace, however, was in some way aware that the same idea had occurred to both of them. Whatever it was, the old man had died happy in it.

There was no engagement, only a something altogether intangible and vague, understood to be an understanding. And Lucia adored him. If she had not adored him he might have been urged to something irretrievable and definite. As it was, there was no need, and nothing could have been more soothing than the golden concord of that understanding.

Needless to say if Lucia had been anybody but Lucia, such a solution would have been impossible. He was fastidious. He would not have married a woman simply because his grandfather wished it; and he could not have married a woman simply because she inherited