

verandah about ten minutes ago. I thought no more of it till I found her gone. But I know she has something very much on her mind; and she has such fanciful notions about things—the moonlight and the sea——” Poor Audrey floundered sadly out of her depth. “At any rate—we might ask the waiters. It’s possible——”

“Yes, indeed, it *is* possible. And other things—worse things, are possible as she is to-night.”

Sir Lakshman, knowing the women of his race, spoke with a strange vehemence quite unlike himself.

“Go, Nevil, go!” He gripped his son-in-law by the arm. “Bring her safe back with you, or—by God——”

Nevil did not wait to hear the rest. He strode out, slamming the door. That speck moving from shadow to shadow came suddenly back to him; and remembrance of a certain night on Como laid an icy clutch upon his heart.

Audrey followed him out, leaving the distracted father alone. Hearing her footsteps, Nevil turned and confronted her.

“Something very much on her mind, you said?”

“I thought so.”

“Did she tell you what it was?”

“Not exactly. There was no need. I understood.” A pause: then, for Lilamani’s sake, Audrey found courage to add with deliberate, unmistakable significance: “Nevil—can’t you guess?”

Look and tone enlightened him.

“That? Good God!” he exclaimed under his breath—and was gone.

Audrey stood still for many minutes looking at the empty space where he had been, wondering what that fervent expletive might bode for Lilamani’s “great gift.”