

... He put out his hand to touch the bubble and it broke, and with a shuddering, gasping cry he heard Clowes saying:—

"On the whole I don't think all this modern stuff can be good for anything but decoration."

And he began to think of his own picture, which was full of life. Wherever he picked up the design he could follow it all round the picture, and through and through it, beyond it into the mystery of art, and out of it back into life. It was poised, a wonderful, lovely created thing, with a complete, unaccountable, serene life of its own. The harsh, gloomy background of London fell away, and in its place shone green hills and a clear blue sky, fleecy with mauve-grey clouds. . . .

Following the clouds, he came easily back to life again, to the two girls sitting in this wonderful snug cottage, and he was overwhelmed by a feeling that he was sharing their comfortable happiness on false pretences. It was not to him the perfectly satisfying wonder they so obviously wished it to be for him, and at last he could not contain himself, and burst out:—

"You must not expect me to be happy. I cannot be happy. I will swing up to it as high as ever you like, but I must swing back again. Happiness is not life, love is not life, any more than misery is life. If I stay in happiness I die as surely as if I stay in misery. I must be like a pendulum. I must swing to and fro or the clock will stop. . . . I can't make it clear to you, but it is so. What matters is that the clock should go. Jews understand, but they forget that they are the pendulum and they do not live at all. Jews are wonderful people. They know that what matters is the impulse of the soul. It matters so much to them that they have forgotten everything else. And those who are not

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