
VANDOVER AND THE BRUTE

CHAPTER ONE

IT WAS always a matter of wonder to Vandover that he was able to recall so little of his past life. With the exception of the most recent events he could remember nothing connectedly. What he at first imagined to be the story of his life, on closer inspection turned out to be but a few disconnected incidents that his memory had preserved with the greatest capriciousness, absolutely independent of their importance. One of these incidents might be a great sorrow, a tragedy, a death in his family; and another, recalled with the same vividness, the same accuracy of detail, might be a matter of the least moment.

A certain one of these wilful fillips of memory would always bring before him a particular scene during the migration of his family from Boston to their new home in San Francisco, at a time when Vandover was about eight years old.

It was in the depot of one of the larger towns in western New York. The day had been hot and after the long ride on the crowded day coach the cool shadow under the curved roof of the immense iron vaulted depot seemed very pleasant. The porter, the brakeman and Vandover's father very carefully lifted his mother from the car. She was lying back on pillows in a long steamer chair. The