

AN ARRIVAL IN BOHEMIA

I HAD hesitated before coming fairly into Bohemia, and lived for some time in the house of relations a little way out of London, spending all my days in town, often, after a talking party in a Bloomsbury flat or a Fleet Street tavern, missing the last train out at night and being compelled to walk home in the early morning. Would I were as ready for such walks now. Why then, for the sake of one more half hour of laugh and talk and song, the miles of lonely trudge seemed nothing, and all the roads were lit with lamps of poetry and laughter. Down Whitehall I would walk to Westminster, where I would sometimes turn into a little side street in the island of quiet that lies behind the Abbey, and glance at the windows of a house where a poet lived whose works were often in my pocket, to see if the great man were yet abed, and, if the light still glowed behind the blind, to wait a little in the roadway, and dream of the rich talk that might be passing, or picture him at work, or reading, or perhaps turning over the old prints I knew he loved.