

up all for the sake of a girl's smile, and for the rather doubtful possession of a girl's fickle heart. He did not laugh at them any longer. He spent his nights pacing his room, and his days haunting the house at Queen's Gate. If he could not go in he could linger near the house. He could lounge in the park and see Valentine as she drove past, and nodded and smiled to him brightly. His own face turned pale when she gave him those quick gay glances. She was absolutely heart-whole—a certain intuition told him this, whereas he—he found himself drivelling into a state bordering on idiocy.

Almost all men have gone through similar crises, but Wyndham at this time was making awful discoveries. He was finding out day by day the depths of weakness as well as pain within him.

"I'm the greatest fool that ever breathed," he would say to himself. "What would Liliass say if she saw me now? How often she and I have laughed over this great momentous matter—how often we have declared that we at least would never lose ourselves in so absurd a fashion. Poor Liliass, I suppose her turn will come as mine has come—I cannot understand myself—I really must be raving mad. How dare I go to Mr. Paget and ask him to give me Valentine? I have not got a halfpenny in the world. This money in my pocket is my father's—I have to come to him for every sixpence! I am no better off than my little sister Joan. When I am ordained, and have secured the curacy of Jewsbury-on-the-Wold, I shall have exactly £160 a year. A large sum truly. And yet I want to marry Valentine—Paget—the youngest heiress of the season—the most beautiful—the most wealthy! Oh, of course I must be mad—quite mad. I ought to shun her like the plague. She does not in the least care for me—not in the least. I often wonder if she has got a heart anywhere. She acts as a sort of siren to me—luring me on—weakening and enfeebling