
HOME

He opened his eyes for a minute. The banks went gliding past swiftly, and the river had lost its immensity. The villages seemed close at hand, not villages any more, but little groups of homes quite close at hand, each one with wonders and everlasting astonishments of its own. He was nearly home, nearly there, and he was different. How would she take it, this difference in him? How would she bear with the strangeness of a man who has seen too much and who comes back to the world and everyday life with difficulty?

His eyelids dropped and he lay back a long while, pressing the tiny packet close up against him with his folded arms. The cable was there that he had got afterwards. Afterwards, after all those letters he had waited and longed for, since he had been like this—different. The cable had said, "Your wife and son are well." And, when they read it to him, it had meant nothing.

Since then, letters from her again, tiny letters, though she said that she could have written more if only they would have let her