

Cecily treasured the thought, teasing him now sometimes, as they grew intimate, with a purposed repetition of a pose or trick that she had first displayed unconsciously, and found had power to make him frown or smile. She smiled herself in mischievous triumph when she hit her mark, or she would break into the rich gurgle of delight that he remembered hearing from his young mother when he himself was a child. The life was to her all pure delight; she had no share in the thoughts that often darkened his brow, no knowledge of the thing which again and again filled him with that wondering despair.

On the evening of the day when Major Duplay went to Fairholme, the two sat together in the garden after dinner. It was nine o'clock, a close still night, with dark clouds now and then slowly moving off and on to the face of a moon nearly full. They had been silent for some minutes, sipping coffee. Cecily pointed to the row of windows in the left wing of the house.

"I've never been there," she said. "What's that?"

"The Long Gallery—all one long room, you know," he answered.

"One room! All that! What's in it?"

"Well, everything mostly," he smiled. "All our treasures, and our pictures, and so on."

"Why haven't you taken me there?"

Harry shrugged his shoulders. "You never asked me," he said.

"Well, will you take me there now—when you've finished your cigar?"

There was a pause before he answered, "Yes, if you like." He turned to the servant who had come to take away the coffee. "Light up the Long Gallery at once."

"Yes, my lord." A slight surprise broke through the respectful acceptance of the order.

"It was lighted last for my mother, months ago," Harry said, as though he were explaining his servant's surprise. "She sat there the last evening before she took to her room."

"Is that why you haven't taken me there?"

"I expect it is." His tone was not very confident.