

was so mentally alien that he could recognise no development in her. Now, still unchanged, she was coming to him, still an alien, with the same unchangeable yoke. She would throw it across his shoulders, and then, with impregnable fidelity, ask him to begin all over again.

This opened up an interminable lane along which he plodded doggedly. The trouble was that, so far as he could see, it did not end anywhere. It was bordered with self-suppression and paved with compromise. Had there been any ultimate reward or solution the thing would have seemed more reasonable.

He walked unsteadily to the window and looked out. Ellison's house was on a curve in the street and he could see a long way. Rain was pelting down, the asphalt was glistening, the skies heavy and low. Farther up the road was the Dynock place, and, as he looked, Dynock came to the front door with his wife. He stooped over her before he started down the steps, then glanced across at Ellison's. Blantyre drew back involuntarily, and Dynock strode off after another puzzled look. Once he stopped, turned, and seemed about to come back, but after a moment's hesitation went on slowly and thoughtfully. Blantyre's eyes followed him. He began to wonder why Yorkton had not more men like Dynock, who seemed to have solved the problem of being able to keep to himself without being called critical.

Now he realised, with a start, that Stella would come at any instant. But still, it all seemed ghostly and unreal. Supposing—he caught his breath at