

that before he settled down to the soberness of marriage, he must take one hasty, heady, compensating draft of life, of the sort of life he might have had. He would go East, go at once; he would fling himself into a tumultuous bath of pleasure, and then he would come back to Sheila and lay a great gift of gold at her feet. He thought over his plans, reconstructing them. He got pen and ink and wrote a letter to Sheila. He wrote badly — a schoolboy's inexpressive letter. But he told his story and his astounding news and drew a vivid enough picture of the havoc it had wrought in his simplicity. He used a lover's language, but his letter was as cold and lumpish as a golden ingot. And yet the writer was not cold. He was throbbing and distraught, confused and overthrown, a boy of fourteen beside himself at the prospect of a holiday . . . It was a stolen holiday, to be sure, a sort of truancy from manliness, but none the less intoxicating for that. Cosme's Latin nature was on top; Saxon loyalty and conscience overthrown. He was an egoist to his finger-tips that night. He did not sleep a wink, did not even try, but lay on his back across the bed, hands locked over his hair while "visions of sugar plums danced through his head." In the morning he went down and made his arrangements for Sheila, a little less complete, perhaps, than he had intended, for he met a worthy citizen of Rusty starting up the country with a sled to visit his traps and to him he gave the letter and