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## GREEN CHALK

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"Do you mean it?"

"I do. I've smoked my last cigarette."

"I don't believe you."

"You needn't, but it's quite true all the same. Half an hour ago I smoked an exquisite Russian cigarette, and it was my very last."

"Are you developing principles?"

"Why not add 'in your old age'? I know you thought it."

"I didn't, because I'm elemental enough to judge a woman's age by her appearance. Won't you tell why you have made this sudden and extraordinary resolution? If it isn't that you are developing principles, what is it?"

"Sentimentality, which is the chief characteristic of a fool," she said, lying back and idly regarding her green satin toe.

"But what has sentimentality to do with an 'exquisite Russian cigarette'?"

"The Russian cigarette was tipped with gold, only it ended in plain brown paper."

"Your riddle is too difficult for me," Philip said, his eyes on the door. "Won't you explain it?"

"It wasn't a riddle, it was a metaphor. I won't explain it, because it wasn't a very good metaphor and won't bear analysis. Mr. Lenormand, I have only loved twice in my life: The first time it was a younger son, who began by bewitching me, then bored me, and ended by divorcing me; the second time it was a man who tried to make a fool of me, and succeeded in