

of the family, cold, perhaps, and hard by nature. But these things which I have described have made a man of him at an age when many men are but boys, and he has learnt what many never learn at all—that there is more true devotion to be found in the world than most people will acknowledge. He may some day be heard of. He may some day fall under the great passion. Or he may never love at all and may never distinguish himself any more than his father has done. One or the other may happen, but not both, in all probability. The very greatest passion is rarely compatible with the very greatest success except in extraordinary good or bad natures. And Orsino Saracinesca is not extraordinary in any way. His character has been formed by the unusual circumstances in which he was placed when very young, rather than by anything like the self-development which we hear of in the lives of great men. From a somewhat foolish and affectedly cynical youth he has grown into a decidedly hard and cool-headed man. He is very much seen in society but talks little on the whole. If, hereafter, there should be anything in his life worth recording, another hand than mine may write it down for future readers.

If any one cares to ask why I have thought it worth the trouble to describe his early years so minutely, I answer that the young man of the Transition Period interests me. Perhaps I am singular in that. Orsino Saracinesca is a fair type, I think, of his class at his age. I have done my best to be just to him.

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