

the strong man Rosalind knew him for, and she guessed from it that there was more behind. Still, she said nothing, and sat on with his hand grasping hers and finding in it his refuge from himself. To her its warm pressure was a sure sign that his memory had not penetrated the darkness of his earlier time. If God willed, it might never do so. Meanwhile, what was there for it but patience?

As she sat there listening to the roaring of the gale outside, and watching with satisfaction the evident coming of sleep, she said to herself that it might easily be that some new thing had come back to him which he would be unwilling she should know about, at least until his own mind was clearer. He might speak with less reserve to Vereker. She would give the doctor leave to talk to him to-morrow. Fear of what she would hear may have influenced her in this.

So when, sooner than she had expected, she caught the sound of the first breath of indisputable sleep, she rose and slipped away quietly, and as she lay down again to rest again asked herself the question: Was it the galvanism that had done it?

## CHAPTER XXXVI

HOW FENWICK AND VEREKER WENT FOR A WALK, AND MORE MEMORIES CAME BACK. HOW FENWICK WAS A MILLIONAIRE, OR THEREABOUTS. OF A CLUE THAT KILLED ITSELF. HARRISSON'S AFFAIR NOW! BOTH THE MILLIONS! IS NOT LOVE BETTER THAN MONEY? ONLY FENWICK'S NAME WASN'T HARRISSON NEITHER

"We thought it best to let you have your sleep out, dear. Sally agreed. No, leave the pot alone. Mrs. Lobjoit will make some fresh coffee."

"Who's the other cup?"

"Vereker. He came in to breakfast; to see if we were blown away."

"I see. Of course. Where are they now?"

"They? . . . oh, him and Sally! They said they'd go and see if Tishy and her husband were blown away."

"Well, I have had my sleep out with a vengeance. It's a quarter to ten."

"Never mind, darling. So much the better. Let's have a look at you. . . ." And the little self-explanatory colloquy ends with Rosalind kissing her husband and examining him with anxious eyes. She sees a face less haggard than the one she saw last night, for is it not daylight and has not the wind fallen to a mere cheerful breeze you can quite stand upright in, leaning slightly seawards? And are not the voices and the footsteps of a new day outside, and the swift exchanges of sunlight and cloud-shadow that are chasing each other off the British Channel? And has not a native of eighty years of age (which he ignores) just opened the street door on his own responsibility and shouted along the passage that pra'ans are large this morning? He is more an institution than a man, and is freely spoken of as "The Shrimps." A flavour of a Triton who has got too dry on the beach comes in with the sea air, and also a sense of prawns, emptied from a wooden measure they have been honourably

shaken down into, falling on a dish held out to receive them by an ambassador of four, named by Sally little Miss Lobjoit, the youngest of her race.

But for all that the rising life of the hours and the subsiding gale may do to chase away the memory of the oppressions of the night from one who was defenceless in its solitude, Rosalind can see how much they leave behind. Her husband may do his best to make light of it—to laugh it off as nothing but the common bad night we all know so well; may make the most of the noises of the storm, and that abominable banging door; but he will not conceal from her the effort that it costs him to do so. Besides, had he not admitted, in the night, that he “got worried and fidgeted by chaotic ideas”? What were these ideas? How far had he penetrated into his own past? She was not sorry for the few words she had had time to exchange with Dr. Conrad while Sally went to seek her hat. She had renewed and confirmed her permission to him to speak to her husband freely about himself.

“Are Mr. and Mrs. Paganini gone to sea?” This is said as Fenwick opens negotiations rather mechanically with the fresh coffee Mrs. Lobjoit has produced, and as that lady constructs for removal a conglomerate of plates and effete eggs.

“Gone to sea, Gerry? Not very likely. What’s the meaning of that? Explain.”

“Why, Sally and her doctor are staring out at the offing. . . .”

“Well?”

“And didn’t you say they had gone to find out if they were blown away?”

“I supposed they changed their minds.” Rosalind talks absently, as if they didn’t matter. All her thoughts are on her husband. But she doesn’t fancy catechizing him about his experiences in the night, neither. She had better let him alone, and wait new oblivion or a healthy revival.

He is also *distract*, and when he spoke of Sally and the doctor he had shown no interest in his own words. His eyes do not kindle at hers in his old way, and might be seeing nothing, for all there is in them to tell of it. He makes very short work of a cup of coffee, and a mere pretence of anything else; and then, suddenly rousing himself with a shake, says this won’t do, and he must go out and get a blow. All right, says Rosalind, and he’d

better get Dr. Conrad, and make him go for a walk. Only they are not to fall over the cliff.

“Fall over the cliff!” repeats Fenwick. He laughs, and she is glad at the sound. “You couldn’t fall over the cliff against such a wind as this. I defy any one to.” He kisses her and goes out, and she hears him singing, as he hunts for a stick that has vanished, an old French song:

“Auprès de ma blond-e  
Comme c’est bon—c’est bon—c’est bon. . . .”

Only, when he has found the stick and his hat, he does not go at once, but comes back, and says, as he kisses her again: “Don’t fidget about me, darling; I’m all right.” Which must have been entirely brain-wave or thought-reading, as Rosalind had said never a word of her anxiety, so far.

Fenwick walked away briskly towards the flagstaff where Sally and Vereker had been looking out to sea. In the dazzling sunshine—all the more dazzling for the suddenness of its come and go—and the intoxicating rush of well-washed air that each of those crested waves out yonder knew so much about—and they were all of a tale—and such a companion in the enjoyment of it as that white sea-bird afloat against the blue gap of sky or purple underworld of cloud, what could he do other than cast away the thoughts the night had left, the cares, whatever they were, that the revival of memory had brought back?

If he could not succeed altogether in putting them aside, at least he could see his way to bearing them better, with a kiss of his wife still on his face, and all St. Sennans about him in the sunshine, and Sally to come. However, before he reached the flagstaff he met the doctor, and heard that Miss Sally had actually gone down to the machines to see if Gabriel wouldn’t put one down near the water, so that she could run a little way. She was certain she could swim in that sea if she could once get through what she called the selvage-wave. If Gabriel wouldn’t, she should take her things up to the house and put them on and walk down to the sea in a cloak. It was quite ridiculous, said the merpussy, people making such a fuss about a few waves. What was the world coming to?

“She’ll be all safe,” was Fenwick’s comment when he heard

this. "They won't let her go in, at the machines. They won't let her leave the Turkey-twill knickers and the short skirt. She always leaves them there to dry. *She's* all right. Let's take a turn across the field; it's too windy for the cliff."

"You had a bad night, Fenwick."

"All of us had. About three in the morning I thought the house would blow down. And there was a door banged, etc. . . ."

"You had a worse night than the rest of us. Look at me straight in the face. No, I wasn't going to say show me your tongue." They had stopped a moment at the top of what was known as The Steps—*par excellence*—which was the shortest cut up to the field-path. Dr. Conrad looks a second or so, and then goes on: "I thought so. You've got black lines under your eyes, and you're evidently conscious of the lids. I expect you've got a pain in them, one in each, tied together by a string across here." That is to say, from eyebrow to eyebrow, as illustrated fingerwise.

Fenwick wasn't prepared to deny it evidently. He drew his own fingers across his forehead, as though to feel if the pain were really there. It confirmed a suspicion he couldn't have sworn to.

"Yes; I suppose I did have a worse night than the rest of you. At least, I hope so, for your sakes." His manner might have seemed to warrant immediate speculation or inquiry about the cause of his sleeplessness, but Vereker walked on beside him in silence. The way was along a short, frustrated street that led to the field-pathway that was grass-grown, more or less, all but the heaps of flints that were one day to make a new top-dressing, but had been forgotten by the local board, and the premature curb-stones whose anticipations about traffic had never been fulfilled. The little detached houses on either side were unselfish little houses, that only wanted to be useful and afford shelter to the wanderer, or provide a refuge for old age. All made use, on placards, of the cautious expression "Apartments"; while some flung all reserve to the winds and said also they were "To let" outright. The least satisfactory one of the lot was almost invisible owing to its egotism, but distinguishable from afar because the cross-board on a standard that had been placed in the garden-front had fallen forward over the palings like Punch's gallows.

It didn't much matter, because the placard attached was dissolving off in the rains, and hanging down so low that a goat was eating it with relish, standing against the parapet of the garden-fence.

They reached the point at which Albion Villas had been thwarted by a hedge, rich in unripe sloes and green abortive blackberries, in their attempt to get across a stubble-field to the new town, and passed in instalments through its turnstile, or kissing-gate. Neither spoke, except that Fenwick said, "Look at the goat," until, after they had turned on to the chalk pathway, nearly dry in the warm sun and wind, he added a question:

"Did you ever taste a sloe?"

"Yes, once."

"That is what every one says if you ask him if he ever tasted a sloe. Nobody ever does it again."

"But they make sloe-gin of them?"

"That, my dear Vereker, is what everybody always says next. Sally told me they did, and she's right. They console themselves for the taste of the sloe by an imaginary *liqueur* like *maraschino*. But that's because they never tasted sloe-gin."

Vereker thinks he may conclude that Fenwick is talking for talk's sake, and humours him. He can get to the memory-subject later.

"A patient of mine," he says, "who's been living at Spezzia, was telling me about a fruit that was very good there, *diosperi* he called them. They must be very unlike sloes by his description."

"And naturally sloes made you think of them. I wonder what they are—*diosperi*—*diosperi*—" He repeated the word as though trying to recall it. Dr. Conrad helped the identification.

"He said they are what the Japs call jelly-plums—great big fruit, very juicy."

"I know. They're persimmons, or a sort of persimmons. We used to get lots of them in California, and even up at the Klondyke. . . ."

He stopped abruptly and remained silent. A sudden change in him was too marked to escape notice, and there could be no doubt about the cause. The doctor walked beside him, also silent, for a few paces. Then he spoke:

"You will have to bear this, Fenwick, and keep your head. It is just as I told you it would be. It is all coming back." He laid his left hand on his companion's shoulder as they stood side-by-side on the chalk pathway, and with his right felt the wrist that was nearest him. Fenwick was in a quiver all through his frame, and his pulse was beating furiously as Dr. Conrad's finger touched it. But he spoke with self-control, and his step was steady as they walked on slowly together the moment after.

"It's all coming back. It *has* come back. I shall remember all in time." Then he repeated Vereker's words, "I must keep my head. I shall have to bear this," and walked on again in silence. The young man beside him still felt he had best not speak yet. Just let the physical perturbation subside. Talking would only make it worse.

They may have walked so for two minutes before Fenwick spoke again. Then he roused himself, to say, with but little hint in his voice of any sense of the oddity of his question: "Which is my dream?—this or the other?" Then added: "That's the question I want to ask, and nobody can answer."

"And of course all the while each of us knows perfectly well the answer is simply 'Neither.' You are a man that has had an accident, and lost his memory. Be patient, and do not torment yourself. Let it take its own time."

"All right, doctor! Patience is the word." He spoke in an undertone—a voice of acquiescence, or rather obedience. "Perhaps it will not be so bad when I remember more." They walked on again.

Then Vereker, noting that during silence he brooded under the oppression of what he had already recovered from the past, and to all appearance struck, once or twice, on some new unwelcome vein of thought, judging from a start or a momentary tension of the arm that now held his, decided that it would be as well to speak to him now, and delay no longer.

"Has anything come back to you, so far, that will unsettle your present life?"

"No, no—not that, thank God! Not so far as I can see. But much that must disquiet it; it cannot be otherwise."

"Do you mind telling me?"

"No, surely, dear fellow!—surely I will tell you. Why should

I not? But what I say to you don't repeat to Sally or her mother. Not just now, you know. Wait!"

There was a recess in the wall of mortar-bedded flints that ran along the path, which would give shelter from the wind to light a cigar. Fenwick stopped and took two from a cigar-case, Sally's present to him last Christmas, and offered one to Dr. Conrad, who, however, didn't want to smoke so early. He lighted his own in the recess, with only a slight tremor of the hand, barely visible even to Vereker's experienced eye; and then, as he threw away the match, said, without anything that could be called emotion, though always with an apparent sense of his bewilderment at his own words:

"I am that man Harrison that was in all the newspapers just about the time of the—you remember—when I . . ."

Vereker failed for the moment to grasp the degree of his own astonishment, and used the residuum of his previous calmness to say:

"I remember. The time of your accident."

"*Am* I that man? I mean ought I to say '*I am* that man'? I know I *was* that man, in my old dream. I know it now, in this one."

"Well, but—so much the better! You are a millionaire, Fenwick, with mines at Klondyke. . . ."

Dr. Conrad had been so taken aback at the suddenness of the extraordinary revelation that his amazement was quite at a loss for means of expression. A delayed laugh, not unmixed with a gasp, expressed nothing—merely recorded a welcome to the good side of it. For, of course, when one hears of Golconda one is bound to think it good, failing evidence to the contrary.

"Yes, I *was* that man—Algernon Harrison. Now, the question is—and you'll have to help me here, Vereker. Don't look so thunderstruck, old chap—Shall I be that man again or not?"

"Why not, in Heaven's name? How can you help it?" The speaker is too dumbfounded, so far, to be able to get the whip hand of the circumstances. But the pace may be slacker presently.

"Let's be steady!" Fenwick's voice, as he says this, has a sense of ease in it, as though he were relieved by his disclosure. He takes Vereker's arm in his again, and as they walk on to-