



Roderick

Hudson

Henry James

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Chapter

1 Rowland

Mallet had made his arrangements to sail for Europe on the first of September, and having in the interval a fortnight to spare, he determined to spend it with his cousin Cecilia, the widow of a nephew of his father. He was urged by the reflection that an affectionate farewell might help to exonerate him from the charge of neglect frequently preferred by this lady. It was not that the young man disliked her; on the contrary, he regarded her with a tender admiration, and he had not forgotten how, when his cousin had brought her home on her marriage, he had seemed to feel the upward sweep of the empty bough from which the golden fruit had been plucked, and had then and there accepted the prospect of bachelorhood. The truth was, that, as it will be part of the entertainment of this narrative to exhibit, Rowland Mallet had an uncomfortably sensitive conscience, and that, in spite of the seeming paradox, his visits to Cecilia were rare because she and her misfortunes were often uppermost in it. Her misfortunes were three in number: first, she had lost her husband; second, she had lost her money (or the greater part of it); and third, she lived at Northampton, Massachusetts. Mallet's compassion was really wasted, because Cecilia was a very clever woman, and a most skillful counter-plotter to adversity. She had made herself a charming home, her economies were not obtrusive, and there was always a cheerful flutter in the folds of her crape. It was the consciousness of all this that puzzled Mallet whenever he felt tempted to put in his oar. He had money and he had time, but he never could decide just how to place these gifts gracefully at Cecilia's service. He no longer felt like marrying her: in these eight years that fancy had died a natural death. And yet her extreme cleverness seemed somehow to make charity difficult and patronage impossible. He would rather chop off his hand than offer her a check, a piece of useful furniture, or a black silk dress; and yet there was some sadness in seeing such a bright, proud woman living in such a small, dull way. Cecilia had, moreover, a turn for sarcasm, and her smile, which was her pretty feature, was never so pretty as when her sprightly phrase had a lurking scratch in it. Rowland remembered that, for him, she was all smiles, and suspected, awkwardly, that he ministered not a little to her sense of the irony of things. And in truth, with his means, his leisure, and his opportunities, what had he done? He had an unaffected suspicion of his uselessness. Cecilia, meanwhile, cut out her own dresses, and was personally giving her little girl the education of a princess.

This time, however, he presented himself bravely enough; for in the way of activity it was something definite, at least, to be going to Europe and to be meaning to spend the winter in Rome. Cecilia met him in the early dusk at the gate of her little garden, amid a studied combination of floral perfumes. A rosy widow of twenty-eight, half cousin, half hostess, doing the honors of an odorous cottage on a midsummer evening, was a phenomenon to which the young man's imagination was able to do ample justice. Cecilia was always gracious, but this evening she was almost joyous. She was in a happy mood, and Mallet imagined there was a private reason for it—a reason quite distinct from her pleasure in receiving her honored kinsman. The next day he flattered himself he was on the way to discover it.

For the present, after tea, as they sat on the rose-framed porch, while Rowland held his younger cousin between his knees, and she, enjoying her situation, listened timorously for the stroke of bedtime, Cecilia insisted on talking more about her visitor than about herself.

"What is it you mean to do in Europe?" she asked, lightly, giving a turn to the frill of her sleeve—just such a turn as seemed to Mallet to bring out all the latent difficulties of the question.

"Why, very much what I do here," he answered. "No great harm."

"Is it true," Cecilia asked, "that here you do no great harm? Is not a man like you doing harm when he is not doing positive good?"

"Your compliment is ambiguous," said Rowland.

"No," answered the widow, "you know what I think of you. You have a particular aptitude for beneficence. You have it in the first place in your character. You are a benevolent person. Ask Bessie if you don't hold her more gently and comfortably than any of her other admirers."

"He holds me more comfortably than Mr. Hudson," Bessie declared, roundly.

Rowland, not knowing Mr. Hudson, could but half appreciate the eulogy, and Cecilia went on to develop her idea. "Your circumstances, in the second place, suggest the idea of social usefulness. You are intelligent, you are well-informed, and your charity, if one may call it charity, would be discriminating. You are rich and unoccupied, so that it might be abundant. Therefore, I say, you are a person to do something on a large scale. Bestir yourself, dear Rowland, or we may be taught to think that virtue herself is setting a bad example."

"Heaven forbid," cried Rowland, "that I should set the examples of virtue! I am quite willing to follow them, however, and if I don't do something on the grand scale, it is that my genius is altogether imitative, and that I have not recently encountered any very striking models of grandeur. Pray, what shall I do? Found an orphan asylum, or build a dormitory for Harvard College? I am not rich enough to do either in an ideally handsome way, and I confess that, yet awhile, I feel too young to strike my grand coup. I am holding myself ready for

inspiration. I am waiting till something takes my fancy irresistibly. If inspiration comes at forty, it will be a hundred pities to have tied up my money-bag at thirty."

"Well, I give you till forty," said Cecilia. "It 's only a word to the wise, a notification that you are expected not to run your course without having done something handsome for your fellow-men."

Nine o'clock sounded, and Bessie, with each stroke, courted a closer embrace. But a single winged word from her mother overleaped her successive intrenchments. She turned and kissed her cousin, and deposited an irrepressible tear on his moustache. Then she went and said her prayers to her mother: it was evident she was being admirably brought up. Rowland, with the permission of his hostess, lighted a cigar and puffed it awhile in silence. Cecilia's interest in his career seemed very agreeable. That Mallet was without vanity I by no means intend to affirm; but there had been times when, seeing him accept, hardly less deferentially, advice even more peremptory than the widow's, you might have asked yourself what had become of his vanity. Now, in the sweet-smelling starlight, he felt gently wooed to egotism. There was a project connected with his going abroad which it was on his tongue's end to communicate. It had no relation to hospitals or dormitories, and yet it would have sounded very generous. But it was not because it would have sounded generous that poor Mallet at last puffed it away in the fumes of his cigar. Useful though it might be, it expressed most imperfectly the young man's own personal conception of usefulness. He was extremely fond of all the arts, and he had an almost passionate enjoyment of pictures. He had seen many, and he judged them sagaciously. It had occurred to him some time before that it would be the work of a good citizen to go abroad and with all expedition and secrecy purchase certain valuable specimens of the Dutch and Italian schools as to which he had received private proposals, and then present his treasures out of hand to an American city, not unknown to aesthetic fame, in which at that time there prevailed a good deal of fruitless aspiration toward an art-museum. He had seen himself in imagination, more than once, in some mouldy old saloon of a Florentine palace, turning toward the deep embrasure of the window some scarcely-faded Ghirlandaio or Botticelli, while a host in reduced circumstances pointed out the lovely drawing of a hand. But he imparted none of these visions to Cecilia, and he suddenly swept them away with the declaration that he was of course an idle, useless creature, and that he would probably be even more so in Europe than at home. "The only thing is," he said, "that there I shall seem to be doing something. I shall be better entertained, and shall be therefore, I suppose, in a better humor with life. You may say that that is just the humor a useless man should keep out of. He should cultivate discontentment. I did a good many things when I was in Europe before, but I did not spend a winter in Rome. Every one assures

me that this is a peculiar refinement of bliss; most people talk about Rome in the same way. It is evidently only a sort of idealized form of loafing: a passive life in Rome, thanks to the number and the quality of one's impressions, takes on a very respectable likeness to activity. It is still lotus-eating, only you sit down at table, and the lotuses are served up on rococo china. It 's all very well, but I have a distinct prevision of this—that if Roman life does n't do something substantial to make you happier, it increases tenfold your liability to moral misery. It seems to me a rash thing for a sensitive soul deliberately to cultivate its sensibilities by rambling too often among the ruins of the Palatine, or riding too often in the shadow of the aqueducts. In such recreations the chords of feeling grow tense, and after-life, to spare your intellectual nerves, must play upon them with a touch as dainty as the tread of Mignon when she danced her egg-dance."

"I should have said, my dear Rowland," said Cecilia, with a laugh, "that your nerves were tough, that your eggs were hard!"

"That being stupid, you mean, I might be happy? Upon my word I am not. I am clever enough to want more than I 've got. I am tired of myself, my own thoughts, my own affairs, my own eternal company. True happiness, we are told, consists in getting out of one's self; but the point is not only to get out—you must stay out; and to stay out you must have some absorbing errand. Unfortunately, I 've got no errand, and nobody will trust me with one. I want to care for something, or for some one. And I want to care with a certain ardor; even, if you can believe it, with a certain passion. I can't just now feel ardent and passionate about a hospital or a dormitory. Do you know I sometimes think that I 'm a man of genius, half finished? The genius has been left out, the faculty of expression is wanting; but the need for expression remains, and I spend my days groping for the latch of a closed door."

"What an immense number of words," said Cecilia after a pause, "to say you want to fall in love! I 've no doubt you have as good a genius for that as any one, if you would only trust it."

"Of course I 've thought of that, and I assure you I hold myself ready. But, evidently, I 'm not inflammable. Is there in Northampton some perfect epitome of the graces?"

"Of the graces?" said Cecilia, raising her eyebrows and suppressing too distinct a consciousness of being herself a rosy embodiment of several. "The household virtues are better represented. There are some excellent girls, and there are two or three very pretty ones. I will have them here, one by one, to tea, if you like."

"I should particularly like it; especially as I should give you a chance to see, by the profundity of my attention, that if I am not happy, it 's not for want of taking pains."

Cecilia was silent a moment; and then, "On the whole," she resumed, "I don't think there are any worth asking. There are none so very pretty,

none so very pleasing."

"Are you very sure?" asked the young man, rising and throwing away his cigar-end.

"Upon my word," cried Cecilia, "one would suppose I wished to keep you for myself. Of course I am sure! But as the penalty of your insinuations, I shall invite the plainest and prosiest damsel that can be found, and leave you alone with her."

Rowland smiled. "Even against her," he said, "I should be sorry to conclude until I had given her my respectful attention."

This little profession of ideal chivalry (which closed the conversation) was not quite so fanciful on Mallet's lips as it would have been on those of many another man; as a rapid glance at his antecedents may help to make the reader perceive. His life had been a singular mixture of the rough and the smooth. He had sprung from a rigid Puritan stock, and had been brought up to think much more intently of the duties of this life than of its privileges and pleasures. His progenitors had submitted in the matter of dogmatic theology to the relaxing influences of recent years; but if Rowland's youthful consciousness was not chilled by the menace of long punishment for brief transgression, he had at least been made to feel that there ran through all things a strain of right and of wrong, as different, after all, in their complexions, as the texture, to the spiritual sense, of Sundays and week-days. His father was a chip of the primal Puritan block, a man with an icy smile and a stony frown. He had always bestowed on his son, on principle, more frowns than smiles, and if the lad had not been turned to stone himself, it was because nature had blessed him, inwardly, with a well of vivifying waters. Mrs. Mallet had been a Miss Rowland, the daughter of a retired sea-captain, once famous on the ships that sailed from Salem and Newburyport. He had brought to port many a cargo which crowned the edifice of fortunes already almost colossal, but he had also done a little sagacious trading on his own account, and he was able to retire, prematurely for so seaworthy a maritime organism, upon a pension of his own providing. He was to be seen for a year on the Salem wharves, smoking the best tobacco and eying the seaward horizon with an inveteracy which superficial minds interpreted as a sign of repentance. At last, one evening, he disappeared beneath it, as he had often done before; this time, however, not as a commissioned navigator, but simply as an amateur of an observing turn likely to prove oppressive to the officer in command of the vessel. Five months later his place at home knew him again, and made the acquaintance also of a handsome, blonde young woman, of redundant contours, speaking a foreign tongue. The foreign tongue proved, after much conflicting research, to be the idiom of Amsterdam, and the young woman, which was stranger still, to be Captain Rowland's wife. Why he had gone forth so suddenly across the seas to marry her, what had happened between them before, and

whether—though it was of questionable propriety for a good citizen to espouse a young person of mysterious origin, who did her hair in fantastically elaborate plaits, and in whose appearance "figure" enjoyed such striking predominance—he would not have had a heavy weight on his conscience if he had remained an irresponsible bachelor; these questions and many others, bearing with varying degrees of immediacy on the subject, were much propounded but scantily answered, and this history need not be charged with resolving them. Mrs. Rowland, for so handsome a woman, proved a tranquil neighbor and an excellent housewife. Her extremely fresh complexion, however, was always suffused with an air of apathetic homesickness, and she played her part in American society chiefly by having the little squares of brick pavement in front of her dwelling scoured and polished as nearly as possible into the likeness of Dutch tiles. Rowland Mallet remembered having seen her, as a child—an immensely stout, white-faced lady, wearing a high cap of very stiff tulle, speaking English with a formidable accent, and suffering from dropsy. Captain Rowland was a little bronzed and wizened man, with eccentric opinions. He advocated the creation of a public promenade along the sea, with arbors and little green tables for the consumption of beer, and a platform, surrounded by Chinese lanterns, for dancing. He especially desired the town library to be opened on Sundays, though, as he never entered it on week-days, it was easy to turn the proposition into ridicule. If, therefore, Mrs. Mallet was a woman of an exquisite moral tone, it was not that she had inherited her temper from an ancestry with a turn for casuistry. Jonas Mallet, at the time of his marriage, was conducting with silent shrewdness a small, unpromising business. Both his shrewdness and his silence increased with his years, and at the close of his life he was an extremely well-dressed, well-brushed gentleman, with a frigid gray eye, who said little to anybody, but of whom everybody said that he had a very handsome fortune. He was not a sentimental father, and the roughness I just now spoke of in Rowland's life dated from his early boyhood. Mr. Mallet, whenever he looked at his son, felt extreme compunction at having made a fortune. He remembered that the fruit had not dropped ripe from the tree into his own mouth, and determined it should be no fault of his if the boy was corrupted by luxury. Rowland, therefore, except for a good deal of expensive instruction in foreign tongues and abstruse sciences, received the education of a poor man's son. His fare was plain, his temper familiar with the discipline of patched trousers, and his habits marked by an exaggerated simplicity which it really cost a good deal of money to preserve unbroken. He was kept in the country for months together, in the midst of servants who had strict injunctions to see that he suffered no serious harm, but were as strictly forbidden to wait upon him. As no school could be found conducted on principles sufficiently rigorous, he was attended at home by a master who set a

high price on the understanding that he was to illustrate the beauty of abstinence not only by precept but by example. Rowland passed for a child of ordinary parts, and certainly, during his younger years, was an excellent imitation of a boy who had inherited nothing whatever that was to make life easy. He was passive, pliable, frank, extremely slow at his books, and inordinately fond of trout-fishing. His hair, a memento of his Dutch ancestry, was of the fairest shade of yellow, his complexion absurdly rosy, and his measurement around the waist, when he was about ten years old, quite alarmingly large. This, however, was but an episode in his growth; he became afterwards a fresh-colored, yellow-bearded man, but he was never accused of anything worse than a tendency to corpulence. He emerged from childhood a simple, wholesome, round-eyed lad, with no suspicion that a less roundabout course might have been taken to make him happy, but with a vague sense that his young experience was not a fair sample of human freedom, and that he was to make a great many discoveries. When he was about fifteen, he achieved a momentous one. He ascertained that his mother was a saint. She had always been a very distinct presence in his life, but so ineffably gentle a one that his sense was fully opened to it only by the danger of losing her. She had an illness which for many months was liable at any moment to terminate fatally, and during her long-arrested convalescence she removed the mask which she had worn for years by her husband's order. Rowland spent his days at her side and felt before long as if he had made a new friend. All his impressions at this period were commented and interpreted at leisure in the future, and it was only then that he understood that his mother had been for fifteen years a perfectly unhappy woman. Her marriage had been an immitigable error which she had spent her life in trying to look straight in the face. She found nothing to oppose to her husband's will of steel but the appearance of absolute compliance; her spirit sank, and she lived for a while in a sort of helpless moral torpor. But at last, as her child emerged from babyhood, she began to feel a certain charm in patience, to discover the uses of ingenuity, and to learn that, somehow or other, one can always arrange one's life. She cultivated from this time forward a little private plot of sentiment, and it was of this secluded precinct that, before her death, she gave her son the key. Rowland's allowance at college was barely sufficient to maintain him decently, and as soon as he graduated, he was taken into his father's counting-house, to do small drudgery on a proportionate salary. For three years he earned his living as regularly as the obscure functionary in fustian who swept the office. Mr. Mallet was consistent, but the perfection of his consistency was known only on his death. He left but a third of his property to his son, and devoted the remainder to various public institutions and local charities. Rowland's third was an easy competence, and he never felt a moment's jealousy of his fellow-

pensioners; but when one of the establishments which had figured most advantageously in his father's will bethought itself to affirm the existence of a later instrument, in which it had been still more handsomely treated, the young man felt a sudden passionate need to repel the claim by process of law. There was a lively tussle, but he gained his case; immediately after which he made, in another quarter, a donation of the contested sum. He cared nothing for the money, but he had felt an angry desire to protest against a destiny which seemed determined to be exclusively salutary. It seemed to him that he would bear a little spoiling. And yet he treated himself to a very modest quantity, and submitted without reserve to the great national discipline which began in 1861. When the Civil War broke out he immediately obtained a commission, and did his duty for three long years as a citizen soldier. His duty was obscure, but he never lost a certain private satisfaction in remembering that on two or three occasions it had been performed with something of an ideal precision. He had disentangled himself from business, and after the war he felt a profound disinclination to tie the knot again. He had no desire to make money, he had money enough; and although he knew, and was frequently reminded, that a young man is the better for a fixed occupation, he could discover no moral advantage in driving a lucrative trade. Yet few young men of means and leisure ever made less of a parade of idleness, and indeed idleness in any degree could hardly be laid at the door of a young man who took life in the serious, attentive, reasoning fashion of our friend. It often seemed to Mallet that he wholly lacked the prime requisite of a graceful flaneur—the simple, sensuous, confident relish of pleasure. He had frequent fits of extreme melancholy, in which he declared that he was neither fish nor flesh nor good red herring. He was neither an irresponsibly contemplative nature nor a sturdily practical one, and he was forever looking in vain for the uses of the things that please and the charm of the things that sustain. He was an awkward mixture of strong moral impulse and restless aesthetic curiosity, and yet he would have made a most ineffective reformer and a very indifferent artist. It seemed to him that the glow of happiness must be found either in action, of some immensely solid kind, on behalf of an idea, or in producing a masterpiece in one of the arts. Oftenest, perhaps, he wished he were a vigorous young man of genius, without a penny. As it was, he could only buy pictures, and not paint them; and in the way of action, he had to content himself with making a rule to render scrupulous moral justice to handsome examples of it in others. On the whole, he had an incorruptible modesty. With his blooming complexion and his serene gray eye, he felt the friction of existence more than was suspected; but he asked no allowance on grounds of temper, he assumed that fate had treated him inordinately well and that he had no excuse for taking an ill-natured view of life, and he undertook constantly to believe that all

women were fair, all men were brave, and the world was a delightful place of sojourn, until the contrary had been distinctly proved.

Cecilia's blooming garden and shady porch had seemed so friendly to repose and a cigar, that she reproached him the next morning with indifference to her little parlor, not less, in its way, a monument to her ingenious taste. "And by the way," she added as he followed her in, "if I refused last night to show you a pretty girl, I can at least show you a pretty boy."

She threw open a window and pointed to a statuette which occupied the place of honor among the ornaments of the room. Rowland looked at it a moment and then turned to her with an exclamation of surprise. She gave him a rapid glance, perceived that her statuette was of altogether exceptional merit, and then smiled, knowingly, as if this had long been an agreeable certainty.

"Who did it? where did you get it?" Rowland demanded.

"Oh," said Cecilia, adjusting the light, "it 's a little thing of Mr. Hudson's."

"And who the deuce is Mr. Hudson?" asked Rowland. But he was absorbed; he lost her immediate reply. The statuette, in bronze, something less than two feet high, represented a naked youth drinking from a gourd. The attitude was perfectly simple. The lad was squarely planted on his feet, with his legs a little apart; his back was slightly hollowed, his head thrown back, and both hands raised to support the rustic cup. There was a loosened fillet of wild flowers about his head, and his eyes, under their drooped lids, looked straight into the cup. On the base was scratched the Greek word $\alpha\alpha\gamma\delta\gamma\iota\gamma\epsilon\gamma\alpha$, Thirst. The figure might have been some beautiful youth of ancient fable,—Hylas or Narcissus, Paris or Endymion. Its beauty was the beauty of natural movement; nothing had been sought to be represented but the perfection of an attitude. This had been most attentively studied, and it was exquisitely rendered. Rowland demanded more light, dropped his head on this side and that, uttered vague exclamations. He said to himself, as he had said more than once in the Louvre and the Vatican, "We ugly mortals, what beautiful creatures we are!" Nothing, in a long time, had given him so much pleasure. "Hudson—Hudson," he asked again; "who is Hudson?"

"A young man of this place," said Cecilia.

"A young man? How old?"

"I suppose he is three or four and twenty."

"Of this place, you say—of Northampton, Massachusetts?"

"He lives here, but he comes from Virginia."

"Is he a sculptor by profession?"

"He 's a law-student."

Rowland burst out laughing. "He has found something in Blackstone that I never did. He makes statues then simply for his pleasure?"

Cecilia, with a smile, gave a little toss of her head. "For mine!"

"I congratulate you," said Rowland. "I wonder whether he could be induced to do anything for me?"

"This was a matter of friendship. I saw the figure when he had modeled it in clay, and of course greatly admired it. He said nothing at the time, but a week ago, on my birthday, he arrived in a buggy, with this. He had had it cast at the foundry at Chicopee; I believe it 's a beautiful piece of bronze. He begged me to accept."

"Upon my word," said Mallet, "he does things handsomely!" And he fell to admiring the statue again.

"So then," said Cecilia, "it 's very remarkable?"

"Why, my dear cousin," Rowland answered, "Mr. Hudson, of Virginia, is an extraordinary—" Then suddenly stopping: "Is he a great friend of yours?" he asked.

"A great friend?" and Cecilia hesitated. "I regard him as a child!"

"Well," said Rowland, "he 's a very clever child. Tell me something about him: I should like to see him."

Cecilia was obliged to go to her daughter's music-lesson, but she assured Rowland that she would arrange for him a meeting with the young sculptor. He was a frequent visitor, and as he had not called for some days it was likely he would come that evening. Rowland, left alone, examined the statuette at his leisure, and returned more than once during the day to take another look at it. He discovered its weak points, but it wore well. It had the stamp of genius. Rowland envied the happy youth who, in a New England village, without aid or encouragement, without models or resources, had found it so easy to produce a lovely work.

In the evening, as he was smoking his cigar on the veranda, a light, quick step pressed the gravel of the garden path, and in a moment a young man made his bow to Cecilia. It was rather a nod than a bow, and indicated either that he was an old friend, or that he was scantily versed in the usual social forms. Cecilia, who was sitting near the steps, pointed to a neighboring chair, but the young man seated himself abruptly on the floor at her feet, began to fan himself vigorously with his hat, and broke out into a lively objurgation upon the hot weather. "I 'm dripping wet!" he said, without ceremony.

"You walk too fast," said Cecilia. "You do everything too fast."

"I know it, I know it!" he cried, passing his hand through his abundant dark hair and making it stand out in a picturesque shock. "I can't be slow if I try. There 's something inside of me that drives me. A restless fiend!"

Cecilia gave a light laugh, and Rowland leaned forward in his hammock. He had placed himself in it at Bessie's request, and was playing that he was her baby and that she was rocking him to sleep. She sat beside him, swinging the hammock to and fro, and singing a lullaby.

When he raised himself she pushed him back and said that the baby must finish its nap. "But I want to see the gentleman with the fiend inside of him," said Rowland.

"What is a fiend?" Bessie demanded. "It 's only Mr. Hudson."

"Very well, I want to see him."

"Oh, never mind him!" said Bessie, with the brevity of contempt.

"You speak as if you did n't like him."

"I don't!" Bessie affirmed, and put Rowland to bed again.

The hammock was swung at the end of the veranda, in the thickest shade of the vines, and this fragment of dialogue had passed unnoticed. Rowland submitted a while longer to be cradled, and contented himself with listening to Mr. Hudson's voice. It was a soft and not altogether masculine organ, and was pitched on this occasion in a somewhat plaintive and pettish key. The young man's mood seemed fretful; he complained of the heat, of the dust, of a shoe that hurt him, of having gone on an errand a mile to the other side of the town and found the person he was in search of had left Northampton an hour before.

"Won't you have a cup of tea?" Cecilia asked. "Perhaps that will restore your equanimity."

"Aye, by keeping me awake all night!" said Hudson. "At the best, it 's hard enough to go down to the office. With my nerves set on edge by a sleepless night, I should perforce stay at home and be brutal to my poor mother."

"Your mother is well, I hope."

"Oh, she 's as usual."

"And Miss Garland?"

"She 's as usual, too. Every one, everything, is as usual. Nothing ever happens, in this benighted town."

"I beg your pardon; things do happen, sometimes," said Cecilia. "Here is a dear cousin of mine arrived on purpose to congratulate you on your statuette." And she called to Rowland to come and be introduced to Mr. Hudson. The young man sprang up with alacrity, and Rowland, coming forward to shake hands, had a good look at him in the light projected from the parlor window. Something seemed to shine out of Hudson's face as a warning against a "compliment" of the idle, unpondered sort.

"Your statuette seems to me very good," Rowland said gravely. "It has given me extreme pleasure."

"And my cousin knows what is good," said Cecilia. "He 's a connoisseur."

Hudson smiled and stared. "A connoisseur?" he cried, laughing. "He 's the first I 've ever seen! Let me see what they look like;" and he drew Rowland nearer to the light. "Have they all such good heads as that? I should like to model yours."

"Pray do," said Cecilia. "It will keep him a while. He is running off to Europe."

"Ah, to Europe!" Hudson exclaimed with a melancholy cadence, as they sat down. "Happy man!"

But the note seemed to Rowland to be struck rather at random, for he perceived no echo of it in the boyish garrulity of his later talk. Hudson was a tall, slender young fellow, with a singularly mobile and intelligent face. Rowland was struck at first only with its responsive vivacity, but in a short time he perceived it was remarkably handsome. The features were admirably chiseled and finished, and a frank smile played over them as gracefully as a breeze among flowers. The fault of the young man's whole structure was an excessive want of breadth. The forehead, though it was high and rounded, was narrow; the jaw and the shoulders were narrow; and the result was an air of insufficient physical substance. But Mallet afterwards learned that this fair, slim youth could draw indefinitely upon a mysterious fund of nervous force, which outlasted and outwared the endurance of many a sturdier temperament. And certainly there was life enough in his eye to furnish an immortality! It was a generous dark gray eye, in which there came and went a sort of kindling glow, which would have made a ruder visage striking, and which gave at times to Hudson's harmonious face an altogether extraordinary beauty. There was to Rowland's sympathetic sense a slightly pitiful disparity between the young sculptor's delicate countenance and the shabby gentility of his costume. He was dressed for a visit—a visit to a pretty woman. He was clad from head to foot in a white linen suit, which had never been remarkable for the felicity of its cut, and had now quite lost that crispness which garments of this complexion can as ill spare as the back-scene of a theatre the radiance of the footlights. He wore a vivid blue cravat, passed through a ring altogether too splendid to be valuable; he pulled and twisted, as he sat, a pair of yellow kid gloves; he emphasized his conversation with great dashes and flourishes of a light, silver-tipped walking-stick, and he kept constantly taking off and putting on one of those slouched sombreros which are the traditional property of the Virginian or Carolinian of romance. When this was on, he was very picturesque, in spite of his mock elegance; and when it was off, and he sat nursing it and turning it about and not knowing what to do with it, he could hardly be said to be awkward. He evidently had a natural relish for brilliant accessories, and appropriated what came to his hand. This was visible in his talk, which abounded in the florid and sonorous. He liked words with color in them.

Rowland, who was but a moderate talker, sat by in silence, while Cecilia, who had told him that she desired his opinion upon her friend, used a good deal of characteristic finesse in leading the young man to expose himself. She perfectly succeeded, and Hudson rattled away for an hour with a volubility in which boyish unconsciousness and manly shrewdness were singularly combined. He gave his opinion on twenty topics, he opened up an endless budget of local gossip, he described his

repulsive routine at the office of Messrs. Striker and Spooner, counselors at law, and he gave with great felicity and gusto an account of the annual boat-race between Harvard and Yale, which he had lately witnessed at Worcester. He had looked at the straining oarsmen and the swaying crowd with the eye of the sculptor. Rowland was a good deal amused and not a little interested. Whenever Hudson uttered some peculiarly striking piece of youthful grandiloquence, Cecilia broke into a long, light, familiar laugh.

"What are you laughing at?" the young man then demanded. "Have I said anything so ridiculous?"

"Go on, go on," Cecilia replied. "You are too delicious! Show Mr. Mallet how Mr. Striker read the Declaration of Independence."

Hudson, like most men with a turn for the plastic arts, was an excellent mimic, and he represented with a great deal of humor the accent and attitude of a pompous country lawyer sustaining the burden of this customary episode of our national festival. The sonorous twang, the see-saw gestures, the odd pronunciation, were vividly depicted. But Cecilia's manner, and the young man's quick response, ruffled a little poor Rowland's paternal conscience. He wondered whether his cousin was not sacrificing the faculty of reverence in her clever protegee to her need for amusement. Hudson made no serious rejoinder to Rowland's compliment on his statuette until he rose to go. Rowland wondered whether he had forgotten it, and supposed that the oversight was a sign of the natural self-sufficiency of genius. But Hudson stood a moment before he said good night, twirled his sombrero, and hesitated for the first time. He gave Rowland a clear, penetrating glance, and then, with a wonderfully frank, appealing smile: "You really meant," he asked, "what you said a while ago about that thing of mine? It is good—essentially good?"

"I really meant it," said Rowland, laying a kindly hand on his shoulder. "It is very good indeed. It is, as you say, essentially good. That is the beauty of it."

Hudson's eyes glowed and expanded; he looked at Rowland for some time in silence. "I have a notion you really know," he said at last. "But if you don't, it does n't much matter."

"My cousin asked me to-day," said Cecilia, "whether I supposed you knew yourself how good it is."

Hudson stared, blushing a little. "Perhaps not!" he cried.

"Very likely," said Mallet. "I read in a book the other day that great talent in action—in fact the book said genius—is a kind of somnambulism. The artist performs great feats, in a dream. We must not wake him up, lest he should lose his balance."

"Oh, when he 's back in bed again!" Hudson answered with a laugh. "Yes, call it a dream. It was a very happy one!"

"Tell me this," said Rowland. "Did you mean anything by your young Water-drinker? Does he represent an idea? Is he a symbol?"

Hudson raised his eyebrows and gently scratched his head. "Why, he 's youth, you know; he 's innocence, he 's health, he 's strength, he 's curiosity. Yes, he 's a good many things."

"And is the cup also a symbol?"

"The cup is knowledge, pleasure, experience. Anything of that kind!"

"Well, he 's guzzling in earnest," said Rowland.

Hudson gave a vigorous nod. "Aye, poor fellow, he 's thirsty!" And on this he cried good night, and bounded down the garden path.

"Well, what do you make of him?" asked Cecilia, returning a short time afterwards from a visit of investigation as to the sufficiency of Bessie's bedclothes.

"I confess I like him," said Rowland. "He 's very immature,—but there 's stuff in him."

"He 's a strange being," said Cecilia, musingly.

"Who are his people? what has been his education?" Rowland asked.

"He has had no education, beyond what he has picked up, with little trouble, for himself. His mother is a widow, of a Massachusetts country family, a little timid, tremulous woman, who is always on pins and needles about her son. She had some property herself, and married a Virginian gentleman of good estates. He turned out, I believe, a very licentious personage, and made great havoc in their fortune. Everything, or almost everything, melted away, including Mr. Hudson himself. This is literally true, for he drank himself to death. Ten years ago his wife was left a widow, with scanty means and a couple of growing boys. She paid her husband's debts as best she could, and came to establish herself here, where by the death of a charitable relative she had inherited an old-fashioned ruinous house. Roderick, our friend, was her pride and joy, but Stephen, the elder, was her comfort and support. I remember him, later; he was an ugly, sturdy, practical lad, very different from his brother, and in his way, I imagine, a very fine fellow. When the war broke out he found that the New England blood ran thicker in his veins than the Virginian, and immediately obtained a commission. He fell in some Western battle and left his mother inconsolable. Roderick, however, has given her plenty to think about, and she has induced him, by some mysterious art, to abide, nominally at least, in a profession that he abhors, and for which he is about as fit, I should say, as I am to drive a locomotive. He grew up a la grace de Dieu, and was horribly spoiled. Three or four years ago he graduated at a small college in this neighborhood, where I am afraid he had given a good deal more attention to novels and billiards than to mathematics and Greek. Since then he has been reading law, at the rate of a page a day. If he is ever admitted to practice I 'm afraid my friendship won't avail to make me

give him my business. Good, bad, or indifferent, the boy is essentially an artist—an artist to his fingers' ends."

"Why, then," asked Rowland, "does n't he deliberately take up the chisel?"

"For several reasons. In the first place, I don't think he more than half suspects his talent. The flame is smouldering, but it is never fanned by the breath of criticism. He sees nothing, hears nothing, to help him to self-knowledge. He 's hopelessly discontented, but he does n't know where to look for help. Then his mother, as she one day confessed to me, has a holy horror of a profession which consists exclusively, as she supposes, in making figures of people without their clothes on. Sculpture, to her mind, is an insidious form of immorality, and for a young man of a passionate disposition she considers the law a much safer investment. Her father was a judge, she has two brothers at the bar, and her elder son had made a very promising beginning in the same line. She wishes the tradition to be perpetuated. I 'm pretty sure the law won't make Roderick's fortune, and I 'm afraid it will, in the long run, spoil his temper."

"What sort of a temper is it?"

"One to be trusted, on the whole. It is quick, but it is generous. I have known it to breathe flame and fury at ten o'clock in the evening, and soft, sweet music early on the morrow. It 's a very entertaining temper to observe. I, fortunately, can do so dispassionately, for I 'm the only person in the place he has not quarreled with."

"Has he then no society? Who is Miss Garland, whom you asked about?"

"A young girl staying with his mother, a sort of far-away cousin; a good plain girl, but not a person to delight a sculptor's eye. Roderick has a goodly share of the old Southern arrogance; he has the aristocratic temperament. He will have nothing to do with the small towns-people; he says they 're 'ignoble.' He cannot endure his mother's friends—the old ladies and the ministers and the tea-party people; they bore him to death. So he comes and lounges here and rails at everything and every one."

This graceful young scoffer reappeared a couple of evenings later, and confirmed the friendly feeling he had provoked on Rowland's part. He was in an easier mood than before, he chattered less extravagantly, and asked Rowland a number of rather naif questions about the condition of the fine arts in New York and Boston. Cecilia, when he had gone, said that this was the wholesome effect of Rowland's praise of his statuette. Roderick was acutely sensitive, and Rowland's tranquil commendation had stilled his restless pulses. He was ruminating the full-flavored verdict of culture. Rowland felt an irresistible kindness for him, a mingled sense of his personal charm and his artistic capacity. He had an indefinable attraction—the something divine of unspotted, exuberant,

confident youth. The next day was Sunday, and Rowland proposed that they should take a long walk and that Roderick should show him the country. The young man assented gleefully, and in the morning, as Rowland at the garden gate was giving his hostess Godspeed on her way to church, he came striding along the grassy margin of the road and out-whistling the music of the church bells. It was one of those lovely days of August when you feel the complete exuberance of summer just warned and checked by autumn. "Remember the day, and take care you rob no orchards," said Cecilia, as they separated.

The young men walked away at a steady pace, over hill and dale, through woods and fields, and at last found themselves on a grassy elevation studded with mossy rocks and red cedars. Just beneath them, in a great shining curve, flowed the goodly Connecticut. They flung themselves on the grass and tossed stones into the river; they talked like old friends. Rowland lit a cigar, and Roderick refused one with a grimace of extravagant disgust. He thought them vile things; he did n't see how decent people could tolerate them. Rowland was amused, and wondered what it was that made this ill-mannered speech seem perfectly inoffensive on Roderick's lips. He belonged to the race of mortals, to be pitied or envied according as we view the matter, who are not held to a strict account for their aggressions. Looking at him as he lay stretched in the shade, Rowland vaguely likened him to some beautiful, supple, restless, bright-eyed animal, whose motions should have no deeper warrant than the tremulous delicacy of its structure, and be graceful even when they were most inconvenient. Rowland watched the shadows on Mount Holyoke, listened to the gurgle of the river, and sniffed the balsam of the pines. A gentle breeze had begun to tickle their summits, and brought the smell of the mown grass across from the elm-dotted river meadows. He sat up beside his companion and looked away at the far-spreading view. It seemed to him beautiful, and suddenly a strange feeling of prospective regret took possession of him. Something seemed to tell him that later, in a foreign land, he would remember it lovingly and penitently.

"It 's a wretched business," he said, "this practical quarrel of ours with our own country, this everlasting impatience to get out of it. Is one's only safety then in flight? This is an American day, an American landscape, an American atmosphere. It certainly has its merits, and some day when I am shivering with ague in classic Italy, I shall accuse myself of having slighted them."

Roderick kindled with a sympathetic glow, and declared that America was good enough for him, and that he had always thought it the duty of an honest citizen to stand by his own country and help it along. He had evidently thought nothing whatever about it, and was launching his doctrine on the inspiration of the moment. The doctrine expanded with the occasion, and he declared that he was above all an advocate for

American art. He did n't see why we should n't produce the greatest works in the world. We were the biggest people, and we ought to have the biggest conceptions. The biggest conceptions of course would bring forth in time the biggest performances. We had only to be true to ourselves, to pitch in and not be afraid, to fling Imitation overboard and fix our eyes upon our National Individuality. "I declare," he cried, "there 's a career for a man, and I 've twenty minds to decide, on the spot, to embrace it—to be the consummate, typical, original, national American artist! It 's inspiring!"

Rowland burst out laughing and told him that he liked his practice better than his theory, and that a saner impulse than this had inspired his little Water-drinker. Roderick took no offense, and three minutes afterwards was talking volubly of some humbler theme, but half heeded by his companion, who had returned to his cogitations. At last Rowland delivered himself of the upshot of these. "How would you like," he suddenly demanded, "to go to Rome?"

Hudson stared, and, with a hungry laugh which speedily consigned our National Individuality to perdition, responded that he would like it reasonably well. "And I should like, by the same token," he added, "to go to Athens, to Constantinople, to Damascus, to the holy city of Benares, where there is a golden statue of Brahma twenty feet tall."

"Nay," said Rowland soberly, "if you were to go to Rome, you should settle down and work. Athens might help you, but for the present I should n't recommend Benares."

"It will be time to arrange details when I pack my trunk," said Hudson.

"If you mean to turn sculptor, the sooner you pack your trunk the better."

"Oh, but I 'm a practical man! What is the smallest sum per annum, on which one can keep alive the sacred fire in Rome?"

"What is the largest sum at your disposal?"

Roderick stroked his light moustache, gave it a twist, and then announced with mock pomposity: "Three hundred dollars!"

"The money question could be arranged," said Rowland. "There are ways of raising money."

"I should like to know a few! I never yet discovered one."

"One consists," said Rowland, "in having a friend with a good deal more than he wants, and not being too proud to accept a part of it."

Roderick stared a moment and his face flushed. "Do you mean—do you mean?"... he stammered. He was greatly excited.

Rowland got up, blushing a little, and Roderick sprang to his feet. "In three words, if you are to be a sculptor, you ought to go to Rome and study the antique. To go to Rome you need money. I 'm fond of fine statues, but unfortunately I can't make them myself. I have to order them. I order a dozen from you, to be executed at your convenience. To help you, I pay you in advance."

Roderick pushed off his hat and wiped his forehead, still gazing at his companion. "You believe in me!" he cried at last.

"Allow me to explain," said Rowland. "I believe in you, if you are prepared to work and to wait, and to struggle, and to exercise a great many virtues. And then, I 'm afraid to say it, lest I should disturb you more than I should help you. You must decide for yourself. I simply offer you an opportunity."

Hudson stood for some time, profoundly meditative. "You have not seen my other things," he said suddenly. "Come and look at them."

"Now?"

"Yes, we 'll walk home. We 'll settle the question."

He passed his hand through Rowland's arm and they retraced their steps. They reached the town and made their way along a broad country street, dusky with the shade of magnificent elms. Rowland felt his companion's arm trembling in his own. They stopped at a large white house, flanked with melancholy hemlocks, and passed through a little front garden, paved with moss-coated bricks and ornamented with parterres bordered with high box hedges. The mansion had an air of antiquated dignity, but it had seen its best days, and evidently sheltered a shrunken household. Mrs. Hudson, Rowland was sure, might be seen in the garden of a morning, in a white apron and a pair of old gloves, engaged in frugal horticulture. Roderick's studio was behind, in the basement; a large, empty room, with the paper peeling off the walls. This represented, in the fashion of fifty years ago, a series of small fantastic landscapes of a hideous pattern, and the young sculptor had presumably torn it away in great scraps, in moments of aesthetic exasperation. On a board in a corner was a heap of clay, and on the floor, against the wall, stood some dozen medallions, busts, and figures, in various stages of completion. To exhibit them Roderick had to place them one by one on the end of a long packing-box, which served as a pedestal. He did so silently, making no explanations, and looking at them himself with a strange air of quickened curiosity. Most of the things were portraits; and the three at which he looked longest were finished busts. One was a colossal head of a negro, tossed back, defiant, with distended nostrils; one was the portrait of a young man whom Rowland immediately perceived, by the resemblance, to be his deceased brother; the last represented a gentleman with a pointed nose, a long, shaved upper lip, and a tuft on the end of his chin. This was a face peculiarly unadapted to sculpture; but as a piece of modeling it was the best, and it was admirable. It reminded Rowland in its homely veracity, its artless artfulness, of the works of the early Italian Renaissance. On the pedestal was cut the name—Barnaby Striker, Esq. Rowland remembered that this was the appellation of the legal luminary from whom his companion had undertaken to borrow a reflected ray, and although in the bust there was naught flagrantly set down in malice, it

betrayed, comically to one who could relish the secret, that the features of the original had often been scanned with an irritated eye. Besides these there were several rough studies of the nude, and two or three figures of a fanciful kind. The most noticeable (and it had singular beauty) was a small modeled design for a sepulchral monument; that, evidently, of Stephen Hudson. The young soldier lay sleeping eternally, with his hand on his sword, like an old crusader in a Gothic cathedral.

Rowland made no haste to pronounce; too much depended on his judgment. "Upon my word," cried Hudson at last, "they seem to me very good."

And in truth, as Rowland looked, he saw they were good. They were youthful, awkward, and ignorant; the effort, often, was more apparent than the success. But the effort was signally powerful and intelligent; it seemed to Rowland that it needed only to let itself go to compass great things. Here and there, too, success, when grasped, had something masterly. Rowland turned to his companion, who stood with his hands in his pockets and his hair very much crumpled, looking at him askance. The light of admiration was in Rowland's eyes, and it speedily kindled a wonderful illumination on Hudson's handsome brow. Rowland said at last, gravely, "You have only to work!"

"I think I know what that means," Roderick answered. He turned away, threw himself on a rickety chair, and sat for some moments with his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands. "Work—work?" he said at last, looking up, "ah, if I could only begin!" He glanced round the room a moment and his eye encountered on the mantel-shelf the vivid physiognomy of Mr. Barnaby Striker. His smile vanished, and he stared at it with an air of concentrated enmity. "I want to begin," he cried, "and I can't make a better beginning than this! Good-by, Mr. Striker!" He strode across the room, seized a mallet that lay at hand, and before Rowland could interfere, in the interest of art if not of morals, dealt a merciless blow upon Mr. Striker's skull. The bust cracked into a dozen pieces, which toppled with a great crash upon the floor. Rowland relished neither the destruction of the image nor his companion's look in working it, but as he was about to express his displeasure the door opened and gave passage to a young girl. She came in with a rapid step and startled face, as if she had been summoned by the noise. Seeing the heap of shattered clay and the mallet in Roderick's hand, she gave a cry of horror. Her voice died away when she perceived that Rowland was a stranger, but she murmured reproachfully, "Why, Roderick, what have you done?"

Roderick gave a joyous kick to the shapeless fragments. "I 've driven the money-changers out of the temple!" he cried.

The traces retained shape enough to be recognized, and she gave a little moan of pity. She seemed not to understand the young man's allegory, but yet to feel that it pointed to some great purpose, which

must be an evil one, from being expressed in such a lawless fashion, and to perceive that Rowland was in some way accountable for it. She looked at him with a sharp, frank mistrust, and turned away through the open door. Rowland looked after her with extraordinary interest.

Chapter

2 Roderick

Early on the morrow Rowland received a visit from his new friend. Roderick was in a state of extreme exhilaration, tempered, however, by a certain amount of righteous wrath. He had had a domestic struggle, but he had remained master of the situation. He had shaken the dust of Mr. Striker's office from his feet.

"I had it out last night with my mother," he said. "I dreaded the scene, for she takes things terribly hard. She does n't scold nor storm, and she does n't argue nor insist. She sits with her eyes full of tears that never fall, and looks at me, when I displease her, as if I were a perfect monster of depravity. And the trouble is that I was born to displease her. She does n't trust me; she never has and she never will. I don't know what I have done to set her against me, but ever since I can remember I have been looked at with tears. The trouble is," he went on, giving a twist to his moustache, "I 've been too absurdly docile. I 've been sprawling all my days by the maternal fireside, and my dear mother has grown used to bullying me. I 've made myself cheap! If I 'm not in my bed by eleven o'clock, the girl is sent out to explore with a lantern. When I think of it, I fairly despise my amiability. It 's rather a hard fate, to live like a saint and to pass for a sinner! I should like for six months to lead Mrs. Hudson the life some fellows lead their mothers!"

"Allow me to believe," said Rowland, "that you would like nothing of the sort. If you have been a good boy, don't spoil it by pretending you don't like it. You have been very happy, I suspect, in spite of your virtues, and there are worse fates in the world than being loved too well. I have not had the pleasure of seeing your mother, but I would lay you a wager that that is the trouble. She is passionately fond of you, and her hopes, like all intense hopes, keep trembling into fears." Rowland, as he spoke, had an instinctive vision of how such a beautiful young fellow must be loved by his female relatives.

Roderick frowned, and with an impatient gesture, "I do her justice," he cried. "May she never do me less!" Then after a moment's hesitation, "I 'll tell you the perfect truth," he went on. "I have to fill a double place. I have to be my brother as well as myself. It 's a good deal to ask of a man, especially when he has so little talent as I for being what he is not. When we were both young together I was the curled darling. I had the silver mug and the biggest piece of pudding, and I stayed in-doors to be kissed by the ladies while he made mud-pies in the garden and was never missed, of course. Really, he was worth fifty of me! When he was brought home from Vicksburg with a piece of shell in his skull, my poor

mother began to think she had n't loved him enough. I remember, as she hung round my neck sobbing, before his coffin, she told me that I must be to her everything that he would have been. I swore in tears and in perfect good faith that I would, but naturally I have not kept my promise. I have been utterly different. I have been idle, restless, egotistical, discontented. I have done no harm, I believe, but I have done no good. My brother, if he had lived, would have made fifty thousand dollars and put gas and water into the house. My mother, brooding night and day on her bereavement, has come to fix her ideal in offices of that sort. Judged by that standard I 'm nowhere!"

Rowland was at loss how to receive this account of his friend's domestic circumstances; it was plaintive, and yet the manner seemed to him over-trenchant. "You must lose no time in making a masterpiece," he answered; "then with the proceeds you can give her gas from golden burners."

"So I have told her; but she only half believes either in masterpiece or in proceeds. She can see no good in my making statues; they seem to her a snare of the enemy. She would fain see me all my life tethered to the law, like a browsing goat to a stake. In that way I 'm in sight. 'It 's a more regular occupation!' that 's all I can get out of her. A more regular damnation! Is it a fact that artists, in general, are such wicked men? I never had the pleasure of knowing one, so I could n't confute her with an example. She had the advantage of me, because she formerly knew a portrait-painter at Richmond, who did her miniature in black lace mittens (you may see it on the parlor table), who used to drink raw brandy and beat his wife. I promised her that, whatever I might do to my wife, I would never beat my mother, and that as for brandy, raw or diluted, I detested it. She sat silently crying for an hour, during which I expended treasures of eloquence. It 's a good thing to have to reckon up one's intentions, and I assure you, as I pleaded my cause, I was most agreeably impressed with the elevated character of my own. I kissed her solemnly at last, and told her that I had said everything and that she must make the best of it. This morning she has dried her eyes, but I warrant you it is n't a cheerful house. I long to be out of it!"

"I 'm extremely sorry," said Rowland, "to have been the prime cause of so much suffering. I owe your mother some amends; will it be possible for me to see her?"

"If you 'll see her, it will smooth matters vastly; though to tell the truth she 'll need all her courage to face you, for she considers you an agent of the foul fiend. She does n't see why you should have come here and set me by the ears: you are made to ruin ingenuous youths and desolate doting mothers. I leave it to you, personally, to answer these charges. You see, what she can't forgive—what she 'll not really ever forgive—is your taking me off to Rome. Rome is an evil word, in my mother's vocabulary, to be said in a whisper, as you 'd say 'damnation.'

Northampton is in the centre of the earth and Rome far away in outlying dusk, into which it can do no Christian any good to penetrate. And there was I but yesterday a doomed habitue of that repository of every virtue, Mr. Striker's office!"

"And does Mr. Striker know of your decision?" asked Rowland.

"To a certainty! Mr. Striker, you must know, is not simply a good-natured attorney, who lets me dog's-ear his law-books. He's a particular friend and general adviser. He looks after my mother's property and kindly consents to regard me as part of it. Our opinions have always been painfully divergent, but I freely forgive him his zealous attempts to unscrew my head-piece and set it on hind part before. He never understood me, and it was useless to try to make him. We speak a different language—we 're made of a different clay. I had a fit of rage yesterday when I smashed his bust, at the thought of all the bad blood he had stirred up in me; it did me good, and it 's all over now. I don't hate him any more; I 'm rather sorry for him. See how you 've improved me! I must have seemed to him wilfully, wickedly stupid, and I 'm sure he only tolerated me on account of his great regard for my mother. This morning I grasped the bull by the horns. I took an armful of law-books that have been gathering the dust in my room for the last year and a half, and presented myself at the office. 'Allow me to put these back in their places,' I said. 'I shall never have need for them more—never more, never more, never more!' 'So you 've learned everything they contain?' asked Striker, leering over his spectacles. 'Better late than never.' 'I 've learned nothing that you can teach me,' I cried. 'But I shall tax your patience no longer. I 'm going to be a sculptor. I 'm going to Rome. I won't bid you good-by just yet; I shall see you again. But I bid good-by here, with rapture, to these four detested walls—to this living tomb! I did n't know till now how I hated it! My compliments to Mr. Spooner, and my thanks for all you have not made of me!'"

"I 'm glad to know you are to see Mr. Striker again," Rowland answered, correcting a primary inclination to smile. "You certainly owe him a respectful farewell, even if he has not understood you. I confess you rather puzzle me. There is another person," he presently added, "whose opinion as to your new career I should like to know. What does Miss Garland think?"

Hudson looked at him keenly, with a slight blush. Then, with a conscious smile, "What makes you suppose she thinks anything?" he asked.

"Because, though I saw her but for a moment yesterday, she struck me as a very intelligent person, and I am sure she has opinions."

The smile on Roderick's mobile face passed rapidly into a frown. "Oh, she thinks what I think!" he answered.

Before the two young men separated Rowland attempted to give as harmonious a shape as possible to his companion's scheme. "I have

launched you, as I may say," he said, "and I feel as if I ought to see you into port. I am older than you and know the world better, and it seems well that we should voyage a while together. It 's on my conscience that I ought to take you to Rome, walk you through the Vatican, and then lock you up with a heap of clay. I sail on the fifth of September; can you make your preparations to start with me?"

Roderick assented to all this with an air of candid confidence in his friend's wisdom that outshone the virtue of pledges. "I have no preparations to make," he said with a smile, raising his arms and letting them fall, as if to indicate his unencumbered condition. "What I am to take with me I carry here!" and he tapped his forehead.

"Happy man!" murmured Rowland with a sigh, thinking of the light stowage, in his own organism, in the region indicated by Roderick, and of the heavy one in deposit at his banker's, of bags and boxes.

When his companion had left him he went in search of Cecilia. She was sitting at work at a shady window, and welcomed him to a low chintz-covered chair. He sat some time, thoughtfully snipping tape with her scissors; he expected criticism and he was preparing a rejoinder. At last he told her of Roderick's decision and of his own influence in it. Cecilia, besides an extreme surprise, exhibited a certain fine displeasure at his not having asked her advice.

"What would you have said, if I had?" he demanded.

"I would have said in the first place, 'Oh for pity's sake don't carry off the person in all Northampton who amuses me most!' I would have said in the second place, 'Nonsense! the boy is doing very well. Let well alone!'"

"That in the first five minutes. What would you have said later?"

"That for a man who is generally averse to meddling, you were suddenly rather officious."

Rowland's countenance fell. He frowned in silence. Cecilia looked at him askance; gradually the spark of irritation faded from her eye.

"Excuse my sharpness," she resumed at last. "But I am literally in despair at losing Roderick Hudson. His visits in the evening, for the past year, have kept me alive. They have given a silver tip to leaden days. I don't say he is of a more useful metal than other people, but he is of a different one. Of course, however, that I shall miss him sadly is not a reason for his not going to seek his fortune. Men must work and women must weep!"

"Decidedly not!" said Rowland, with a good deal of emphasis. He had suspected from the first hour of his stay that Cecilia had treated herself to a private social luxury; he had then discovered that she found it in Hudson's lounging visits and boyish chatter, and he had felt himself wondering at last whether, judiciously viewed, her gain in the matter was not the young man's loss. It was evident that Cecilia was not judicious, and that her good sense, habitually rigid under the demands