

really hated him at that moment for holding me in that glance, which seemed to deprive me of free will. I struggled to recover the passage of my eyes, as it were, but could not. I stared till I cursed my boldness, and then my boldness seemed to curse me. Not till Mr Harrison gave me leave consciously to "go" did I go. Pray what is this?

Did I describe Mr Harrison, of Newtown Town, the States? I said he had black eyes; but did I tell of his beard, of his height, of his intense calmness, which has the effect of arousing every nerve and exciting you to the highest pitch of intellectual effort, and then reducing you to a state of abject humiliation, by feeling that it was he who drew you forth, and he again who, by a sudden change of manner, left you stranded on the dry, arid deserts of no will, no thought, except what he evoked?

His face is inscrutable: it is folded and refolded in a scheme of thought to which only adepts, I suppose, could have access. His face is the instrument of his will. He is, perhaps, old; I say perhaps, because he will never show those indisputable signs of age which are the lot of those who cannot manage either themselves or their lives. He has arranged a great scheme, and he sits at ease in the middle of it. You don't dare dispute his goodness, because his arguments command you; you can't walk away from him; you might run, and even then your head would be over your shoulder all the time.

I wanted to say, "If there is a fortune awaiting me, I shall dance about a bit," but I didn't dare. I only looked at Mr Harrison like a simpleton, and smiled the smile of enforced acceptance of the command this man had laid upon me to yield up my fortune.

Miss Clutterbeck had that paradoxical dog under her arm. I say paradoxical because you take its whiteness on hearsay—it's as black as my Tyrolean hat! She says it's white. Mr Harrison has no power over her. She says he has more wives alive than the Bishop of Bengaline has dead. And she talks about polygamy in a way that makes my hair stand on end. I have always noticed that ladies of the Clutterbeck type make such alarming statistics. Miss Clutterbeck has set about protecting Conway Hope. She says he needs protection, all the time the disgusting old thing is making up to him herself, and, of course, he doesn't see through it. Why should he? Only very conceited men think they are attractive. I saw her march off down the cloisters with Conway Hope the other day, just like a lucifer-match in petticoats. I don't know why this simile occurred, but it did. I watched her, and then I felt myself laugh with that silent soul-laughter which is not pleasant; it's that strange laughter which is only known to adepts in knowledge of life. Well, he won't marry her, neither will he marry me—no, not even if I'm a great heiress! He will marry his "vision," whatever it is, and I—Conway Hope proposed music should be used to charm the hidden treasure to the surface, for Megiddo left no certain record. He merely said, "Beneath the lime-trees." There is an organ, among other things, in the parlour, and Canon Hope sat him down and played.

The strains floated out on the perfect stillness of the night and we five gathered about the trees in the quaint old garden, which leads on to the water-meadows. The prophet Harrison had a spade, and he carefully drew a circle round each of the seven trees; then he raised his head, and the slanting moonbeams smote downwards on his broad brow, and one impish ray got among the rope-like hairs of his long beard and played for several seconds therein.

Mrs Cudlip-Gaye stood with her back against one of the trees, and her arms high above her head, as if invoking the boughs to help us. Just above her the northern Bruin blazed downwards. I forgot about my fortune in my desire to paint her by brush or word. That dreadful Pietra absolutely got out her cigarette-case and put her cane under her arm. Miss Clutterbeck kissed the poodle, and said, "Its late, darling, for us to be out. He shall have an extra hour's nap to-morrow, he shall, the angel!" I thought I heard Mr Harrison mutter something awful under his beard. If he did, it shows he dislikes her, because he has no power over her. If I fondled ten cats, he would view my mis-placed affection with a glance of compassion. Conway Hope had just commenced a march, the wildest, saddest, maddest, sweetest thing I have ever heard. You beat the time with your heart to the measure, and in some odd way you apprehend that the music is a sermon which creates or rather develops all your latent forces. Between the music of Canon Hope and the spade of Prophet Harrison I felt strung to a pitch of *felt living* hitherto unknown. The march had just burst into a series of chords, abrupt, almost harsh, highly effective, when Prophet Harrison struck something with his spade.

Mrs Cudlip-Gaye's arms fell from their dramatic height, Pietra flung away her cigarette, Miss Clutterbeck threw the poodle down in an access of forgetfulness and then screamed like a maniac, I held my hands over my heart to still its wild beating, and even Conway Hope left the organ and absolutely jumped out of the window by the low window-sill. Mr Harrison cleared away the earth, and lo! a big box came to view, tin covered, more like those over-land route boxes than anything else. It was directed to Lady Angela Dewsberry, daughter of the Earl of May.

"That's a box," said Pietra, who, when she is gay, is always flippant. "We have heard of the Earl of March, but there the titled seasons stop, don't they, Mr Harrison?"

Mr Harrison made no reply? he was dragging the box upward with all his might, assisted by Canon Hope, and, of course, Mrs Cudlip-Gaye, who declares she has a passion for moving furniture and carrying loads. "Must have had a railway porter in the family somewhere," is one of her many theories; "also a housemaid, and a peer, and a country squire. Out of this family budget," she says, she traces all her characteristics.

We followed the box to the parlour, and then there came a pause. Prophet Harrison went to the "burness" and made the gas flare. Then he came back to the box and bowed to Canon Hope.

"Are you prepared to be the chief witness in the opening of this box?" he said oracularly; "also to take notes of every document, and attest that everything is as we find it?"

Canon Hope coloured to the roots of his hair (now *why?*). He glanced confusedly at Mr Harrison and still more confusedly at me; then he said with a little bow at me:

"Gladly."

"Lady Angela, the key is extricated; please unlock your box."

"Don't call me Lady Angela," I said. "I shall always be nothing and nobody. I have no titles."

"It is all so obvious," said Canon Hope; and then he looked at me again, as if I were an entire congregation. Love is personal, I'm told; now if that's the way he gives a compliment, the compliment, like an entailed estate, is as much the next person's as mine.

The lid flew back and disclosed the entire apparel of a little girl. There was a large dimity hat, profusely trimmed with some very rare lace. There were a quaint little rose-coloured silk dress and mantle, a small pair of embroidered boots, and some very fine under-linen. The initials A.D., surmounted by a coronet, were firmly embroidered on each little garment. A faded letter lay on the rose-coloured little frock. Strangely moved, I took it, and then that impulse to cover emotion which is in us all beset me, and I placed it on one side to be read afterwards; not for worlds just then could I have opened that letter. The rest of the box was a cram of documents.

Yes, Megiddo had been rich, passing rich, for a man in his position. His investments were quite magnificent, and all was bequeathed to me.

Prophet Harrison read out list upon list of stocks and shares, property in warehouses and property in land.

His will was quite a curious study. It took the form of a love-letter, for Megiddo, with a pathetic stupidity unworthy of his age, constantly affirmed that he had dared to love me, but that with sound, common sense I had deprecated his attentions.

This is Megiddo's will,

"I, Bartimeus Megiddo, born, by the will of Jehova, just outside the sacred city of Jerusalem, do, on this June 1st, in this year of grace 189—, make my will in favour of Angela Dewsberry, the, as I believe her to be, daughter, born in lawful wedlock, of the Earl of May.

"Angela came to my dark dwelling as the gracious flowers of spring, and she has ever been to me as fountains of water and as rain after drought, for my soul has known long years of drought. I have been, I do now declare it, a wicked old man, full of the lust of possession. My curs' son Jabin has done but one good action, and that was unintentional: he brought Angela to me.

"Angela fell into his possession as a sparrow to the hawk. He stole her at the gates of her dwelling. It seems the brute said unto her: 'My pretty one, will you come with me?' and the foolish child placed her hand in his, and went. She served him well while he travelled about with his company, and when he was tired of his show he left her with me. 'Tis all simple enough.

"Now to my will. I bequeath to Angela my two streets in Jerusalem. The greatest financier of the day, who belongs to my people, has offered me a fabulous sum for them. Hold them. Jerusalem has to be rebuilt, mark that.

"I bequeath my warehouse of works of art in Grip street, Westminster, to Angela; also the five streets branching out of Grip street, and stretching out to the mansions of the nobility like the hands of the masses to-day. Also that part of New Cambridge street which the County Council are now busy haggling with me for, to make recreation-grounds out of, and a people's museum. Also my five lodging-houses in Oxford, near New College. Also my shares in the Nations' Union Hotel, now paying 100 per cent. Also my bazaar in Stamboul, and my store in Constantinople. Also my shares in the whale-fisheries off New Foundland, and my mine in California, now yielding as much gold as we can carry. Also my gratitude for kindly offices graciously done, also the humble tribute of an old Jew's respectful love.

(Signed)

"BARTIMEUS MEGIDDO.

"P.S.—The frock and letter found in this box were taken from Angela, when a child, by Jabin; the letter, he says, was in her hand when he stole her, and must, he thought, have been picked up by her unknown to her mother."

After the reading of the will the ladies kissed me and said good-night. Canon Hope grasped my hand apostolically, and Mr Harrison hypnotically.