

SELECTED STORIES OF KATHLEEN MANSTFIELD

英汉对照 ● 英美文学精品



曼

美丽和忧郁的守护者  
斯菲尔德短篇小说选

杨向荣 译

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### 曼斯菲尔德短篇小说选

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# 美丽和忧郁的守护者

## 曼斯菲尔德

英国女作家凯瑟琳·曼斯菲尔德(Katherine Mansfield,1888—1923)出生于新西兰惠灵顿。父亲曾担任新西兰银行主要负责人。1903年,父亲迁至英国伦敦,曼斯菲尔德开始到皇后学院读书。在校期间读了大量奥斯卡·王尔德等人的著作并在校刊上发表短篇小说。1906年,又随父母回到惠灵顿。1908年她又离开惠灵顿赴伦敦,此后再未回去。1909年她与乔治·波顿结婚,很快又分手。其间她又去德国一段时间。回伦敦后她结识了未来的编辑和批评家约翰·迈德顿·马利,于1918年结婚。她死后,马利编辑了她的短篇小说、书信。1915年,她的兄弟在法国被害,加上本人健康恶化,对她的小说创作影响很大。在伦敦期间,她结识了许多著名作家,包括伍尔夫、罗素等人。在她人生后期,她得知患了不治之症后曾在欧洲许多国家旅游。

曼斯菲尔德的小说主题往往不难理解。1918年,她曾给自己定下理想,要表现这个世界最微妙和宁静之美。在她的小说中反复出现爱的渴望、复杂和误解以及孤独,尤其是女性的孤独感。她还表现了现代生活,以及大自然的美丽,尤其喜爱描写植物和大海。她的小说主题虽然单纯,然而叙述的调子和风格却复杂多变。她经常使用对话,似乎很少直接自己出来讲什么。读者往往获得的是一个混合的视角。她经常使用“散点”的手法来组织和推动情节的发展,其间不一定有严格的逻辑顺承关系。曼斯菲尔德认为这才是表现真实最诚实的手段。

她的小说很像契诃夫的作品,经常出现一些出乎意料的转折和时空变化。同时她的文字也力求简化,力争把可有可无的字句删去。她使用了不少现代派表现手法,但用得自然。曼斯菲尔德擅长表现

男女之间的复杂微妙关系以及令人意想不到的激情发展方向。在《心理学》一篇中，她选择了两位艺术家情感吸引的细节。由于双方过于自我，在两人感情本应该达到升华境界的时刻却错失良机，表现那种意想不到的心理摩擦。曼斯菲尔德的小说往往还处理更为复杂和模糊的性以及心理关系。在《幸福》中，女主角柏莎对她的婚姻、家庭、孩子、艺术家朋友有种孩子气的幸福感，但又觉得自己对客人中的一位女友感兴趣。柏莎试图在多种神秘的情爱中寻找来自女友的暗示。这又使读者感到意外和震惊。柏莎继而又把自己的这种感情转移到丈夫身上，第一次对丈夫有了欲望。可是当她发现了女友与丈夫的暧昧行为后，也意味着她的生活破碎了，幸福将不复存在，代之以同床异梦的痛苦。曼斯菲尔德有许多作品表现了女性的孤独问题，往往在曼斯菲尔德式的神秘瞬间，这些女人丧失了勇气，强烈的幻灭感油然而生。

在《已故上校的女儿们》中，读者一时很难轻易进入两位老处女的内心世界。小说一开始似乎还是在写一个男性为主的世界，姐妹俩走不出已死父亲的影响和控制。在情节逐渐展开过程中，慢慢揭示出两姐妹的个性，两人始终在犹豫状态中生活，连辞掉一个女佣的决定都很难做出。她们不得不采取某种行动时，又在最后失去了商量如何采取行动的交流机会。看来她们的生活永远不会有结果。

《游园会》基于一个真实的故事。在某种意义上是表示对阶级界限的不满。主角劳拉显然有曼斯菲尔德的影子。读者可以从看出在对待穷人的态度上，上下两代人之间的冲突。而故事很自然地往下推进时，“阶级界限”的主题逐渐退而变成一个女孩对死亡的直觉思考。这种很自然的转换在曼斯菲尔德的小说中经常见到。她的机智也在这些细节上得到充分体现。

作为一个作家，曼斯菲尔德的重要性主要在于使用一些现代派手法，打破了英国维多利亚时代客厅小说的沉闷气氛。在她最好的作品中，她始终想剥去生活丑陋的外表，揭示隐藏在深处的美。

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#### **幸福**

一个少妇忽然心中涌动出一股莫名其妙的幸福感。晚上回到家里，她在这种幸福心境中布置房间、准备饭菜宴请很要好的几位朋友。席间，朋友们谈得很愉快，不时地暗示这位少妇对性的冷淡。而在这种极度愉快的心境中她好像又有了某种冲动，她想好了要好好地爱自己的丈夫。就在晚宴结束，大家分手四散之际，丈夫却在一间屋里与她的女友卿卿我我。目睹完这一幕，幸福感还会持续下去吗？作者好像要说生活就是由这种欢乐与忧伤、单调与意外，此起彼伏的微妙过程构成的。

### **The Wind Blows** 26

#### **起风了**

写一个小姑娘上音乐课之前和之后在风中的经历。突如其来的大风暗示着生活的可怕和生命的无常。作者写到了温暖的音乐教室，优美轻柔的钢琴乐与外面的狂风既相隔绝，又形成鲜明对比。小姑娘心中对音乐老师产生一股说不清的感觉。故事是这样结束的：成年后的女孩与她的哥哥在离去的船上回忆起当年风中的那一幕。

### **Psychology** 36

#### **心理学**

男作家与女戏剧家重逢后都极为兴奋，可是在交谈过程中老出现沉默。于是一种说不清的隔阂在两人之间出现。一场微妙、不见动作的心理冲突开始了。女戏剧家觉得自己被深深伤害，男作家也另有约会走了。在孤独寂静中传来敲门声，一个神经质的女人站在门

口。在这样一种心境下，女戏剧家对这个门口的女人产生了一种从未有过的怜悯，她仿佛看到了某种虚无缥缈的暗示，最后回到屋里满怀幸福地给作家朋友写信。

## **Mr Reginald Peacock's Day**

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### **雷金纳德·皮库克先生的一天**

著名歌唱家在舞台上给人们带来精神上的愉快和超越，身边也不乏爱慕者和美丽的女学生。自视为天才的他陶醉在自我构织的虚幻中，视妻子为整天柴米油盐的俗人，苦于无法跟妻子进行精神上的交流。精神与现实发生严重背离，歌唱家在这种分裂中变得神经质起来。

## **Feuille D'album**

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### **画页**

这是一个看来无望，后来却终成眷属的爱情故事。画家爱上了对面楼上像影子一般出现在阳台上的女孩。女孩非常瘦削，但却很美。画家魂牵梦萦，却无缘近身。最后他发现女孩每星期三晚上出去买东西，这才有了表白机会。这篇故事构思巧妙，写女孩一尘不染之美以及跟踪过程都很能引起读者共鸣。

## **The Little Governess**

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### **家庭女教师**

这篇小说讲述了一个英国家庭女教师前往德国慕尼黑途中的曲折经历。这位小女孩独自先乘轮船然后又坐火车，其心情始终处于对外界的高度警戒和恐惧状态之中。就是在这种心境下，一位老人无端地跟她坐在女士专用包间里，而隔壁有一群迹近阿飞的青年。因为有老人在身边，小女孩心里有了安全感。这位老人巧言善诱，轻而易举地把女孩诓骗到家里要行非礼。女孩好不容易才逃了出来，但这一事件在女孩心中造成的阴影，将终生难以抹去。作者似乎要借这个青春历险故事透露出人心叵测和对这个世界的绝望，希望人们对道貌岸然和假慈悲保持应有的警惕。……

## Revelations

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### 意想不到的事

每到早晨一段时间就要忍受神经紧张折磨的一位年轻女人，在狂风中更显孤独和痛苦。她觉得周围没有一个人理解自己，百无聊赖中她去自己熟悉的理发店做头发，她很喜欢那里。而这次却有些异常，一切都冷冰冰的。年轻的乔治认真负责地给她做完头发后说自己的女儿今天早上死了，他能做头发全因她是个老顾客。她哭着跑出去，坐上车，路过花店，想给死去的小女孩买下全部洁白的花。可是她让停车时司机却没听见，就这样错过了机会。

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### 逃跑

年轻夫妇去旅行，由于丈夫的拖拉而中途误了火车。女人一路埋怨不断。后来女人心爱的阳伞掉在路上，她乘机摆脱一会儿丈夫去捡伞。这时丈夫在车上出现幻觉，心情极为沉静，达到忘我境界。丈夫似乎从此顿悟，在下一程火车上望着黑夜沉思，而女人也觉得自己的丈夫很好。不少细节既奇妙又写实，往往其中一方都在某一瞬间顿悟而进入新的情感世界。

## The Garden Party

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### 游园会

一个上流社会人家的几个小女儿，正忙着准备下午举办的一场别开生面的花园舞会。但是一个马车夫驾车时不幸摔死的消息传来，小姑娘劳拉的心情一下子糟透了，她请求妈妈不要再办这场聚会，可是大家对劳拉的提议反应很冷漠。聚会结束后，爸爸委婉地提出指责，妈妈只好让劳拉把剩下的一些食物装满一篮给那个不幸的人家送去。劳拉害怕地穿过贫民区，来到死者家里。她看见死者睡得那么宁静，刹那间好像顿悟到某种死亡之美。小说里既有小孩子对可恶的阶级界限的厌恶和抗议，最后又出奇不意地把笔锋转到对死亡问题的思索上来。



## **The Daughters of the Late Colonel**

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### **已故上校的女儿们**

退休上校死了，留下两个足不出户、完全在象牙塔中生活的女儿。虽然她俩已是成人，然而思想和行为仍然带着孩子气和怪僻。作者笔下不少女人都是这样。通篇小说充满了神秘、恐惧和两位善良的女人神经质性格所带来的特有气氛中。虽然没有大起大落曲折的情节，但复杂而略带病态的心理描述已经让人对主人公心生同情。

## **The Voyage**

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### **海上旅行**

一位小女孩跟着祖母回家，经过了一夜的海上航行。上船前的紧张不安，上船后父亲与祖母告别的伤心场面，舱里的灯光、气味、摇晃，这一切都很细腻地展现出来。虽然没有具体写什么悲伤的事件，然而其中总透着一种忧郁。作者借乘务员之口，一笔带过地说出小女孩的母亲刚刚死去。在这种平静的叙述中，总觉得有什么伤感没说出来，而且令人觉得黑暗和不可知的地方藏着危险。

## **Her First Ball**

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### **初涉舞会**

乡下女孩丽拉第一次参加舞会，那种紧张和新奇自然不用提。她本来心情挺好，可是跟一个胖子跳舞时，这个胖子向她灌输了一番人生无常的观念，她觉得这样很冷酷。就在她感到很难受的时候，一个声音迷人的青年来请她跳舞，她才乐而忘忧。故事隐隐透出人生苦短，浮华如烟的悲观情绪。

## **An Ideal Family**

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### **理想家庭**

大家都说尼维先生家是个理想家庭，但他也有本难念的经。儿子是个花花公子，毫不吝惜父亲辛苦经营的家产。最要命的是家庭成员之间严重的隔阂。他老有种被遗忘的感觉，被春天遗忘，被欢乐的女儿们遗忘，被妻子遗忘。作者似乎对所谓的理想家庭提出质疑。

美丽和忧郁的守护者

# 曼斯菲尔德短篇小说选

SELECTED STORIES OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD

## Bliss

Although Bertha Young was thirty she still had moments like this when she wanted to run instead of walk, to take dancing steps on and off the pavement, to bowl a hoop, to throw something up in the air and catch it again, or to stand still and laugh at — nothing — at nothing, simply.

What can you do if you are thirty and, turning the corner of your own street, you are overcome, suddenly, by a feeling of bliss — absolute bliss! — as though you'd suddenly swallowed a bright piece of that late afternoon sun and it burned in your bosom, sending out a little shower of sparks into every particle, into every finger and toe?...

Oh, is there no way you can express it without being “drunk and disorderly”? How idiotic civilization is! Why be given a body if you have to keep it shut up in a case like a rare, rare fiddle?

“No, that about the fiddle is not quite what I mean,” she thought, running up the steps and feeling in her bag for the key — she'd forgotten it, as usual — and rattling the letter-box. “It's not what I mean, because — Thank you, Mary” — she went into the hall. “Is nurse back?”

“Yes, M'm.”

“And has the fruit come?”

“Yes, M'm. Everything's come.”

“Bring the fruit up to the dining-room, will you? I'll arrange it before I go upstairs.”

It was dusky in the dining-room and quite chilly. But all the same Bertha threw off her coat; she could not bear the tight clasp of it another moment, and the cold air fell on her arms.

But in her bosom there was still that bright glowing place — that shower of little sparks coming from it. It was almost unbearable. She hardly dared to breathe for fear of fanning it higher, and yet she breathed deeply, deeply. She hardly dared to look into the cold mirror — but she did look, and it gave her back a woman, radiant, with smiling, trembling lips, with big, dark eyes and an air of listening, waiting for something ... divine to happen ... that she knew must happen ... infallibly.

## 幸 福

尽管柏莎·扬已经30岁了，可走路时有时还会那样想跑上几步，在人行道上跳上跳下，来几个舞步，或者滚一下铁环，把什么东西抛向空中又接住，或者干脆一动不动站着傻笑——其实没有任何可笑的，不过是笑笑而已。

如果你年当30，走到你们家那条街的拐角处，突然一种极度幸福的感觉袭来——一种毫无杂质的狂喜！——仿佛忽然间嘴里吞进一块那天黄昏时分外明亮的太阳，它在你胸中燃烧发亮，一簇细密的光芒辐射到每一粒细胞、每一根手指和脚趾，此时此刻你会怎么样呢？

噢，难道除了“迷醉和狂乱”这些词就没法表达那种感觉吗？文明语汇多傻呀！如果身体像一把珍稀的小提琴一般给禁锢在盒子里，那要它又有什么用呢？

“不，小提琴的比喻还没有完全表达出我的意思。”她一边思考一边轻快地踏上台阶，手在包里摸索钥匙——她又跟往常一样，忘带了——接着她又顺手摇了摇信箱。“这不是我想说的意思，因为——谢谢你，玛丽”——她走进大厅。“保姆回来了吗？”

“回来了，夫人。”

“水果送来了吗？”

“送来了，夫人，东西都齐了。”

“把水果拿到餐厅去可以吗？我要在上楼前把它布置好。”

餐厅里不但光线很暗，还特别冷。但柏莎还是脱掉外套，她一刻也受不了大衣穿在身上那种紧绷绷的感觉。一股凉气随之袭遍臂膀。

然而她胸中依然有那么一块地方在熠熠发光——那簇细密的火花就是从那里发出的。简直让人难以自持。她连气都不敢出，生怕把那束火焰扇得更旺，不过她还是深深地、深深地吸了口气。她甚至不敢看那面冰凉的镜子，可她还是看了，镜子里映现出一个容光焕发，面带微笑

Mary brought in the fruit on a tray and with it a glass bowl, and a blue dish, very lovely, with a strange sheen on it as though it had been dipped in milk.

“Shall I turn on the light, M’m?”

“No, thank you. I can see quite well.”

There were tangerines and apples stained with strawberry pink. Some yellow pears, smooth as silk, some white grapes covered with a silver bloom and a big cluster of purple ones. These last she had bought to tone in with the new dining-room carpet. Yes, that did sound rather far-fetched and absurd, but it was really why she had bought them. She had thought in the shop: “I must have some purple ones to bring the carpet up to the table.” And it had seemed quite sense at the time.

When she had finished with them and had made two pyramids of these bright round shapes, she stood away from the table to get the effect — and it really was most curious. For the dark table seemed to melt into the dusky light and the glass dish and the blue bowl to float in the air. This, of course in her present mood, was so incredibly beautiful.... She began to laugh.

“No, no. I’m getting hysterical.” And she seized her bag and coat and ran upstairs to the nursery.

Nurse sat at a low table giving Little B her supper after her bath. The baby had on a white flannel gown and a blue woollen jacket, and her dark, fine hair was brushed up into a funny little peak. She looked up when she saw her mother and began to jump.

“Now, my lovey, eat it up like a good girl,” said Nurse, setting her lips in a way that Bertha knew, and that meant she had come into the nursery at another wrong moment.

“Has she been good, Nanny?”

“She’s been a little sweet all the afternoon,” whispered Nanny. “We went to the park and I sat down on a chair and took her out of the pram and a big dog came along and put its head on my knee and she clutched its ear, tugged it. Oh, you should have seen her.”

Bertha wanted to ask if it wasn’t rather dangerous to let her clutch at a strange dog’s ear. But she did not dare to. She stood watching them, her hands by her side, like the poor little girl in front of the rich little girl with the doll.

The baby looked up at her again, stared, and then smiled so charmingly that Bertha couldn’t help crying:

的女人，嘴唇颤动，一双大眼睛乌溜溜的。她凝神倾听着、期待着……某种不同寻常的事情……好像她知道一定会发生……错不了。

玛丽端着一盘水果进来，盘上放着一只玻璃碗，一只蓝色碟子，盘子非常漂亮，闪烁着一种奇异的光泽，像在牛奶中浸过似的。

“要开灯吗，夫人？”

“不用，谢谢。我看得见。”

桔子和苹果上泛着一层草莓般的粉红色。几只黄梨光洁得像丝绸，白葡萄上覆盖着一层银色的粉霜，还有一大串紫葡萄。最后这一串她买来是想配餐厅里新铺的地毯。嗯，听上去确实不着边际而且荒谬，可这正是她买这些东西的真实动机。她在商店就想：“我得买些紫色的，把地毯的颜色带到餐桌上。”那时候听上去好像很有道理。

她把水果布置好，用这些亮堂堂、圆溜溜的东西摆出两个金字塔后，站到离桌子几步远的地方观看效果——的确不俗。黑沉沉的桌子好像融入了昏暗的光线，衬得玻璃碟子和蓝碗像浮在空中。当然，依她此时的心情，这里有一种无与伦比的美……她开始笑起来。

“别这样，别这样，我又在歇斯底里了。”然后她抓起提包和外套冲上楼，向保姆室奔去。

保姆坐在一张低矮的桌子旁边，正给刚洗完澡的小贝喂晚饭。小孩穿着一件白色法兰绒裙子和蓝色毛料上衣，漂亮的黑头发梳成一个很好玩的小尖顶。她看见妈妈时仰起头欢跳起来。

“诺，小乖，都吃了，做个好姑娘。”保姆说，她那努嘴的样子柏莎是很熟悉的，暗示她此时到保姆房里来很不是时候。

“她好吗，南妮？”

“今天下午她可真乖。”南妮低声说，“我们去了公园。我坐在一把椅子上，把她从手推车里抱出来，这时候来了一条大狗，把头搁到我的膝盖上，她抓住狗的耳朵揪。噢，你要看见她那样子就好了。”

柏莎想问让孩子去抓一条陌生的狗的耳朵是不是太危险了。但她没敢问。她站在那里望着她们，手垂在一边，像个穷人家的小女孩站在抱着洋娃娃的阔小姐跟前一样。

孩子又抬头望着她，目不转睛地瞧着她，笑容那么动人，柏莎不禁

"Oh, Nanny, do let me finish giving her her supper while you put the bath things away."

"Well, M'm, she oughtn't to be changed hands while she's eating," said Nanny, still whispering. "It unsettles her; it's very likely to upset her."

How absurd it was. Why have a baby if it has to be kept — not in a case like a rare, rare fiddle — but in another woman's arms?

"Oh, I must!" said she.

Very offended, Nanny handed her over.

"Now, don't excite her after her supper. You know you do, M'm. And I have such a time with her after!"

Thank heaven! Nanny went out of the room with the bath towels.

"Now I've got you to myself, my little precious," said Bertha, as the baby leaned against her.

She ate delightfully, holding up her lips for the spoon and then waving her hands. Sometimes she wouldn't let the spoon go; and sometimes, just as Bertha had filled it, she waved it away to the four winds.

When the soup was finished Bertha turned round to the fire.

"You're nice — you're very nice!" said she, kissing her warm baby. "I'm fond of you. I like you."

And, indeed, she loved Little B so much — her neck as she bent forward, her exquisite toes as they shone transparent in the firelight — that all her feeling of bliss came back again, and again she didn't know how to express it — what to do with it.

"You're wanted on the telephone," said Nanny, coming back in triumph and seizing *her* Little B.

Down she flew. It was Harry.

"Oh, is that you, Ber? Look here. I'll be late. I'll take a taxi and come along as quickly as I can, but get dinner put back ten minutes — will you? All right?"

"Yes, perfectly. Oh, Harry!"

"Yes?"

What had she to say? She'd nothing to say. She only wanted to get in touch with him for a moment. She couldn't absurdly cry: "Hasn't it been a *divine day!*"

"What is it?" rapped out the little voice.

"Nothing. *Entendu*," said Bertha, and hung up the receiver, thinking how

叫起来：

“嘿，南妮，我喂她吃晚饭，你收拾一下洗澡的家伙吧。”

“嗯，夫人，她吃饭时可不能换手，”南妮说，声音还那么低。“那样她会不舒服的，很可能会心烦。”

多么荒唐。要是必须把孩子放在别的女人怀里——当然不是像一把珍贵的小提琴一样放在盒子里——那生孩子干吗呢？

“噢，我一定要喂！”她说。

南妮很生气地把小孩递过来。

“诺，吃完饭千万别逗她乐。您总是逗她，夫人。我一会儿就来照看她！”

谢天谢地！南妮终于拿着浴巾走出屋子。

“我终于把你抓到手里了，我的小宝贝。”柏莎说，孩子向她靠了过来。

她一边翘起小嘴去够勺子，一边挥舞着小手，吃得很高兴。有时她一口咬住小匙，有时柏莎刚舀上一匙，她一摆手就推开了。

喝完汤后，柏莎转过身向着火。

“你真漂亮——真是漂亮极了！”她说，亲吻着暖融融的宝贝。“我多么爱你。多么喜欢你。”

她确实非常爱小宝贝——她身子往前倾时脖颈的样子、在火光照耀下显得透明、精致的脚趾头——突然那种极度幸福的感觉又来了，她又不知该怎么表达——也不知道该怎么办。

“来电话了，要你接，”南妮说，她凯旋而归地抓走了小宝贝。

她飞快地跑下楼。是哈里打来的。

“嗨，是你吗，柏儿？你瞧，我要迟到了。我叫辆出租车尽快过来，晚宴推迟10分钟——可以吗？没关系吧？”

“噢，哈里，完全可以。”

“真的？”

她还能说什么呢？她无话可说。她只想跟他在一起待一会儿。她不能荒唐地叫喊：“今天可是个神圣的日子啊！”

“什么？”那边突然小声说。

“没什么。请原谅。（译注：原文为法文。）”柏莎说完挂上话筒，心想



more than idiotic civilization was.

They had people coming to dinner. The Norman Knights — a very sound couple — he was about to start a theatre, and she was awfully keen on interior decoration, a young man, Eddie Warren, who had just published a little book of poems and whom everybody was asking to dine, and a “find” of Bertha’s called Pearl Fulton. What Miss Fulton did, Bertha didn’t know. They had met at the club and Bertha had fallen in love with her, as she always did fall in love with beautiful women who had something strange about them.

The provoking thing was that, though they had been about together and met a number of times and really talked, Bertha couldn’t yet make her out. Up to a certain point Miss Fulton was rarely, wonderfully frank, but the certain point was there, and beyond that she would not go.

Was there anything beyond it? Harry said “No.” Voted her dullish, and “cold like all blonde women, with a touch, perhaps, of anaemia of the brain”. But Bertha wouldn’t agree with him; not yet, at any rate.

“No, the way she has of sitting with her head a little on one side, and smiling, has something behind it, Harry, and I must find out what that something is.”

“Most likely it’s a good stomach,” answered Harry.

He made a point of catching Bertha’s heels with replies of that kind ... “liver frozen, my dear girl”, or “pure flatulence”, or “kidney disease”, ... and so on. For some strange reason Bertha liked this, and almost admired it in him very much.

She went into the drawing-room and lighted the fire; then picking up the cushions, one by one, that Mary had disposed so carefully, she threw them back on to the chairs and the couches. That made all the difference; the room came alive at once. As she was about to throw the last one she surprised herself by suddenly hugging it to her, passionately, passionately. But it did not put out the fire in her bosom. Oh, on the contrary!

The windows of the drawing-room opened on to a balcony overlooking the garden. At the far end, against the wall, there was a tall, slender pear tree in fullest, richest bloom; it stood perfect, as though becalmed against the jade-green sky. Bertha couldn’t help feeling, even from this distance, that it had not a single bud or a faded petal. Down below, in the garden beds, the red and yellow tulips, heavy with flowers, seemed to lean upon the dusk. A grey cat, dragging its belly, crept across the lawn, and a black