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by D. H. Lawrence.

III.

The Flux of Corruption.

The tiger blazed transcendent into immortal darkness. The unique phœnix of the desert grew up to maturity and wisdom. Sitting upon her tree, she was the only one of her kind in all creation, supreme, the zenith, the perfect aristocrat. She attained to perfection, eagle-like she rose in her nest and lifted her wings, surpassing the zenith of mortality; so she was translated into the flame of eternity, she became one with the fiery Origin.

In the nest was a little ash, a little flocculent grey dust wavering upon a blue-red, dying coal. The red coal stirred and gathered strength, gradually it grew white with heat, it shot forth sharp gold flames. It was the young phœnix within the nest, with curved beak growing hard and crystal, like a scimitar, and talons hardening into pure jewels.

Wherein, however, is the immortality, in the constant occupation of the nest, the widow's cruse, or in the surpassing of the phœnix? She goes gadding off into flame, into her consummation. In the flame she is timeless. But the ash within the nest lies in the restless hollow of time, shaken on the tall tree of the desert. It will rise to the same consummation, become absolute in flame.

In a low, shady bush, far off, on the other side of the world, where the rains are cold and the mists wrap the leaves in a chillness, the ring-dove presses low on the bough, while her mate sends forth the last ru-cuooo of peace. The mist darkens and ebbs-in in waves, the trees are melted away, all

things pass into a universal oneness, with the last re-echoing dove, peace, all pure peace, ebbing in softer, softer waves to a universal stillness.

The dark blue tranquility is universal and infinite, the doves are asleep in the sleeping boughs, all fruits are fallen and are silent and cold, all the leaves melt away into pure mist of darkness.

It is strange, that away on the other side of the world, the tiger gleams through the hot-purple darkness, and where the dawn comes crimson, the phœnix lifts her wings in a yawn like an over-sumptuous eagle, and passes into flame above the golden palpable fire of the desert.

Here are the opposing hosts of angels, the ruddy choirs, the upright, rushing flames, the lofty Cherubim that palpitate about the Presence, the Source; and then the tall, still angels soft and pearly as mist, who await round the Goal, the attendants that hover on the edge of the last Assumption.

And from the seed two travellers set forth, in opposite directions, the one concentrating towards the upper, ruddy, blazing sun, the zenith, the creative fire, the other towards the blue, cold silence, dividing itself and ever dividing itself till it is infinite in the universal darkness.

And at the summit, the zenith, there is a flash, a flame, as the traveller enters into infinite, there is a red splash as the poppy leaps into the upper, fiery eternity. And far below there is unthinkable silence as the roots ramify and divide and pass into the oneness of unutterable silence.

The flame is gone, the flower has leapt away, the fruit ripens a· d falls. Then dark ebbs back to dark, and light to light, hot to hot, and cold to cold. This is death and decay and corruption. And the worm, the maggot, these are the ministers of separation, these are the tiny clashing ripples that still ebb together, when the chief tide has set back, to flow utterly apart.

This is the terror and wonder of dark returning to dark, and of light returning to light, the two departing back to

their Sources. This we cannot bear to think of. It is the temporal flux of corruption, as the flux together was the temporal flux of creation. The flux is temporal. It is only the perfect meeting, the perfect utter interpretation into oneness, the kiss, the blow, the two-in-one, that is timeless and absolute.

And dark is not willing to return to dark till it has known the light, nor light to light till it has known the dark, till the two have been consummated into oneness. But the act of death may itself be a consummation, and life may be a state of negation.

It may be that our state of life is itself a denial of the consummation, a prevention, a negation; that this life is our nullification, our not-being.

It may be that the flower is held from the search of the light, and the roots from the dark, like a plant that is pot-bound. It may be that, as in the autumnal cabbage, the light and the dark are made prisoners in us, their opposition is overcome, the ultimate moving has ceased. We have forgotten our goal and our end. We have enclosed ourselves in our exfoliation, there are many little channels that run out into the sand.

This is evil, when that which is temporal and relative asserts itself eternal and absolute. This I, which I am, has no being save in timelessness. In my consummation, when that which came from the Beginning and that which came from the End are transfused into oneness, then I come into being, I have existence. Till then I am only a part of nature: I *am* not.

If I say that I *am*, this is false and evil. I am not. Among us all, how many have being? — too few. Our individuality, our personality is no more than an accidental cohesion in the flux of time. The cohesion will break down and utterly cease to be. The atoms will return into the flux of the universe. And that unit of cohesion which I was will vanish utterly. Matter is indestructible, spirit is indestructible. This of us remains, in any case, general in the flux. But the soul that has not come into being has no being for ever. The

soul does not come into being at birth. The soul comes into being in the midst of life, just as the phœnix in her maturity becomes immortal in flame. That is not her perishing: it is her becoming absolute. If she did not pass into flame, she would never really exist. It is by her translation into fire that she is the phœnix. Otherwise she were only a bird, a transitory cohesion in the flux.

It is absurd to talk about all men being immortal, all having souls. Very few men have being at all. They perish utterly, as individuals. Their endurance afterwards is the endurance of Matter within the flux, non-individual. Most men are just transitory natural phenomena. Whether they live or die does not matter: except that every failure in the part is a failure in the whole. Their death is of no more matter than the cutting of a cabbage in the garden, an act utterly apart from grace.

They assert themselves as important, as absolute mortals. They are just liars. When one cuts a fat autumnal cabbage, one cuts off a lie, to boil it down in the pot.

They are all just fat lies, these people, these many people, these mortals. They are innumerable cabbages in the regulated cabbage plot. And our great men are no more than Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch.

The cabbage is a nice fat lie. That is why we eat it. It is the business of the truthful to eat up the lies. A cow is a lie, and a pig is a lie, and a sheep is a lie, just the same: these sacrificial beasts, these lambs and calves, become fat lies when they are allowed to persist.

The cabbage is a lie because it asserts itself as a permanency, in the state wherein it finds itself. In the swirl of the Beginning and the End, stalk and leaves take place. But the stalk and leaves are only the swirl of the waves. Yet they say, they are absolute, they have achieved a permanent form. It is a lie. Their universal absolute is only the far-off dawning of the truth. And dawn is nothing except in relation to that which comes after.

But they say, "We are the consummation and the reality, we are the fulfilment." This is pure amorphousness. Each one becomes a single, separate entity, a single separate nullity. Having started along the way to eternity, they say, "We are there, we have arrived," and they enclose themselves in the nullity of the falsehood.

Then they are wealthy and fat. They go no further, so they become wealthy. All that great force which would carry them naked over the edge of time, into timelessness, into being, they convert into fatness, into having. And they are full of self-satisfaction. Having no being, they assert their artificial completeness, and the life within them becomes a will-to-have; which is the expression of the will-to-persist, in the temporary unit. Selfishness is the subjugating of all things to a false entity, and riches is the great flux over the edge of the bottomless pit, the falsity, the nullity. For where is the rich man who is not the very bottomless pit? Travel nearer, nearer, nearer to him, and one comes to the gap, the hole, the abyss where his soul should be. He *is* not. And to stop up his hollowness, he drags all things unto himself.

And what are we all, all of us, collectively, even the poorest, now, in this age? We are only *potentially* rich men. We are all alike. The distinction between rich and poor is purely accidental. Rich and poor alike are only, each one, a pit-head surrounding the bottomless pit. But the rich man, by pouring vast quantities of matter down his void, gives himself a more pleasant illusion of fulfilment than the poor man can get: that is all. Yet we would give our lives, every one of us, for this illusion.

There are no rich or poor, there are no masses and middle classes and aristocrats. There are myriads of framed gaps, people, and a few timeless fountains, men and women. That is all.

The current ideal is to be a gap with a great heap of matter around it, which can be sent clattering down. The most sacred thing is to give all your having so that it can be put on the heaps that surround all the other bottomless

pits. If you give away all your having, even your life, then, you are a bottomless pit with no sides to it. Which is infinite. So that to become infinite, give away all your having, even to your life. So that you will achieve immortality yourself. Like the heroes of the war, you will become the bottomless pit itself; but more than this, you will be contributing to the public good, you will be one of those who make blessed history: which means, you will be heaping goods upon the dwindling heaps of superfluity that surrounds these bottomless lives of the myriad people. If we poor can each of us hire a servant, then the servant will be like a stone tumbling always ahead of us down the bottomless pit. Which creates an almost perfect illusion of having a solid earth beneath us.

Long long ago we agreed that we had fulfilled all purpose and that our only business was to look after other people. We said; "It is marvellous, we are really complete." If the regulation cabbage, hide-bound and solid, could walk about on his stalk, he would have been very much as we were, twenty or thirty years ago. He would have thought of himself as we thought of ourselves, he would have talked as *we* talked of the public good.

But inside him, proper and fine, the heart would have been knocking and urgent, the heart of the cabbage. Of course for a long time he would not hear it. His good, enveloping green leaves outside, the heap round the hole, would have closed upon him very early, like Wordsworth's "Shades of the prison house," very close and complete and gratifying.

But the heart would beat within him, beat and beat, grow louder and louder, till it was threshing the whole of his inside rotten, threshing him hollow, till his inside began to devour his consciousness.

Then he would say: "I must do something." Looking round, he would see little dwindly cabbages struggling in the patch, and would say: "So much injustice, so much suffering and poverty in the world, it cannot be." Then he would

set forth to make dwindly cabbages into proper, fine cabbages. So he would be a reformer.

He would kick, kick, kick against the conditions which make some cabbages poor and dwindly, most cabbages poorer and more dwindly than himself. He would but be kicking against the pricks.

But it is very profitable to kick against the pricks. It gives one a sensation, and saves one the necessity of bursting. If our reformers had not had the prickly wrongs of the poor to kick, so that they hurt their toe quite sorely, they might long ago have burst outwards from the enclosed form in which we have kept secure.

Let no one suffer, they have said. No mouse shall be caught by a cat, no mouse. It is a transgression. Every mouse shall become a pet, and every cat shall lap milk in peace, from the saucer of utter benevolence.

This is the millennium, the golden age that is to be, when all shall be domesticated, and the lion and the leopard and the hawk shall come to our door to lap milk and to peck the crumbs, and no sound shall be heard but the lowing of fat cows and the baa-ing of fat sheep.

This is the Green Age that is to be, the age of the perfect cabbage. This was our hope and our fulfilment, for this, in this hope, we lived and we died.

So the virtuous, public-spirited ones have suffered bitterly from the aspect of their myriad more-or-less blighted neighbours, whom they love as themselves. They have lived and died to right the wrong conditions of social injustice.

Meanwhile, the threshing has continued at the core of us, till our entrails are threshed rotten. We are a wincing mass of self-consciousness and corruption, within our plausible rind. The most unselfish, the most humanitarian of us all, he is the hollowest and fullest of rottenness. The more rotten we become, the more insistent and insane becomes our desire to ameliorate the conditions of our poorer, and maybe healthier neighbours.

Fools, vile fools! Why cannot we acknowledge and admit the horrible pulse and thresh of corruption within us. What *is* this self-consciousness that palpitates within us like a disease? What is it that threshes and threshes within us, drives us mad if we see a cat catch a sparrow?

We dare not know. Oh, we are convulsed with shame long before we come to the point. It is indecent beyond endurance to think of it.

Yet here let it be told. It was the living desire for immortality, for *being*, which urged us ceaselessly. It was the bud within the cabbage, threshing, threshing, threshing. And now, oh our convulsion of shame, when we must know this! We would rather die.

Yet it shall be made known. It was the struggling of the light and darkness within us, towards consummation, towards absoluteness, towards flowering. Oh, we shriek with anger of shame as the truth comes out: that the cabbage is rotten within because it wanted to straddle up into weakly fiery flower, wanted to straddle forth in a spire of ragged, yellow, inconsequential blossom.

Oh God, it is unendurable, this revelation, this disclosure, it is not to be borne. Our souls perish in an agony of self-conscious shame, we will not have it.

Yet had we listened, the hide-bound cabbage might have burst, might have opened apart, for a venturing forth of the tender, timid, ridiculous cluster of aspirations, that issue in little yellow tips of flame, the flowers naked in eternity, naked above the staring unborn crowd of amorphous entities, the cabbages.

But the crowd of not-being, of null entities, they were too strong, too many. Quickly they extinguished any shoot of tender immortality from among them, violently they adhered to the null rind and to the thresh of rottenness within.

Still the living desire beat and threshed at the heart of us, relentlessly. And still the fixed will of the temporal form we have so far attained, the static, mid-way form, triumphed in assertion.

Yet constantly the rising flower pushed and thrust at the belly and heart of us, thrashed and beat relentlessly. If it could not beat its way through into being, it must thrash us hollow. Let it do so then, we said. This also we enjoy, this being threshed rotten inside. This is sensationalism, reduction of the complex tissue back through rottenness to its elements. And this sensationalism, this reduction back, became our very life, our only form of life at all. We enjoy it, it is our lust.

It became at last a collective activity, a war, when, within the great rind of virtue we thresh destruction further and further, till our whole civilisation is like a great rind full of corruption, of breaking down, a mere shell threatened with collapse upon itself.

And the road of corruption leads back to one eternity. The activity of utter going apart has, in eternity, a result equivalent to the result of utter coming together. The tiger rises supreme, the last brindled flame upon the darkness; the deer melts away, a blood-stained shadow received into the utter pallor of light; each having leapt forward into eternity, at opposite extremes. Within the closed shell of the Christian conception, we lapse utterly back, through reduction, back to the Beginning. It is the triumph of death, of decomposition.

And the process is that of the serpent lying prone in the cold, watery fire of corruption, flickering with the flowing-apart of the two streams. His belly is white with the light flowing forth from him, his back is dark and brindled where the darkness returns to the Source. He is the ridge where the two floods flow apart. So in the orange-speckled belly of the newt, the light is taking leave of the darkness, and returning to the light; the imperious, demon-like crest is the flowing home of the darkness. He is the god within the flux of corruption, from him proceeds the great retrogression back to the Beginning and back to the End These are our gods.

There are elsewhere the golden angels of the Kiss, the golden, fiery angels of strife, those that have being when we come together, as opposites, as complements coming to consumma-

tion. There is delight and triumph elsewhere, these angels sound their loud trumpets. Then men are like brands that have burst spontaneously into flame, the phœnix, the tiger, the glistening dove, the white-burning unicorn.

But here are only the angels that cleave asunder, terrible and invincible. With cold, irresistible hands they put us apart, they send like unto like, darkness unto darkness They thrust the seas backward from embrace, backward from the locked strife. They set the cold phosphorescent flame of light flowing back to the light, and cold heavy darkness flowing back to the darkness. They are the absolute angels of corruption, they are the snake, the newt, the water-lily.

I cease to be, my darkness lapses into utter, stone darkness, my light into a light that is keen and cold as frost.

This goes on within the rind. But the rind remains permanent, falsely absolute, my false absolute knowledge of good and evil. Till the work of corruption is finished; then the rind also, the public form, the civilisation, the established consciousness of mankind disappears as well in the mouth of the worm, taken unutterably asunder by the hands of the angels of separation. It ceases to be, all the civilisation and all the consciousness, it passes utterly away, a temporary cohesion in the flux. It was this, this rind, this persistent temporary cohesion, this was evil, this alone was evil, And it destroys us all before itself is destroyed.

The Little Governess.

by MATILDA BERRY.

PART II.

"Pardon! Pardon!" The sliding back of the carriage door woke her with a start. What had happened? Some one had come in and gone out again. The old man sat in his corner, more upright than ever, his hands in the pockets of his coat, frowning heavily. "Ha! ha! ha!" came from the carriage next door. Still half asleep she put her hands to her hair to make sure it wasn't a dream. "Disgraceful!" muttered the old man more to himself than to her. "Common, vulgar fellows! I am afraid they disturbed you, gracious Fraulein, blundering in here like that." No, not really. She was just going to wake up, and she took out her silver watch to look at the time. Half-past four. A cold blue light filled the window panes. Now when she rubbed a place she could see bright patches of fields, a clump of white houses like mushrooms, a road 'like a picture' with poplar trees on either side, a thread of river. How pretty it was! How pretty and how different! Even those pink clouds in the sky looked foreign. It was cold, but she pretended that it was far colder and rubbed her hands together and shivered, pulling at the collar of her coat because she was so happy.

The train began to slow down. The engine gave a long shrill whistle, They were coming to a town. Taller houses, pink and yellow, glided by, fast asleep behind their green eyelids, and guarded by the poplar trees that quivered in the blue air as if on tiptoe, listening. In one house a woman opened the shutters, flung a red and white mattress across the window frame and stood staring at the train. A pale woman with black hair and a white woollen shawl over her shoulders. More women appeared at the doors and at the windows of the sleeping houses. There came a flock of sheep. The shepherd wore a blue blouse and pointed wooden

shoes. Look! look what flowers — and by the railway station too! Standard roses like bridesmaids' bouquets, white geraniums, waxy pink ones that you would *never* see out of a greenhouse at home. Slower and slower. A man with a watering can was spraying the platform. "A-a-a-ah!" Somebody came running and waving his arms. A huge fat woman waddled through the glass doors of the station with a tray of strawberries. Oh, she was thirsty! she was very thirsty! "A-a-a-ah!" the same somebody ran back again. The train stopped. The old man pulled his coat round him and got up, smiling at her. He murmured something she didn't quite catch, but she smiled back at him as he left the carriage. While he was away the little governess looked at herself again in the glass, shook and patted herself with the precise practical care of a girl who is old enough to travel by herself and has nobody else to assure her that she is 'quite alright behind'. Thirsty and thirsty! The air tasted of water. She let down the window and the fat woman with the strawberries passed as if on purpose; holding up the tray to her. "Nein, danke," said the little governess looking at the big berries on their gleaming leaves. "Wie viel?" She asked as the fat woman moved away. "Two marks fifty, Fraulein." "Good gracious!" She came in from the window and sat down in the corner, very sobered for a minute. Half a crown! "H-o-o-o-o-o-e-e-e!" shrieked the train, gathering itself together to be off again. She hoped the old man wouldn't be left behind. Oh, it was daylight — everything was lovely if only she hadn't been so thirsty. Where *was* the old man — oh, here he was — she dimpled at him as though he were an old accepted friend as he closed the door and turning took from under his cape a basket of the strawberries. "If fraulein would honour me by accepting these...." "What, for me?" But she drew back and raised her hands as though he were about to put a wild little kitten on her lap. "Certainly, for you," said the old man. "For myself it is twenty years since I was brave enough to eat strawberries." "Oh, thank you very

much. Danke bestens," she stammered, "sie sind so *sehr* schön!" "Eat them and see," said the old man looking pleased and friendly. "You won't have even one?" "No, no, no." Timidly and charmingly her hand hovered. They were so big and juicy she had to take two bites to them — the juice ran all down her fingers — and it was while she munched the berries that she first thought of the old man as a grandfather. What a prefect grandfather he would make! Just like one out of a book'!

The sun came out, the pink clouds in the sky, the strawberry clouds were eaten by the blue. "Are they good?" asked the old man. "As good as they look?"

When she had eaten them she felt she had known him for years. She told him about Frau Arnholdt and how she had got the place. Did he know the Hotel Grunewald? Frau Arnholdt would not arrive until the evening. He listened, listened until he knew as much about the affair as she did, until he said — not looking at her — but smoothing the palms of his brown suede gloves together: "I wonder if you would let me show you a little of Munich today. Nothing much — but just perhaps a picture-gallery and the Englischer Garten. It seems such a pity that you should have to spend the day at the hotel, and also a little uncomfortable... in a strange place. Nicht wahr? You would be back there by the early afternoon or whenever you wish, of course, and you would give an old man a great deal of pleasure."

It was not until long after she had said 'Yes' — because the moment she had said it and he had thanked her he began telling her about his travels in Turkey and after of roses — that she wondered whether she had done wrong. After all, she really did not know him. But he was so old and he had been so very kind — not to mention the strawberries... And she couldn't have explained the reason why she said "No," and it was her *last* day in a way, her last day to really enjoy herself in. "Was I wrong? was I?" A drop of sunlight fell into her hands and lay there, warm and quivering. "If I might accompany you as far as the

hotel," he suggested, "and call for you again at about ten o'clock." He took out his pocket-book and handed her a card. 'Herr Regierungsrat...' He had a title! Well, it was *bound* to be all right! So after that the little governess gave herself up to the excitement of being really abroad, to looking out and reading the foreign advertisement signs, to being told about the places they came to--having her attention and enjoyment looked after by the charming old grandfather — until they reached Munich and the Haupt Bahnhof. "Porter! Porter!" He found her a porter, disposed of his own luggage in a few words, guided her through the bewildering crowd out of the station down the clean white steps into the white road to the hotel. He explained who she was to the manager as though all this had been bound to happen, and then for one moment her little hand lost itself in the big brown suède ones. "I will call for you at ten o'clock." He was gone.

"This way, Fraülein," said a waiter, who had been dodging behind the manager's back, all eyes and ears for the strange couple. She followed him up two flights of stairs into a dark bedroom. He dashed down her dress-basket and pulled up a clattering, dusty blind. Ugh! what an ugly, cold room — what enormous furniture! Fancy spending the day in here! "Is this the room Frau Arnholdt ordered?" asked the little governess. The waiter had a curious way of staring as if there was something *funny* about her. He pursed up his lips about to whistle, and then changed his mind. "Gewiss" he said. Well, why didn't he go? Why did he stare so? "Gehen Sie," said the little governess, with frigid English simplicity. His little eyes, like currants, nearly popped out of his doughy cheeks. "Gehen Sie sofort," she repeated icily. At the door he turned. "And the gentleman," said he, "shall I show the gentleman upstairs when he comes?"

* * *

Over the white streets big white clouds fringed with silver — and sunshine everywhere. Fat fat coachmen driving fat cabs; funny women with little round hats cleaning the

tramway lines; people laughing and pushing against one another; trees on both sides of the streets and everywhere you looked almost, immense fountains; a noise of laughing from the footpaths or the middle of the streets or the open windows. And beside her, more beautifully brushed than ever, with a rolled umbrella in one hand and yellow gloves instead of brown ones her grandfather who had asked her to spend the day. She wanted to run, she wanted to hang on his arm, she wanted to cry every minute, "Oh, I am so frightfully happy!" He guided her across the roads, stood still while she 'looked' and his kind eyes beamed on her and he said 'just whatever you wish.' She ate two white sausages and two little rolls of fresh bread at eleven o'clock in the morning and she drank some beer, which he told her wasn't intoxicating, wasn't at all like English beer, out of a glass like a flower vase. And then they took a cab and really she must have seen thousands and thousands of wonderful classical pictures in about a quarter of an hour! "I shall have to think them over when I am alone"... But when they came out of the picture gallery it was raining. The grandfather unfurled his umbrella and held it over the little governess. They started to walk to the restaurant for lunch. She, very close beside him so tha the should have some of the umbrella, too. "It goes easier," he remarked in a detached way, "if you take my arm, Fraülein. And besides it is the custom in Germany." So she took his arm and walked beside him while he pointed out the famous statues, so interested that he quite forgot to put down the umbrella even when the rain was long over.

After lunch they went to a café to hear a gypsy band, but she did not like that at all. Ugh! such horrible men were there with heads like eggs and cuts on their faces, so she turned her chair and cupped her burning cheeks in her hands and watched her old friend instead... Then they went to the Englischer Garten.

"I wonder what the time is," asked the little governess. "My watch has stopped. I forgot to wind it in the train last night. We've seen such a lot of things that I feel it must be quite late." "Late!" He stopped in front of her laugh-

ing and shaking his head in a way she had begun to know. "Then you have not really enjoyed yourself. Late! Why, we have not had any ice cream yet!" "Oh, but I have enjoyed myself," she cried, distressed, "more than I can possibly say. It has been wonderful! Only Frau Arnholdt is to be at the hotel at six and I ought to be there by five." "So you shall. After the ice cream I shall put you into a cab and you can go there comfortably." She was happy again. The chocolate ice cream melted — melted in little sips a long way down. The shadows of the trees danced on the table cloths, and she sat with her back safely turned to the ornamental clock that pointed to twenty-five minutes to seven. "Really and truly," said the little governess earnestly, "this has been the happiest day of my life. I've never even imagined such a day." In spite of the ice cream her grateful baby heart glowed with love for the fairy grandfather.

So they walked out of the garden down a long alley. The day was nearly over. "You see those big buildings opposite," said the old man. "The third storey — that is where I live. I and the old housekeeper who looks after me." She was very interested. "Now just before I find a cab for you, will you come and see my little 'home' and let me give you a bottle of the attar of roses I told you about in the train? For remembrance?" She would love to. "I've never seen a bachelor's flat in my life," laughed the little governess.

The passage was quite dark. "Ah, I suppose my old woman has gone out to buy me a chicken. One moment." He opened a door and stood aside for her to pass, a little shy but curious, into a strange room. She did not know quite what to say. It wasn't pretty. In a way it was very ugly — but neat, and she supposed, comfortable for such an old man. "Well, what do you think of it?" He knelt down and took from a cupboard a round tray with two pink glasses and a tall pink bottle. "Two little bedrooms beyond," he said gaily, "and a kitchen. It's enough, eh?" "Oh, quite enough." "And if ever you should be in Munich and care to spend a day or two — why there is always a little nest — a wing of

a chicken, and a salad, and an old man delighted to be your host once more and many many times, dear little Fraülein!" He took the stopper out of the bottle and poured some wine into the two pink glasses. His hand shook and the wine spilled over the tray. It was very quiet in the room. She said: "I think I ought to go now." "But you will have a tiny glass of wine with me — just one before you go?" said the old man. "No, really no. I never drink wine. I — I have promised never to touch wine or anything like that." And though he pleaded and though she felt dreadfully rude, especially when he seemed to take it to heart so, she was quite determined. "No, *really*, please." "Well, will you just sit down on the sofa for five minutes and let me drink your health." The little governess sat down on the edge of the red velvet couch and he sat down beside her and drank her health at a gulp. "Have you really been happy today?" asked the old man, turning round, so close beside her that she felt his knee twitching against hers. Before she could answer he held her hands. "And are you going to give me one little kiss before you go," he asked, drawing her closer still.

It was a dream! It wasn't true! It wasn't the same old man at all. Ah, how horrible! The little governess stared at him in terror. "No, no, no!" she stammered, struggling out of his hands. "One little kiss. A kiss. What is it? Just a kiss, dear little Fraülein. A kiss." He pushed his face forward, his lips smiling broadly; and how his little blue eyes gleamed behind the spectacles. "Never—never. How can you!" She sprang up, but he was too quick and he held her against the wall, pressed against her his hard old body and his twitching knee and though she shook her head from side to side, distracted, he kissed her on the mouth. On the mouth! Where not a soul who wasn't a near relation had ever kissed her before...

She ran, ran down the street until she found a broad road with tramlines and a policeman standing in the middle like a clockwork doll. "I want to get a tram to the Haupt Bahnhof," sobbed the little governess. "Fraülein?" She wrung her hands at him. "The Haupt Bahnhof. There — there's one

now," and while he watched very much surprised, the little girl with her hat on one side crying without a handkerchief sprang on to the tram — not seeing the conductor's eyebrows, nor hearing the *hochwohlgebildete Dame* talking her over with a scandalized friend. Sherocked herself and cried out loud and said "Ah, ah!" pressing her hands to her mouth. "She has been to the dentist," shrilled a fat old woman, too stupid to be uncharitable. "Na, sagen Sie 'mal, what toothache! The child hasn't one left in her mouth." While the tram swung and jangled through a world full of old men withtwitching knees

* * *

When the little governess reached the hall of the Hote Grunewald the same waiter who had come into her room in the morning was standing by a table, polishing a tray of glasses. The sight of the little governess seemed to fill him out with some inexplicable important content. He was ready for her question; his answer came pat and suave. "Yes, Fraülein, the lady has been here. I told her that you had arrived and gone out again immediately with a gentlemen, She asked me when you were coming back again — but of course I could not say. And then she went to the manager." He took up a glass from the table, held it up to the light, looked at it with one eye closed, and started polishing it with a corner of his apron. "... ?" "Pardon, Fraülein? Ach, no, Fraulein. The manager could tell her nothing — nothing." He shook his head and smiled at the brilliant glass. "Where is the lady now?" asked the little governess, shuddering so violently that she had to hold her handkerchief up to her mouth. "How should I know?" cried the waiter, and as he swooped past her to pounce upon a new arrival his heart beat so hard against his ribs that he nearly chuckled aloud. "That's it! that's it!" he thought. "That will show her" And as he swung the new arrival's box on to his shoulders — hoop! — as though he were a giant and the box a feather, he minced over again the little governess's words, "*Gehen Sie. Gehen Sie sofort.* Shall I! Shall I!" he shouted to himself.

There was a Little Man...

By John Middleton Murry.

III.

"It's an obsession," as the lady says in one of the George Moore books; and surely it's as bad to be obsessed by the idea of freedom as it was for the lady to be worried by the vision of Mr. George Moore. The faculties are paralysed by the effort of digesting the indigestible; and I believe that the longer the mind prowls about the idea of freedom, the less substantial does the idea become, and at the last the mind is doing no more than to chase its own tail round and round until it mistakes giddiness for ecstasy.

"But you should sit down and think things out," says Adam. "There's a virtue comes of solid thinking."

I wonder. There are times — and this one – when it seems to one that the one thing of value to the soul is its own discovery. That discovery is not made by thinking, for thinking proceeds only by making discovery look exactly like something we knew before. It allows no change in quality, but only a greater complication of known elements; as a faculty it battens upon changing the impulses of mind into habits. Therefore it diminishes the catastrophic shock of a contact with the outer world, and by so much makes that world amenable to our discipline. But we despise things which can be made amenable; they put off their particularity and are not. We seek only that which is reluctant.

No man loves another because his ideas sort with his own; rather he will suspect him, and find in the agreement some

subtle disparagement of his own individuality. Even though the agreement seem identity he will deny it; for ideas have no living force of their own: they are parasites upon personality. If the person be living, then his ideas are alive; if he be dead, then they are no more than sounding words. And the living bars between persons is not deeper than their ideas. "I love you because you are you; I love your ideas, because they are part of you now. To-morrow they will give place to new ideas, and I shall love those new ideas no less, for they will be no less a part of you. But apart from you they are vain and valueless." No, where the contacts of some are fertile there is but little room for thinking and ideas.

For what are ideas save the anatomy of a little man at a given moment? The very condition of his living is that his configuration should change incessantly, and ideas have their value in that they proclaim that at such a time this was the man's rough shape. And even so we must remember that the proclamation is made at the peril of the soul, for he may be imprisoned within his own ideas either by himself or by the world which receives them. Let this be avoided, still there is no place in his ideas for a man's most intimate beliefs, just as anatomy cannot touch upon the soul. Thus it is that the ideas which have endured alive are least like ideas —Love and Freedom and their offspring, Immortality; for Immortality is only the refuge of Love that has been broken and Freedom that has been denied in this life.

And therein I have thought that I discern the cleavage between the great spiritual motions in man. There is that which seeks Freedom and Love within this life, which must reveal man triumphant here and now. This is art; for the being and purpose of art is to justify life in life. It is become our conscious purpose, for Christ brought into the world the sword of a bitter knowledge. In vain they call upon us that we should be classic. The classic spirit departed from the world, when life was declared to be not the end. Those heroes of old, they had no enemy to fight who could be com-

pared to ours. They had but to glorify, we must justify life. They glorified it by the natural exercise of the free spirit that was born in them: our lives may pass in the struggle to that which was their birthright. They danced for glee upon the pinnacle of the universe: it is our lot to climb the mountain on bloody knees and with tears.

So there are those who have not the strength of this resolution, and do not dream that life may be justified in life, whose sense of their own personality is not paramount: these look to a Love and a Freedom which are not of this world. Therefore the gulf between religion and art is now fixed and impassable. It may yet be truly said that for the artist art takes the place of religion; but it is far truer to say that in the religious man, religion has supplanted art. The rarer, stronger and more intensely human thing must have the precedence...

Here then is a man to whom neither religion nor philosophy can be the infallible index of reality. He lives by his own inward conviction of life and his determination to make it triumph. He will be his own justification and his judge.

Then, surely, apart from all effort and determination, he is justified because he is. No effort of his own can increase his own reality, or diminish the reality of the things and persons about him. He is good, because he is, and things are good because they are.

It is not true. He is good in so far as he has attained to free activity. His free action is good; and outward things have their goodness as they conduce to this free expansion of the turing man.

But the new freedom will not be as the old; it cannot be. The bitter knowledge of evil is in our blood. We stand sentry at the gates of the mind, denying, but the sentry sleeps and the knowledge enters in.

Aye, there's the rub. Am I just blinking at life, silvering it over with my own personal ideal? The cruelties, the bestialities, the sufferings — these exist, not accidental, but delibe-

rate in men's souls. Where are these in my philosophy? One child maimed and broken, — does not the whole thing crumble into dust? Is that cruelty no more than a thwarted freedom? Where shall the freedom be when the child is dead? Will my hard-won freedom outweigh one moment of helpless suffering?

If I say it does, for I forget the suffering, can I hold that all this labour and pain is but the travail of bringing me to birth? My reasoning soul abhors it; my instinct says that it is true. And I will say: Can I hold another thought upon it? Even if evil be positive as good, and both be warring against each other, what else can I say? That there is another life where evil is not? Will that take the evil away? One child's suffering is enough to make Heaven a mockery. Shall I say that there is no good, seeing that the evil is there always? I cannot believe it. There is good. I know it, and I know that the good is freedom. And freedom must be my own, and another's own; it belongs to persons and not to the world.

It belongs to a person as Christ's suffering upon the cross were his own. He died for the world. I do not understand it. Surely one man's freedom, won in pain, is as true for the world as one man's death. He said: I will die in this life that I may be free in the life to come, and you may be free in me. I say: I will live in this life that I may be free in this life and you may be free in me.

Is not mine the better creed? Yet shall I live for two thousand years and people in their millions find their freedom in me? I laugh at myself, and laugh again because others will find the thought blasphemous. Yet where is his potency, that is not in me.

Did he have the thought that I have of life and the end of life, and then choose death? Having my thoughts, surely he could not have chosen death. Or could he have chosen death, yet not believing in the Father or the Spirit or the mansions of the Kingdom of Heaven? Would a man so great

have left behind him a legacy of deceit for the millions to inherit?

Oh Christ, man, tell me the answer. You seem so strange to me, there on the Cross. I cannot speak with you; for your words have not your meaning, but mine. I cannot be silent with you, for there is no bond of silence between us. We do not love, that our silence should speak.

But tell me your thoughts. Did you seek freedom in this life as I seek it? Being man, and man above all other men, you must have sought it. Then death came upon you like a thief in the night. They took you and crucified you, when the dream of freedom had but half been dreamt. And life — the half-life that you lived, the half-freedom that you saw — seemed so barren, that at the last you looked for a freedom to come.

Or did you seek death? How seeking death, could you be man? Did you in truth believe that your death would save mankind from suffering and shame? How could you believe that, being man? Was the evil less when you were dead than it was before? Had you been God, you would have known, and would not have deceived the world; — but being man, could you then have believed?

You will not speak to me. I see you there on the Cross, your hands twisted and cruelly nailed, your face pale with drooping lids, your bended head, your pierced feet — and you have no word for me. The angel Freedom spoke, but your lips are closed. Only the words that once you spoke remain: and they are old and worn. Some I have made my own again. They are mine. I lived them. My blood made them alive. But the others are dead...

I have a new word. In this life must life be justified. Will surrender and love and suffering in the hope of a life to come justify life to a man? How can a man surrender, nor give himself to love and to suffering, unless his surrender and his gift be free? Yet how shall a free man deny life? No, only they can deny who are not free, for freedom can-

not be conceived save in terms of life, and life cannot be conceived save in relation to the physical and moral harmony which is its implanted form.

And the freedom of a free man is infinite. Thereby he attains to be a vehicle of the free spirit; and the infinite he touches is sterile and endless, not without bound and void, but truly infinite, controlled into harmony by its own inward principle. Thereby his every act is become a note in the music by which life and the reluctant universe are governed. Then he lives and is a man and life is justified in him, not by suffering and mutilation but by the plenitude of a living soul.

Do I then deny evil? I deny it in myself. I cast it utterly out. It is there even yet in my soul, urging me to be freedom's renegade. I will deny its Dominion. And thereby, am I not a Saviour? Seeing that evil is in the souls of men, if I deny its power with courage and not by weakness and treachery, do I not conquer for all men? If ten men will not listen to me, some one man will, and life will be victorious and justified in him; and to him again another will listen, and to that other, others.

Yet I am afraid of death!

How should I not be afraid of death, seeing I am not free. I have not seen the print of freedom's foot in the dark places of my soul. I have but learnt that whereto my life must tend and whereby it must be made harmonious and alive. Shall I die without the joy of this achievement, when my race is not yet begun — die as a blackened seed without knowing the full beauty of the flower, — die as a dreamer who has dreamed a dream, not as a leader who has shown a path, — die without having felt the free wind blow upon my own free forehead, without having heard the joy of free living make music in my own free heart? Can I die with nothing said save that this I dreamed I might attain, without having proclaimed that this I saw in life and won for an example? Let me feel this and say this and then I will freely die. But with a bare, fool fortnight to mock me — no, I must live.

"Coward," says my heart again.

Time was when I hearkened to you, my evil heart: but now I know that you are evil. For at the least I know that I am not afraid to be called coward. Is he a coward who will not risk his life in a hazard, when he fights for his own soul? I die and the question is over. It cannot be asked any more. I cannot answer it. I have shirked the issue and to no end.

"You are but hungry for delights."

What delight is there for me, ever vexed by the old impatience, to know and try the truth of my own heart? What delights have I known? What delights do I foresee? Think you that the joy of free living is sent down like the miracle of roses? Or that it is bought with money? The sacrifice is not less than his, who had great possessions.

And now, how I hate this pontifical parade of my own self. I hate myself for choosing out words in which to clothe it magnificently, my 'think you' and my 'time was.' If that is not the meanest and most hypocritical slavery, then there is no meanness and no slavery at all. Am I a Moses that I should speak words and carve them in monstrous letters on tables of stone?

I do not think it is a mean little self or even a coward. I am sure it is as good and true by itself as it is clothed in all the bookish paraphernalia. The trouble is not hard to understand. I continually forget that there is no one to listen to me save myself. I strut about as though the world were for my audience, hungrily watching my exits and my entrances. Fool that I am, to make even my truth look like a lie. I am not that wooden actor on foot-high shoes, clothed like a rainbow, but a little bundle of mean desires, feeble terrors and incipient honesties. A Saviour! And I cannot even in the quiet of my own room save myself from writing big sounding words to cover my own nakedness.

But I say again, it was not all a lie. I tried to speak

the truth and even in my pompous speeches there is some thing of my truth hidden. Because I am unregenerate, it was not the whole truth. But were the bombast not there it would not be me; were it not me it would not be true, and you, if you have the will to find me, will find me there, no less than here — a man, weak with vain pride, who fought with himself who fainted by the wayside, who blasphemed, who sold his spirit for money, and envied others the success which in his soul he despised.

And why should you look for me? Weakness and pride again. The thought that no one should look, that no one should reach out after the soul that is too often hidden beneath its own pretence of revelation, is intolerable to me. It may be pride, and yet I think it may be because I have looked so long and anxiously myself. I have found only fainting glimpses of the thing I sought; and these have been so precious with sudden communion that I have striven to render back faithfully, with all the effort to make my gift my own, that which I have so wonderingly received.

And then I think that I deceive myself. Why should any one ask this from me?

I do not know; but I care deeply. Sometimes I believe they will; sometimes, as now, I do not believe at all. I have no wit nor cleverness. I feel alone, and it may be I write about my own soul to cover it with the love and affection which it seeks. But if they will not hear me, what shall I do? Will my search for freedom stay with me and I devote myself gladly? For myself! It should be enough to win one's own freedom .. But perhaps these freedoms are never won.

I grow weary of tormenting myself until I writhe in words over the page. Perhaps all that I write is false, because I force it. Perhaps I do no more than soil a thing that was pure in me. I do not believe it, because I dare not. If I cannot find myself thus, I shall not find myself at all.

"Morbid," — that is what it is called. "Morbid," with the

colour of death in its cheeks. Why, then, I am morbid, if not to expand freely into the life which surrounds me is morbid. Let it be that I am death by the side of that life; but that life may be death to mine. "Morbid," because I do not fit wholly and all the while. Then let me be morbid. At least my sin is not sickly and my fight no street-corner brawl. If I am morbid, the consensus of life is against me. If I were a hero, the odds would be heroic; but I am not a hero; I have said that I am a coward. It may be the odds are more heroic for that.

Puffed-up imagination again! The consensus of life — what ridiculous words! — does not even condescend to fight against me.

Strange how the meaning and zest will suddenly fade even out of my life! A moment comes when there is neither purpose nor value, and the only flicker of life that remains in me is the throb of the question: am I really a soul with the power to achieve a destiny, or just an atom, shaped by friction with other atoms, insentient and dull? Most of all that moment comes in the presence of other people. I want to speak and I cannot. Words seem to float like little motes idly down the air, shapes without meaning. And life then appears to me like an infinitely long grey avenue, lined with dusty trees, and I a traveller tired with the agony of my impatience to pass out of it. But I can make no headway: I remain imprisoned by the interminable vista. And the dusty greyness creeps also into my soul. It spreads like a deadly vapour over all my past, so that I can hardly believe that once the things which I remember were made alive by joy or sorrow. The words I have written are words and no more, so barren that I could weep for the bitterness of my own disillusion. There is nothing for me but to creep ingloriously out of the life which I meanly entered.

These are the hours which try my soul — the hours of utter unbelief, when it seems not that belief has failed me

suddenly, but that I never can have believed. Then I think that my courage and my confidence were no more than a dream, and I cannot even remember the emotion which I felt. I know that I felt it; but the knowledge is unreal.

For a week that depression and despair has not wholly left me, and now I wonder what may be the cause. It is plain.

All my activity is gathered into one part of itself, as though into one limb of my body all my blood and growing strength had been forced. Then the body would faint, be pale and sick with the burden of the limb's hypertrophy. So does the maintainence of my soul depend upon a harmony of all the free activities of a living man. That alone is freedom, and alone the condition of attaining some permanent spirit. Personal truth is the hypertrophied limb; it is the exaggeration of deliberate thought upon free living at the cost of free living. If the limb will be sound and whole that we may lean upon it, then it must be an harmonious part of the living whole which is the body. Therefore deliberate thought upon the soul must be controlled into its due place as a free activity of the free soul, else it saps and drains the channels of their blood. Its strength is the rapidly growing weakness of its fears; and because they are weakencd, its strength is empty wind, the dropsy of decay.

So the laborious definition of vague personal truth affects the soul. It weakens and exhausts; and the soul rejects that which honest thought discovered.

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