

instead of spoiling it, only enriched it for present feeling and marked his renewal as a thing substantial enough to share. It was with Waymarsh he should have shared it, and he was now accordingly taking from him something that was his due. He looked repeatedly at his watch, and when he had done so for the fifth time Miss Gostrey took him up.

“You’re doing something that you think not right.”

It so touched the place that he quite changed colour and his laugh grew almost awkward. ‘Am I enjoying it as much as that?’

“You’re not enjoying it, I think, so much as you ought.”

“I see”—he appeared thoughtfully to agree. “Great is my privilege.”

“Oh it’s not your privilege! It has nothing to do with me. It has to do with yourself. Your failure ’s general.”

“Ah there you are!” he laughed. “It’s the failure of Woollett. That’s general.”

“The failure to enjoy,” Miss Gostrey explained, “is what I mean.”

“Precisely. Woollett isn’t sure it ought to enjoy. If it were it would. But is hasn’t, poor thing,” Strether continued, “any one to show it how. It’s not like me. I have somebody.”

They had stopped, in the afternoon sunshine—constantly pausing in their stroll, for the sharper sense of what they saw—and Strether rested on one of the high sides of the old stony groove of the little rampart. He leaned back on this support with his face to the tower of the cathedral, now admirably commanded by their station, the high red-brown mass, square and subordinately spired and crocketed, retouched and restored, but charming to his long-sealed eyes and with the first swallows of the year weaving their flight all round it. Miss Gostrey lingered near him, full of an air, to which she more and more justified her right,

of understanding the effect of things. She quite concurred. "You've indeed somebody." And she added: "I wish you would let me show you how!"

"Oh, I'm afraid of you!" he cheerfully pleaded.

She kept on him a moment, through her glasses and through his own, a certain pleasant pointedness. "Ah no, you're not! You're not in the least, thank goodness! If you had been we shouldn't so soon have found ourselves here together. I think," she comfortably concluded, "you trust me."

"I think I do!—but that's exactly what I'm afraid of. I shouldn't mind if I didn't. It's falling thus in twenty minutes so utterly into your hands. I dare say," Strether continued, "it's a sort of thing you're thoroughly familiar with; but nothing more extraordinary has ever happened to me."

She watched him with all her kindness. "That means simply that you've recognised me—which is rather beautiful and rare. You see what I am." As on this, however, he protested, with a good-humoured headshake, a resignation of any such claim, she had a moment of explanation. "If you'll only come on further as you have come you'll at any rate make out. My own fate has been too many for me, and I've succumbed to it. I'm a general guide-o 'Europe,' don't you know? I wait for people—I put them through. I pick them up—I set them down. I'm a sort of superior 'courier-maid.' I'm a companion at large. I take people, as I've told you, about. I never sought it—it has come to me. It has been my fate, and one's fate one accepts. It's a dreadful thing to have to say, in so wicked a world, but. I verily believe that, such as you see me, there's nothing Z don't know. I know all the shops and the prices—but I know worse things still. I bear on my back the huge load of our national consciousness, or, in other words --for it comes to that--of our nation itself. Of what is our nation composed but of the men and women individually on my shoulders? I don't do it, you know,

for any particular advantage. *I* don't do it, for instancesome people do, you know-or money. ”

Strether could *only listen* and wonder and weigh his chance. “And yet, affected as you are then to so many of your clients, you can scarcely be said to do it for love.” He waited a moment. “How do we reward you?”

She had her own hesitation, but “You don't!” she *finally* returned, setting him again in motion. They went on, but in a few minutes, though while still *thinking over what she had said, he once more took out his watch; mechanically, unconsciously and if made nervous by the mere exhilaration of what struck him* as her strange and cynical wit. He looked at the hour without *seeing it, and then,* on something again said by his companion, had another pause. “You're really in terror of him. ”

He smiled a smile that he almost felt to be sickly. “Now you can see why *I'm afraid of you.*”

“*Because I've such illuminations?* Why they're *all for your help! It's* what *I* told you,” she added, “just now. You feel as if this were wrong.”

He fell back once more, settling himself against the parapet as if to hear more about it. “Then get me out!”

Her face fairly brightened for the joy of the appeal, but, as if it were a question of immediate action, she visibly considered, “Out of waiting for him?—of seeing him at all?”

“Oh no—*not that,*” said poor Strether, looking grave. “I've got to wait for *him* — and *I* want very much to see him. But out of the terror. You did put your *finger on it a few minutes ago. It's general, but it avails itself of particular occasions. That's what it's doing for me now. I'm always considering something else; something else, I mean, than the thing of the moment. The obsession of the*

other thing is the terror. I'm considering at present for instance something else than you."

She listened with charming earnestness. "Oh you oughtn't to do that!"

"It's what I admit. Make it then impossible."

She continued to think. "Is it really an "order" from you?—that I shall take the job? Will you give yourself up?"

Poor Strether heaved his sigh. "If I only could! But that's the deuce of it —that I never can. No—I can 't."

She wasn't, however, discouraged. "But you want to at least?"

"Oh unspeakably "

"Ah then, if you'll try!"—and she took over the job, as she had called it, on the spot. "Trust me!" she exclaimed; and the action of this, as they retraced their steps, was presently to make him pass his hand into her arm in the manner of a benign dependent paternal old person who wishes to be "nice" to a younger one. If he drew it out again indeed as they approached the inn this may have been because, after more talk had passed between them, the relation of age, or at least of experience—which, for that matter, had already played to and fro with some freedom affected him as incurring a readjustment. It was at all events perhaps lucky that they arrived in sufficiently separate fashion within range of the hotel—door. The young lady they had left in the glass cage watched as if she had come to await them on the threshold. At her side stood a person equally interested, by his attitude, in their return, and the effect of the sight of whom was instantly to determine for Strether another of those responsive arrests that we have had so repeatedly to note. He left it to Miss Gostrey to name, with the fine full bravado, as it almost struck him, of her "Mr. Waymarsh!" what was to have been, what -he more than ever felt as his short stare of suspended welcome took things in

-would have been, but for herself, his doom. *It* was already upon him even at that *distance*—*Mr. Waymarsh* was **for his** part joyless.

เนื้อความต่อไปนี้ตัดตอนมาจาก Book 5

On which Strether saw that Chad was again at hand, and he afterwards scarce knew, absurd as it may seem, what had then quickly occurred. The moment concerned him, he felt, more deeply than he could have explained, and he had a subsequent passage of speculation as to whether, on walking off with Chad, he hadn't looked either **pale** or red. The only thing he was clear about was that, luckily, nothing indiscreet had in fact **been** said, and that Chad himself was more than ever, in Miss *Barrace's* great sense, wonderful. *It* was **one of the connexions**—*though* really why it should be, after all, was none so apparent in which the whole change in him came out as most striking. Strether recalled as they approached the house that he had impressed him that first night as knowing how to enter a box. Well, he impressed him scarce less now as knowing how to make a presentation. It did something for Strether's own quality—marked it as estimated; so that our poor friend, conscious and passive, really seemed to feel himself quite handed over and delivered; absolutely, as he would have **said**, made a present of, given away. As they reached the house a young woman, about to **come forth, appeared, unaccompanied, on the steps; at the exchange with whom** of a word on Chad's part Strether immediately perceived that, obligingly, kindly, she was there to meet them. Chad had left her in the house, but she had afterwards come halfway and then the next moment had joined them in the garden. Her air **of** youth, for Strether, was at first almost disconcerting, while his second impression was, not less sharply, a degree of relief at there not having just

been, with the others, any freedom used about her. It was upon him at a touch that she was no subject for that, and meanwhile, on Chad's introducing him, she had spoken to him, very simply and gently, in an English clearly of the easiest to her, yet unlike any other he had ever heard. It wasn't as if she tried; nothing, he could see after they had been a few minutes together, was as if she tried; but her speech, charming correct and odd, was like a precaution against her passing for a Pole. There were precautions, he seemed indeed to see, only when there were really dangers.

*Later on he was to feel many more of them, but by that time he was to feel other things besides. She was dressed in black, but in black that struck him as light and transparent; she was exceedingly fair, and, though she was as markedly slim, her face had a roundness, with eyes far apart and a little strange. Her smile was natural and dim; her hat not extravagant; he had only perhaps a sense of the clink, beneath her fine black sleeves, of more gold bracelets and bangles than he had ever seen a lady wear. Chad was excellently free and light about their encounter; it was one of the occasions on which Strether most wished he himself might have arrived at such ease and such humour: "Here you are then, face to face at last; you're made for each other-vous **allez voir**;¹¹ and I bless you union." It was indeed, after he had gone off, as if he had been partly serious too. This latter motion had been determined by an enquiry from him about "Jeanne"; to which her mother had replied that she was probably still in the house with Miss Gostrey, to whom she had lately committed her. "Ah but you know," the young man had rejoined, "he must see her"; with which, while Strether pricked up his ears, he had started as if to bring her, leaving the other*

¹¹ You will see.

objects of his interest together. Strether wondered to find Miss Gostrey already involved, feeling that he missed a link; but feeling also, with small delay, how much he should like to talk with her of Madame de Vionnet on this basis of evidence.

The evidence as yet in truth was meagre; which, for that matter, was perhaps a little why his expectation had had a drop. There was somehow not quite a wealth in her; and a wealth was all that, in his simplicity, he had definitely prefigured. Still, it was too much to be sure already that there was but a poverty. They moved away from the *house*, and, with eyes on a bench at some distance, he proposed that they should sit down. “I’ve heard a great deal about you,” she said as they *went*; but he had an answer to it that made her stop short. “Well, about you, Madame de Vionnet, I’ve heard, I’m bound to say, almost *nothing*”—those struck *him* as the only *words* he himself could utter with any lucidity; conscious as he was, and as with more reason, of the determination *to be* in respect to the rest of his business perfectly plain and go perfectly straight. It hadn’t at any rate been in the least his idea *to spy on* Chad’s proper freedom. It was possibly, however, at this very instant and under the impression of Madame de Vionnet’s pause, that going straight began to announce itself as a matter for *care*. She had only after all to smile at him ever so *gently in* order to make him ask himself *if* he weren’t already going crooked. *It* might be going crooked *to* find it of a sudden just *only* clear that she intended very definitely to be what he would have called nice to him. This was what passed between them while, for another instant, they stood still; he couldn’t at least remember afterwards what else it might have been. The thing indeed really unmistakable was its rolling over him as a wave that he had been, in conditions incalculable and unimaginable, a subject of discussion. He had been, on some ground that concerned

her, answered for, which gave her an advantage he should never be able to match.

“Hasn ’t Miss Gostrey, ” she asked, “said a good word for me?”

What had struck him first was the way he was bracketed with that lady; and he wondered what account Chad would have given of their acquaintance. Something not as yet traceable, at all events, had obviously happened. “I didn’t even know of her knowing you.”

“Well, now she’ll tell you all. I’m so glad you’re in relation with her. ”

This was one of the things—the “all” Miss Gostrey would now tell him—that, with every deference to present preoccupation, was uppermost for Strether after they had taken their seat. One of the others was, at the end of five minutes, that she—oh incontestably, yes—differed less; differed, that is, scarcely at all—well, superficially speaking, from Mrs. Newsome or even from Mrs. Pocock. She was ever so much younger than the one and not so young as the other; but what was there in her, if anything, that would have made it impossible he should meet her at Woollett? And wherein was her talk during their moments on the bench together not the same as would have been found adequate for a Woollett garden-party?—unless perhaps truly in not being quite so bright. She observed to him that Mr. Newsome had, to her knowledge, taken extraordinary pleasure in his visit; but there was no good lady at Woollett who wouldn’t have been at least up to that. Was there in Chad, by chance, after all, deep down, a principle of aboriginal loyalty that had made him, for sentimental ends, attach himself to elements, happily encountered, that would remind him most of the old air and the old soil? Why accordingly be in a flutter-trether could even put it that way—about this unfamiliar phenomenon of the femme du monde? On these terms Mrs. Newsome herself was as much of one. Little Bilham verily had testified that they

came out, the ladies of the type, in close quarters; but it was just in these quarters now comparatively close-hat he felt Madame de Vionnet's common humanity. She did come out, and certainly to his relief, but she came out as the usual thing. There might be motives behind, but so could there often be even at Woollett. The only thing was that if she showed him she wished to like him—as the motives behind might conceivably prompt—it would possibly have been more thrilling for him that she should have shown as more vividly alien. Ah she was neither Turk nor Pole!—which would be indeed flat once more for Mrs. Newsome and Mrs. Pocock. A lady and two gentlemen had meanwhile, however, approached their bench, and this accident stayed for the time further developments.

They presently addressed his companion, the brilliant strangers; she rose to speak to them, and Strether noted how the escorted lady, though mature and by no means beautiful, had more of the bold high look, the range of expensive reference, that he had, as might have been said, made his plans for. Madame de Vionnet greeted her as “**Duchesse**” and was greeted in turn, while talk started in French, as “**Ma toute-belle,**”¹² little facts that had their due, their vivid interest for Strether, Madame de Vionnet didn't, none the less, introduce him—a note he was conscious of as false to the Woollett scale and the Woollett humanity; though it didn't prevent the Duchess, who struck him as confident and free, very much what he had obscurely supposed duchesses, from looking at him as straight and as hard-for it was hard—as if she would have liked, all the same, to know him. “Oh yes, my dear, it's all right, it's me; and who are you, with your interesting wrinkles and your most effective (is it the handsomest, is it the ugliest?) of

¹² My great beauty (lit.. my completely beautiful).

noses ? ” -some such loose handful of bright flowers she seemed, fragrantly enough, to fling at him. Strether almost wondered-t such a pace was he going if some divination of the influence of either party were what determined Madame de Vionnet’s abstention. One of the gentlemen, in’any case, succeeded in placing himself in close relation with our friend’s companion; a gentleman rather stout and importantly short, in a hat with a wonderful wide curl to its brim and a frock coat buttoned with an effect of superlative decision. His French had quickly turned to equal English, and it occurred to Strether that he might well be one of the ambassadors. His design was evidently to assert a claim to Madame de Vionnet’s undivided countenance, and he made it good in the course of a minute —led her away with a trick of three words; a trick played with a social art of which Strether, looking after them as the four, whose backs were now all turned, moved off, felt himself no master.

He sank again upon his bench and, while his eyes followed the party, reflected, as he had done before, on Chad’s strange communities. He sat there alone for five minutes, with plenty to think of; above all with his sense of having suddenly been dropped by a charming woman overlaid now by other impressions and in fact quite cleared and indifferent. He hadn’t yet had so quiet a surrender; he didn’t in the least care if nobody spoke to him more. He might have been, by his attitude, in for something of a march so broad that the want of ceremony with which he had just been used could fall into its place as but a minor incident of the procession. Besides, there would be incidents enough, as he felt when this term of contemplation was closed by the reappearance of little Bilham, who stood before him a moment with a suggestive “Well?” in which he saw himself reflected as disorganised, as possibly floored. He replied with a “Well!” intended to show that he wasn’t floored in the least. No indeed; he gave it out, as the

young man sat down beside him, that if, at the worst, he had been overturned at all, he had been overturned into the upper air, the subliner element with which he had an affinity and in which he might be trusted a while to float. It wasn't a descent to earth to say after an instant and in sustained response to the reference: "You're quite sure her husband's living?"

"Oh dear, yes."

"Ah then —!"

"Ah then what?"

Strether had after all to think. "Well, I'm sorry for them." But it didn't for the moment matter more than that. He assured his young friend he was quite content. They wouldn't stir; were all right as they were. He didn't want to be introduced; had been introduced already about as far as he could go. He had seen moreover an immensity; liked Gloriani, who, as Miss Barrace kept saying, 'was wonderful; had made out, he was sure, the half-dozen other men who were distinguished, the artists, the critics and oh the great dramatist—him it was easy to spot; but wanted--no, thanks, really--o talk with none of them; having nothing at all to say and finding it would do beautifully as it was; do beautifully because what it was--well, was just simply too late. And when after this little Bilham, submissive and responsive, but with an eye to the consolation nearest, easily threw of some "Better late than never!" all he got in return for it was a sharp "Better early than late!" This note indeed the next thing overflowed for Strether into a quiet stream of demonstration that as soon as he had let himself go he felt as the real relief. It had consciously gathered to a head, but the reservoir had filled sooner than he knew, and his companion's touch was to make the waters spread. There were some things that had to come in time if they were to

come at all. If they didn't come in time they were lost forever. It was the general sense of them that had overwhelmed him with its long slow rush.

"It's not too late for you, on any side, and you don't strike me as in danger of missing the train; besides which people can be in general pretty well trusted, of course—with the clock of their freedom ticking as loud as it seems to do here—to keep an eye on the fleeting hour. All the same don't forget that you're young—blessedly young: be glad of it on the contrary and live up to it. Live all you can; it's a mistake not to. It doesn't so much matter what you do in particular, so long as you have your life. If you haven't had that what have you had? This place and these impressions--mild as you may find them to wind a man up so; all my impressions of Chad and of people I've seen at his place--well, have had their abundant message for me, have just dropped that into my mind. I see it now. I haven't done so enough before--and now I'm old; too old at any rate for what I see. Oh I do see, at least; and more than you'd believe or I can express. It's too late. And it's as if the train had fairly waited at the station for me without my having had the gumption to know it was there. Now I hear its faint receding whistle miles and miles down the line. What one loses one loses; make no mistake about that. The affair--I mean the affair of life--couldn't, no doubt, have been different for me; for it's at the best a tin mould, either fluted and embossed, with ornamental excrescences, or else smooth and dreadfully plain, into which, a helpless jelly, one's consciousness is poured—so that one "takes" the form, as the great cook says, and is more or less compactly held by it: one lives in fine as one can. Still, one has the illusion of freedom; therefore don't be, like me, without the memory of that illusion. I was either, at the right time, too stupid or too intelligent to have it; I don't quite know which. Of course at present I'm a case of reaction against the mistake; and the voice of reaction.

should, no doubt, *always* be taken with an allowance. But that doesn't affect the point that the right time is now yours. *The* right time is any time that one is still so lucky as to have. You've plenty; that's the great thing; you're, as *I* say, damn you, so happily and hatefully young. Don't at *any* rate miss things *out of* stupidity. Of course *I* don't take you for a fool, or *I* shouldn't be addressing you thus awfully. Do what you like so long as you don't make my mistake. For it was a mistake. Live!" . . . Slowly and sociably, with full pauses and straight dashes, Strether had so delivered himself; holding little Billham from step to step deeply and gravely attentive. The end of all was that the young man had turned quite solemn, and that this was a contradiction *of* the innocent gaiety the speaker had wished *to promote*. *He watched for a moment the consequence of his words*, and then, laying a hand on his listener's knee and as if to end with the proper joke: "And now for the eye *I* shall keep on you!"

"Oh but *I* don't know that *I* want to be, at ***your age***, too different from you!"

"Ah prepare while you 're about it," *said* Strether, "to be more amusing."

Little *Billham* continued to think, but at last had a smile. "Well, you are *amusing*—*to me*."

"***Impayable***,¹³ as you say, no doubt. But what am *I* to *myself*?" Strether had risen with ***this***, giving his attention now to an encounter that, in the middle of the *garden*, was in the act of taking place between their host and the lady at whose side *Madame de Vionnet* had quitted him. This lady, ***who appeared*** within a few minutes to have left her friends, awaited *Gloriani's* eager approach with words on her lips that Strether couldn't catch, but of which her interesting witty

¹³ Priceless

face seemed to give him the echo. He was sure she was prompt and fine, but also that she had met her match, and he liked--in the light of what he was quite sure was the Duchess's latent insolence--the good humour with which the great artist asserted equal resources. Were they, this pair, of the "great world"?--and was he himself. for the moment and thus related to them by his observation, in it? Then there was something in the great world covertly tigerish, which came to him across the lawn and in the charming air as a waft from the jungle. Yet it made him admire most of the two, made him envy, the glossy male tiger, magnificently marked. These absurdities of the stirred sense, fruits of suggestion ripening on the instant, were all reflected in his next words to little Bilham. "I know--if we talk of that--whom I should enjoy being like!"

Little Bilham followed his eyes; but then as with a shade of knowing surprise: "Gloriani?"

Our friend had in fact already hesitated, though not on the hint of the companion's doubt, in which there were depths of critical reserve. He had just made out, in the now full picture, something and somebody else; another impression had been superimposed. A young girl in a white dress and a softly plumed white hat had suddenly come into view, and what was presently clear was that her course was toward them. What was clearer still was that the handsome young man at her side was Chad Newsome, and what was clearest of all was that she was therefore Mademoiselle de Vionnet, that she was unmistakably pretty--bright gentle shy happy wonderful--and that Chad now, with a consummate calculation of effect, was about to present her to his old friend's vision. What was clearest of all indeed was something much more than this, something at the single stroke of which--and wasn't it simply juxtaposition?--all vagueness vanished. It was the click of a spring--e saw the truth. He had by this time also

met Chad's look; there was more of it in that; and the truth, accordingly, so far as *Bilham's enquiry was concerned, had thrust in the answer*. "Oh Chad!"—it was that rare youth he should have enjoyed being "**like**." The virtuous attachment would be all there before him; the virtuous attachment would be in the very act of appeal for his blessing; Jeanne de Vionnet, this charming creature, would be—exquisitely, intensely *now—the* object of it. Chad brought her straight up to him, and Chad was, oh yes, at this moment—for the glory of *Woollett* or *whatever—* better still even than *Gloriani*. He had plucked this blossom; he had kept it overnight in water; and at last as he held it up to wonder he did enjoy his effect. That was why Strether *had* felt at first the breath of calculation—and why moreover, as he now *knew*, his look at the girl would be, for the young man, a sign of the latter's success. What young man had ever paraded about *that way*, without a reason, a maiden in her flower? And there was nothing *in* his reason at present *obscure*. *Her type sufficiently told of it--they wouldn't, they couldn't, want her to go to Woollett. Poor Woollett, and what if might miss!—though* brave Chad indeed too, and what it might gain! Brave Chad however had just *excellently spoken*. "*This is a good little friend of mine who knows all about you and has moreover a message for you. And this, my dear*"—he had turned to the *child herself—* "*is the best man in the world, who has it in his power to do a great deal for us and whom I want you to like and revere as nearly as possible as much as I do.*"

She stood there quite pink, a little frightened, prettier and prettier and not *a bit like her mother*. *There was in this last particular no resemblance but* that of *youth to youth; and here was in fact suddenly Strether's sharpest impression*. It went wondering, dazed, embarrassed, back to the woman he had just been talking with; it was a revelation in the light of which he already saw she would become

more interesting. So slim and fresh and fair, she had yet put forth this perfection; so that for really believing it of her, for seeing her to any such developed degree as a mother, comparison would be urgent. Well, what was it now but fairly thrust upon him? *“Mamma wishes me to tell you before we go,” the girl said, “that she hopes very much you ‘11 come to see us very soon. She has something important to say to you.”*

“She quite reproaches herself,” Chad helpfully explained: “you were interesting her so much when she accidentally suffered you to be interrupted.”

“Ah don ‘t mention it!” Strether murmured, looking kindly from one to the other and wondering at many things.

“And I’m to ask you for myself, ” Jeanne continued with her hands clasped together as if in some small learnt prayer- “I’m to ask you for myself if you won ‘t positively come. ”

*“Leave it to me, dear—I’ll take care of it!” Chad genially declared in answer to this, while Strether himself almost held his breath.’ What was in the girl was indeed too soft, too unknown for direct dealing; so that one could only gaze at it as at a picture, quite staying one’s own hand. But with Chad he was now on ground-had he could meet; so pleasant a confident in that and in everything did the young man freely exhale. There was the whole of a story in his tone to his companion, and he spoke indeed as if already of the family. It made Strether guess the more quickly what it might be about which Madame **de** Vionnet was so urgent. Having seen him then she had found him easy; she wished to have it out with him that some way for the young people must be discovered, some way that would not impose as a condition the transplantation of her daughter. He already saw himself discussing with this lady the attractions of Woollett as a residence for Chad’s companion. Was that youth going now to trust her with the affair—so*

that it would be after all with one of his "lady-friends" that his mother's missionary should be condemned to deal? It was quite as if for an instant the two men looked at each other on this question. But there was no mistaking at last Chad's pride in the display of such a connexion. This was what had made him so carry himself while, three minutes before, he was bringing it into view; what had caused his friend, first catching sight of him, to be so struck with his air. It was, in a word, just when he thus finally felt Chad putting things straight off on him that he envied him, as he had mentioned to little Bilham, most. The whole exhibition however was but a matter of three or four minutes, and the author of it had soon explained that, as Madame de Vionnet was immediately going "on," this could be for Jeanne but a snatch. They would all meet again soon, and Strether was meanwhile to stay and amuse himself—"I'll pick you up again in plenty of time." He took the girl off as he had brought her, and Strether, with the faint sweet foreignness of her "Au revoir, monsieur!" in his ears as a note almost unprecedented, watched them recede side by side and felt how, once more, her companion's relation to her got an accent from it. They disappeared among the others and apparently into the house; whereupon our friend turned round to give out to little Bilham the conviction of which he was full. But there was no little Bilham any more; little Bilham had within the few moments, for reasons of his own, proceeded further: a circumstance by which, in its order, Strether was also sensibly affected.

เนื้อความต่อไปนี้ตัดตอนมาจาก Book 11

He had taken the tram a few days after this from a station as well as to a station selected almost at random; such days, whatever should happen, were

numbered, and he had gone forth under the impulseartless enough, no doubt—to give the whole of one of them to that French ruralism, with its cool special green, into which he had hitherto looked only through the little oblong window of the picture-frame. It had been as yet for the most part but a land of fancy for him—the background of fiction, the medium of art, the nursery of letters; practically as distant as Greece, but practically also well-nigh as consecrated. Romance could weave itself, for Strether’s sense, out of elements mild enough; and even after what he had, as he ‘felt, lately “been through,” he could thrill a little at the chance of seeing something somewhere that would remind him of a certain small Lambinet¹⁴ that had charmed him, long years before, at a Boston dealer’s and that he had quite absurdly never forgotten. It had been offered, he remembered, at a price he had been instructed to believe the lowest ever named for a Lambinet, a price he had never felt so poor as on having to recognise, all the same, as beyond a dream of possibility. He had dreamed-ad turned and twisted possibilities for an hour: it had been the only adventure of his life in connexion with the purchase of a work of art. The adventure, it will be perceived, was modest; but the memory, beyond all reason and by some accident of association, was sweet. The little Lambinet abode with him as the picture he would have bought—he particular production that had made him for the moment overstep the modesty of nature. He was quite aware that if he were to see it again he should perhaps have a drop or a shock, and he never found himself wishing that the wheel of time would turn it up again, just as he had seen it in the

¹⁴ Emile Lambinet, a nineteenth-century French Romantic painter

*maroon-colored, sky-lighted inner shrine of Tremont Street.*¹⁵ *It would be a different thing, however, to see the remembered mixture resolved back into its elements—assist at the restoration to nature of the whole far-away hour: the dusty day in Boston, the background of the Fitchburg Depot, of the maroon-coloured sanctum, the special-green vision, the ridiculous price, the poplars, the willows, the rushes, the river, the sunny silvery sky, the shady woody horizon.*

*He observed in respect to his train almost no condition save that it should stop a few times after getting out of the banlieue,*¹⁶ *he threw himself on the general amiability of the day for the hint of where to alight. His theory of his excursion was that he could alight anywhere not nearer Paris than an hour's run—on catching a suggestion of the particular note required. It made its sign, the suggestion—eather, air, light, colour and his mood all favouring—at the end of Some eighty minutes; the train pulled up just at the right spot, and he found himself getting out as securely as if to keep an appointment. It will be felt of him that he could amuse himself, at his age, with very small things if it be again noted that his appointment was only with a superseded Boston fashion. He hadn't gone far without the quick confidence that it would be quite sufficiently kept. The oblong gilt frame disposed its enclosing lines; the poplars and willows, the reeds and rivet—a river of which he didn't know, and didn't want to know, the name—fell into a composition, full of felicity, within them; the sky was silver and turquoise and varnish; the village on the left was white and the church on the right was grey; it was all there, in short—it was what he wanted: it was Tremont*

¹⁵ A principle street in Boston and the location of at least one commercial gallery. The Fittchburg train station was located near by.

¹⁶ Suburb

Street, it was France, it was Lambinet. Moreover he **was freely** walking about **in** it. He did this last, for **an** hour, to **his** heart's content, making for the shady woody horizon and boring so **deep** into his impression and his **idleness** that he might fairly have got through them again and reached **the** maroon-colored wall. It was a wonder, **no** doubt, that the taste of idleness **for him** shouldn't need more time to **sweeten**; but it had in fact taken the few previous days; it had been sweetening **in** truth ever since the retreat **of the** Pockocks. **He** walked **and** walked **as if to show** himself **how** little he had now to do; he had nothing to do but turn **off** to some hillside where he might stretch himself **and** hear the poplars rustle, and **whence**—**in** the course of an afternoon so spent, **an** afternoon richly suffused too with the sense **of** a book in **his** pocket—he should sufficiently command the **scene to be** able to pick **out** just the right little rustic inn **for** an experiment in respect to dinner. There **was** a train back to **Paris** at 9.20, and **he** saw himself partaking, at the close of the day, **with the** enhancements **of** a coarse **white** cloth **and** a sanded floor, of something fried and felicitous, washed down with authentic wine; after which **he** might, **as** he liked, either stroll back to his station **in the** gloaming or propose **for the local carriole**¹⁷ and converse with his driver, a driver who naturally wouldn't fail **of** a stiff clean blouse, **of** a knitted nightcap and **of the genius of response**—**who**, in **fine**, would **sit on** the shafts, tell **him** what the French people **were** thinking, and **remind him, as indeed the whole episode would** incidentally do, of **Maupassant**.¹⁸ Strether heard **this lips, for the first time in** French **air, as this vision assumed consistency, emit sounds of expressive**

¹⁷ A small cart or carriage

¹⁸ In an 1888 essay on City de Maupassant (1850-1893), the great French short story writer and novelist, James

intention *without fear of his company. He had been afraid of Chad and of Maria and of Madame de Vionnet; he had been most of all afraid of Waymarsh, in whose presence, so far as they had mixed together in the light of the town, he had never without somehow paying for it aired either his vocabulary or his accent. He usually paid for it by meeting immediately afterwards Waymarsh's eye.*

Such were the liberties with which his fancy played after he had turned off to the hillside that did really and truly, as well as most amiably, await him beneath the poplars, the hillside that made him feel, for a murmurous couple of hours, how happy had been his thought. He had the sense of success, of a finer harmony in things; nothing but what had turned out as yet according to his plan. It most of all came home to him, as he lay on his back on the grass, that Sarah had really gone, that his tension was really relaxed; the peace diffused in these ideas might be delusive, but it hung about him none the less for the time. It fairly, for half an hour, sent him to sleep; he pulled his straw hat over his eyes—he had bought it the day before with a reminiscence of Waymarsh's and lost himself anew in Lambinet. It was as if he had found out he was tired—tired not from his walk, but from that inward exercise which had known, on the whole, for three months, so little intermission. That was it—when once they were off he had dropped; this moreover was what he had dropped to, and now he was touching bottom. He was kept luxuriously quiet, soothed and amused by the consciousness of what he had found at the end of his descent. It was very much what he had told Maria Gostrey he should like to stay on for, the hugely-distributed Paris of summer, alternately dazzling and dusky, with a weight lifted for him off its columns and cornices and with shade and air in the flutter of awnings as wide as avenues. It was present to him without attenuation that, reaching out, the day

after making the remark, for some proof of his freedom, he had gone that very afternoon to see Madame de Vionnet. He had gone again the next day but one, and the effect of the two visits, the after-sense of the couple of hours spent with her, was almost that of fulness and frequency. The brave intention of frequency, so great with him from the moment of his finding himself unjustly suspected at Woollett, had remained rather theoretic, and one of the things he could muse about under his poplars was the source of the special shyness that had still made him careful. He had surely got rid of it now, this special shyness; what had become of it if it hadn't precisely, within the week, rubbed off?

It struck him now in fact as sufficiently plain that if he had still been careful he had been so for a reason. He had really feared, in his behaviour, a lapse from good faith; if there was a danger of one's liking such a woman too much one's best safety was in waiting at least till one had the right to do so. In the light of the last few days the danger was fairly vivid; so that it was proportionately fortunate that the right was likewise established. It seemed to our friend that he had on each occasion profited to the utmost by the latter: how could he have done so more, he at all events asked himself, than in having immediately let her know that, if it was all the same to her, he preferred not to talk about anything tiresome? He had never in his life so sacrificed an armful of high interests as in that remark; he had never so prepared the way for the comparatively frivolous as in addressing it to Madame de Vionnet's intelligence. It hadn't been till later that he quite recalled how in conjuring away everything but the pleasant he had conjured away almost all they had hitherto talked about; it was not till later even that he remembered how, with their new tone, they hadn't so much as mentioned the name of Chad himself. One of the things that most lingered with him on his hillside was this delightful facility, with such a woman,

of arriving at a new tone; he thought, as he lay on his back, of all the tones she might make possible if one were to try her, and at any rate of the probability that one could trust her to fit them to occasions. He had wanted her to feel that, as he was disinterested now, so she herself should be, and she had showed she felt it, and he had showed he was grateful and it had been for all the world as if he were calling for the first time. They had had other, but irrelevant, meetings; *it was* quite as if, had they sooner known how much they really had in common, there were quantities of comparatively dull matters they might have skipped. Well, they were skipping them now, even to graceful gratitude, even to handsome “Don’t mention it!”—and *it was* amazing what *could still* come up *without reference to* what had been *going* on between them. *It* might have *been, on* analysis, nothing more than Shakespeare and the musical *glasses*, but it had served all the purpose of his appearing to have said to her: “Don’t like me, if it’s a question of liking me, for anything obvious and clumsy that *I’ve, as they call it, “done”* for you: like me—well, like me, hang *it*, for anything else you choose. So, by the *same* propriety, don’t be for me simply the person I’ve come to know through my awkward connexion with Chad—was ever anything, by the way, more awkward? Be for me, please, with all your admirable tact and trust, just whatever I may show you it’s a present pleasure to me to think you.” *It* had been a large indication *to meet; but if she hadn’t met it what had she done, and how had their* time together slipped along so smoothly, mild but not slow, and melting, *liquefying, into his happy illusion of idleness? He could recognize on the other* hand that he had probably not been without reason, *in* his prior, his restricted *state, for keeping an eye on his liability to lapse from good faith.*

He really continued in the picture—that being for himself *his* situation—all the rest of this rambling day; so that the charm was still, was indeed more than

ever upon him when, toward six o'clock, he found himself amicably engaged with a stout white-capped deep-voiced woman at the door of the auberge¹⁹ of the biggest village, a village that affected him as a thing of whiteness, blueness and crookedness, set in coppery green, and that had the river flowing behind or before it-one couldn't say which; at the bottom, in particular, of the inn-garden. He had had other adventures before this; had kept along the height, after shaking off slumber; had admired, had almost coveted, another small old church, all steep roof and dim state-color without and all whitewash and paper flowers within; had lost his way and had **found it again; had** conversed with **rustics** who struck him perhaps a little more as men of the world than he had expected; had acquired at a bound a fearless facility in French; had had, as the afternoon waned, a watery bock, all pale and Parisian, in the café of the furthest village, which was not the biggest; and had meanwhile not once overstepped the oblong gilt frame. The frame had drawn itself out for him, as much as you please; but that was **just** his luck. He had finally come down again to the valley, to keep within touch of stations and trains, turning his face to the quarter from which he had started; and thus it was that he had at last pulled up before the hostess of the Cheval Blanc,²⁰ who met him, with a rough readiness that was like the clatter of sabots over stones, on their common ground of a côtelette de veau à l'oseille²¹ and a subsequent lift. He had walked many miles and didn't know he was tired; but he still knew he was amused, and even that, though he had been alone all day, he had never yet so struck himself as engaged with others and in midstream of his

¹⁹ Inn

²⁰ White House

²¹ Veal cotlet with purée of sorrel

drama. It might have passed for finished, his drama, with its catastrophe all but reached: it had, however, none the less been vivid again for him as he thus gave it its fuller chance. He had only had to be at last well but of it to feel it, oddly enough, still going on.

For this had been all day at bottom the spell of the picture-hat it was essentially more than anything else a scene and a stage, that the very air of the play was in the rustle of the willows and the tone of the sky. The play and the characters had, without his knowing it till now, peopled all his space for him, and it seemed somehow quite happy that they should offer themselves, in the conditions so supplied, with a kind of inevitability. It was as if the conditions made them not only inevitable, but so much more nearly natural and right as that they were at least easier, pleasanter, to put up with. The conditions had nowhere so asserted their difference from those of Woollett as they appeared to him to assert it in the little court of the Cheval Blanc while he arranged with his hostess for a comfortable climax. They were few and simple, scant and humble, but they were the thing, as he would have called it, even to a greater degree than Madame de Vionnet's old high salon where the ghost of the Empire walked. "The" thing was the thing that implied the greatest number of other things of the sort he had had to tackle; and it was queer of course, but so it was—he implication here was complete. Not a single one of his observations but somehow fell into a place in it; not a breath of the cooler evening that wasn't somehow a syllable of the text. The text was simply, when condensed, that in these places such things were, and that if it was in them one elected to move about one had to make dne's account with what one lighted on. Meanwhile at all events it was enough that they did affect one—so far as the village aspect was concerned—s whiteness, crookedness and blueness set in coppery green; there being positively,

for that matter, an outer wall of the White Horse that was painted the most improbable shade. That was part of the amusement-s if to show that the fun was harmless; just as it was enough, further, that the picture and the play seemed supremely to melt together in the good woman's broad sketch of what she could do for her visitor's appetite. He felt *in short* a confidence, and it *was* general, and *it was all he wanted to feel*. It suffered no shock even on her mentioning that she had in fact just laid the cloth for two persons *who, unlike Monsieur*, had arrived by *the river—in* a boat *of their own*; *who had asked her, half an hour before*, what she could do for them, and had then paddled *away* to look at something a little further *up—from* which promenade they would presently return. Monsieur might meanwhile, if he liked, pass into the garden, such as it was, where she would serve him, should he wish *it—for* there were tables and benches in plenty a “bitter” before his repast. Here she would also report to him on the possibility of a conveyance to his station, and here *at* any rate he would have the *agrément*²² of the river.

It may be mentioned without delay that Monsieur had the agrément of everything, and in particular, for the next twenty minutes, of a small and primitive pavilion that, at the garden's edge, almost overhung the water, testifying, in its somewhat battered state, to much fond frequentation. It consisted of little more than a platform, slightly raised, with a couple of benches and a table, a protecting rail and a projecting roof; but it raked the full grey-blue stream, which, taking a turn a short distance above, passed out of sight to reappear much higher up; and it was clearly in esteemed requisition for Sundays and other feasts. Strether sat there and,.. though hungry, felt at peace,' the

²² *Pleasure*

confidence that had so gathered for him deepened with the lap of the water, the ripple of the surface, the rustle of the reeds on the opposite bank, the faint diffused coolness and the slight rock of a couple of small boats attached to a rough landing-place hard by. The valley on the further side was all copper-green level and glazed pearly sky, a sky hatched across with screens of trimmed trees, which looked flat, like espaliers; and though the rest of the village straggled away in the near quarter the view had an emptiness that made one of the boats suggestive. Such a river set one afloat almost before one could take up the oars—the idle play of which would be moreover the aid to the full impression. This perception went so far as to bring him to his feet; but that movement, in turn, made him feel afresh that he was tired, and while he leaned against a post and continued to look out he saw something that gave him a sharper arrest.

คำถาม

1. จงวิเคราะห์บทบาทของ มาเรีย กอสตริย์
2. ทำไมสเตทเธอร์จึงคิดว่าเซตมีความสัมพันธ์ฉันท์เพื่อนกับ มาตาม เดอ ว็อนเนตต์
3. ยุโรปมีบทบาทอย่างไรต่อทัศนคติของสเตทเธอร์
4. จุดสุดยอดของเรื่องในตอนแรกอยู่ในตอนไหน และทำไมจึงถือว่าเป็นเหตุการณ์นั้น เป็นจุดสุดยอดของเรื่อง
5. จุดสุดยอดของเรื่องในตอนหลังอยู่ในตอนไหน และทำไมจึงถือว่าเป็นเหตุการณ์นั้น เป็นจุดสุดยอดของเรื่อง
6. ทำไมสเตทเธอร์จึงเปลี่ยนบทบาทมาเป็น ‘ทูต’ ให้ มาตาม เดอ ว็อนเนตต์
7. ท่านคิดว่าสเตทเธอร์ตัดสินใจถูกหรือผิดที่ยอมกลับไปวุลเลตแบบ ‘มือเปล่า’
8. บทสนทนามีบทบาทอย่างไรในเรื่อง *The Ambassadors*
9. ภาษาที่ เฮนรี เจมส์ ใช้ในนวนิยายเรื่องนี้มีลักษณะอย่างไร
10. จงวิเคราะห์โครงเรื่องของ *The Ambassadors*