

The content of this fragment reminds one that in 1915 Katherine Mansfield made three trips to France to join her lover Francis Carco, and it is likely that this bit of scribble was a by-product of that situation. The name 'Max' is peripherally interesting in that she refers in a letter to her husband, in this period, to Max Jacob who was one of Beatrice Hastings' lovers. None of these pointers is conclusive but together they add up to a strong probability that *Toots* was written in 1915.

As with the earlier pieces the interest of *Toots* is mainly biographical, extending the picture of the family which we have already from the New Zealand short stories and other sources. The name 'Toots', on the surface so improbable, serves to emphasise the inconsequential nature of the mother's personality. The whole thing is sufficiently developed to give one a real sense of frustration on finding that it breaks off just at the point when Pip is about to make an observation on Laura. But clearly it died of asphyxiation, strangled by its author's failure to approach her material from the outside and treat it with sensitive restraint.

Margaret Scott

[*Radiana and Guido*]¹

SCENE: A little room with dull purple hangings. Four Roman candles set in heavy wrought-iron holders shed a pale light. Across the windows yellow curtains are hung, straight and fine. On a couch below the windows a woman is seated, holding up a little mirror to her face and shaking the petals of a yellow chrysanthemum over her hair.

Radiana: Ah! how beautiful. They are like little pieces of perfumed gold falling over my hair. They are like little drops of pure amber, falling falling into the darkness of my hair. They are like flakes of golden snow – summer snow. (She leans back against the dull purple cushions.) O I am wrapt in the perfume of the chrysanthemums. The air is full of the perfume. It is as though there had been a dead body in the room. It is the body of Summer who is lying dead in the room, and all her beautiful gold is spent. My fingers burn with the scent of her dead body. O, I thirst, I thirst. My soul is like a great stretch of sand on which the sun has shone all the long day – it is dried up, parched, hot. It is waiting for the fierce waves to beat upon it, to hold it in a green strong embrace.

(Enter Guido)

Guido: *Radiana*, *Radiana*. No – stir not. Ah! how beautiful you are – golden and white like the heart of a water lily, and the petals in your hair are like the little stars in the dark night sweetness. Your face in the depths of your hair is like a pale flower in a deep forest. Never have I