

## Introductory Note

standard of self-criticism was continually changing, and changing always in the direction of a greater rigour. In writings which I thought perfect she, with her keener insight, discerned unworthy elements. Now that I am forced to depend upon my own sole judgment, it has seemed to me that there is not a scrap of her writing—not even the tiniest fragment—during this final period which does not bear the visible impress of her exquisite individuality and her creative power.

On October 27, 1921, soon after she had finished and sent to her publisher the stories which compose “The Garden Party,” she wrote the following plan of her new book in her journal. (The letters L. and N.Z. mean that the stories were to have London or New Zealand for their setting.)

### STORIES FOR MY NEW BOOK.

- N.Z. *Honesty*: The Doctor, Arnold Cullen and his wife Lydia, and Archie the friend.
- L. *Second Violin*: Alexander and his friend in the train. Spring... wet lilac... spouting rain.
- N.Z. *Six Years After*: A wife and husband on board a steamer. They see someone who reminds them. The cold buttons.

x

## Introductory Note

- L. *Lives Like Logs of Driftwood*: This wants to be a long, very well written story. The men are important, especially the lesser man. It wants a great deal of working... newspaper office.
- N.Z. *A Weak Heart*: Roddie on his bike in the evening, with his hands in his pockets, *doing marvels* by that dark tree at the corner of May Street.
- L. *Widowed*: Geraldine and Jimmie, a house overlooking Sloane Street and Square. Wearing those buds at her breast. “Married or not married”... From autumn to spring.
- N.Z. *Our Maude*: Husband and wife play duets: And a one a two a three a one a two three one! His white waistcoats. Wifeling and Mahub! What a girl you are!
- N.Z. *At Karori*: The little lamp. I seen it. And then they were silent.
- N.Z. *Aunt Anne*: Her life with the Tannhäuser overture.

Of these stories only the one called *At Karori* and subsequently entitled *The Doll's House* was finished, three days later, on October 30. Of some of the remaining stories there are considerable fragments, of three of them I have so far

xi

John Middleton Murry's prefatory notes to Katherine Mansfield's posthumous collection, *The Dove's Nest* (1923), reveal a writer immersed in two spaces and characters in two times. Fortunate characters have both past and future, but many may only move backward out of the present. But like Mansfield herself, these losses and backward glances, these forward glances to a future of loss, allow us as readers to form *en dehors garde*. Our task is thus to re-edit, in a variety of media and of professional and personal contexts, to supplement Murry's flawed work with a better backwards glance to propel a next generation of feminist modernist studies.