

do you remember, sweetheart, those talks underneath the "Seven Sisters"?' Need he have asked the question? How those golden hours had lingered in her memory!

Fate was kind that afternoon, and more than an hour passed before they heard wheels on the drive. Mr. Ashton went out into the hall to meet them. Perhaps—who knows?—some word passed between him and Vera, for as she came into the room her pretty eyes were full of tears.

'Oh, Ray—my own darling Ray!' But Rancee could only cling to her in silence.

'You are glad?' she whispered presently.

'Glad! I have never been more pleased with anything in my life; and Heber will be overjoyed too. But, Ray—you must not mind my saying it now—we have always expected it. The last time you were here together Heber said to me afterwards, "Ashton is just wrapped up in the girl—he never loses a word or a look—but he thinks it too soon to speak; he will take his own time for that."'

'Oh, hush, they are coming in, Vera.' And Rancee started away like a frightened fawn. But she coloured beautifully as Mr. Ashton came up to her.

'I think we had better tell them about it, dear,' he said in a low voice. 'But I rather suspect it is an open secret with Maxwell.'

THE END