

*The Feast of St. John Baptist*

out of dim distant sight, prosaic shreds of catalogued description, a vividly creating mind, and — to be candid — the absolute necessity of amusing myself in the country. But the Woman I am to see to-morrow? Is she the Image? I shall know in the first moment of our encounter. If she is, all is well for me — for her it will be just a question of her dower of heavenly venturousness. If she is not — in my humble judgment, you, Ambrose Caverly, having put the thir with so excessive a prettiness, shall for you art's sake perish — you must, in short, if you would end this thing in the manner (creditable to yourself, Ambrose!) in which it has hitherto been conducted, willy-nilly, hot or cold, confirmed in divine dreams or slapped in the face by disenchanting fact — within a brief space of time, propose marriage to this lady. If there be any other course,