

advantage he envied me; but our merriment was soon checked by the thought of the consequences of our visit to his wife and daughter, upon whom his wrath would naturally fall. In fact we were highly uncomfortable the whole of the way home, and with this was mixed a considerable share of annoyance at our happy party being disturbed in so sudden a way. It was only some time after,—for the groom was unable to bring us the promised information for more than a week,—that we heard that Mr. Marston had managed to transact his business in London in a few hours, and had returned to the Hall the same day, making his way thereafter to the Bower. His anger was fearful, and for some weeks he would never allow his wife or daughter to drive out of the park, but insisted on their confining themselves to the garden when they wished to breathe the air. He soon found out, of course, who were the two “scoundrels,” as he called us, who had dared to penetrate as far as the Hall and into the very Bower, and wrote my mother a most furious letter, stating that if he ever caught me near the bounds of Marston Hall, he would have me flogged by his keepers. Naturally we laughed at these threats, but the evil was done, and I had now no chance of seeing Julia. To make matters worse, the very servants were forbidden to hold any intercourse with ours or the Westfields’ on pain of immediate dismissal, and as he refused to listen to the entreaties of your father, who called on him as soon as he heard of the affair, I took the advice of my friends and started for a tour through Sweden and Norway. My intention was, as you know, to spend the months of August and September there, and then travel south, and winter at Rome or Florence; indeed, I had already proceeded as far as Nice, when, two days ago, I received a letter which caused me to pack up in very great haste, and speed to Paris, for the purpose of crossing over to England as soon as I could get my business here settled. I knew you were somewhere in the provinces, and almost expected to see you here. I got driven hither after leaving my luggage at the hotel, saw a light shining through the chinks of the window, learnt from the *concierge* that you had been settled here for three days and were quite alone, so up I came, and here we are!