

She, too, was curious concerning mademoiselle and her past, but with a very different curiosity from Virginia's, and she determined to learn the story of the Dalahaides and their château above the Valley of the Shadow. She did not, however, wish to appear curious before Virginia or her brother, and hoped that the American girl, with her wonted audacity, would at once approach the topic when they had rejoined Sir Roger Broom and the Marchese Loria. But Virginia asked no questions, contenting herself with answering those of her cousin, which for some reason confined themselves entirely to the château. Lady Gardiner was sure, since he admitted having known the Dalahaides, that, being human, Roger would have liked to hear something of the girl who lived there like Mariana in the Moated Grange; and it would have been interesting to know why he refrained from mentioning her.

As they rode through the valley, dark and sad now, in the chill of its early dusk, she brought her horse to Virginia's side in so narrow a defile of the road that Roger, who was with the girl, dropped behind.