

though Farquhar's look still questioned him. "Pshaw!" said he, laughing frankly, "I am a fool, indeed, to let my hot temper come between me and my best friend. Yes, George, it is true."

"And she loves you?"

"Is that so incredible to you? Are you so greatly surprised? Your amazement speaks well for our behaviour. Lovers are not generally so difficult of detection."

Mr. Farquhar suddenly swerved aside from his companion, and stooped to pick up a stone. He seemed to expend much energy in flinging it into the midst of the dark foliage of an *arbor vitæ* on the lower lawn. Vaughan laughed at him, and at the whimsical interruption to their discourse.

"You are half boy yet at heart, George; but be your full age just at present. I need your most mature wisdom."

Mr. Farquhar again turned to him, with a face that was pale and grave enough effectually to scare away all jestings.

"On such subjects of discussion as the present a man's own honest feeling is his best wisdom."

"So I think," said Vaughan, quickly. "I am aware that, in a merely wordly sense, my best, and easiest, and wisest plan would be at once to tell my uncle of my unfortunate involvements. I know the extent of the result. He would be angry—forgive—and pay. But other considerations intervene. I have told you what they are. Caroline——"

"Miss Maturin loves you, you say?"

"You seem oddly incredulous of the fact. Just use your perceptive organs the next time you see us together."

Mr. Farquhar's eyes blazed on him for a moment, in sudden and fierce disdain. With an effort he controlled it.

"There is another side to the question, which apparently does not occur to you," he went on. "Do you love her, Vaughan?—do you love Miss Maturin?"

"I cannot conceive why you should doubt that, either. I have known her from childhood; she is beautiful, intelligent——"

"I asked you a question—will you answer it straightforwardly? There is no time for quibbling——"

"And no desire on my part," declared Vaughan, with an air of injured candour. "Of course I love her, as a man *should* love the woman he looks on as his future wife."

Mr. Farquhar made no reply. They walked on.

"It is not necessary that I should say more on such a point," Vaughan resumed; "the dearest feelings of a man's heart are not commonly the oftenest on his lips."