

full of sweet-briar, nodded to him politely, and excused herself at once to arrange her flowers. This took her some time. Mrs. Carruth entertained him placidly. Helen's eyes saw but did not seem to see the slightest motion of his nervous hand, each tone of expression that ran over his sensitive face. He had looked so eager and happy when she came; almost boyishly thirsting for that little pleasure! But when she saw the light die from his eyes, when she saw that hurt look which she knew quite well, settle about the lower part of his face, Helen was ashamed of herself.

"Mother," said Helen, "I wonder if Mr. Bayard wouldn't like to have us show him the clam study?"

"Your father said he should be at work," replied Mrs. Carruth. "I don't know that we ought to disturb him; do you think we ought, Helen?"

"He was whittling a piece of mahogany for the head of a cane when I left him," said Helen irreverently; "he stole it out of the cabin of that old wreck in the inner harbour. Do you think a Professor of Theology could be forgiven for sneak-thieving, Mr. Bayard?"

She abandoned the idea of visiting the clam study, however, and seated herself with calm graciousness by their visitor. Mrs. Carruth having strolled away presently to keep some elderly tryst among the piazza ladies of the hotel, the young people were left alone.

They sat for a moment in sudden, rather awkward silence. Bayard looked at her without any attempt to speak. She answered his silent question by saying, abruptly:

"You know you'll have to forgive me, whether you want to or not."

"Forgive you?"

"Why, for being vexed. I was a little, at first. But I needn't have been such a schoolgirl as to show it."

"If you would be so kind as to tell me what I can possibly have done to—deserve your displeasure—" began Bayard helplessly.

"If a man doesn't understand without being told, I've noticed he can't understand when he is told. . . . Why didn't you wait till next fall before you came to see us, Mr. Bayard?"

"Oh!" said Bayard. His happy look came back to his tired face, as if a magic-lantern had shifted a beautiful slide. "Is that it?"

He laughed delightedly. "Why, I suppose I must have seemed rude—neglectful, at any rate. But I've

noticed that if a woman doesn't understand without being told, she makes up for it by her readiness of comprehension when she is told."

"What a nice, red coal!" smiled Helen. "The top of my head feels quite warm. Dear me! Isn't there a spot burned bald?"

She felt anxiously of her pretty hair. "Come over and see my work," said Bayard, "and you'll never ask me again why I didn't do anything I—would so much rather do."

"I never asked you before!" flashed Helen.

"You did me an honour that I shall remember," said Bayard gravely.

"Oh, please don't! Pray forget it as soon as you can," cried Helen, with red cheeks.

"You don't know, you see you can't know, how a man situated as I am prizes the signs of the simplest human friendship that is sincere and womanly."

So said Bayard quietly. Helen drew a little quick breath. She seemed reconciled now, to herself, and to him. They began to talk at once, quite fast and freely. Afterwards he tried to remember what it had all been about, but he found it not easy; the evening passed on wings; he felt the atmosphere of this little pleasure with a delight impossible to be understood by a man who had not known and graced society and left it. Now and then he spoke of his work, but Helen did not exhibit a marked interest in the subject.

Bayard drew a modest inference that he had obtruded his own affairs with the obtuseness common to missionaries and other zealots; he roused himself to disused conversation, and to the forgotten topics of the world. It did not occur to him that this was precisely what she intended. The young lady drew him out, and drew him on. They chatted about Cesarea and Beacon Street, about art, clubs, magazine literature, and the symphony concerts, like the ordinary social human being.

"You see I have been out of it so long!" pleaded Bayard.

"Not yet a year," corrected Helen.

"It seems to me twenty," he mused.

"You don't go to see your uncle, yet?"

"I met him once or twice downtown. I have not been home yet. But that would make no difference. I have no leisure for—all these little things."

He said the words with such an utter