

"And why?"

"It's the first time he ever went out that door without being willing to tell where he was going."

"And what does that signify?"

"Oh, Robert, such a question! Do you forget how you felt when you began to come and see me?"

"Yes, but, mother, that's a good while ago now."

"Nevertheless it's not a thing a man should forget."

The minister made no reply to this last shot, but went on with his writing, while his wife turned back to her work. He gave the matter no further thought, but she ceased not to turn it over in her mind. A woman's curiosity, and a mother's solicitude, made her keenly desirous to know who was the object of this mysterious solitary drive, and she made up her mind to wheedle it out of her son. A little while after dark he returned, and after supper sat for awhile with the family, and then went to his own room, saying he had a letter or two to write. The mother saw that there was some new interest at work in his mind, and her curiosity became all the more eager. Passing his room after the rest of the family had settled down for the night, she saw a gleam of light through the chinks, and, tapping at the door, entered the chamber.

"Well, Fergie," she said, "I've come to hid ye good-night."

"Yes, mother," he replied, "it'll not be long now that you can do that. Two days more, and I'm off to Montreal."

"That's true," she said. "And what kind of a day have ye had? Did ye have a pleasant drive?"