

cause I am, and Marjorie—you should have been first, dear—because, as papa says, ‘the party will be incomplete without Marjorie.’ I wish you could have seen Marie’s face then,” and Erica laughed at the remembrance.

Marjorie flushed.

“It is a pretty picture. I only wish I could bring up the rear—any place to be in it.”

“Now, Marjorie, Marie said you wouldn’t afford it, but papa said it would not exceed your rent-roll. Pardon me, Marjorie, if I seem impertinent, but the lessor of Fern Villa should be able to take a continental tour. Can’t I tempt you? Think of that Eden—not the American Eden of poor Martin Chuzzlewit, but the Eden of Europe, your longed-for Germany.”

“But I have plans with which this trip will interfere, Erica, and Germany can be left for another year at least. It will seem strange to have us all leave poor Frau Kercher; she will be disconsolate. Mary’s husband comes for her to-morrow, you will be gone soon, and I think, dearest, I will run down to Hillsvew and cheer Mrs. Manning in Jack’s absence.”