

"O! you look like it. There's a peculiar sonnet-ish appearance in the eyes of persons under such circumstances. You'll see it in me presently. I already begin to feel in blank verse."

Caroline laughed lightly. Mr. Farquhar was silent.

"I could make a poem about you, Carry, this minute," Vaughan went on, as if restlessly bent on talking. "You look completely poetic, in that white robe, with the blue shawl wrapped about you, and that fair young crescent behind your head. I mean the moon, which evidently counts it a destiny enough to 'fill the ambition of a moderate moon'—to make an ornament for your back hair. I think I must get you a moon of your own, Carry, in mother-of-pearl."

"You are very kind," she responded, in the same gay tone.

Not a suspicion of embarrassment clouded her smile; then she looked at her watch, and exclaiming at the lateness of the hour, she fled across the grass, and disappeared inside the study window.

The two young men walked on for some little time in silence; then Vaughan, with some slight hesitation, commenced by saying, "I have been thinking, George, that the full disclosure I intended making to my uncle had, after all, better be postponed."

"Your reasons," his friend rejoined, after a somewhat blank pause.

"Nay, don't think me capricious or obstinate," said Vaughan, with a frankness that it was very hard to resist. "I know you have my promise and if you still claim it, it shall be done; but——"

"The arguments that were cogent a month since are surely not less so now. Time only increases your difficulty. For what reason did I accompany you to Redwood, but to make your confession of extravagance and debt easier by coming through a third party——"

"For whose name my uncle has an unusual respect," put in Vaughan. "Don't suppose me so cowardly as to have placed a duty upon other shoulders, merely because they were not mine. I knew well that from your lips the old man would receive patiently what otherwise might at once exasperate him beyond reason."

"Then why postpone it till I am no longer here to fulfil the office?"

"But you will be here again, often, I hope. And you will not count your visit valueless, even though its primary motive should fail?"

Mr. Farquhar made no immediate reply. With his eyes bent downwards, he appeared to be musing rather intently.

"Well, Vaughan, give me your reasons for delay."

"My uncle is evidently not in his usual health and spirits just now. He tells me he has had some heavy losses—some speculations in which he was concerned have failed. He received the tidings only this morning. You see, therefore, that to add to this—would——"