

ing the others still out on the lawn. At Blanche's suggestion they wandered down to the riverside, and walked through the meadows thickly starred with daisies and buttercups. The sun was near to its setting, and had fired the thin clouds in the West with living rose. Thrushes threw their song abroad into the air with all the lavishness of mating time. Leaves lisped in the cool shadow of trees, and the grasses were long round the strolling feet. The willows by the water were enmeshed in a green net of leaves, and the beautiful river swung on its way in great sheets of mirrored sky. They had passed through the lawn and over the nearer fields in busy talk; but here a silence fell.

"Ah, it is spring!" said Percy, at length. "Spring, and the promise of all good things. I read the Song of Solomon last night, Blanche. Do you know it? 'For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing birds is come.' They are singing; they are singing in my heart."

Percy paused.

"It has rung in my head all day," he said; "it seems to have been written for me. May I go on, Blanche?"

Blanche raised her eyes to his, but did not speak.

"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs," said Percy very low, "and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."