

"You look quite radiant," he remarked, with an odd, half-discontented inflection in his voice; "I suppose you have had what young ladies, always call 'a most delightful evening.' Haven't you, now?"

"Indeed, yes," she replied, heartily; "and I was thinking," she added, after a brief pause, "that you also liked it. I hoped so."

"One must do at Rome as the Romans do," he answered, carelessly; "it is absurd to stand aloof in the midst of an assemblage of this kind, looking a grave and wise reproach to all the foolery that is going on, like my friend there. Poor George! I suppose he feels in a ball-room very much as you would feel at a smoking party."

"O, Vaughan! is he that sort of person?"

"You simple child! 'That sort of person' is nothing so very unusual or dreadful, is it? Men are not angels, Carry, and they *will* smoke cigars, and play billiards and *écarté*, and all sorts of uncelestial things. Your pleasures are not their pleasures: your tastes are widely different from theirs. They care nothing for what makes the glory of life to you. Their hopes, and aims, and wishes, and enjoyments, are utterly opposed to yours. Trust me, you have very little in common with them."

Caroline, in the midst of some dismay, derived comfort in noticing that he said "them," and not "us." Very wistfully she looked down at her fast fading flowers.

"But Vaughan, all the men in the world are not like that?"

"Very nearly all," he said, decidedly. "If you knew as much of the world as I do—But women never do know anything of life as it really is, happily for them, and for us, too. Where should we come for fresh air, if it were otherwise?" And he smiled down at Caroline the old, pleasant smile.

Bewildered and rather troubled as she felt, she could not resist the cheering influence of Vaughan's look.

"I am glad I am only a girl," said she, laughing, "in spite of my old ambitions. Don't you remember, Vaughan, years ago, how I used to chafe over my feminine privations? But it was not because of such delights as you tell me of that I longed for manhood. I had much nobler ideas: chivalry, heroism, and romance, were in my mind."

"I know. You were always such a dreamer," he said, with an admiring glance at her animated face.

"O, Vaughan, do *you* say it was only a dream to imagine a man might be noble?"

"No—not exactly. But there are different ways of being noble, you know. There are no crusades now, Carry; the age of chivalry is past. What opportunities are there for heroism in the nineteenth century? As