

# MOUNT EDEN.

## CHAPTER I.

### EVELYN.

SHE was not a pretty girl by any manner of means, at all events at that period of her life. Her most striking features were a large and somewhat heavy nose, and a wide mouth. But her chin was firm and well moulded, and she had a pair of large liquid eyes, set in a noble forehead. Her hair—of a reddish tinge, and of which she possessed an unusual quantity—was all pushed off her face in a most unbecoming fashion, and her plain, black dress was relieved by nothing more ornamental than a frill of common lace about the throat. Yet there was nothing ordinary about her, unless it were the look of extreme weariness with which she surveyed the scene before her. It was evening, at the close of one of the hottest days in July, and she was leaning with both elbows on the sill of her bedroom window, trying to inhale a breath of fresh air, and looking expectantly up the street as she did so. Such a bedroom as it was, too! An attic at the very top of a dingy lodging-house in a back street of Liverpool, with a sloping roof that concentrated all the sun's rays, and made it like an oven at that time of the year. Whitewashed walls that offered no relief to the wearied eye; a small iron bedstead, a strip of carpet, a common deal washstand and table—these composed the luxuries of Evelyn's sleeping apartment. In the ceiling was a trap-door that led out upon the roof of the house, and had been placed there in case of fire. Evelyn often looked at it, and wished she could get through and sit upon the house-top, and feel the air circling all around her. Once she had mounted on a chair and slipped the bolt and lifted the trap-door, but the dirt and