

"Now, Robert, I understand your motive in not telling me all this. My father would blame Harry very much for being in debt, first to you, and then again to some one else, in order to pay. Still it would be better he should know than accuse you of so much a worse fault. Do let me go up and tell him."

"Oh, no! perhaps Harry himself may, but I never shall."

"He will not be back to-night, and is to be all to-morrow on this boating excursion."

"And I must start by the next train for home. Please don't say anything about it to him when he comes back. I am sure he will clear me if he can; you know how good-natured Harry is. Now good bye, Florry, and thanks for not thinking badly of me."

That evening Robert arrived at home; Lucy ran joyfully to welcome his return, but soon her pleasure was turned into pain when the story of his dismissal and its disgraceful cause were told.

Mrs. Manvers was too ill to bear the excitement of such tidings, and she thought that her son had come to see her for a short time, and they did not tell her otherwise. But things could not go on in this way. Robert must not remain a burden to those so little able to bear any addition to their cares; therefore, having no hope of obtaining a situation in the country without his uncle's recommendation, he resolved to try his fortune abroad. One week longer he lingered in expectation that Harry might speak to his father and the mystery be cleared up; but days went by and no letter arrived. Had Florry forgotten him? or was she forbidden to write? And Harry, good-natured Harry! had he allowed his friend to remain under such a charge without saying a word to clear his character? He knew Harry to be more kind-hearted than high-principled, still he clung to the hope that generosity would lead him to speak the