

"It's quite true, miss. Dead waste of money. It has never been used, I'll swear."

"No, Mr. Vine, never," said Madelaine, smiling now.

"Ah, you need not show your teeth at me because you're so proud they're white. Lots of the fisher-girls have got better. That's right, shut your lips up, and listen. What I've got to say is this ; if I see any more of that nonsense there'll be an explosion."

"I don't know what you mean," said Madelaine, colouring more deeply.

"Yes, you do, miss. I saw Harry put his arm round your waist, and I won't have it. What's your father thinking about? Why, that boy's no more fit to be your husband than that great, ugly, long brown-bearded Scotchman who poisons the air with his copper mine, is to be Louie's."

"Uncle, you are beyond bearing to-day."

"Am I? Well then be off. But you mind, Miss Maddy, I won't have it. You'll be silly enough to marry some day, but when you do, you shall marry a man, not a feather-headed young ass, with no more brains than that bass. Ah, I've got you this time, have I?"

He had thrown in again, and this time struck and hooked a large fish, whose struggles he watched with grim satisfaction, till he drew it gasping and quivering on to the rock—a fine bass, whose silver sides glistened like those of a salmon, and whose sharp back fin stood up ready to cut the unwitting hand.

"Bad for him, Louie," said the old man with a laugh ; "but one must have dinners, eh? What a countenance!" he continued, holding up his fish, "puts me in mind of that fellow you have up at the house, what's his name, Priddle, Fiddle?"

"Pradelle, uncle."

"Ah, Pradelle. Of course he's going back too."

"Yes, uncle."

"Don't like him," continued Uncle Luke, rebaiting quickly and throwing out ; "that fellow has got scoundrel written in his face."

"For shame! Mr. Vine," said Madelaine, laughing. "Mr. Pradelle is very gentlemanly and pleasant."

"Good-looking scoundrels always are, my dear. But he don't want you. I watched him. Going to throw over the Scotchman and take to Miss Louie?"