

a heavy, sombre-clouded November morning as ever dawned in sluggish mists.

"In the afternoon——" began Caroline, wistfully.

"You forget, my dear, that in November there is no such season as 'afternoon.' No; a walk on the terrace is the utmost you'll get after two o'clock."

"You must have your ramble alone, then. It's a pity, I should have liked it so much."

"I'll tell you what I shall do. I thought we would go together; but it will be quite as well for me to get it over by myself. I'll go and call on Miss Kendal."

"Ah, do!" she cried, eagerly, delighted at his voluntary proposal. "Take her my love, and say I shall come to see her, and make acquaintance with Madame de Vigny, to-morrow, if I can. Perhaps, though, they would come here this evening."

"O, don't ask them," said Vaughan, hastily; "let us at least have our evenings to ourselves."

"Unsociable!" smilingly she answered. "If you would only give me a proper description of the stranger lady, perhaps my impatience might be controlled. But you are as vague and unsatisfactory as—as an oracle."

He glanced at her. She was laughing, in utter simplicity; and he laughed too.

"Well, then, I'll go, and entertain you at dinner-time with an account of my adventures—shall I?"

"That will be charming! I must go to my uncle now. And you will be off to Beacon's Cottage soon, I suppose? Good-by!" She was going.

"Stop!" Vaughan cried. She lingered. "I say," he began, with a curious hesitation, "shall I—shall I have to endure the ordeal of—of congratulations and so forth up there? Do they know——"

She coloured, perhaps because he was looking at her so earnestly.

"I told Miss Kendal," she said, uttering the words quickly, as if not without effort. Vaughan looked away, strode to the window with his hands in his pockets. However, the next minute he laughed lightly.

"What a fool a man is sometimes! Why should I care? What would it matter to me if all the children in the parish ran after me, calling out, 'He's going to be married!' Eh, Carry?"

"I should say it would be unpleasant, at least. I don't think you need fear any such *éclat*. My uncle did not wish it—our engagement," bravely spoken out, "to be talked over by the neighbourhood; and Miss Kendal, knowing his wish, is the last person to mention the fact again."

"Like himself, like *yourself* too, Carry!" cried Vaughan, with a won-

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