

a—a happiness of my own, and it won't make any difference in our friendship, but I wanted you to know it."

In a moment Miss Deborah's suggestion was a certainty to Lois. She clasped her hands tight around the handle of her grass basket; Gifford should not see them tremble. "I'm sure I'll be glad to hear anything that makes you happy."

Her voice had a dull sound in her own ears.

"Helen put it into my head to tell you," Gifford went on nervously. "I hope you won't feel that I am not keeping my word"—

She held her white chin a little higher. "I don't know of any 'word,' as you call it, that there is for you to keep Gifford."

"Why, that I would not trouble you, you know, Lois," he faltered. "Have you forgotten?"

"What!" Lois exclaimed, with a start, and a thrill in her voice.

"But I am sure," he said hurriedly, "it won't make you unhappy just to know that it is still an inspiration in my life, and that it always will be, and that love, no matter if"—

"Oh, wait a minute, Giff!" Lois cried, her eyes shining like stars through sudden tears, and her breath quick. "I—I—why, don't you know, I was to—don't you remember—my promise?"

"Lois!" he said, almost in a whisper. He dropped the bay's rein, and came and took her hand, his own trembling,

"I know what you were going to say," she began, her face turned away so that he could only see the blush which had crept up to her temple, "but I"—He waited, but she did not go on. Then he suddenly took her in his arms and kissed her without a word; and Max, and the horse, and the bob-white looked on with no surprise, for after all it was only part of the morning, and the sunrise, and Nature herself.

"And to think that it is I!" Lois said a minute afterward. "Why, who else could it be?" cried Gifford rapturously.

But Lois shook her head; even in her joy she was ashamed of herself. "I won't even remember it," she thought.

Of course there were many explanations. Each was astonished at the other for not having understood; but Lois's confession of her promise to Mrs. Forsythe made all quite clear,