

"Perhaps you don't deserve a more liberal income," said Pauline. Then she re-addressed Mrs. Dares. "I want to ask you," she proceeded, with a shy kind of venture in her tone, "if you will kindly loan me your visiting-book for a little while."

"My visiting-book?" murmured Mrs. Dares. Then she slowly shook her head, while the pale girl at the desk knitted her brows perplexedly, as though she had encountered some tantalizing foreign word. "I would gladly lend it if I had one," Mrs. Dares went on; "but I possess no such article."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Pauline, with an involuntary surprise that instantly afterward she regretted as uncivil. "You *have* none!"

But Mrs. Dares did not seem to detect the least incivility in Pauline's amazement.

"No, my dear Miss Varick, I have no need of a visiting-book, for I have no time to visit."

"But you surely have some sort of list, have you not?" now inquired Kindelon.

Mrs. Dares lightly touched her forehead. "Only here in my memory," she said, "and that is decidedly an imperfect list. My guests understand that to be invited to one of my evenings is to be invited to all. I suppose that in the fashionable world," she proceeded, fixing her great dark eyes on Pauline, "it is wholly different. There matters of this sort are managed with much ceremony, no doubt."

"With much trivial ceremony," said Pauline. "A little scrap of paste-board there represents an individuality—and in just as efficient manner as if it were truly the person represented. To be in society, as it is called, is to receive a perpetual shower of cards. I strongly doubt if many people ever care to meet in a truly social way those whose company they pretend to solicit. There are few more perfect mockeries, in that most false and mocking life, than the ordinary visit of etiquette." Pauline here gave a little meaning smile as she briefly paused. "But I suppose you will understand, Mrs. Dares," she continued, "that I regret your having no regular list. I wanted to borrow it—and with what purpose I am sure you can readily imagine."

"Yes," was the reply. "My daughter Cora shall prepare you one, however. She has an admirable memory. If she fails in the matter of addresses, there is the directory as a help, you know. And so your idea about the *salon* is unchanged?"

"It is unalterable," said Pauline, with a laugh. "But I hate so to trouble your daughter."

"She will not think it any trouble," said Kindelon, quickly.

Pauline looked at him with a slight elevation of the brows. "You speak confidently for Miss Cora," she said.

Kindelon lifted one hand, and waved it a trifle embarrassedly. "Oh, I have always found her so accommodating," he answered.

"Yes, Cora is always glad to please those whom she likes," said Mrs. Dares.

A little later Pauline and Kindelon took leave of their hostess. They had been driven to Spruce Street in the carriage of the former, and as they quitted the huge building in which Mrs. Dares's tiny sanctum was situated, Kindelon said to his companion: "You shall return home at once?"

Pauline gave a careless laugh. She looked about her at all the commercial hurry and bustle of the placarded, vehicle-thronged street. "I have nowhere else to go just at present," she said. "Not that I should not like to stay down town, as you call it, a little longer. The noise and activity please me. . . . 'Oh, by the way,' she added, 'did you not say that you must repair to your office?'"

"The *Asteroid* imperatively claims me," said Kindelon, taking out his watch. "Only twelve o'clock," he proceeded; "I thought it later. Well, I have at least an hour at your service still. Have you any commands?"

"Where on earth could we pass your hour of leisure?" said Pauline. "It would probably not be proper if I accompanied you into the office of the *Asteroid*."

"It would be sadly dull."

"Then I will drive up town after I have left you there."

"Why not remain *down* town, since the change pleases you?"

"Driving aimlessly about for a whole hour?"

"By no means. I have an idea of what we might do. I think you might not find the idea at all disagreeable. If you will permit, I will give your footman an order, and plan for you a little surprise."

"Do so, by all means," said Pauline, lightsomely, entering the carriage. "I throw myself upon your mercy and your protection."

Kindelon soon afterwards seated himself at her side, and the carriage was immediately borne into the clamorous region of what we term lower Broadway.

"I hope I shall like your surprise," said Pauline, as she leaned back against the cushions, not knowing how pretty she looked in her patrician elegance of garb and person. "But we will not talk of it; I might guess what it is if we did, and that would spoil all. My faith in you shall be blind and unquestioning, and I shall expect a proportionately rich reward. . . . What gulfs of difference lie between that interesting little Mrs. Dares and most of women whom I have met! People tell us that we must travel to see life. I begin to think that one great city like New York can give us the most majestic experience, if only we know how to receive it. Take my aunt Cynthia Poughkeepsie, for example, and compare her with Mrs. Dares! A whole continent seems to lie between them, and yet they are continually living at scarcely a stone's-throw apart."

Kindelon gave a brisk, acquiescent nod.

"True enough," he said. "Travel shows us only the outsides of men and women. We go abroad to discover better what profits of observation lie at home. . . ."

The carriage at length stopped.

"Is my surprise all ready to burst upon me?" asked Pauline, at this point.

"Yes. Its explosion is now imminent," said Kindelon, with dry solemnity of accent.

Pauline, after she had alighted, surveyed her surroundings for a moment, and then said:

"I knew we were approaching the Battery, but I did not suppose you meant to stop there. And why *have* you stopped, pray?"

Kindelon pointed toward a distant flash of water glimpsed between the nude black boughs of many high trees. "You can't think what a delightful stroll we could take over yonder," he said, "along the esplanade. The carriage could wait here for us, you know."

"Certainly," acceded Pauline.

They soon entered the noble park lying on their right. It was a day of unusual warmth for that wintry season, but the air freshened and sharpened as they drew further seaward. There are many New Yorkers to whom our beautiful Battery is but a name, and Pauline was one of them. As she neared the rotund wooden building of Castle Garden, a wholly novel and unexpected sight awaited her. Not long ago one of the great ocean-steamer had discharged here many German immigrants, and some of these had come forth from the big sea-fronting structure beyond, to meet the stares of that dingy, unkempt rabble which always collects, on such occasions, about its doorways. Pauline and Kindelon paused to watch the poor dazed-looking creatures, with their pinched, vacuous faces, their timid miens, their coarse, dirty bundles. The women mostly had blonde braids of hair matted in close coils against the backs of their heads; they wore no bonnets, and one or two of them led a bewildered, dull-eyed child by the hand, while one or two more clasped infants to their breasts, wrapped in soiled shawls. The men had a spare, haggard, slavish demeanour; the liberal air and sun, the very amplitude and brilliancy of sky and water, seemed to cow and depress them; they slunk instead of walking; there was something in their visages of an animal suggestion; they did not appear entirely human, and made you think of the mythic combinations between man and brute.

"They are Germans, I suppose," said Kindelon to Pauline; "or perhaps they hail from some of the Austrian provinces. Many of my own country people, the Irish, are not much less shocking to behold when they first land here."

"These do not shock me," said Pauline; "they sadden me. They look as if they had not wit enough to understand whither they had come, but quite enough to feel alarmed and distrustful of their present environment."

"This drama of immigration is constantly unfolding itself here, day after day," answered Kindelon. "It surely has its mournful side, but you, as an American, ought by all means to discern its bright one. These poor souls are the social refuse of Europe; they are the pathetic fugitives from vile and time-honored abuses; they are the dreary consequences of kingdoms and empires. Their state is almost brutish, as you see; they don't think themselves half as far above the beasts as you think them, depend upon it. They have had manhood and womanhood crushed into the dust for generations. It is as much their hereditary instinct to fawn and crawl as it is for a dog to bark or a cat to lap milk. They represent the enlightened and thrifty peasantry overseas. Bah! how it sickens a man to consider that because a few insolent kings must have their hands kissed and their pride of rule glutted, millions of their people are degraded into such doltish burlesques upon humanity! But I mentioned the bright side of this question from the American standpoint."

"Yes," said Pauline, quickly, lifting her face to his. "I hope it is really a bright side."

"It is—very. America receives these pitiful wretches, and after a few short months they are regenerated, transformed. There has never, in the history of the world, been a nation of the same magnificent hospitality as this. Before such droves of deplorable beings any other nation would shut her ports or arm her barriers, in strong affright. But America (which I have always thought a much more terse and expressive name than the United States) does nothing of the sort. With a superb kindness, which has behind it a sense of unexampled power, she bids them all welcome. And in a little while they breathe her vitalizing air with a new and splendid result. They forget the soldiers who kicked them, the tyrants who made them shoulder muskets in the defence of thrones, the taxes wrung from their scant wages that princes might dance and feast. They forget all this gross despotism; they begin to live; their very frames and features change; their miserable past is like a broken fetter, flung gladly away. And America does all this for them—this, which no other country has done or can do!"

He spoke with a fine heat, an impressive enthusiasm. Pauline, standing beside him, had earnestly fixed her look upon his handsome, virile face, noting the spark that pierced his light-blue eyes, below their black gloss of lashes, and the little sensitive tremor that disturbed his nostril. She had never felt more swayed by his force of personality than now. She had never felt more keenly than now that his manful countenance and shape were both fit accompaniments of an important and robust nature.

"And what does America really do with these poor, maltreated creatures, after having greeted and domesticated them?" came her next words, filled with an appealing sincerity of utterance.

Something appeared suddenly to have changed Kindelon's mood. He laughed shortly, and half turned away.

"Oh," he said, in wholly altered voice, "if they are Irish she sometimes makes Tammany politicians of them, and if they are German she sometimes turns them into howling socialists."