

from an unsuspecting heart. It came to Lucinda, in the bitter desert of her unhappiness, as a mirage of the Sahara that is all unlike the cheats that went before it; and is, this time for certain, sweet water and green fields. And even as the parched traveller welcomes it for the sheer joy of believing them true, so her soul welcomed what it had not the courage to doubt.

"Oh, Oliver—Oliver!" she cried out into the middle of his passionate discourse. "The crime was mine—the crime was mine! And, oh me!—the coward that I was, to shift the guilt on thee to spare myself! Oh, my love, it is I that should be asking you to pardon *me*. Pardon me now, my dear, my dear, and help me to bear my life—for it is bitter to live and know . . . and know . . ." She shrank from saying roundly that she knew herself guilty of her father's death.

Oliver flinched from the torrent of her remorse and self-accusation. But a woman's fancies must be humoured. If, now, he could only think of something Biblical to say, solemnly! It would seal the compact of a peace negotiation—help the ship, as it were, into safe waters. Then there would be an end of this sort of thing. Was old Ralph the only man that had ever been killed in a duel?

One or two memories of Scripture floated hazily in Oliver's mind. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," would sound well, but Oliver was uncertain of the context. Neither did it seem to him reassuring. "Joy in Heaven over the sinner that repenteth" was more so, but—he could not have said why!—it seemed somehow to disclaim his own guilt. No—that line would *not* be safe! Why not resort to mere sincerity? It would be the safest shift, surely!

"What—my Lucy! Art thou to answer for thy father's death? Out upon it! No—no! Let him who sows reap. As to the guilt of it—to my thinking, the guilt lay in the