

RUNNING WATER

plexity which was evident in Hilary Chayne. Chayne stood a little aloof, looking from Sylvia's face to the face of her father, in doubt whither the talk was leading. Sylvia, on the other hand, recognized each sentence which her father spoke as the embodiment of a thought with which she was herself familiar.

"Well, then, here 's a definite thing, an influence most likely, a characteristic most certainly, and not of your making! One out of how many influences, characteristics which are part of you but not of your making! But we can lay our finger on it. Well, it is a pleasant and a pretty quality—this dream of yours, Sylvia—yes, a very pleasant one to be born with. But suppose that instead of that dream you had been born with a vice, an instinct of crime, of sin, would you have been any the more responsible for it? If you are not responsible for the good thing, are you responsible for the bad? An awkward question, Sylvia—awkward enough to teach you to go warily in your judgments."

"Yes," said Sylvia. "I was amongst the fortunate. I don't deny it."

"But that 's not all," and as Chayne moved restively, Garratt Skinner waved an indulgent hand.

"I don't expect you, Captain Chayne, to take an interest in these problems. For a military man, discipline and the penal code are the obvious unalterable solutions. But it is possible that I may never see my daughter again and—I am speaking to her"; and he went back to the old vexed question.