

to limp up and down in old days? . . . Oh, curse that dream! . . .

Never mind the dream—have done with it! . . .

Yes!—that was Lucinda. Lucinda in the lightest robe an anticipated hot day dictates—muslin or fine lawn at the heaviest. She was leaning on the stone balustrade skirting the steps from the upper terrace, disappointing with her fan the sun-glare that had found its way through a flowering arbutus to kiss her, gazing along the broad walk Sir Oliver had just passed over. A few minutes sooner, and she would have crossed his path. He was glad she had not. Anything was better than to meet her unprepared.

As she stood there watching for him, and he knew what her great black eyes would have looked like had he met her, what her soft hand would have felt like in his own, her soft lips upon his cheek, he said to himself that this girl was worthy to be loved, if ever woman was. He did not add, "Worthy of the other sort of Love, as well as mine," because he knew nothing of that variety—only his own. Not an hour had he passed with her without taking in vain the sacred name of Love—a Divinity whose groves had no path for such as he, whose shrine he had never seen. But the word on his lips had not chimed true with the sound in her ears. And yet neither knew it! Each kept a flavour for the word apart, and neither tasted from the other's dish. Do not peer into the unholy caverns of his mind—dwell in the garden of hers, wild and disorderly perhaps, but still a garden.

He wondered at himself that he should be so solicitous to delay speech with her, if only for a minute—for a second! He actually walked along the skirting turf of the flower-bed, to be noiseless, that those eyes should remain turned from him as long as possible. Yet to how little purpose! The time must come.