

"That's not fair," replied the girl. "Besides, if it were, who has helped to spoil me? I *will* buy an olive grove, and you shall see if I tire of it. Come, let's ride up the valley, and find out if there are any for sale. It looks heavenly cool, after this heat."

"You'll soon discover that it's too cool," said the Italian, in perfect English. "The sun is only in these valleys for a few hours, and it's gone for the day now. Besides, there's nothing interesting here. One sees the best from where we stand."

Virginia Beverly turned her eyes upon him, and let them dwell on his face questioningly. "Of course, you must know every inch of this country," she said, "as you used to live just across the Italian border."

For once he did not answer her look. "I haven't spent much time here for several years. Paris has absorbed me," he said evasively. "One forgets a good deal; but if you want to see a really charming valley, we had better go further on. Then I think I can show you one."

Virginia's pretty brows, which were many shades darker than her hair, drew together.