

"Yes," returned Richard, "very lately."

"Ah!" said Mr. Grey, "perhaps he'll come up to-night?"

"I fear not," was the reply.

"You *fear* not, Mr. Maldon! Why do you fear not? Is anything the matter?"

"Well, the truth is," said Richard, bursting at once into business, "I have only just left him. He's in a little trouble; very slight, I assure you!—To-morrow, I hope, will set all to rights."

"Where, where is he, Mr. Maldon?" said the father, dropping his cup. "Is he ill? has he had an accident?"

"A slight one," replied Richard. "A blow on the forehead, that's all—nothing serious. He will be well in a day or two!"

"But why didn't he come here? Why does he keep away? Why didn't you bring him with you?" said the mother, clutching Richard's arm.

"Well, the truth is, he couldn't well come. He's in custody!"