

"The philosophy of the desert," she commented smiling. "You are living in the desert even when you are here. This is a dream; the desert and Egypt only are real."

"That is true, I think. I seem sometimes like a sojourner here, like a spirit 'revisiting the scenes of life and time.'" He laughed boyishly.

"Yet you are happy here. I understand now why and how you are what you are. Even I that have been here so short a time feel the influence upon me. I breathe an air that, somehow, seems a native air. The spirit of my Quaker grandmother revives in me. Sometimes I sit hours thinking, scarcely stirring; and I believe I know now how people might speak to each other without words. Your Uncle Benn and you—it was so with you, was it not? You heard his voice speaking to you sometimes; you understood what he meant to say to you? You told me so long ago."

David inclined his head. "I heard him speak as one might speak through a closed door. Sometimes, too, in the desert I have heard Faith speak to me."

"And your grandfather?"

"Never my grandfather—never. It would seem as though, in my thoughts, I could never reach him; as though masses of opaque things lay between. Yet he and I—there is love between us. I don't know why I never hear him."

"Tell me of your childhood, of your mother. I have seen her grave under the ash by the Meeting-house, but I want to know of her from you."

"Has not Faith told you?"

"We have only talked of the present. I could not ask her; but I can ask you. I want to know of your mother and you together."