

suming that she will remain constant if she is what you describe in your letter."

"She is a thousand times more than that. You have never seen her equal."

"Well, if you intend to impeach my ideas and experience of female beauty, my testy cousin, I shall retort by saying that your enthusiasm betrays inexperience. But I will allow she is as beautiful as you say. You are an artist; you are of gentle blood, although pride and integrity are all you have left. Beauty is a hard task-master, and can not dine and dress upon an artist's enthusiasm. Besides, dear Win., what do you know about the ancestors of this beautiful wretch? If you should find a diamond by the roadside in the laurentian formation, you would conclude that it was an alien to the place; and so, when remarkable beauty is found amid such surroundings, it is well to see whether there is not something beyond a mere mesalliance between patrician and plebian. And again, if it is a beautiful model you want"—as I said this I glanced at the covered easel—"you can get plenty without marrying them."

"I can afford to be generous and indifferent to your badinage, considering how little you know of the facts; but if, after you have seen Olive and learned all I know, you repeat language similar to this, you will be my enemy instead of my cousin."

Not wishing to prolong a conversation which was likely to leave wounds, and through curiosity to see the object of his love, I declined Winthrop's invitation to share his supper and returned to the hotel. Winthrop's letter had invested it with peculiar interest, and I was disappointed to find what looked more like an old, dilapidated barn, spruced up with blue paint. Along the front and over the sidewalk projected a decaying porch, whose outer supports, half whittled away by idlers, seemed to lean compulsorily as if staggering under their burthen. As I penetrated the dingy office, with its low ceiling and uneven floor, I was greeted by the faint odors of the kitchen, which seemed to suffer reinforcement three times a day without impairing their individual qualities. I went into the dining room and was seated at the table kept for transients, where extra dishes were kept and red napkins gave way to dingy white ones. A freckle-faced girl, with the shamrock in her brogue, came to wait upon me. Before she returned with my order I heard a sound as of someone walking softly, and looking up I saw a vision of beauty, which I knew was Olive. To say I was surprised would but faintly describe the degree of my astonishment. I was so amazed at her beauty that I betrayed the emotion in my look, which she interpreted as a signal to herself, and gliding up to the side of my chair, in a voice strikingly in contrast with the other's, said—

"Did you wish anything?"

"A glass of water, please."

She brought it quickly, but without apparent haste, and then she floated away, as it were, to wait upon someone else. Every moment, almost, she was all over the room, speaking a word to this one, giving another a smile, but always with such a lofty mien that I saw no attempt at familiarity or rudeness. There was a certain nobleness in her bearing that exempted her from the coarse jests and conversational license which many men feel at liberty to indulge in the presence of waiter girls. I shall make no effort to describe her personal appearance, for it would be impossible to add anything to the portrait as drawn by the pen of one whose eyes were rendered doubly keen by love.

Being weary with travel and excitement, I retired early; but not to gain refreshing slumber. At some time during the night I began to dream, at first shadowy nothings, which by degrees grew into vivid pictures that followed each other in consecutive order of development. At last, after I had seemingly traveled through a varied succession of marvelous adventures, I seemed about to go over an immense bridge, whose construction bore a resemblance to one I am familiar with in real life. Beneath its lofty spans flowed a dreadful river—of blood. Its gory surface rolled on with a hideous, half-human motion, and from the glassy sheen of half-curdled spots the sun blinked at me like the fiery eye of some infernal deity, while a sickening odor rose and almost dragged me down with the might of its horrible oppression. Next it seemed as if my cousin was about to cross this bridge in advance of me; and looking ahead of where he walked, I saw the pathway in a state of constant change, as if parts of the floor were being lifted out and shifted here and there by invisible hands. To attempt to cross it was almost certain death. I shouted his name, and awoke in an agony of fright, with drops of sweat standing on my face. I leaped out of bed, and seizing my pencil and paper, which I always have as regularly at my bedside as some persons a glass of water, I hastily wrote a few words which I sealed in an envelope, and partially dressing myself I found my way to the office. A young man was dozing in a large easy chair beside a dying fire. I roused him and bade him take the letter to the party addressed, at Mrs. Ellis's boarding house. He grumbled out some kind of a refusal. I handed him a piece of money.

"It is important," I said, "I wish you to go at once."

Wonderingly and with a stupid air he made ready and started. As he slammed the door I seemed to waken from a reverie. I glanced at the clock over