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The Undiscovered Country.
Coud we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,
Where lie those happier hills and meadows
low—
Ah! if beyond the spirit's almost civil
Aught of the country could we surely know,
Who would not go?

Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,
Or catch betimes, with watchful eyes and
clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us—
With one rapt moment given to see and
hear,

Ah! who would fear?

We're quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely;
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,
To gaze in eyes that were love-only—
This weary mortal coil, were we quite sure,
Who would endure?

MABEL MOORE'S STRATEGEM.

It was almost like a bit of Persian poetry, that little commentary at Baywater, "the green fragrance, and soft, delicious murmur of leaves." And Mabel Moore herself looked not unlike a Persian enchantress, as she stood there leaning one hand on a marble vase, with the gold of the acacia plumed hardly brighter than her hair, and a quiver in the heavy white lids that hid her deep blue eyes. She was tall, and finely formed, with very regular features, cheeks tinged with a faint color, and an unconscious *hauteur* in the poise of her slender throat and shoulders. Mabel Moore was born to be an heiress, and very gracefully she fulfilled the mission of her sunny life.

She was not alone, however, in the flowery fragrance of the twilight conservatory. Ernest Beckford was leaning against the doopost, twisting and untwisting a long spray of jasmino with a sort of impatient rapidity. He was a tall, manly fellow, with bright auburn hair, and a face that you were involuntarily compelled to respect and like.

"Mabel," he said, almost passionately, "do you know that you are asking impossibilities?"

"Am I?"

"I cannot go to Australia without you."

"You can, Ernest, and you will."

"I'm always thinking, only think of it—a year's exile from you."

"Will it be any easier for me to endure, Ernest?" she asked, calmly.

"Sometimes, I fancy, Mabel," he responded, impudently, "that you don't care for me, else you would never be so willing to let me go."

"Ernest!"

"My dearest, I know I am unjust; but—"

"Now," said Mabel, "let me understand just what you wish me to do in this matter."

"I want you to marry me the day after to-morrow, and go out to Australia with me in the ship that sails on Saturday."

"A very reasonable wish," said Mabel, laughing. "But, Ernest, you know I will ne'er marry you while your mother refuses her sanction and approbation to the match."

"She does not know you, Mabel."

"That makes no difference. She shall never enter a family where I am not welcomed by every one of its members."

"But just consider how unreasonable you are, my own darling, and how utterly and entirely groundless are my mother's objections."

"She fancies me a hollow, heartless woman of the world, does she not? She is unwilling to trust her son's happiness in the keeping of a coquette who knows nothing but Italian songs and French witticisms."

"Mabel, I am sorry I ever allowed you to read that unreasonable letter."

"But I am glad. No, Ernest, I have too much pride and dignity to marry you unless your mother gives her free and full consent."

"Then you do not love me, Mabel."

"I do love you, Ernest Beckford, better than I like to acknowledge to myself."

"Mabel," he urged, tenderly, "let us cut this Gordian knot by the exercise of our own free will. Become my wife; give me the right to take you with me on this long, long journey."

Mabel Moore shook her head.

"Let me wait and see what time may bring forth," she said, archly. "And now leave me; remember that the ship sails on Saturday."

"I can't possibly go in that vessel," said Ernest; "I've many things to do."

"But if you do not on Saturday you will be obliged to witanother fortuitous, and your business is so important over there—"

"Yes, I know, but—"

"I must get that companion for my mother—she will be entirely alone."

Mrs. Carter told me she knew some one who would take the situation, and I shall have to go over to Clapham to see her about it to-morrow."

"Don't let that detain you, Ernest. I think I know of a young lady who would make an excellent companion, and I will send her to Beckfordville."

"Can she read aloud, and has she patience and forbearance, and will she be as meek as Moses?"

"I am sure she will try."

"Send her, then. But, Mabel—"

"It strikes me you are anxious to hurry me off next Saturday."

"Ernest," she said, in a voice that quivered a little, in spite of all her self-control, "you are misjudging me. I want to do your duty—to go and attend to the affairs of your poor uncle, whose reason has deserted him. And more than this, I want you to learn life's lesson of patience and endurance. The sunshine will come at last, if you can only wait unrepiningly."

"Little prophecies," said Ernest, drawing her fondly towards him, "I accept your anguishes, and I'll bear up as manfully as human nature will allow. No one ought to be disengaged who is sure of your love. But, oh, my darling, how often I shall remember this sunset, and your sweet face turned towards mine!"

"Do you think I shall ever forget it? Only wait, Ernest, and all will come right in God's own time," she answered, with her hand in his. And thus they parted.

"Going out of town, Miss Mabel? The pretty lady's maid stood aghast in the occupation of putting away the lace in a satin lined box of veined sandal wood. Yes. Get my trunks ready, Mildred."

"And when do we start, miss?" "I will not take you with me, Mildred."

"Not take me, Miss Mabel! And who is to arrange your hair and take care of your dresses?"

"I, myself."

"I choose to go alone, Mildred," said the young lady, a little imperatively. "Take away the silks and grenades; I shall only require the muslins and one or two light wrappers."

"Miss Mabel!" exclaimed the surprised lady's maid, holding up both hands in hopeless bewilderment, "where can you be going?"

"To seek my fate, Mildred," said Mabel, in a tone that was a curious intermingling of jest and earnest. "There—now leave me to myself."

"What is it?" said Mrs. Beckford, somewhat curtly.

"If you please, madam, I am anxious to come as a companion."

"Who sent you?" said the lady, surveying the large blue eyes and golden bands of smoothly brushed hair rather curiously.

"I learnt from a lady of your acquaintance that you wished a companion, and I should like to take the situation."

"Hum-m-m," said the old lady.

"Edith Moore?" Got any relations to—ah! at Baywater, I mean?" demanded the inquisitive, sharply.

"No, ma'am. I am alone in the world."

"I'm glad of that," murmured Mrs. Beckford. "I couldn't stand any one belonging to the guitar playing girl who—but never mind that just now. What are your references?"

Edith Moore drew a letter or two from her traveling bag.

"So Mrs. Carter, of Clapham, knows you, eh?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well," commented the matron, glancing over the notes, "these recommendations seem very satisfactory—I don't know—but that you may come and stay. The only objection I can see is that you're too pretty, and I don't think you are really to blame for that. Take off your things."

And Mrs. Beckford melted straightway before the pleasing sunshine of the blue eyes.

"I always wanted a daughter," she said; "but I couldn't bear the idea of Mabel Moore, the Baywater heiress."

"But you will love little Edith, who came to be your companion."

"I suppose I ought to yield you for deceiving me," said the old lady; "but I—I couldn't help loving you if I were to try ever so hard, and that's the truth of the matter. There, Ernest, take her, and I will ring and tell Thomas he may serve up dinner."

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