

06

thanks banner

Free printable to create a book page
thanksgiving banner



stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! the Lord made it—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand that always fetches the top of the market. You see nobody can quite touch us in quality, because nobody has just such another hillside. See! It spreads in a big half moon. There are seventy-five acres planted. We need not go high. The early peaches, there at the top, went to market three months back. Look down and along these rows, though, tell me if New York can show anything more beautiful?"

"If it can, I have not seen it," Archer said, letting his shift quickly and covertly from the laden trees to her. Yet the trees were worth anybody's looking at. Through deep green of healthy leaves, still rich and oily of spite of the rain, there gleamed pinkish rounds, and yellow ovals, and clustered knobs of deep, glowing red. The boughs bent heavily earthward. Their tips spattered, yet scarcely one was broken. Along the edge of each terrace grape vines stood in double rows, one outside a long wire trellis, the other a wall of green stems and leaves and clusters of grapes.

Below were the pear trees, last of the season. The lowest of all a solid terrace of grapes. The growth and ripeness hung and hovered in the air, and curled about in defiance of the splashing rain.

"I am in love—with all I have seen here," Archer said. "It is a new world to me. It must be I have inherited aptness for it. I can never be grateful for Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much it had to be grateful," Marcella said, saucily. "Only think how I have come through this without you! You see how I have whistled, whistled from breakfast to bedtime. And even if five could play. If you had not been here, I might have been forced to come up here and crow all day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui or Mr. Blight?" Archer asked, laughing. Marcella looked at him severely. "Ennui," she said.

"You surely cannot mean that ennui and anonyms?" Archer said. "Consider, my dear, I have confided to me that he will one day have a million—if only he marries to please his mother."

"What does that signify to me? I don't care," Marcella answered, affecting to put her hand to her forehead. "The good things of this world are clearly not destined to take root here, like one of these trees, till I die."

"I don't believe any of them die," Archer protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate to admit it," she said. "The trees are nearly right. There is just one tree that dies. It is the one planted over and over. I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear," she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wildest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that my mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Teackles. I was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but where he gets decent pay. He aimed to give me a college training. When I was twelve mother had a long, long illness. She had to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor tell her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little troubled, but when he found I was office boy for a big, clean—' he rubbed his head, and said he'd help me nights."

"I studied them pretty hard, but the firm and their interests harder. Not to tire you, when I was twenty-one they offered me a junior partnership. That was five years back. I didn't take it—preferred to go on the street for myself. My old firm offered me money—any reasonable amount, but I was cautious, tremendously cautious, until, when I took a risk, I could feel I was risking only my own. That kept me out of big deals until just this year. I jumped in early for all I was worth—every cent—on copper, and the market came my way. A month back I figured my profits, and found I could keep my original stake yet take out fifty thousand dollars. I have been finding out, too, all I could about the Governor. Mother let me know the truth—he had the old Southern land-hunger. It was the grief of his life that he had had to part with the family plantation. That was why he had not talked about it—it hurt too bad."

"Then I found out, also, by the luckiest chance, that Gray-rock, his old home, could be bought back. It was bought back in a wink—but the Governor does not know it yet. I was on my way there when the water stopped me. From the county town I telegraphed him, 'I am here and need you. Come at once. Bring mother.' They will get here to-morrow at the latest. I must meet them, rain or shine. I mean to establish them here, to put the rest of that fifty thousand in trust for them—then—"

He broke off short, his voice for the first time losing its sharp evenness. After a second's pause he went on: "Then I said to myself, 'I will go back to the street, and play for all I can get.' Now I—well! The whole world has changed since I—since I met—Marcella. I want her for my wife, Major, much more than I want a fortune."

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—that you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

A minute later he was alone listening to the storm's fury without in the least heeding it, so deeply was he wrapped in rumination. He thought he understood everything now. Archer had not meant to steal—he had taken the hidden

stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! the Lord made it—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand new market. You see nobody can quite touch us just such another hillside. There are seventy-five acres of big half moon. The early peaches, there at market three months back. Look down and tell me if New York can show a beautiful?"

"If it can, I have not seen it," she said, shifting quickly and covertly from her face. Yet the trees were worth any deep green of healthy leaves, in spite of the rain, there gleamed yellow ovals, and clustered boughs bent heavily earthward, spattered, yet scarcely veiled by the curving edge of each terrace grape vine, one outside a long winding wall of green stems and leaves. Below were the pear trees, the lowest of all a solid terrace of growth and ripeness hung and curled about in defiance of fate."

"I am in love—with all I have," she said, with a sort of inherited aptness for me. I can Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much," she said, saucily. "Only through this without you! I hate whist, even if five could play. If you let me I might have been forced to crow all day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui?" she asked, laughing. Marcella looked at her and said, "I hate tautology," she said.

"You surely cannot mean ennui?" Archer said. "Confound it, my lady! He has confided to me that he will marry a million—if only he marries to me."

"What does that signify to you?" she asked. "Such good things of this world are destined to take root here, like trees—and live till I die."

"I don't believe any of these things," she protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate to say it, but you are nearly dead."

"I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear," she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wildest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that my mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Teackles. I was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but where he gets decent pay. He aimed to give me a college training. When I was twelve mother had a long, long illness. She had to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor tell her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little queer, but he found I was office boy for a big, clean-dealing firm, and my head, and said he'd help me nights with my books.'"

"I studied hard," he said, but the firm and their interests were harder. Not that I was twenty-one they offered me a junior partnership. I was five years back. I didn't take it—preferred to go to the street for myself. My old firm offered me a reasonable amount, but I was cautious, tremed until, when I took a risk, I could feel I was my own man. That kept me out of big deals until I was worth—every cent I had—the market came my way. A month back I was fifty thousand dollars. I have been finding out about the Governor. Mother let me know the old Southern land-hunger. It was the grief he had had to part with the family plantation. He had not talked about it—it hurt too bad."

"Then I found the luckiest chance, that Gray-rock, his old home, at back. It was bought back in a wink—but I did not know it yet. I was on my way there when I telegraphed to you and need you. Come at once. Bring me to shine. I mean to establish them here, to pay them—then—"

He broke off for the first time losing its sharp evenness. He pause he went on: "Then I said to my father, 'I want her for my wife. Major, much more than I want a fortune.'"

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—that you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

A minute later he was alone listening to the storm's fury without in the least heeding it, so deeply was he wrapped in rumination. He thought he understood everything now. Archer had not meant to steal—he had taken the hidden

stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! the Lord made it—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand that always fetches the top of the market. You see nobody can quite touch us in quality, because nobody has got just such another hillside. See! It spreads in a big half moon. There are seventy-five acres planted. We need not go higher. The early peaches, there at the top, went to market three months back. Look down and along these rows, though, and tell me if New York can show anything more beautiful?"

"If it can, I have not seen it," Archer said, letting his eyes shift quickly and covertly from the laden trees to her face. Yet the trees were worth anybody's looking at. Through the deep green of healthy leaves, still rich and oily of surface in spite of the rain, there gleamed pinkish rounds, and faintly yellow ovals, and clustered knobs of deep, glowing scarlet. The boughs bent heavily earthward. Their tips were mud-spattered, yet scarcely one was broken. Along the curving edge of each terrace grape vines stood in double rank, one inside, one outside a long wire trellis. Now the trellis was a wall of green stems and leaves and purple and white clusters. Below were the pear trees, laden with russet and russet, and lowest of all a solid terrace of grapes, the fine essence of growth and ripeness hung and hovering in the air, as if they were curled about in defiance of the elements.

"I am in love—with all I have seen," Archer went on. "It is a new world to me. It makes me feel a part of inherited aptness for it. I can never get enough of it. Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much it had better come to me," Marcella said, saucily. "Only think how I should have got through this without you! You see how things go—it is whist, whist from breakfast to bedtime. And I hate whist, even if five could play. If you had not been here to entertain me I might have been forced to come up here and make a crow all day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui or Mr. Blight?" Archer asked, laughing. Marcella looked at him and said: "I hate tautology," she said.

"You surely cannot mean that Mr. Blight is synonymous?" Archer said. "Come, young lady! He has confided to me that he has a quarter of a million—if only he marries her."

"What does that signify?" Archer asked, please her," Marcella answered, affecting to be deaf. "Such good things of this world are for me. I'm predestined to take root here, in these trees—and live till I die."

"I don't believe any of them," Archer protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate to see you say that," she said, "but you are nearly right. There is just one thing that has been planted over and over. I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear," she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wildest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that my mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Teackles. I was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but where he gets decent pay. He aimed to give me a college training. When I was twelve mother had a long, long illness. She had to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor tell her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little nervous, sir—but when he found I was office boy for a big, clean-

deal, he patted my head, and said he'd help me nights

with my studies. He was hard, but the firm and their interests harder. When I was twenty-one they offered me a job. That was five years back. I didn't take it—I went on the street for myself. My old firm offered me a very reasonable amount, but I was cautious, and I didn't take it. I could feel it was my own. That kept me out of big deals. I jumped in early for all I was worth—eager, and the market came my way. A month later I was making my profits, and found I could keep my order out fifty thousand dollars. I have heard about the Governor. Mother let me know she had the old Southern land-hunger. It was then I saw that he had had to part with the family place. I was why he had not talked about it—it hurt me."

"Then you were by the luckiest chance, that Gray-rock, his son was bought back. I was bought back in a wink. The Governor does not know it yet. I was on my way to the water stopped me. From the county town I told you I am here and need you. Come at once. But they will get here to-morrow at the latest. It will rain or shine. I mean to establish them here of that fifty thousand and in trust for them—"

He took a deep voice for the first time losing its sharp evenness. A second's pause he went on: "Then I said to my father, 'Go back to the street, and play for all that is in the game.' The whole world has changed since I—since I met Marcella. I want her for my wife, Major, much more than I want a fortune."

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—that you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

A minute later he was alone listening to the storm's fury without in the least heeding it, so deeply was he wrapped in rumination. He thought he understood everything now. Archer had not meant to steal—he had taken the hidden

stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! the Lord made—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand that always fetches the top of the market. You see nobody can quite touch us in quality, because nobody has got just such another hillside. See! It spreads in a big half moon. There are seventy-five acres planted. We need not go higher. The early peaches, there at the top, went to market three months back. Look down and along these rows, though, and tell me if New York can show anything more beautiful!"

"If it can, I have not seen it," Archer said, letting his eyes shift quickly and covertly from the laden trees to her face. Yet the trees were worth anybody's looking at. Through the deep green of healthy leaves, still rich and oily of surface in spite of the rain, there gleamed pinkish rounds, and faintly yellow ovals, and clustered knobs of deep, glowing scarlet. The boughs bent heavily earthward. Their tips were mud-spattered, yet scarcely one was broken. Along the curving edge of each terrace grape vines stood in double rank, one inside, one outside a long wire that ran the length of the terrace. The trellis was a wall of green, and the vines were heavy with many clusters

Below were the pear trees, the lowest of all a solid terrace growth and ripeness hung and curled about in defiance.

"I am in love—with all I have."

"It is a new world to me. I have inherited aptness for it. I can Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much," said Marcella, saucily. "Only five could have got through this without you! Whist, whist from breakfast till tea-time, and then whist again, even if five could play. If you had not been here, I might have been forced to play the piano and play scare-crow all day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui laughing. Marcella looked at Archer asked, "I hate tautology," she said.

"You surely cannot mean synonyms?" Archer said. "Conrad has confided to me that he will give you a quarter of a million—if only he marries to-day."

"What does that signify to you?"

Cecilia answered, affecting to pay no attention to the question, "Good things of this world are destined to take root here, like me, till I die."

"I don't believe any of the [redacted] protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate [redacted] said, "but you are nearly right [redacted]"

planted over and over. I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear," she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wilddest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat up with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that my mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Teackles." He was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but earning well enough gets paid.

"I have been going to college training myself to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor told her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir,—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little downy when he found I was office boy for a big, clean-dealing firm.'" My head, and said he'd help me make

"I studied harder. Not me a junior pro take it—prefer firm offered more cautious, trend could feel I was big deals until worth—every A month back my original stock been finding out let me know it. It was the grand family plantation—it hurt too bad, but the firm and their interests were what I was twenty-one they offered me five years back. I didn't leave the street for myself. My old job reasonable amount, but I was nervous, until, when I took a risk, I came down. That kept me out of the jump in early for all I was in the market came my way. Profits, and found I could keep fifty thousand dollars. I have about the Governor. Mother told me he old Southern land-hunger. But he had had to part with the money he had not talked about it."

"Then I found the luckiest chance, that Gray-
rock, his old back. It was bought back-
in a wink—but I was not know it yet. I was on
my way there. From the county
town I telegraphed. I was on
once. Bring me. From the county
latest. I must here and need you. Come at
them here, to-morrow at the
them—then—shine. I mean to establish
at fifty thousand in trust for

He broke off sharply evenness. I said to my [redacted] for the first time losing its [redacted] pause he went on: "Then [redacted] to the street, and play for all [redacted] the world has changed since I—since I met—Marcella. I want her for my wife. Major, much more than I want a fortune."

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—that you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

A minute later he was alone listening to the storm's fury without in the least heeding it, so deeply was he wrapped in rumination. He thought he understood everything now. Archer had not meant to steal—he had taken the hidden

stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! The Lord made it—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand the world has never seen. You see nobody can quite touch us here. The Hawk's Nest is just such another hillside. See it? It's a fine lot of land. There are seventy-five acres planted in fruit trees. The early peaches, there at the foot of the hill, are on the market three months back. Look down and see how the peaches tell me how fine New York can show off. The peaches are beautiful?"

"If it can, I have not seen it shift quickly and covertly from. Yet the trees were worth any deep green of healthy leaves, despite of the rain, these gleams of yellow ovals, and clustered knots. The boughs bent heavily earthward, spattered, yet scarcely one on the edge of each terrace grape vine side, one outside a long wide wall of green stems and leaves. Below were the pear trees, ladest of all a solid terrace of growth and ripeness hung and curled about in defiance of the wind.

"I am in love—with all I have seen. It is a new world to me. I have inherited aptness for it. I can take Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much," Cella said, saucily. "Only through this without you! Whist, whist from breakfast to even if five could play. If you me I might have been forced to crow all day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui?" he asked, laughing. Marcella looked at him. "I hate tautology," she said.

"You surely cannot mean onyms?" Archer said. "Cons has confided to me that he will million—if only he marries to . . ."

"What does that signify to cella answered, affecting to pu good things of this world are destined to take root here, lik till I die."

"I don't believe any of them," she protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate to say it, but you are nearly right."

planted over and over. I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-
night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces
houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear,"
she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only
exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wildest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that that mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Tackles. I was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but where he gets decent pay. He aimed to give me a college training. When I was twelve mother had a long, long illness. She had to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor tell her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—-but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little

dealing in the market. "I was a boy for a big, clean-
" "I studied hard, but the firm and their interest
harder. Not that you, when I was twenty-one they offered
me a junior partnership. That was five years back. I didn't
take it—preferred to go on the street for myself. My old
firm offered me money—any reasonable amount, but I was
cautiously tremendously cautious, until, when I took a risk, I
could feel I was risking only my own. That kept me out of
business until just this year. I jumped in early for all I was
worth—very cent—on copper, and the market came my way.
Back I figured my profits, and found I could keep
it. I take yet take out fifty thousand dollars. I have
about, too, all I could about the Governor. Mother
the truth—he had the old Southern land-hunger.
of his life that he had had to part with the
That was why he had not talked about it

But, also, by the luckiest chance, that Gray-
rock would be bought back. It was bought back
in spite of the Governor does not know it yet. I was on
my way to the water stopped me. From the county
town I said, "I am here and need you. Come at
once. They will get here to-morrow at the
latest. Rain or shine. I mean to establish
them here." I gave that fifty thousand in trust for
them—then

He broke for the first time losing its sharp evenness. He paused he went on: "Then I said to myself, 'I will go down the street, and play for all the money I can get.' But the world has changed since I—since I met—Marcella. I want her for my wife, Major, much more than I want a fortune."

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

stone steps led from terrace to terrace. As he set his foot upon the middle one of the third flight he felt it quiver beneath him. "Is this made ground?" he asked, a little anxiously. Marcella laughed back: "Yes! the Lord made it—with a very little help from my grandpa. This hillside was in what we country folks call benches—he flattened the benches a little, filled in a few places, and turfed over the slopes, so they should not wash. At least, he began to do it—Uncle-Major has followed the pattern set him. We are mighty proud of our orchards—also of the fact that the Hawk's Nest is a brand that always fetches the top of the market. You see nobody can quite touch us in quality, because nobody has got just such another hillside. See! It spreads in a big half moon. There are seventy-five acres planted. We need not go higher. The early peaches, there at the top, went to market three months back. Look down and along these rows, though, and tell me if New York can show anything more beautiful?"

"If it can, I have not seen it," Archer said, letting his eyes shift quickly and covertly from the laden trees to her face. Yet the trees were worth anybody's looking at. Through the deep green of healthy leaves, still rich and oily of surface in spite of the rain, there gleamed pinkish rounds, and faintly yellow ovals, and clustered knobs of deep, glowing scarlet. The boughs bent heavily earthward. Their tips were mud-spattered, yet scarcely one was broken. Along the curving edge of each terrace grape vines stood in double rank, one inside, one outside a long wire trellis. Now the vines were a wall of green stems and leaves and purple and waxy clusters. Below were the pear trees, laden with bright and russet, and lowest of all a solid terrace of grapes. The fine essence of growth and ripeness hung and hovered in the mist that rose and curled about in defiance of the falling rain.

"I am in love—with all I have seen here," Archer went on. "It is a new world to me. It makes me feel I have a sort of inherited aptness for it. I can never be grateful enough to Fate—and the storm."

"I love the rain so much it makes me cry," said to me," Marcella said, saucily. "Only this rain has got through this without you! You have got to be a good whist, whist from breakfast to bedtime, or you will not even if five could play. If you had been a good whist, I might have been forced to come out and play with you every day and every day."

"To escape—what, ennui or Mr. Blight?" Archer asked, laughing. Marcella looked at him severely. "I have no ennui," she said.

"You surely cannot mean that Ennui and Blight are synonyms?" Archer said. "Consider, dear young lady! He has confided to me that he will one day have a quarter of a million—if only he marries to please his mother."

"What does that signify to me? I don't please her," Marcella answered, affecting to put her hand to her eyes. "Such good things of this world are clearly not for me. I'm predestined to take root here, like one of these trees—and live till I die."

"I don't believe any of them die," Archer protested. Marcella looked pensive. "I hate to admit it," she said, "but you are nearly right. There is just one tree that dies. I have been planted over and over. I mean trees of all sorts have been set in one particular place, and they always die after a year or two, though there seems to be nothing the matter. I wonder if—" she checked herself suddenly and flushed deeply. The thought had shot through her mind that this fated spot was perhaps the one from which her uncle's gold had been stolen.

"I have a story to tell Major Clayton. Will you come to-night and listen to it?" Archer asked, as they set their faces houseward. Marcella nodded. "If the rest are not to hear," she said. "One can endure even a bad story, if it is only exclusive."

"Mr. Blight, at least, will not be there," Archer said, his eyes twinkling. Marcella laughed tranquilly. "If you break up the rubber he is sure to propose to Sweet Alyssum," she said. "Oh, she is worlds too good for him, but she likes his mother and his expectations. I gave Uncle-Major a hint this morning—that is, I suppose, the reason he has time to listen to you."

All day the storm strengthened. It raged and roared its wildest toward nine o'clock that night, as Major Clayton sat with Marcella at his elbow, listening to his young guest. "All I shall say of my family," young Archer began, "is that my mother is Southern too—she was one of the Baltimore Teackles. I was born, indeed, in Baltimore, but all my memories are of life in New York. You know my father, sir. I don't need to tell you what he is—the bravest, truest, honestest gentleman, modest and faithful. The wonder to me is that he has made a living in that big town. Of course he has never made a fortune. He's in a bank there—not high up in it, but where he gets decent pay. He aimed to give me a college training. When I was twelve mother had a long, long illness. She had to go away for a year, or die. I heard the Governor tell her so. She looked at him with the sweetest smile, and shook her head, saying, 'It would take all we have been saving for our boy's education.' I—but never mind! She went and came back well. Then I said to the Governor, 'I'm going in business, sir—didn't ask, just told him. He looked a little troubled, but when he found I was office boy for a big, clean, and firm, he nodded my head, and said he'd help me nights with his own hands.'"

"I studied pretty hard, but the firm and their interests harder. Next day, you, when I was twenty-one they offered me a junior partnership. That was five years back. I didn't take it—preferred to go on the street for myself. My old firm offered me money—any reasonable amount, but I was cautious, tremendously cautious, until, when I took a risk, I could feel I was making only my own. That kept me out of big deals until just this year. I jumped in early for all I was worth—every cent—on copper, and the market came my way. A month back I figured my profits, and found I could keep my original stake yet take out fifty thousand dollars. I have a good deal of it, too, all I could about the Governor. Mother was a little bit of a snob—she had the old Southern land-hunger. I don't know if this life that he had had to part with the money was why he had not talked about it."

"By the luckiest chance, that Gray-rock, I was bought back. It was bought back in a wink—my father does not know it yet. I was on my way there when he stopped me. From the county town I telegraphed to him here and need you. Come at once. Bring money, they will get here to-morrow at the latest. I must meet him rain or shine. I mean to establish them here, to put my wife and that fifty thousand in trust for them—then—"

He broke off suddenly, his voice for the first time losing its sharp evenness. After a second's pause he went on: "Then I said to myself, 'I will go back to the street, and play for all that is in my game. Now I—well! The whole world has changed since I—since I met—Marcella. I want her for my wife, Major, much more than I want a fortune.'"

Marcella's eyes answered him. With a laugh that was half a sob he caught her in his arms. Major Clayton got up and took the girl from his hold, saying: "If you please, Mr. Archer, we will consider that—that you have not spoken, until you see and consult with your father."

A minute later he was alone listening to the storm's fury without in the least heeding it, so deeply was he wrapped in rumination. He thought he understood everything now. Archer had not meant to steal—he had taken the hidden