

“I saw him this morning, — I mean” — Julia blushed and hesitated. “I mean, I heard him talking out here in the grove.”

“Who was he talking to, Jule?” The squire put the question calmly and deliberately.

There was a little pause. Julia, still blushing, adjusted an imaginary hairpin. The negro looked sheepishly from one to the other. The squire repeated his question.

“Who was he talking to, Jule?”

“Nobody but me,” said the young lady, growing redder. Her embarrassment was not lessened by an involuntary “eh — eh,” from the negro. Squire Fambrough raised his eyes heavenwards and allowed both his heavy hands to drop helplessly by his side.

“What was he talkin’ about?” The old man spoke with apparent humility.

“N-o-t-h-i-n-g,” said Julia demurely, looking at her pink finger-nails. “He just asked me if I thought it would rain, and I told him I did n’t know; and then he said the spring was coming on very rapidly, and I said, ‘Yes, I thought it was.’ And then he had found a bunch of violets and asked me if I would accept them, and I said, ‘Thank you.’”