All on a Summer's Eve.

"I do hope and pray that that Eustis man will get so completely raveled up over some girl that he won't be able to breathe away from her, and that she will then throw him over in the most pronounced manner. Nothing would cause me more joy—true, intoxicating joy—Nell, than to see that happen. A more thoroughly conceited and self-satisfied fool I never in my life set eyes upon."

And with a spiteful stamp of her little russet shoe, the speaker threw from her the remains of a marguerite she had been reducing to white and yellow atoms, and looked up appealingly from under the broad-brimmed hat that shaded as expressive a pair of brown eyes as one could ask to look into.

But there was not much sympathy in the soft laugh that greeted this outburst, and Bessie Carleton wearily dropped her hands upon the arms of the straw chair she was sitting in, and gazed pensively out over the blue Atlantic, that, almost motionless save for the occasional passing of a lazy swell, lay peacefully glimmering under the rays of the hot August sun.

Bessie Carleton and her cousin Nell were the two prettiest girls at N that summer, and every fellow had been more or less "smitten" with one or the other. But for reasons which we will leave for you, kind reader, to decide, none had been particularly favored, and none could honestly feel that he was a shade more acceptable than the rest to either of the two girls. The rule of first come, first served, had been strictly observed in the matter of walks, drives, sailing parties, and the thousand and one ways of whiling away the long summer days and evenings, and these fellows were fast becoming discouraged.

Bert Eustis and Harry Tilton, old schoolfellows and college chums, had come from New York to spend a month or so at N, and at the time we refer to had been there about two weeks. By the exercise of some skilful diplomacy they had met Nell and Bessie Carleton soon after their arrival, and had agreed between themselves that "they were mighty nice girls, and decidedly worth cultivating." In pursuance of this idea, Eustis had managed to spend the greater portion of the time that the young people were together, with Bessie Carleton. And yet he received no assistance whatever from her, and only succeeded in making himself her escort by carefully watching his opportunities to be the first in the field.

But the other men were unaware of the true state of affairs. They wouldn't for worlds have acknowledged that Eustis had been quicker than they, and after a great many of them had received from Miss Carleton as an answer to a request for her company in a walk, dance, or what not, "I have promised Mr. Eustis, thank you," it began to be generally accepted that Eustis was the favored one. In consequence, his way was made much easier, and he was correspondingly jubilant.

But Miss Carleton was quick to see the turn affairs had taken, and, although she had liked Mr. Eustis as well as any of the others, she hadn't the slightest intention of exchanging their homage for his, and forthwith took particular pains to show him that she considered him in no way superior to any one else. But Eustis was a determined sort of fellow, and he hadn't any idea of retiring from the position he had worked so hard to attain.

And this was how things stood on the day when the two cousins were sitting together on the veranda of their pretty summer villa, and Bessie was relieving her mind in the words set down at the beginning of this record.

"I must say, Bess," answered her cousin, "I don't see why you are so hard on Mr. Eustis. He is an especially agreeable fellow, he is one of the most popular men in his class at college, and he has been particularly kind and attentive to you. I'm sure I shouldn't blame him if he refused to have anything fur-