

CHAPTER XVII. -Crome yellow

Ivor Lombard concludes his piano rhapsody with a bang, leading to admiration from his audience, especially Mary, who is overtaken by his performance. Ivor, characterized by his multitude of talents and striking presence, proposes they move to the garden to enjoy the night. While Mr. Scogan and Henry Wimbush stay behind, Ivor leads Anne, Mary, Denis, and Jenny outside. A sensuous atmosphere builds as Ivor sings, and he instinctively puts his arm around Anne, walking with an effortless charm. Denis, feeling overshadowed and disenchanted, tags along as the group ventures toward the pool through a dark, yew-tree-lined path. A minor incident results in Jenny deciding to return to the house alone.

The setting shifts to a more intimate interaction as Denis and Anne end up together after a fall leaves Anne with minor injuries. Despite Denis's attempts to deepen their connection through a romantic gesture, Anne resists, wanting to preserve their friendship. After Anne insists on going back due to her injuries, Denis helps her, feeling a surge of protectiveness and affection. Meanwhile, Ivor continues his evening without interruption, embracing the romantic and care-free atmosphere of the night.

Back in the house, the others remain engaged in their respective diversions, untouched by the brief dramas unfolding outside. Denis's attempts to bond with Anne lead to a moment of disillusionment. As he assists Anne inside, maintaining a semblance of chivalry, the complexity of their relationships becomes apparent. Ivor and Mary's return from the garden and the mention of a captivating moonrise mark the close of the evening's engagements. The narrative weaves through moments of artistic expression, romantic aspirations, and small personal revelations, highlighting the intricate social dynamics and individual desires set against the backdrop of Crome Yellow's inviting yet introspective environment.