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Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
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Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
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# **A Face Illumined**

Edward Payson Roe

# Imprint

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## Preface

As may be gathered from the following pages, my title was obtained a a number of years ago, and the story has since been taking form and color in my mind. What has become of the beautiful but discordant face I saw at the concert garden I do not know, but I trust that that the countenance it suggested, and its changes may not prove so vague and unsatisfactory as to be indistinct to the reader. It has looked upon the writer during the past year almost like the face of a living maiden, and I have felt, in a way that would be hard to explain, that I have had but little to do with its expressions, and that forces and influences over which I had no control were moulding character.

The old garden, and the aged man who grew young within it, are not creations, but sacred memories.

That the book may tend to ennoble other faces than that of Ida Mayhew, is the earnest wish of

E. P. Roe.

Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.



## **Contents**

Chapter I: A Face

Chapter II: Ida Mayhew

Chapter III: An Artist's Freak

Chapter IV: A Parthian Arrow

Chapter V: Spite

Chapter VI: Reckless Words and Deeds

Chapter VII: Another Feminine Problem

Chapter VIII: Glimpses of Tragedy

Chapter IX: Unexpectedly Thrown Together

Chapter X: Phrases too Suggestive

Chapter XI: A "Tableau Vivant

Chapter XII: Miss Mayhew is Puzzled

Chapter XIII: Nature's Broken Promise

Chapter XIV: A Revelation

Chapter XV: Contrasts

Chapter XVI: Out Among Shadows

Chapter XVII: New Forces Developing

Chapter XVIII: Love Put to Work

Chapter XIX: Man's Highest Honor

Chapter XX: A Wretched Secret that Must be Kept

Chapter XXI: A Deliberate Wooer

Chapter XXII: A Vain Wish

Chapter XXIII: Jennie Burton's Remedies

Chapter XXIV: A Hateful, Wretched Life

Chapter XXV: Half-Truths

Chapter XXVI: Sunday Table-Talk

Chapter XXVII: A Family Group

Chapter XXVIII: Rather Volcanic

Chapter XXIX: Evil Lives Cast Dark Shadows  
Chapter XXX: The Deliberate Wooer Speaks First  
Chapter XXXI: An Emblem  
Chapter XXXII: The Dangers of Despair  
Chapter XXXIII: "Hope Dies Hard  
Chapter XXXIV: Puzzled  
Chapter XXXV: Desperately Wounded  
Chapter XXXVI: Temptation's Voice  
Chapter XXXVII: Voices of Nature  
Chapter XXXVIII: A Good Man Speaks  
Chapter XXXIX: Van Berg's Escape  
Chapter XL: Van Berg's Conclusions  
Chapter XLI: The Protestant Confessional  
Chapter XLII: The Corner-Stone of Character  
Chapter XLIII: A "Heavenly Mystery  
Chapter XLIV: "The Garden of Eden  
Chapter XLV: Problems Beyond Art  
Chapter XLVI: A Resolute Philosopher  
Chapter XLVII: The Concert Garden Again  
Chapter XLVIII: Ida's Temptation  
Chapter XLIX: The Blind God  
Chapter L: Swept Away  
Chapter LI: From Deep Experience  
Chapter LII: An Illumined Face  
Chapter LIII: A Night's Vigil  
Chapter LIV: Life and Trust





## Chapter 1. A Face.

Although the sun was approaching the horizon, its slanting rays found a young artist still bending over his easel. That his shoulders are broad is apparent at a glance; that upon them is placed a shape-ly head, well thatched with crisp black hair, is also seen at once; that the head is not an empty one is proved by the picture on the easel, which is sufficiently advanced to show correct and spirited drawing. A brain that can direct the hand how to do one thing well, is like a general who has occupied a strategic point which will give him the victory if he follows up his advantage.

A knock at the door is not answered at once by the intent and preoccupied artist, but its sharp and impatient repetition secures the rather reluctant invitation,

"Come in," and even as he spoke he bent forward to give another stroke.

"Six o'clock, and working still!" cried the intruder. "You will keep the paint market active, if you achieve nothing else as an artist."

"Heigho! Ik, is that you?" said he of the palette, good-naturedly; and rising slowly he gave a lingering look at his work, then turned and greeted his friend with the quiet cordiality of long and familiar acquaintance. "What a marplot you are with your idle ways!" he added. "Sit down here and make yourself useful for once by doing nothing nothing for ten minutes. I am in just the mood and have just the light for a bit of work which perhaps I can never do as well again," and the artist returned promptly to his picture.

In greeting his friend he had revealed that he was above middle height, that he had full black eyes that were not only good for seeing, but could also, if he chose, give great emphasis to his words, and at times be even more expressive. A thick mustache covered his lip, but the rest of his face was cleanly shaven, and was strong and decided in its outlines rather than handsome.

"They say a woman's work is never done," remarked Ik Stanton, dropping into the easiest chair in the studio, "and for this reason, were there no other, your muse is evidently of the feminine persuasion. I also admit that she is a lady of great antiquity. Indeed I would place her nearer to the time when 'Adam delved and Eve span' than to the classic age."

"My dear Ik," responded the artist, "I am often at a loss to know whether I love or despise you most. If a little of the whirr of our great grandam's spinning wheel would only get into your brain the world might hear from you. You are a man of unbounded stomach and unbounded heart, and so you have won all there is of me except my head, and that disapproves of you."

"A fig for the world! what good will it do me or it to have it hear from me? you ambitious fellows are already making such a din that the poor old world is half ready for Bedlam; and would go stark mad were it not for us quiet, easy-going people, who have time for a good dinner and a snack between meals. You've got a genius that's like a windmill in a trade wind, always in motion; you are worth more money than I shall ever have, but you are the greatest drudge in the studio building, and work as many hours as a house-painter."

"When your brain once gets in motion, Ik, fiction will be its natural product. You must admit that I have not painted many pictures."

"That is one of the things I complain of; I, your bosom friend and familiar, your, I might add, guardian angel—I, who have so often saved your life by quenching the flame of your consuming genius with a hearty dinner, have been able to obtain one picture only from you, and as one might draw a tooth. Your pictures are like old maid's children—they must be so perfect that they can't exist at all. But come, the ten minutes are up. Here's the programme for the evening—a drive in the Park and a little dinner at a cool restaurant near Thomas's Garden, and then the concert. That prince of musical caterers has made a fine selection for to-night, and, with the cigar stand on one side of us and the orchestra on the other, we are certain to kill a couple of hours that will die like swans."

"You mention the cigar-stand first."

"Why not? Smoke is more real than empty sound."

"Are you not equally empty, Ik, save after dinner? How have the preceding hours of this long day been killed?"

"Like boas. They have enfolded me with a weary weight."

"The snakes in your comparison are larger than your pun, and the pun, rather than yourself, suggests a constrictor's squeeze."

"Come, you are only abusing me to gain time, and you may gain too much. My horses have more mettle than their master, and may carry off my trap and groom to parts unknown, while you are wasting paint and words. You are like the animals at the Park, that are good-natured only after they are fed. So shut up your old paint shop, and come along; we will shorten our ride and lengthen our dinner."

With mutual chaffing and laughter the young men at last went down to where a liveried coachman and a pair of handsome bays were in waiting. Taking the high front seat and gathering up the reins, Ik Stanton, with his friend Harold Van Berg at his side, bowled away towards the Park at a rapid pace.

Harold Van Berg was, in truth, something of a paradox. He was an artist, and yet was rich; he had inherited large wealth, and yet had formed habits of careful industry. The majority of his young acquaintances, who had been launched from homes like his own, were known only as sons of their fathers, and degenerate sons at that. Van Berg was already winning a place among men on the ground of what he was and could do himself.

It were hard to say which was the stronger motive, his ambition or the love of his art; but it seemed certain that between the two, such talent as he had been endowed with would be developed quite thoroughly. And he did possess decided talent, if not genius. But his artistic gift accorded with his character, and was controlled by judgement, correct taste, and intellectuality rather than by strong and erratic impulses. His aims were definite and decided rather than vague and diffusive; but his standards were so high that, thus far, he had scarcely attempted more than studies that were like the musician's scales by which he seeks to acquire a skill in touch that shall enable him to render justly the works of the great composers.

His family had praised his work unstintedly, and honestly thought it wonderful; he had also been deluged with that kind of flattery which relaxes the rules of criticism in favor of the wealthy. Thus it was not strange that the young fellow, at one time, believed that he was born to greatness by a kindly decree of fate. But as his horizon widened he was taught better. His mind, fortunately, grew faster than his vanity, and as he compared his crude but promising work with that of mature genius, he was not stricken with that most helpless phase of blindness—the inability to see the superiority of others to one's self. Every day, therefore, of study and observation was now chastening Harold Van Berg and preparing him to build his future success on the solid ground of positive merit as compared with that of other and gifted artists.

Van Berg's taste and talent led him to select, as his specialty, the human form and countenance, and he chiefly delighted in those faces which were expressive of some striking or subtle characteristic of the indwelling mind. He would never be content to paint surfaces correctly, giving to features merely their exact proportions. Whether the face were historical, ideal, or a portrait, the controlling trait or traits of the spirit within must shine through, or else he regarded the picture as scarcely half finished.

A more sincere idolator than Van Berg, in his worship of beauty, never existed; but it was the beauty of a complete man or a complete woman. Even in his early youth he had not been so sensuous as to be captivated by that opaque fragment of a woman—an attractive form devoid of a mind. Indeed with the exception of a few boyish follies, his art had been his mistress thus far, and it was beginning to absorb both heart and brain.

With what a quiet pulse—with what a complacent sense of security we often meet those seemingly trivial events which may change the whole character of our lives! The ride had been taken, the dinner enjoyed, and the two friends were seated in the large cool hallway off the concert garden, where they could smoke without offence. The unrivalled leader, Thomas, had just lifted his baton—that magic wand whose graceful yet mysterious motion evokes with equal ease, seemingly, the thunder of a storm, the song of a bird, the horrid din of an inferno, or a harmony so pure and lofty as to suggest

heavenly strains. One of Beethoven's exquisite symphonies was to be rendered, and Van Berg threw away his half-burned cigar, settled himself in his chair and glanced around with a congratulatory air, as if to say, "Now we are to have one of those pleasures which fills the cup of life to overflowing."

Oh, that casual glance! It was one of those things that we might justly call "little." Could anything have been more trivial, slight, and apparently inconsequential than this half involuntary act? Indeed it was too aimless even to have been prompted by a conscious effort of the will. But this book is one of the least results of that momentary sweep of the eye. Another was, that Van Berg did not enjoy the symphony at all, and was soon in a very bad humor. That casual glance had revealed, not far away, a face that with his passion for beauty, at once riveted his attention. His slight start and faint exclamation, caused Ik Stanton to look around also, and then, with a mischievous and observant twinkle in his eyes, the bon vivant resumed his cigar, which no symphony could exorcise from his mouth.

At a table just within the main audience room, there sat a young lady and gentleman. Even Van berg, who made it his business to discover and study beauty, was soon compelled to admit to himself that he had never seen finer features than were possessed by this fair young stranger. Her nose was straight, her upper lip was short, and might have been modelled from Cupid's bow; her chin did not form a perfect oval after the cold and severe Grecian type, but was slightly firm and prominent, receding with decided yet exquisite curves to the full white throat. Her cheeks had a transparent fairness, in which the color came and went instead of lingering in any conventional place and manner; her hair was too light to be called brown and too dark to be golden, but was shaded like that on which the sunlight falls in one of Bougureau's pictures of "Mother and Child;" and it rippled away from a broad low brow in natural waves, half hiding the small, shell-like ears.

Van Berg at first thought her eyes to be her finest feature, but he soon regarded them as the worst, and for the same reason, as he speedily discovered, that the face, each feature of which seemed perfect, became, after brief study, so unsatisfactory as to cause posi-

tive annoyance. To a passing glance they were large, dark, beautiful eyes, but they lost steadily under thoughtful scrutiny. A flashing gem may seem real at first, but as its meretricious rays are analyzed, they lose their charm because revealing a stone not only worthless worse than worthless, since it mocks us with a false resemblance, thus raising hopes only to disappoint them. The other features remained beautiful and satisfactory to Van Berg's furtive observation because further removed from the informing mind, and therefore more justly capable of admiration upon their own merits; but the eyes are too near akin to the animating spirit not to suffer from the relationship, should the spirit be essentially defective.

That the beautiful face was but a transparent mask of a deformed, dwarfed, contemptible little soul was speedily made evident. The cream and a silly flirtation with her empty-headed attendant—a pallid youth who parted his hair like a girl and had not other parts worth naming—absorbed her wholly, and the exquisite symphony was no more to her than an annoying din which made it difficult to hear her companion's compliments that were as sweet, heavy, and stale as Mailard's chocolates, left a year on the shelves. Their mutual giggle and chatter at last became so obtrusive that an old and music-loving German turned his broad face towards them, and hissed out the word "Hist!" with such vindictive force as to suggest that all the winds had suddenly broken loose from the cave of Aeolus.

Ik Stanton, who had been watching Van Berg's perturbed, lowering face, and the weak comedy at the adjacent table, was obviously much amused, although he took pains to appear blind to it all and kept his back, as far as possible, towards the young lady.

The German's "hist" had been so fierce as to be almost like a rap from a policeman's club, and there was an enforced and temporary suspension of the inane chatter. The attendant youth tried to assume the incensed and threatening look with which an ancient gallant would have laid his hand on the hilt of his sword. But some animals and men only become absurd when they try to appear formidable. It was ludicrous to see him weakly frowning at the sturdy Teuton who had already forgotten his existence as completely as he might that of a buzzing mosquito he had exterminated with a slap.

They young girl's face grew even less satisfactory as it became more quiet. A muddy pool, rippled by a breeze, will sparkle quite brilliantly while in motion; but when quiet it is seen the more plainly to be only a shallow pool. At first the beautiful features expressed only petty resentment at the public rebuke. As this faintly lurid light faded out and left the countenance in its normal state it became more heavy and earthy in its expression than Van Berg would have deemed possible, and it ever remained a mystery to him how features so delicate, beautiful, and essentially feminine could combine to show so clearly that the indwelling nature was largely alloyed with clay. there was not that dewy freshness in the fair young face which one might expect to see in the early morning of existence. The Lord from heaven breathed the breath of life into the first fair woman; but this girl might seem to have been the natural product of evolution, and her soul to be as truly of the earth as her body.

It was evident that she had been made familiar too early and thoroughly with conventional and fashionable society, and, although this fraction of the world is seldom without its gloves, its touch nevertheless had soiled her nature. Her face did not express any active or malignant principle of evil; but a close observer, like Van Berg, in whom the man was in the ascendant over the animal, could detect the absence of the serene, maidenly purity of expression, characteristic of those girls who have obtained their ideas of life from good mothers, rather than from French novels, French plays, and a phase of society that borrows its inspiration from fashionable Paris.

With the ending of the symphony the chatting and flirting at the table began again, to Van Berg's increased disgust. Indeed, he was so irritated that he could no longer control himself, and rose abruptly, saying to his companion:

"Come, let us walk outside."

His sudden movement drew the young lady's attention, but by this time he had only his broad shoulders turned towards her. She saw Ik Stanton looking at her, however, with a face full of mischief, and she recognized him with a nod and a smile.

He, with the familiarity that indicated relationship, but with a motion too slight to be noticed by others, threw her a kiss from the

tips of his fingers, as one might toss a sugar-plum to a child, and then followed his friend.

## Chapter II. Ida Mayhew.

What is the matter, Van? You remind me of a certain horned beast that has seen a red flag," said Ik Stanton, linking his arm in that of Van Berg's.

"An apt illustration. I have been baited and irritated for the last twenty minutes."

"I thought you enjoyed Beethoven's music, and surely Thomas rendered it divinely to-night."

"That is one of the chief of my grievances. I haven't been able to hear a note," was the wrathful response.

"That's strange," said Stanton with mock gravity. "Were I not afraid you would take it amiss I would hint that your ears are of goodly size. How comes it that they have so suddenly failed you?"

"Having seen your dinner you have no eyes for anything else. If you had, you would have seen a face near us."

"I saw a score of faces near us. A German had one with the area of an acre."

"Was he the one who said, 'hist,' like a blast from the North?"

"From a porpoise rather."

"Did you observe the girl towards whom his gusty rebuke was directed?"

"Yes, an inoffensive young lady."

"Inoffensive, indeed!" interrupted Van Berg. "She has put me into purgatory."

"You do seem quite ablaze. Well, you are not the first one that she has put there. But really, Van, I did not know that you were so inflammable."

"If you had any of the instincts of an artist you would know that I am inflamed with no gentler feeling than anger."

"Why! what has the poor child done to you?"

"She is not a child. She knows too much about some things."

"I've no doubt she is better than either you or I," said Stanton, sharply.

"That fact would be far from proving her a saint."

"What the dickens makes you so vindictive against the girl?"

"Because she has the features of an angel and the face of a fool. What business has a woman to mock and disappoint one so! When I first saw her I thought I had discovered a prize—a new revelation of beauty; but a moment later she looked so ineffably silly that I felt as if I had bitten into an apple of Sodom. Of course the girl is nothing to me. I never saw her before and hope I may never see her again; but her features were so perfect that I could not help looking at them, and the more I looked the more annoyed I became to find that, instead of being blended together into a divine face by the mind within, they were the reluctant slaves of as picayune a soul as ever maintained its microscopic existence in a human body. It is exasperating to think what that face might be, and to see what it is. How can nature make such absurd blunders? The idea of building so fair a temple for such an ugly little divinity!"

"I thought you artists were satisfied with flesh and blood women, if only put together in a way pleasing to your fastidious eyes."

"If nature had designed that women should consist only of flesh and blood women, if only put together in a way pleasing to your fastidious eyes."

"If nature had designed that women should consist only of flesh and blood, one would have to be content; but no one save the 'unspeakable Turk,' believes in such a woman, or wants her. Who admires such a fragment of a woman save the man that is as yet undeveloped beyond the animal? My mother is my friend, my companion, my inspiration. The idea of yonder silly creature being the companion of a MAN."

"Good evening, Coz," said a voice that was a trifle shrill and loud for a public place, and looking up, the friends saw the subject of their conversation, who, with her spindling attendant was also taking a promenade.

Stanton raised his hat with a smile, while Van Berg touched his but coldly.

"I wish to speak with you," she said in passing.

"I will join you soon," Stanton answered.

"So this lady is your cousin?" remarked Van Berg.

"She is," said Stanton laughing.

"You will do me the justice to remember that I spoke in ignorance of the fact. If I were you I would give her some cousinly advice."

"Bless you! I have, but it's like pouring water on a duck's back. For one sensible word I can say to her she gets a thousand compliments from rich and empty-headed young fools, like the one now with her, who will eventually be worth half a million in his own name. I was interested to see how her face would strike you, and I imagine that your estimate has hit pretty close upon the truth, for in my judgment she is the prettiest and silliest girl in New York. She has recently returned from a year's absence abroad, and I was in hopes that she would find something to remember besides her own handsome face, but I imagine she has seen little else than it and the admiring glances which everywhere follow her. Take us as we average, Van, Mr. Darwin has not got us very far along yet, and if the face of a woman suits us we are apt to stare at it as far as such politeness as we possess permits, without giving much thought to her intellectual endowments. When it comes to companionship, however, I agree with you. Heaven help the man who is tied to such a