

the young Lord Seaford's return, was just sixteen. A complexion pure as the lily, a profusion of light brown hair eyes the colour of a June sky, lips like rose-buds steeped in dew, with arms and hands of unrivalled symmetry, formed the elements of her beauty, to which great sweetness of disposition and her still child-like simplicity gave an indescribable charm.

Sir Andrew had likewise received into his family the widow of his only son, who in the pride of health and strength had fallen a victim to sudden disease, and her child, a boy six years old. The young widow was a very lovely woman, with finely chiselled features, and a clear, pearly complexion of a hue so healthy that the absence of the rose, could not be regretted. Though scarcely above the middling height, she appeared almost stately by the side of Catharine Wilton, her sister-in-law, and her mild and quiet manners accorded with the antique style of her beauty. Among the young and the fair, she was the only one, who did not regard the young Lord Seaford with pleasure and admiration. It was probably her keen powers of discrimination, which was subsequently imputed by some to an intuitive perception, and a habit of close observation acquired by mixing freely in society, that led her to trace a chain of circumstances, of themselves slight and unimportant, which made her recoil from him with a feeling of aversion amounting to horror. He, on his part, though a professed admirer of beauty, appeared, after a few interviews, to avoid her with an instinctive feeling of dread; and he shunned encountering her clear, serene eye, as if he imagined the mask he wore, became transparent beneath its gaze. Still, although the opinion she had formed of his character, was to herself, perfectly satisfactory, it would have been no easy task for her to communicate it to another in the same clear and palpable form, and she, therefore, abstained from expressing it at all. She soon became aware that he was seeking to engage the affections of Catharine, and with feelings of alarm spoke to her father-in-law upon the subject, at the same time venturing to suggest that Lord Seaford was not a person likely to promote the happiness of his daughter. But, in his opinion, the young Lord was a desirable match for her, being the owner of a noble estate, contiguous to his own, and, as far as he was able to judge, free from that recklessness and from those habits of dissipation, common to many young men of wealth at that period. He told her that he could not think

of thwarting his motherless child in an affair of the heart, and rebuked her with some harshness for what he considered her unjust prejudices. Mrs. Wilton said no more, and the beautiful girl just emerging from childhood, became the wife of Lord Seaford.

She carried gladness and sunshine with her to the old castle, and the chill and desolate apartments, which had long been conscious of no sound save that of the bleak and hollow blast as it came sweeping up from the sea during a tempest, were rendered cheerful by the taste and care of their young mistress, and echoed again to her musical laugh; or, the unstudied melody of some sweet song.

Though the vassals of Lord Seaford had long been aware that his temper was fiery and imperious, it was many months after their marriage, before Catharine witnessed one of his appalling outbreaks of passion, and although it was not, as in many instances afterwards, directed against herself, she was overwhelmed with terror. Subsequently, the fine taste and feeling which are apt to accompany a delicate physical organization, were outraged by the frequent recurrence of his angry mood, and she shrunk from the caressing touch of the lip, which, perhaps, an hour before, she had seen covered with the white foam of rage, and from the glances of the eye which had appeared to emit sparkles of living fire. Her health soon began to decline, and a morbid state of the imagination ensued, bordering upon insanity, so that she sometimes almost fancied, when upon the most trivial provocation, she beheld him break into a paroxysm of fierce, unbridled rage, that she had given herself up to the power of a demon, and not to a human being. These wild fancies deepened with her physical decay, increased still more by often hearing, when alone in her chamber, when she knew that Lord Seaford had left the castle, sounds of rude and boisterous merriment. Once, on opening her window to ascertain if possible, whence such strange noises could proceed, she distinctly saw four wild looking figures, followed by a fifth, resembling her husband, emerge as if from the solid rock which rose from the water's edge, and step into a skiff fastened to a staple. Rapidly rounding the head of the promontory, they had in a few moments vanished from her sight.—Diseased both in body and mind, there was something in this which strongly appealed to her superstitious fears, and from that time she was constantly haunted by a vague apprehension that her husband was leagued with beings,