

Marvellous words for careless Harold to use. Hope did her best to satisfy the unhappy man's cravings, but again and again the remembrance of past sin came to his mind, and he cried aloud, in fear and anguish to the God he had wronged.

Strange to say, his conduct towards Hope seemed to weigh less heavily on his mind than the sins of his youth. He did indeed allude to his sudden flight with the money, but it was with no special sense of dishonesty.

'I meant to double the money, Hope,' he said, 'and then come back to you—I did, indeed.' And Hope now fully believed the poor foolish, easily-led man. She had rightly deemed that his flight from Messrs. Willis and Saunders was the result of disgust at their hardly concealed greed for his possessions. 'I intended to come back to you, Hope,' he repeated, 'but I was ashamed, so I thought I would look at some land first, and then I changed my name for a time, but I meant no harm. I never said I was not married. It was they who fancied it.'

Hope let him go on. It seemed better not to check him. In the face of coming death he laid his heart bare to her. 'Let me tell you everything, Hope, and then you can pray to God for me,' he gasped. 'Hold my hand tight. Never leave me.'

And then he began a painful sketch of his erring, wilful life.

'My mother spoilt me,' he said, 'and I took advantage of it. We were poor, but I had the best of everything. She got me well educated, but I only rewarded her with neglect. Then she died, and I left my old father and went about looking for a situation that I liked. But I never stayed long in any. And then there was that breakdown of the train at Abermawr, and I came to you. I haven't been a kind husband to you, Hope, hardly ever, but I meant no harm; it was only that I wanted the best of everything for myself. Other girls amused me, but I did not love them. I cared for you more than any of them, though I would not do what you wished. Hope, are you angry with me?'

For answer Hope kissed the poor hand she held in hers. 'I love you,' she said.

But now the terror returned. 'Can God forgive me?' he asked again and again. 'I have thought so little of Him. I have tried to get away from Him; and now I am going to be judged by Him.'

Harold stated his own case with fearful plainness, and Hope put aside her own anguish to try and lead him to the only hope of the sinner. Oh, if only they had been in England, or at least in some place where she could have secured the help of some good clergyman for the dying man! But there was no one in Merseymouth.

The pitiful tale of self-accusation wore itself out at last. Hope was praying silently for forgiveness in this late repentance when Harold pressed her hand once more. 'Hope, that is not all, my father, he is alive, old and poor!'

Hope started. She never guessed that Harold had any living relative. It gave her a new shock. Had the poor fellow's selfishness caused him to fail in every relation of life? 'Tell me about him, Harold,' she said gently, for strength was rapidly failing the sufferer.

'I did help him a little after I married you,' he said feebly. 'I sent him some money twice, but I didn't like you to know.'

'Why, dear?' asked Hope trying to keep her voice steady, these revelations were so astonishing.

'Because he was in—the—workhouse,' said Harold slowly. 'Hope,' he cried, 'will you help him? There is the money, you know.'

Yes, Hope knew that only too well. It cost her a pang to go back to the remembrance the money awakened, but she must face that. There was work to be done now. The time had come for action.

'Of course I will, Harold,' she answered. 'But now you must do one thing for me. When Mr. Furniss comes up you must tell him I am your wife. No one here knows it yet. Just one word, dear, no more.'

It was quite necessary to go through this identification. Harold, in his feeble state,