

nah, frightened out of all proprieties, quitted her seat and walked up and down the room, soothing in her arms the piteous little wailer.

"This will never do," said papa sternly. "Pray take the child upstairs."

When Hannah thankfully did, and staid away some minutes; feeling that, after all, the nursery was the safest, the most peaceful, and the pleasantest room in the house.

When she came back, her brother-in-law had finished breakfast, and was standing, gazing out of the sunshiny window in a sort of dream. His temporary crossness had subsided; his face, though grave, was exceedingly sweet. Now that she had grown used to it, and it had gradually brightened, if not into happiness, at least into composure and peace, Hannah sometimes thought she had seldom seen so thoroughly sweet a face—such a combination of the man and the woman—that beautiful woman whose picture at the Mount-House she often looked at, and wondered what kind of young creature the first Lady Rivers had been. Apparently, not like the second Lady Rivers at all.

It was exactly his mother's smile with which Mr. Rivers turned round now.

"So the little maid is comforted at last. What influence you women have over babies, and what helpless beings we men are with them! Why, it is as much as papa can do to keep Miss Rosie quiet for five minutes, and Aunt Hannah has her the whole day. Do you never tire of her?"

"Never. Nor more does Grace, who has an instinctive love for children—which all women have not, I assure you. This is what makes her so valuable as a nurse."

Hannah said this intentionally; for, not two minutes before, the girl had run after her with a wild white face. "Have you spoken to the master? Will you speak to him? Don't forsake me! Ask him to help me! Oh, Miss Thelluson, I'm fond of *your* child—think of mine!" Even if Hannah had not liked and respected Grace so much, to her good heart, now open to all children for Rosie's sake, this argument would have struck home.

"I hope the young woman is better this morning, and that you did not fatigue yourself too much with her last night," said Mr. Rivers coldly; and then began speaking of something else. But Hannah, bracing up her courage, determined to discharge her unpleasant duty at once.

"Have you ten minutes to spare? Because I have a special message to you from Mrs. Dixon."

"What Mrs. Dixon?"

"Grace. She insists upon it she has a legal right to the name."

"She is under a complete delusion, and the sooner she wakes up out of it the better. Pray, Hannah, do not, with your weak womanish pity, encourage her for a moment."

Mr. Rivers spoke sharply—more sharply than any gentleman ought to speak to any lady; though men sometimes think they are justified in doing so—to wives and sisters. But her brother-in-law had never thus spoken to Hannah before—she was not used to it; and she looked at him, first surprised, then slightly indignant.