

but, for the most part she forgot all, save her own interests or amusements.

At length a new actor appeared in the scenes we have been describing. Claude returned to England! Fitzroy Glenallan's eye rested on Bessie's face, when some careless tongue communicated the news to her. For one moment he looked round to assure himself there was no other obvious cause for the emotion that crimsoned the brow, cheek and bosom, of the being before him. Lady Glenallan lifted her conscious eyes to his, and turned deadly pale—he looked at her a moment more—bit his lip till the blood started, and moved away. A moment's hesitation, and she followed with a light step into the adjoining room. "Fitzroy," she gasped, as she laid her hand on his arm, "you know I knew him before I was married." "I did not know it," he replied coldly, "neither do I believe does Glenallan." For a moment Bessie shrank angrily from the insinuation, which the tone, rather than the words, implied. She dreaded she scarcely knew what, from the manner of her companion; and the consciousness that even that rapid moment, which had scarcely allowed time for the crimson blood to rise and subside in her cheek, had sufficed to flash the thought, through her mind of how and where and when Claude would meet her, and what would be the result of such a meeting, bewildered her, and increased her agitation, as, with a nervous laugh, she said: "You will not jest before *him* about it—will you?" It was the first time she had so directly appealed to him—so directly endeavoured to propitiate him.—A conscious and bitter smile of triumph played on his lip and lurked in his eye.

"You may depend on my never mentioning the past," said he; "but tell me"—what he desired to know was left unasked, for at that moment Claude Forester himself walked through the room. He saw Lady Glenallan—paused—hesitated for a few seconds—crossed the room and stood beside her. A few words he spoke but what they were Bessie did not hear, though they were spoken in a clear firm tone. To her imagination it seemed as if there were contempt and reproof even in the sound of his voice;