

"thank God, and thank you also, never shall this day be forgotten by me while I live."

She rose and approached the window, Colonel Lennox following. Words seemed hovering on his lips, but by one strong effort he restrained them, while he continued gazing on her, his whole soul beaming in his eyes. Lady Neville's carriage now appeared in sight, followed by Lord De Melfort's curricle. The cottager and his wife hastily re-entered to announce them. In a few more moments, Rosetta was clasped to the bosom of her mother, whose trembling frame and deathlike countenance expressed her feelings. She turned to look for the gallant preserver of her child; but he had retreated, and appeared standing without talking to Lord De Melfort. The pale cheek of Blanche testified her sympathy, as she fondly embraced her beloved cousin. It was arranged that she should return with her and Lady Neville, while Colonel Lennox would take her place in the curricle. Generously were the worthy cottagers rewarded for their kindness, and many were their expressions of gratitude in return. Rosetta was then wrapped in a large shawl, and lifted into the carriage by her uncle, when Colonel Lennox once more approached her. She held out both her hands to him; he tenderly held them in his, as he said:

"God in Heaven bless you, may all health and happiness attend you, till we meet again."

"You will come to the Priory tomorrow, will you not?" she inquired anxiously.

"Not tomorrow, I fear—farewell."

He turned hastily away as he spoke, anxious to avoid Lady Neville.

Lord De Melfort, then assisting Blanche, whispered, "Thus closes a happy day, my own Blanche, entirely disappointing the hopes of the morning."

"Not entirely, dear Algernon," replied Blanche smiling; "great cause for thankfulness have we all and if you do not come tomorrow in your gayest mood you may expect a long lecture." Lord De Melfort kissed his hand to the sweet girl as the carriage drove away, and continued gazing after it, until roused from his reverie by Colonel Lennox, when springing into the curricle he drove off at a rapid pace. Both continued silent and lost in thought, for a considerable space. At length Colonel Lennox, turning to his friend, said with a saddened voice:

"Would to Heaven De Melfort, that you had told me of Miss Neville's previous attachment."

Lord De Melfort started at the remark, while he replied with some vehemence.

"Lennox, what do you mean, she never was previously attached."

"It is too true, she all but owned it to me, this very day."

"Impossible, she never could have done so—you are mad, Lennox."

"De Melfort," said Colonel Lennox, astonished at his words and manner, then suddenly recollecting

himself, he added with a smile, "of course you are aware that it is Rosetta Neville I alluded to."

"Ah yes, Rosetta, certainly," returned Lord De Melfort, colouring; "poor child, it was but a passing fancy—a dream—a nursery tale."

"Aye, you can reason thus lightly now, my friend," said Colonel Lennox, "though you nearly bit your lip through at the thoughts of such a fancy, such a nursery tale, when in connection with another—but seriously speaking, De Melfort, I fear it was beyond this—at least, if I may judge from the incidents of today; listen, and I will tell you: We were standing together on the brow of a hill during our ramble; you had all wandered from us—I was pointing out to her notice the various beauties in the landscape which lay before us—there may have been an unusual warmth in my manner, for I confess she is one to inspire it, when I perceived her countenance suddenly become quite pale, and she would have fallen, but for my support. In the same moment that unlucky Captain Forester and his friend passed quite near us, when I heard the latter inquire the name of the beautiful girl. On turning sharply round to look at her, the eyes of Forester flashed fire, while an expression of scornful anger curved his lip, which was increased to one of defiance as he glanced on me; then in a careless light tone, which he evidently meant should reach us, he said:

"Who is that beautiful girl, you ask?—why Rosetta Neville, the heartless, faithless coquette."

These words were followed by a rude laugh, while the elder stranger continued gazing on her with a freedom, which I thought highly offensive—the poor girl seemed ready to sink into the earth.

"Shall I follow them?" I demanded, in a tone of suppressed indignation.

"Oh, no, no, for heaven's sake stay with me," she replied, clinging to my arm in evident terror; "pray lead me back to mamma."

After proceeding a little way in silence, I inquired:

"Are you acquainted with that young man?"

"I have known him," she gasped with a quivering lip, "but from henceforth I shall know him no more."

Not another word passed between us, but in these I read a volume—I could now account but too well for her depression of spirits, her illness, which first called forth my interest—she had loved, and the pang the discovery gave me was indescribable. I had thought her so perfectly unsophisticated, so fresh, so artless, that I began to flatter myself I had found the treasure I had long been seeking—but the charm is dispelled, and I must fly ere my peace is more deeply involved."

"Lennox, you are the most provoking, old-fashioned, fastidious fellow in the world," replied Lord De Melfort. "If you expect to meet one more art-