

his kindness, and, being impatient to depart, rose and shook him warmly by the hand.

In half an hour the two friends were on their way to Westport beach.

Markham sank into his former mood of reflection, and for a long time they conversed but little. Gloomy forebodings and suspicious reflections concerning Valdemar, whom he already considered as a rival in love, caused a sickening sensation to rise in his heart, mingled with feelings of distrust, hatred and fear.

Reticent, melancholy, and unhappy, he sat there for a long time indulging in his own morbid thoughts and fancies.

More than once was Langdon tempted to reveal his own suspicions and doubts concerning this man; but, on deeper reflection he concluded to adhere to the promise which he had made with himself, until he had seen Valdemar. He would observe closely his manner, and, if found guilty of treachery, fraud and dishonour, he would tear the mask from his face and reveal his character in its true guise.

Their conversation was of a desultory character, Langdon avoiding as much as possible, any train of thought that would suggest anything concerning Markham's own trials and sufferings.

"We are near the place, I think," said Langdon—"judging by the distance we have come—if Mr. Gibson has not been misinformed in regard to it."

"Yes," said Markham in reply: "beyond is the sea. What an interesting view we have now of the power, majesty, and sublimity of nature!"

The road which they now took branched off towards the sea shore, at a small distance from which, stood a cottage. From this place Langdon had a good view of the wreck and saw some person walking leisurely along the shore. It was wild and desolate—sufficient to excite sad and gloomy fancies, and to please thoughtful and solitary natures.

There was no sound to be heard save the moanings of the wind, or the roll of the surf on the barren shore.

"I shall rest myself here awhile," said Markham as he entered the cottage. "In the meantime you can see the Captain and acquaint him of my visit."

Langdon did as he was directed, and, jumping with agility and precision over the rocks and chasms, until he came upon the hard sandy beach, his eye caught the graceful outline of a woman's form walking directly towards him.

As they neared he thought he perceived something in her manner that indicated, on her part, a desire to turn back and retrace her steps by the way she came, for, all at once she stopped, and turned her eyes in the direction of those she had left behind. But, probably thinking the step might be considered one of cowardice by Langdon, who was fast approaching, she boldly continued her walk; not, however, without some feelings of uneasiness and fear, peculiar to the situation.

As they met Langdon raised his hat, smiled and bowed.

"I am very much pleased to see you, Miss Steadman," said he: "especially at this eventful meeting."

She changed colour, on hearing her name spoken by one who was to her apparently a stranger; but recovering self-possession, and smiling a faint sickly smile, she answered:

"This is indeed an eventful meeting, which I shall not soon forget. I remember your countenance; pray where did we meet before?"

"At Norwich, some years ago. I am your own —!"

Here he stopped, and looking up observed a faint blush mantling her beautiful face.

"I mean, Miss Steadman," said he, with an agreeable *bon homie* in his manner, "that your society was once a great pleasure to me. My name is Charles Langdon. You surely cannot have forgotten me;—but, alas! the lapse of years *does* efface many fond recollections—although I have never ceased to remember our former acquaintance nor the many pleasing episodes connected with it."

"Oh! I remember you perfectly well now," she replied, speaking in a tone of enthusiasm and delight; "but what a long time has elapsed since your first visit to this place!"

"I suppose you thought at first I was some great sea monster coming towards you, to frighten you from these solitary wastes."

She laughed so loud and musical, that to Langdon's ears, in that situation, it seemed like the gushing music of Terni's Silvery Cascade.

Walking along in the cold bracing air, they conversed on the old joys and pleasures of the past, and finally Langdon touched upon the object of his visit.

"I have come home," said he, "after a long absence abroad, and having heard of Mr. Markham's loss—who *apropos*, is an old acquaintance of mine—we came here for the purpose of investigating matters connected with the wreck."

"Have you seen Capt. Valdemar?" said Miss Steadman archly.

"I have not seen the gentleman yet. Has he been long here?"

"About five days: and I think he is paying the greatest attention to Miss Gibson."

"Indeed!" said Langdon quietly.

"But where is Mr. Markham? I hope you have not been so cruel as to leave him on the road, in your hurry and joy to get here!"

"I left him in a cottage near the roadside, but expect him here in a short time."

"Are you acquainted with Capt. Valdemar, Mr. Langdon?"

"I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance; but you perhaps will introduce me?"

"O certainly: I shall be most happy. He is very handsome and very agreeable in society, and has not at all the appearance of a sea-faring person."

"You have met him then, in company?"

"Yes—at Miss Vernon's—and we had a delightful time. I am certain you will like him."