

the superb mansion, with every kind attention. She ushered her at once, by Lord De Melfort's desire, to her apartment, and summoned an attendant to assist her. It was with a heart overflowing in its thankfulness, that the wearied Blanche laid her head down on her pillow, and found herself once more alone. A silver lamp was left burning on the table, and as she looked around her, she remembered that this was the state bed-chamber, leading to the favourite room of the late Lady De Melfort, and which had ever since her death been closed to all casual visitors at the Manor House. How flattering to her, was the reflection that she was the first for whom they had been opened. The walls, covered with rich tapestry, presented many curious and interesting designs, while the curtains and draperies were composed of pale green satin damask—the Earl's coronet surmounting the splendid canopy of the bed. Blanche continued to gaze until her eyes weighed down with fatigue, beheld only confused images; the last sound she heard was the distant closing of doors, when a deep sleep happily stole over her, and all became forgotten.

She awoke from this on the following morning, with a start of surprise, nor could she at once recall the scene of the preceding night, which seemed to her disturbed fancy like some frightful vision; soon, however, it came in all its reality to her memory, and she shuddered as she covered her eyes with her hand at the retrospection—she knew not the hour, but as the sun was shining brightly into the large gothic window, she arose, and throwing on a loose wrapping dress, passed into the next room, the door of which had been left open—with what deep interest she looked on every thing here—for in this very apartment had the child Algernon spent hours with his beloved mother, and first wept her loss. Nothing had been changed since that period, even specimens of her work were still to be seen lying on the marble table; Blanche turned from these to examine some fine oil paintings—one especially rivetted her attention, representing a full length portrait of Lady De Melfort, and the young Lord Drummond kneeling by her side; his childish hands clasped as if in prayer, his full dark eyes fixed on hers, while on his round cheek mantled the ruddy hue of health. The expression of his face was beautiful, possessing all the sensibility usually given to the youthful Baptist; in hers were delineated intense love and fervent piety, as she looked down upon her child, one hand resting on his fair shoulder, the other pointing towards Heaven. Blanche could not forbear being struck with the resemblance in this last to herself, and which Lord De Melfort had frequently mentioned to her—the discovery pleased her. The view from the windows of this room was one of perfect enchantment. They opened on to a wide terrace adorned with numberless beautiful exotics; from thence the eye looked down upon a sloping velvet lawn, terminating in a

deep glen of wild loveliness, while in the distance rose the magnificent ruins of an old Abbey. Blanche stood enraptured, forgetful of the time, until the sudden entrance of Newton put to flight all her delightful meditations.

"Oh, dear Newton, I am rejoiced to see you," she exclaimed, "how is my father this morning—have you seen him?"

"Yes, my dear young lady; he is even now walking in the grounds with my lord," replied Newton, who appeared laden with packages, which she immediately commenced opening, saying as she did so:

"Dear heart alive, Miss Blanche, only to think of our being burnt out of house and home in this manner, and all owing to that careless girl, Susan, who went into the drawing room last night after you had gone up stairs, and while admiring your flowers, set fire to the muslin window curtains, then, instead of giving the alarm she must needs rush out of the house like mad. I was so aspirated with her. Fortunately for us Lord De Melfort was returning from a dinner party, and perceived the flames bursting through the lower windows. He did look so terrified when he asked which was your room. Well he is a noble gentleman, be the other who he may; I am sure we have all reason to say so."

"We have indeed, Newton," replied Blanche, earnestly; "never, never, can I forget his kindness. But you tell me he is walking with my father. Is it then so late?"

"It is nearly ten o'clock, miss; but as I had orders not to disturb you, I would not come in before." Newton then proceeded to detail all that had been rescued from the fire—amongst which were Mr. Neville's books and plate, a small cabinet belonging to Blanche, containing many things of value, and a portion of her wardrobe; "very little of the furniture is saved," continued Newton, "and all your beautiful china is gone, Miss Blanche, owing to that potatoe headed Irishman, Patrick, who put it in a large sack and threw it out of the window."

"That was an Irish mode of saving it, truly," replied Blanche, smiling; "my dear peaceful home it seems like a dream, that I shall never see it more."

"Ah, well a fairer one will open to receive you, or I am out of my latitude," returned Newton, "you should hear what Mrs. Gibson says, she is quite charmed to have you here, you remind her so of her late lady."

Blanche made no reply to this remark, but when her toilet was completed, she dismissed her attendant, that she might pour forth in secret her grateful thanks to her Almighty father for all the mercies He had conferred in sparing those so dear to her, and softening the trial he had seen fit to send in so many gracious ways. This duty performed, she re-entered the boudoir, having sent a message to request Mr. Neville would come to her there. She at once