

as I do. They have not young hearts, and know not how I feel!

'Ah, Isabella, their sense and experience, and their love for you, made them think as they did. The odious fact was, that this Raffles had trifled with Isabella's affections, and had gained them *before* her brother's death, but all to gratify his own heartless vanity. It was not till *after* she had lost her brother, and became the inheritor of all the savings and worldly goods of old Job Perkins, that Raffles had seriously thought of winning her hand.

'You would not have thought it of her, notwithstanding what I have already said, my dears,' exclaimed the grandfather, looking round on the young people, 'you would not have thought, I say, that her undutifulness would have reached the pitch it did—that she would have run away with Jack Raffles. But I regret to say she did. Conscience makes us cowards. What people call love, or mistake for proper love, often makes us fools. She ran away—Isabella ran away!

'Well, after a time, old Mr. Perkins took Jack and Isabella home. For what was to be done? She was their only child. Hers was a great fault, but her only one. Her parents' grand objection to the match had been, that it was one which would bring misery with it. Now that the marriage had taken place, and could not be revoked, would it be consistent in them to increase her misery by casting her off? No! nature cried out that it was their duty to endeavor to lighten it. Jack's father was a yeoman, but he had other sons. Isabella returned to her father's and her mother's embraces, and they made up their minds to do *their* best to make something of the son-in-law, who had become one against their will.

'Alack, alack! mere wishes and good resolutions of one's own, and the endeavors of others cannot and will not alter a human nature. I don't know that John's resolutions to do his best were ever very firmly rooted in his mind. Certain it is, if they were rooted at all, that they were never acted on, that they never produced any good fruit. The old people moralized—and Isabella wasted tears, but John was late at fairs and markets, he was often away at races, and cock-fights, and card parties. He generally returned home in a state of intoxication. Vices he had managed to conceal from the blinded eyes of Isabella before marriage, he now took small pains to conceal. Perkins found his son-in-law, instead of an assistance, a hindrance and an incumbrance. John, too, in his character of partner, assistant, and successor of the old man gained the power of contracting debts, which must either be paid out of the old man's exchequer, or bring them all into disgrace and trouble.

'I need not enlarge on the sorrows and vexations of the Perkinses. Isabella's love was strong and steadfast; but it was sorely, sorely tried. She had a child. She loved it so much, ah, so very, very much, that she could not long bear anger toward the father, whom it so much resembled.

'Old Mrs. Perkins died in the third year after the marriage, her natural span of life, I have no doubt being curtailed by her grief and her troubles. Job, left alone without his life's companion, pent up in the same domicile with a son-in-law whom he disliked, who he saw was scattering already what he had stored—Job pined, and, in about a year after his wife's death, was laid by her side.

'The rest is soon told. When John Raffles was left master, a wretched management he made of it. He was more frequently to be found carousing with boon companions, than minding his farm. Isabella prayed and did her best. Poor Isabella! One night he was thrown out of his gig on his way home from some card-playing meeting, and while in a state of drunkenness was killed on the spot. He was found to be insolvent at the time of his death. His wife had to turn her back on the farm, and on the dear old house where she had been reared and brought up in simple plenty,

with her child in her arms, without goods or furniture almost without clothes!

The grandfather paused. Pearly drops were trickling down not a few upturned faces.

'But,' cried little Sophy Grindlay, a pretty, blue-eyed girl of ten years old, 'you were to make it *sad and glad*; now it's all sad—isn't it all *very sad*?' said she, looking round appealingly to her cousins, with the mark of a tear's current down each of her cheeks.

'Glad and sad,' said the old man, 'sad and glad as life is: joys and sorrows; showers and sunshine; smiles and tears. There is a little more of the sad yet, Sophy, my dear.

'Poor Isabella,' then continued he, 'rented the end of a cottage, and tried to support herself and child by needle-work, or whatever she could find to do. But first, she could not always get work; second, when she got it, she earned but a wretched pittance by it, as she had not been used to it; and third, people who have been used to plenty do not know how to accommodate themselves to penury—do not know how to economise, and where to begin. Her child took measles, and not being so well clothed, or having been so well fed as it used to be, an inflammation sprang up after that complaint, of which it died. Work was thrown aside, when her dear child was ill. Her infant was all her work, and all her care from morning till night. A little time, after its death, in the midst of her grief, the idea occurred to her mind that now she was worse than poor, that she was in debt—debt to every one who had supplied her with necessaries for that dear one; in debt even for the coffin which held its remains!

'She felt utterly desolate, forlorn, and miserable. She wept again. She sobbed. She tired of weeping, and sat gazing at the embers of burnt sticks in her miserable fireplace. Her brain reeled. She thought she might go mad. She feared she might—when hark! some one taps at the door.

'Mechanically she cried, 'Come in,' thinking it her neighbor from the other end of the cottage. She heard a man's foot on the floor, and raised her head from between her hands. It was Robert Welwood.

'I have but this day, Isabella,' said he, 'heard of your distresses, and have come to try and help you a bit, for the sake of old times.' He was now in a farm of his own, about fifteen miles off.

'Ah! Robert,' she exclaimed, grasping his arm in both her hands, 'you have saved me. God has raised me up a friend, when I thought I was without one in the world. Ah! Robert, you have done me good—you have done me good—you have saved me.' She laughed; she cried; she went into fits.

'Welwood and the woman in the other end laid her on the bed, applied warmth to her feet, combed back her hair, bathed her temples with cold water, and she regained her senses. She then appeared more calm. Robert sent for a doctor, and giving the neighbor money, requested her to provide Isabella with whatever might be ordered, or seem necessary for her comfort.

'We have lost sight of young Welwood a while. It was a sad stroke for him, Isabella's choice of Raffles: his affection received a deep and grievous wound. He lamented, too, for her own dear sake, that she had committed her heart and happiness to such a man as he knew Raffles to be. His natural reserve, first increased by the accident of his lameness, now became greater. But he thought much and wisely; and, bye and bye, gave all his energies to his business. He became gradually prosperous, in a moderate and steady way. He possessed the blessings of honest endeavor and honest success. There was, however, a great gap in his heart.

'He returned daily for a time to Isabella's cottage; and when she became tolerably well again, he often visited her.