

said Andrew Rutherford "and you have been largely instrumental in leading me towards the light."

How lovely she looked he thought, as she leaned thoughtfully forward, looking upwards, as if towards the light of which he spoke. But of this he said no word.

"May I come again, on Wednesday?" he asked, as he rose to go, "I have so much to say to you."

"I—I am always glad to see you," she said, curtsying in her quaint way, but with an embarrassment that sat strangely upon her.

But he came many more days before he made any formal declaration. He was afraid to lose the advantage he had gained. Thenceforth, however, he could intimate so much and feel that she understood. When, at last, the Rubicon had been passed, so quietly that he could scarce realize that she knew all, she said to him simply:

"Do you know that only for grand-mamma I should never have dreamed of such a thing. It seems that Hepzibah had told her."

"I knew that Hepzibah had long ago read my secret," said Andrew Rutherford, laughing his most genial laugh, "though, indeed, I believe that every man, woman and child in the place, except yourself, knew it."

The next day Mrs. Rutherford, the mother, came over to pay a stately visit. She took Carmelita in her arms and kissed her kindly, if a trifle coldly. In some respects the match was not particularly pleasing to her. But she never opposed her son in anything and in fact deferred greatly to his opinion on all subjects. She had a few minutes' conversation with Mrs. Johnson, after which the engagement was looked upon as a settled thing and was duly announced to the neighborhood. All things considered the news was well received. Even the children in the streets said:

"Now Carmelita will never go away from here."

It had been arranged that the wedding should take place in two months. But death waits for no man and scoffs at earthly plans. One warm, bright morning, Carmelita and Hepzibah were at work together in the kitchen, the former peeling fruit and the latter bustling about the stove. Hepzibah, for whom, just then, there was but one topic, dilated on Squire Rutherford's son's perfections, and Carmelita sat listening with a pretty, dreamy look on her face, half pleased, half amused at the old woman's raptures. All at once Hepzibah remembered that "Miss Johnson hadn't taken any broth."

"You stay where you are, Carmelita," she said as the young girl made a movement to rise, "you got your hands in the fruit and 'taint no use taking them out. I'll carry it up."

Carmelita heard her go up, as usual, open the door and cross the room. Then there was a sudden, sharp cry.

In a moment Carmelita was at the head of the stairs, where stood Hepzibah, with face white and drawn, and pinched lips.

"Don't you go in there," she said, sharply.

"Oh, Hepzibah I must."

Together they passed through the open door—strangely still that always quiet room. Carmelita had known what she was to see, from the moment she had heard the wailing cry above her. She fell upon her knees beside the stiffening figure. Hepzibah stood rigid, gazing in intense grief on the form in which for so many years her whole life had been centred. The one, old woman left behind was a more pathetic figure than the other upon the bed, peaceful in its rigidity, with a stream of the morning sunshine falling over it.

"Mrs. Johnson, she's dead," said Hepzibah to some neighbor who called to inquire for the sick woman. In the tone there was