

sation was indeed always of that intellectual nature which commanded the attention, and we could scarcely believe we were at home, when the gate of the shrubbery appeared in sight. At this moment we perceived that the weather appeared lowering—the sun had ceased to shine, and a few drops of rain falling, foretold a shower.

"You will at least come in until the rain is over," said Annie. Captain Selby appeared to hesitate, but it was impossible to refuse her second request, made more urgently, and he entered the house with us. This day was doomed to be one of incident.

Soon after our return, Mrs. Fludyer drove up with one of her daughters—she had come with the full determination of carrying off Annie to the gay ball—for she was one of those good natured worldly women, who conceived it impossible that a young person should give up pleasure from inclination, and she intended to intercede with Mr. Bertram and gain his consent.

"You were disappointed the last time you were to have accompanied us, my love," said she, "and I am resolved that this time you shall not—particularly as Lord Randolph wishes to collect all the beauty he can to grace his ball, and he mentioned you as one of the most attractive. You cannot imagine what pretty things he has said of you—he was with us yesterday and gave us a brilliant description of his arrangements."

Poor Captain Selby, how did he look while Mrs. Fludyer uttered this—he appeared to be gazing on a picture with fixed attention—but there was a firm compression on the lip, as he stood with folded arms, which displayed some internal struggle. He need not have feared for the decision of Annie, who was not to be flattered from her sense of duty by high flown compliments.

"You are very kind, dear Mrs. Fludyer," was her sweet reply, "but you know, that except to your house, I never go to balls—it is neither my father's wish nor mine—he is absent today, and having already declined Lord Randolph's polite invitation—of course as a parent you must understand how impossible it would be for me to accept your kindness, for which my grateful thanks are not the less due."

"You are a provoking though a good child," returned Mrs. Fludyer, who quickly noticed the effect this speech made on Captain Selby. "You are going, of course," she continued, addressing him.

"This is not exactly the garb suited to such scenes," replied Captain Selby gravely, and alluding to his dress.

"Ah! I had forgotten—I beg your pardon. Lord Randolph mentioned to me that you had sustained a recent loss; but he said it was a distant relation. You are determined then good folks to be stupid like all your serious persons, who hold us light-hearted, happy people, to be utterly unworthy. I

know not how it is I have made my most valued friends among you."

"It is that your heart, in reality, is with us, dear Mrs. Fludyer," said Annie, taking her hand; "you know what is right, and the time will come when you will estimate the happiness which you feel not yet, for oh, it has depths which the joys of this world cannot comprehend."

"I must away, else I shall become a convert too soon," replied the lively woman, withdrawing her hand—but as she did so, I saw a tear dim her intelligent dark eye, as she kissed the fair cheek of her youthful monitress.

"She is too good to be lost," said dear Annie, who watched her departure from the window.

Captain Selby had left the room to hand her into the carriage. On re-entering he went up to Annie, "What a different being should I become had I always you near me," said he; "I have sometimes feared that my manner is morose—a sense of loneliness to a warm heart is the most trying dispensation, particularly when we have been loved, and can never be so loved again. At first, the society I met here, cheered and comforted me—now I feel it otherwise, and for my own peace I must depart."

"Not this day, at least," replied Annie, much agitated—"wait to say farewell to my father; the rain too, see how it falls—you must not go yet."

The rain was indeed falling by this time in torrents, and I united my entreaties with those of Annie, to stay the departure of Captain Selby.

"You will dine with us once more, will you not?" asked the dear girl—her pleading voice—her sweet smile, as she looked up in his face, almost overcome his fortitude—but by one grand effort, he was successful in commanding himself, and he assented to remain until the return of Mr. Bertram, with an air of cold reserve, which surprised me—but his consent was given, and Annie was happy.

While dressing for dinner, I traced in my mind the singular manner and various emotions lately displayed by Captain Selby towards Annie.

"It is certain that he loves her," said I mentally, "what man, domesticated as he has been, with so attractive an object for so many weeks, would not—but he feels the utter impossibility of its being returned. He is diffident of himself—he is sensitive upon the subject of his appearance—perhaps weakly so—and his pride is great in proportion. He has at times indulged the thought that Annie had felt tenderly towards him—her innocent display of feeling has occasionally encouraged so happy an idea, and his strong agitation in such moments, evinced how deeply HE LOVES. Then comes the withering stern improbability, and blights reviving hope in his breast—his warm ardent affection is crushed, and he is more miserable than ever. Now he is altogether wrong," I continued, smiling as I thus cogitated, "for I am much mistaken if Annie is not