

Beaufort, regarding her with tender pity. "But henceforth, dear Madelaine,—pardon me that I assume a brother's privilege in thus familiarly addressing you,—henceforth, life I trust will wear a new aspect to you, aye, and to us all,—for we will regard each other but as members of the same loving family, linked together not only by blood, but by the strong and tender bonds of a common interest and affection."

"God grant it! may He indeed grant it," she fervently ejaculated. "I care not for riches, Mr. Beaufort; poverty has ever been my portion, and it has yielded me treasures that wealth could not have bought. But to see my dear mother happy, and restored to her wonted station in society, to feel that we are truly members of the great human family, linked to it by ties of kindness and sympathy; and that with kindred hearts we may interchange precious thoughts, and hopes, and affections, is a consummation of my dreams so utterly un hoped for, that you must not marvel if I shew myself a very child, in the demonstration of my joy!"

Her fervid, yet gentle utterance, poured forth in glad anticipations for the future, and touching with a sweet spirit of grateful resignation, on the past, so moved Beaufort, that his moistened eyes proved him not less a child than her to whom he listened. The pause of an instant which succeeded before he dared trust himself to speak, was broken by Doctor Moreland, who appeared from the chamber of death with tidings that the last struggle was over, and the spirit of the unhappy miser gone to its account.

Madelaine's cheek grew pale as she thought of the dread account it would be called to render, and faintly saying:

"I should have been beside him instead of loitering here," she passed hastily towards the door of the apartment.

"You could have done nothing, my dear girl," said the Doctor, gently drawing her back; "he was virtually dead when you left him, and has neither moved nor struggled since, nor is your presence necessary there now. Phebe has already called in an old crone of her acquaintance, and they together will do all that is requisite, without your aid. On my young friend here, as the nearest male relative of the deceased, devolves the charge of all arrangements respecting the funeral, and other matters requiring attention, so that you have only to attend to your good mother, and reserve your strength for her, when she shall need it, which you know," he added, good humouredly, "she is not slow to do. I shall call again this evening; and as I understand Mr. Beaufort is to bring his sister to see you then, I will contrive to be here at the same time, for I like to witness pleasant meetings, and I can sympathise in the happiness of the young, though my own green days have long since fallen into the yellow leaf and are." "

"Yes, and with their trials also, my dear Doctor as I well know, and feel," said Madelaine, as she received his kind adieu, and with it a parting kiss, bestowed as was often his wont, with fatherly affection on her glowing cheek.

"I use the privilege of an old man, Mr. Beaufort," said the good Doctor, laughing, and as Edward thought, with a provoking air of triumph. "You must bide your time," he gaily added, "to claim so sweet a boon on the same score, and then you may find as I do, that some of the pleasant indulgences granted to age wonderfully reconcile one to the loss of youth. Come, my gig is at the door, and I will drive you to Bowdoin Square, if you will take a seat beside me."

"I must return home immediately, sir, therefore do not wait for me," said Beaufort, strongly inclined to think the Doctor a little malicious,—and then seeing him depart without further delay, he lingered a moment, to say one more word to Madelaine, only "God bless you, my sweet cousin," and he turned away and was quitting the apartment, when, as if relenting in his purpose, he looked round, and half laughing, half in confusion, approached her,

"I am not yet an old man, dear Madelaine," he said, "nor am I disposed to wait till that period arrives, before claiming this privilege, which I do in virtue of our near relationship, trusting to that for pardon if I offend you by the act."

He stooped towards her, and pressed a kiss upon her fair unruffled brow, which she received with maidenly sweetness and composure, though not without a deep and painful blush, that changed its spotless whiteness to the hue of crimson—then, with another brief farewell, he left her, and was gone.

The funeral of Mr. Dorival was over, and few tears were shed for one, who in life had performed not a solitary act to win respect and love. Old Phebe, indeed, let fall a few natural drops at parting with an object which for so many uneventful years she had been daily accustomed to behold; and the tender-hearted Madelaine wept as she reviewed the melancholy past of her grandfather's life, recalled the sinful abuse of God's most precious gifts and endowments, of which he had been guilty, and then thought of the fearful change his unprepared soul had made, from the fleeting illusions of this transitory state, to the awful and solemn realities of the unseen world.

The secret closet, where the slave of mammon had worshipped by stealth his golden god, proved upon investigation to contain, as Phebe had averred, "a mint of money," the hoarded savings of half a century, or more,—and as no will was found to deprive them of it, this mass of wealth fell to the possession of Madelaine and her mother, Beaufort steadily persisting in the relinquishment of his claims, and consenting only on his sister's account,