

Instantly the rich dress fell from her hands, and springing towards him she held him in her arms, while he twined his around her with the eager intensity of pain, and for a few minutes clasped her in a strict embrace. As the pang subsided he relaxed his hold, and then, from a labelled vial, she poured a few drops of liquid into a spoon, and conveyed it to his lips. Without resistance he swallowed the medicine, thinking her with a smile so sweet, that tears filled her eyes, as, stooping to kiss his cheek, she softly said,

"Are you not better now, my Hal?"

"Yes, a little, thank you," answered the boy, "but ah, sister, do put the rosebush where I can see it—there, that will do. How sweet it is, Fanny," continued poor Hal, his large eyes brightening with pleasure, as he gathered up a handful of the delicate flower leaves, which, together with their rich perfume, were shaken over the bed, when Fanny removed, and placed it on a little deal table beside him. "It makes me think so much of our old home, and our pretty garden, where we were so happy; does it not you, sister?"

"Yes, dear, but more of our poor mother, whose delight it was to water and train it," said Fanny, the tears which had gathered in her eyes, falling silently over her pale cheeks as she spoke.

"Ah, and of her too,—but do not cry, sister,—you have often told me, that she dwells now among fairer flowers, and those that do not fade, as you see these do, and some time we shall go to her there—do you not hope it will be soon, sister?—that we may get away from this dismal room, where you have to work all day, and where we can see none of the beautiful things which God has made."

"You forget, dear Hal, that we can see the bright ocean afar off, and the blue sky which bends over it, and these are God's works. And then, too, we have each other to love, while the poor lone woman in the next room has no single heart to care for her, and none for whom she can find it even pleasant to toil. Therefore we should be content, dear boy, and above all things grateful to our heavenly Father for the blessings of our lot, though we have not all we crave."

"I will try to be happy and thankful, sister," said the child weckly, "and I should be, if I could only hear the birds sing, and run in the green fields as I used to do—then too I should be well—but here, Fanny—can any one ever get well in such a close and gloomy place as this?"

"Yes, Hal!—and many who have never known what illness is, have always lived in such an one. But you look weary with lying so long,—come, let me sit you up at the window; there is a fine breeze blowing in from the sea now, and you may count many white sails on the water this

pleasant morning,"—and, lifting the sick boy tenderly in her arms, Fanny placed him in a high chair well lined with pillows, at the window, from whence he could amuse himself with the sight of the distant vessels, while as she hoped the cool and bracing air would invigorate his languid frame.

At first the change delighted him, and pleased to see him happy and at ease, Fanny resumed her work, conscious that she had already stolen more minutes from her task, than her employer would have sanctioned, even though given, as they had been, to the holiest offices of love. But soon the little sufferer grew uneasy in a position, which it required an effort to sustain, and once more Fanny suspended her employment, to minister with the untiring gentleness of love, to his wants. He seemed so exhausted when she laid him back upon the bed, that she tried to tempt his appetite with some delicate boiled rice which she had prepared as he best liked it. But in vain.

"I am not hungry, sister," he said as he turned with an expression of loathing from the food. "I am only tired, but I will just lie still and look at the dear musk-rose, and then I shall not think how badly my back aches."

Fanny smoothed his pillow, and not only drew the cherished plant nearer to him, but plucked one of its lovely roses and placed it in his little feverish hand, which closed over the slender stalk with delight.

"It is so sweet," he said—"when I shut my eyes and smell it, I just think I am lying under that hedge of wild roses by the wood, where you know we used to find the earliest strawberries. I do hope, sister, you will never be obliged to sell this beautiful rosebush, as you have every thing else, that we loved."

"Never, Hal, while I have a place to keep it in, and health to earn a morsel of bread for our support. It is all that remains to us of our old home, and on every leaf I seem to see my mother's smile."

"Yet, sister, Madame Legrande has always teased you for it since you carried her that beautiful branch full of roses that got broken off by the wind, and the other day when she came here to speak about it, I was so afraid you would let her have it for all that heap of money she offered you."

"Do not fear, Hal; I could never find it in my heart to part with it for any price—it seems so like a dear old friend, and as if it remembered with us, what was past and gone. And now try to sleep a little while, and as I have not time to read to you, I will repeat some of the pretty pieces you love so much to hear."

"That will do just as well, Fanny, for you