

undue reproach upon you. Aye, and my very heart would break within me rather than it should foster one sentiment that was not love for you, and yet, feeling thus, I was driving you to ruin and wreck. Instinct taught you the terrible truth, and you would blight your life rather than not suit the whims of a thoughtless old man. How can I ever look you in the face again? Oh! my dearest child, this indeed is too much—too much—too much!” and sobbing violently, the bowed head, with its snow-white locks, fell on the shoulder of the tearful girl kneeling beside the old man’s chair. In her gentlest, most childish and winning way, Honor, brightening up her countenance, said to her disconsolate guardian,

“Well, if you are really sorry, as you pretend, it is not a very good proof that you love me as much as you say.”

At this the bowed head was raised, and a glance of hopeful enquiry cast on the girl’s face.

“Well, it is this way,” Honor continued, answering it “you see, if Vivian Standish had never been encouraged by you, he would never have come here at all, and Guy would never have been alarmed about us, and would not have come back at all, and then, of course, we would never have all been reunited. I would be a gloomy, grumbling old maid, that could never be happy, and life would have been painfully glum for the future, whereas,”—and here the old, care-worn face smiled, as it watched the good, kind features of the girl—“you brought everything to a beautiful crisis, by pretending to force another man on me. for I really don’t believe now, you meant me to marry him at all,” she said, laughing outright, and kissing away the remnants of the old man’s grief from his sorrowful face.

“You are an angel of consolation, besides everything else,” was all that Mr. Rayne could answer to her pretty speech, but he clasped again the hands of the two young people he loved, and in an earnest, pious tone, he said:

“I give you one to another: may you live to gladden and comfort one another’s hearts, through a long, prosperous and holy life; and remember, that each time you dwell upon the memory of the old man, who was foolish, only in his wild love for you both, that he has begged of God on this day, to sanction this humble blessing by one from on high, and that the desire for your future welfares, was the