

dearest," he continued, after looking at her silently for a moment, "you are not so blooming as you were with us at the castle."

Amy gazed mournfully upon him, but felt unable to reply.

"Had you beheld her this morning, you would have thought differently," returned Lady Emily; "something has, I fear, occurred since then to distress her—she was in the gayest spirits before she set out to walk; but see, Harold is approaching, with Colonel d'Arcey."

Amy looked up, and perceived their eyes directed towards herself.

"Lady Amanda," said Lord Blondville, as they drew near, "Colonel d'Arcey requests to be introduced to you."

Amy bowed, while the colour rushed back to her cheek, to her neck, her brow.

"I had the honour to meet the Duke de Manfredonia at the house of Mr. George Denison, some time ago," said Colonel d'Arcey—"has he returned to Italy?"

"He has," replied the agitated girl—"he left England a few months ago."

"And he had the courage to leave you?"

"My father conceived he had a higher duty to perform than any he owed to me; therefore he was right—this is my father *now*," and she laid her hand gently on Mr. Martyn's arm, who pressed it affectionately.

Colonel d'Arcey gazed on her lovely countenance with much interest, while the touching melody of her voice particularly struck him:

"And can you really prefer the cold, foggy atmosphere of this sea-girl isle, to your own sunny land?" he enquired.

"Oh, much every way," replied Amy, with enthusiasm: "it is not country, or beauty, or sunshine which attaches us, but the dear associations which are linked in our memories—Italy is the land of my birth, but England is my *home*, since it contains *all* from whom I have received kindness."

"What a lovely being is this," said Colonel d'Arcey, in a low whisper to the Earl; but *his* face was turned away.

Miss Courtenay, hanging on her brother's arm, now joined the group:

"Lady Amanda," she said, "Charles has come to plead for one song—you must not refuse him; and I am come to challenge Lord Blondville to a game at chess. Will you accept it?" she continued, in a winning tone.

"Most happily," he replied, though he still lingered.

"I fear I am taking you from greater attractions—if so, say me nay," added Miss Courtenay, smiling.

"My word is given," returned the Earl, and he led her to the table, where they both sat down.

Sir Charles then entreated Amy to allow him to conduct her to the instrument.

"Oh, no, no, not tonight," she replied, pressing her hand over her eyes, "indeed I cannot."

"Sweet nightingale, 'most musical, most melancholy,' we may not be refused," urged Sir Charles: "come, you have never yet denied me."

Colonel d'Arcey joined his earnest entreaties, and the distressed girl reluctantly allowed them to lead her to the piano forte. Mrs. Somerville, observing her extreme unwillingness, drew near to encourage her, while a circle was formed round her.

"If I might have been spared this trial I should have felt thankful," she uttered, in a tone scarcely audible, to Mrs. Somerville. Sir Charles, who was leaning over the back of her chair, whispered softly in her ear:

"My heart, my heart is breaking for the love of Alice Grey."

These words of the old ballad, so unfeelingly repeated at such a moment, touched the tenderest chord in Amy's heart. She burst into a flood of tears, and, throwing her arms round Mrs. Somerville, exclaimed:

"Mamma, take me away, I can bear no more."

Mrs. Somerville, much agitated, hurried with her across the room, amidst the astonished gaze of the whole group. Some one kindly hastened to open the door—Amy saw not who, nor was she sensible to any thing until she found herself once more in the quiet of her own room. Here she threw herself on her knees before a large chair, and continued sobbing violently.

"Amy, my dearest child," said Mrs. Somerville, hanging tenderly over her, "this grief is surely ill-timed on such a day. I have seen you bear up against far heavier trials with more fortitude."

"Never," cried Amy, in a voice choked from emotion; "I never had to contend with any thing like the feelings I have suffered today."

"Amy, what mean you?—the death of a little girl, in no way related to you, cannot occasion a display of sorrow like this; there is a want of resignation to the Divine will, which, in you, surprises me."

"Oh, mamma, it is not all for poor Susan," said the agonized girl, raising her head, and fixing her tearful eyes on Mrs. Somerville; "even her sweet, pale image was forgotten in the deeper grief of other thoughts; did you not mark—but no, you were not in the room when he met me as an utter stranger—no look, no smile of recognition; did you not notice the cold, stern gaze he fixed upon me, on passing him in the dining-room? Has he spoken to me once during the evening, save in the frigid manner of one who had never before seen me; yet, to others