

"Alas," she said, "he is dead! What if he has a mother, or one dearer still! And yet but half an hour ago he was in full strength of health and manhood. It cannot be—I have heard," she continued, eagerly, as if a sudden thought had struck her, and she began to tear open his vest, jacket at the wound, "that my grandsire died at Culloden from the blood coagulating in the wound, when, if a surgeon had been by, he might have been saved. What if this should be the case here?"

She had by this time bared sufficient of his person to get at the orifice of the wound. The dark gore had almost stiffened about it. She gazed at it an instant, the tears falling fast in womanly sympathy, and then a sudden idea seemed to strike her. She stooped down, and tenderly approaching the wound, commenced wiping away the congealed blood. She had not been long engaged in her task of mercy, when the wounded man stirred, and opening his eyes fixed them earnestly upon her.

She started from her kneeling posture covered with beautiful confusion. For a while the sense maidenly shame even overcame her joy at his recovery, and she could not meet his gaze.

"Where am I?" he inquired, for his memory was yet vague. "What spirit from heaven are you? Ah! I remember—my gun went off. But where is Harry?"

The young girl had now in a measure recovered from her embarrassment. "If you mean your friend," she said, half timidly, and in a voice that sounded to the ears of the sufferer inexpressibly sweet, "he is going for a surgeon. I have consented to watch by you till some shepherds come to carry you to our cabin. And here they come, Heaven be blessed!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands, equally glad to conclude this embarrassing *tele-a-tele*, and to see the wounded man placed in a situation of more comfort.

"Heaven bless you!" said the sufferer, with emphasis, giving her a look which brought the blushes again to her countenance. "You have saved my life."

In a few moments the wounded man was placed on a sledge brought by the shepherds, and the little cavalcade traversed its way towards the cabin. The maiden walked last, and by her side stalked sally the two dogs of the sufferer; and the dumb animals, with a sense almost human, as if appreciating her kindness to their master, looked up affectionately into her face every few steps.

The cabin was like those existing everywhere in the Highlands—a rude but cheerful habitation, but was both larger than usual, and adorned with more taste inside. The wounded man, as he was borne into an inner chamber, of which the house had apparently at least two, noticed, with some surprise, over the fireplace, an old-fashioned target and broad claymora.

In about two hours the friend of the sufferer returned bringing with him the surgeon, who was conversed with his patient for more than an hour, and when he came forth the young girl was still awake, sitting anxiously by the fire, in company with a middle-aged woman, the wife of one of the shepherds.

"Oh, Miss Helen," said the old surgeon, answering the enquiry of her eyes, "you have saved the life of as brave a lad as ever shot a murr-duck or stalked a red deer. I know all about it, ye see, lassie;" then seeing that Helen was ready to cry with sweet vexation, he continued, "but it's in the blood, ye see, in the blood; ye came of a generous and gallant race;" and he patted her head as a father would that of a favorite

daughter, adding, as it to himself, "tis a pity the Southern had the broad acres that were once her ancestors'; and that she, coming of a chieftain's line, should have nothing but a cabin, and a few bits of hill-side for a flock or two of sheep."

Helen did not hear these last remarks, for the old man spoke in a whisper, and she had risen, now that she knew the result, to retire, for she feared the other young sportsman would come out.

"Good-bye, doctor," she said, giving her hand with the dignity of a countess, softened by the kindness of an affectionate girl. "What you tell me will make me sleep, I trow. I share good Mrs. Com's bed to night, having given up my own room to the sick man; but if you will rest here to-night we will yield it to you and sit by the fire."

"Nae, nae," said the old man, kindly pushing her towards the door of the other sleeping apartment; "I stay here, indeed, for I maun be wanted; but I'm an old campaigner, and hae slept many a night under my cloak, with the bunny stars above me; and, to such as me, a settle and a chimney corner is nae great cross now and then."

The next day the wounded man was pronounced better, but still in a very critical situation; and his removal was expressly forbidden by the old surgeon.

"Ye maun keep him here awhile yet, lassie," he said, addressing Helen; "and, I'm almost persuaded ye'el hae to be his nurse. He has nae sisters or mother to send for, it seems; and men are very rough nurses, ye ken. Mrs. Colin is here, and will nae doubt help; but ye maun be his nurse, maist of the time, yonsel. Aweel, aweel, don't be frightened; 'tis what can't be helped."

And so, Helen, timid and embarrassed, was compelled, from the urgent necessity of the case, to attend on the wounded man. His friend indeed remained to assist in nursing him; but the invalid, with the view of a sick man, soon began to refuse his medicines, unless administered by the hand of Helen, and sweetened by her smile. Moreover, until the danger was over, his friend watched every night at his bed-side, and in consequence regarding a portion of the day for rest, Helen was necessarily left alone for hours with the wounded man. The surgeon, for the first two weeks, came every day to see his patient; but, after this visited him less frequently.

"He is getting along weel enough now," he said, one day, when Helen followed him out of the room, to ask his opinion. "Al, he needs ye careful nursing, such as ye ken weel how to gie him. Ah, lassie," he continued, smiling archly, and shaking his grey head, "I would myself be a most willing to be on a sick bed for a fortnight, if I could hae two such een watching me."

It was not long after this, for he now mended rapidly, that the invalid began to sit up, and very soon he could totter to the window, and look out. In a day or two more he found his way to the cottage door, where, sitting in a chair, he inhaled the delicious mountain air, for an hour or so at noonday. His friend, when the invalid was thus far convalescent, took to his gun again, and went out for game; and so Helen and her guest were frequently left alone together.

It is not to be supposed that this intimacy between two congenial spirits could go without love, on one side at least.

"How shall I ever thank you sufficiently, Helen?" said Donald, one day, looking at her fondly. "I have never dared to allude to it since, though I have thought of it fifty times daily; but your presence of mind

when I was dying by the spring, saved my life."

The blushing Helen looked down, and began to pick to pieces a lily of the valley, her favorite flower; but she answered softly, "Do not talk that way, Mr. Alleyne.—You would not, I know, if you were aware how much it pained me."

"Call me Donald," said the convalescent; "surely we have known each other long enough for you to drop that formal name. Or, if you will not call me Donald, then I shall address you as Miss Graeme."

"Donald, then," said Helen, archly, looking up, and shaking the curls back from her face.

"Bless you for the word Helen," he said, taking her hand. "Do you know it sounds sweeter now than I ever thought it would. Nay, dear one, do not withdraw your hand—do not look away—for I love you, Helen, as I love my own life, and if you will not be mine I shall ever be miserable. It is this, too, that I have been long wishing to say to you, but never dared."

And did not Helen return the love thus warmly expressed? Had she been with him so much not to know how immeasurably superior he was to other men? Why did she, in fact, shake her head and persist in withdrawing her hand.

"Mr. Alleyne," she said, though with averted face, for the tears were falling fast from her eyes—she no longer said Donald—"if you would not have me keep out of your sight forever—it, in short, you have any respect for a friendless girl—do not speak in that strain again." And she rose as if to depart.

"Helen, for Heaven's sake hear me," said her lover, detaining her; "hear me only for one word more. Since the hour that you saved my life I have loved you, and every day I have spent in your society has increased that love; but if you will say that you love another, I swear never to speak on that subject again."

She endeavoured to detach her hand, which he had caught a second time, but he held it too firmly. She still looked away, weeping, but did not answer. "You are rich, I am poor," she said, at last, brokenly; "you would some day repent of this thing. Even your friends would laugh at your folly."

"Then you love me," he said eagerly. "Is it not so?"

"Mr. Alleyne, will you let me go?" she said. "I am an unprotected girl, and you presume on my situation."

"No, by Heaven, no!" he exclaimed, but he let go her hand; "there, leave me, cruel one. You misjudge me, indeed, Miss Graeme, for your blood is as good as mine; and even if it were not, Donald Alleyne is not the man to love for rank or wealth."

Helen, whose prudence rather than heart had spoken, was moved by these words, and she lingered irresolutely. Her lover saw the change in her demeanour, and hastened to take advantage of it. Nor did Helen long continue to resist his pleadings. She loved him indeed only too well, as she had all along confessed to her own heart. Still, even when brought to half acknowledge that he had a place in her heart, she would not promise to be his, without a condition. He argued long and earnestly, but her answer was always the same.

"We must part for a year," she said.—"You think now, with the memory of your illness fresh upon you, that you love me; but I am come of too haughty a blood, tho' poor now, to marry even where I might love, on so sudden and questionable excuse me, for I must speak plainly—so sud-