

when I first learnt the tidings of his illness, I felt in my affliction that the Almighty had laid the stroke on me to humble me, and lead me to himself.

"That child," continued the weeping Lady Blondville, "from his birth, has been my idol—even Harold, the noble gifted Harold, good as he is—and beloved, has been less to me than Arthur—he has stood between me and my God, engrossed all my heart, all my thoughts, and as I now gaze on that perishing lovely wreck, and reflect on what a fragile base I have rested my hopes, and garnered up my treasure, I shudder as I think, how just a retribution," and she hid her face in her hands.

"Dear, dear lady," replied Amy, kneeling by her side and mingling her tears; "our Heavenly Father never afflicts willingly, nor will He suffer us to receive a heavier stroke than he enables us to bear; even now although He has permitted the billows to flow over you, and the storm to rage, yet behind that darkness was concealed the sun which has again shone forth—your prayers, your contrition have been accepted, and your child is spared; henceforth you will remember, that he is only lent to you, that he is reserved for a holier, happier existence in that world where he will live forever, redeemed by his Saviour, who wills not that one should be lost, but that all should come unto Him to be saved."

The Countess gazed in astonishment on the animated countenance of Amy, as she uttered this, in a tone of sweet solemnity.

"Whence can such reasoning come from one of your years," she inquired, laying her hand on her beautiful head; "when I look on you, a mere child, and here words which might proceed from one who had numbered twice as many, I marvel as I listen."

"I have never mixed with those of my own age," returned Amy; "I know nothing of their amusements, their ways, their pursuits. My time has been spent very much alone, or with those considerably older than myself. My Bible has been my guide and my solace, during the five years I was in Italy, I never read any other book, for those which Father Anselm gave me I dared not look into; since I returned to my dear mamma, she has taken great pains with me, and our evenings were always spent in reading the best authors. The first young companion I have known is your loved Arthur. Oh, if I could express to you what I felt when I heard his joyous laugh, it touched a chord in my heart which had never vibrated before, and the days I have spent here in wandering with him over the delightful grounds of this place, have given a charm to my existence quite new to me. Alas! this very feeling of happiness so unknown, rendered me less able to bear the miserable change his illness made on all around me—and I feel that the fewer beings we have to love, the safer and better it is for those

whose best treasures should be laid up in Heaven."

The Countess pressed her lips on the snow white forehead of the kneeling girl, she then seemed lost in deep thought, for she spoke no more for some time. Arthur now called Amy to his bedside, where she remained administering to his childish wishes until he was weary, and inclined to sleep, when she retired to her boudoir, full of gratitude for the happy turn which the last twenty-four hours had given in the tide of affairs, eminently interesting to those who were becoming daily more dear to her heart.

In the evening she joined the Earl, and Mr. Martyn in their walk, and a very happy one it proved, for relieved from his worst fears, the cheerfulness of Lord Blondville had returned, and all the natural playfulness of his character was displayed; the spirits of Mr. Martyn were more chastened, yet full of peace; he felt there was much to be thankful for, he smiled at his friend's sallies, but his feelings were too serene to be mirthful.

I remember once hearing the remark made by a dear boy, only thirteen years of age, that "when we are very happy, we never laugh," I was struck at this saying at the time, and I have since found it to be most true—happiness to be real, must proceed from high causes, therefore a noisy expression of its presence would be inconsistent.

But Amy was still too much a child not to enter with her whole heart, into the frolics, between Lord Blondville and his favourite dog Lion, a noble animal, which he had brought home with him from the great St. Bernard—and who had frequently been her companion and young Arthur's, in their rambles. They had now reached that part of the lake from whence rose the fountain, flowing over a rocky eminence, and whose soothing sound, as it fell gurgling into the marble basin, was peculiarly delightful to Amy. A rich cluster of the water lily grew near this sweet spot, reposing its snowy petals on the broad bosom of the lake.

"How I should like one of those lovely flowers," said Amy, "rendered still more valuable by the difficulty to obtain them—Lion I would you could understand me."

She had scarcely uttered the wish, when Lord Blondville, springing from her side, was standing on the ledge of the rock, and holding by the most fragile support, as he stooped down to secure his prize. Amy beheld his light graceful figure in this perilous attitude only one instant, for covering her face, she turned away in terror, while a violent plunge in the water, and an exclamation from Mr. Martyn succeeded—her heart beat quick, and until her hands were gently removed by some one near her, she ventured not to unclothe her eyes—they rested on the Earl, who with the flowers in his grasp, had approached to present them—her only thanks were a burst of tears.