

"I will, Ieuan, even at the cost of my own happiness."

"Alas, and must it be so? Must I destroy thy happiness, Mifanwy? I wish it could be otherwise."

"But, Ieuan, listen to me first and answer me. Didst ever love me as I loved thee?"

"God knows, Mifanwy, I loved thee tenderly and truly when I first parted from thee, and, in spite of carelessness and neglect, in spite of the fascinations of the world that crowded upon me, and dimmed thine image for a time, no other woman ever moved my heart as thou hast moved it—until lately."

"And now," she said, with trembling in her voice, "thou lovest another woman?"

He was silent for a while, but, at last, with bated breath, he said:

"Alas, I do, with all my heart and soul."

For a short space Mifanwy, too, was silent. Then rising, she leant against the ledge, and murmured nervously:

"I, too, have something to tell thee, Ieuan. There is someone who has—"

"Supplanted me," said Ieuan, speaking fiercely, and rising, too. "Say it out, Mifanwy, I deserve it. Another—more honourable, more faithful than I—has taken my place in thine heart; is it not so?"

Her only answer was, "Poor Mifanwy! poor Mifanwy! say good-bye to her now, Ieuan," and she held out her hand. "Is this the end of all her love for thee? wilt thou cast from thee that faithful love that she has nourished in her bosom like a bird? and shall another take it up and prize it with the warmth that thou refusest?"

Ieuan was in despair. He had never loved La Belle more than at the present moment; and yet the knowledge of Mifanwy's love, the glamour of her presence, threw some spell upon him that made him long to take that girlish form in his arms and press her to his heart.