

he has the more to spare for others," returned Annie, "I have two pounds of my own saved up—as far as they will go, you shall have them to satisfy this unfeeling man."

Captain Selby here interposed—"Annie, you must give up your wishes to mine," he said, "it will not be the first time." He drew forth his pocket book as he spoke, and taking from it a note, he placed it in Martha's hand—his whole countenance beaming with benevolence. "Few pleasures are mine now," continued the amiable man, "permit me to enjoy one of the highest, and become the humble means of restoring happiness to another. Go, my friend, and redeem your property—and remember to give your husband an excellent supper when he comes from his work."

The joy and gratitude of poor Martha knew no bounds—she would have knelt to her benefactor, had he permitted it, calling him an angel of mercy.

"A very comely angel indeed," said he laughingly, as he turned to Annie; there was an expression in her eye as she met his, which appeared in a moment to agitate his whole frame. She had taken his arm, while in the lowest tone she murmured, "Oh that you were as happy as you have made me at this moment."

"Annie, Annie, do not speak thus, I implore you," was his singular reply.

Martha followed us all to the cottage door, with prayers and blessings. She perceived her husband in the distance coming slowly and sorrowfully home. She rushed forward to meet him, while we instantly hurried away, enjoying the reflection of the glad welcome she had in store for him. The rest of our walk passed almost in silence. Annie hung on her companion's arm, gazing at times timidly in his face, which had assumed a grave sadness, almost amounting to sternness.

At the gate of the shrubbery, we met Mr. Bertram. Annie flew forward to tell him our evening's adventure, but before she had time to do so, Captain Selby abruptly took leave of us.

"But you will come to us tomorrow," said Annie's sweet voice, "you know we were to finish our bed of roses."

He turned towards her for one moment, with a countenance I shall never forget. The tears started to her eyes as she looked enquiringly at her father. "Come in my child," said Mr. Bertram calmly, taking her hand, "it is late, and you will take cold. Selby, remember that we cannot do without you tomorrow."

Captain Selby nodded, but did not dare trust his voice. In another moment we beheld him with hasty strides enter the path leading to the road, where he was shut out from our view by the foliage of the trees.

On the following morning, when we met for prayers in Mr. Bertram's study, I thought he was

graver than usual; but Annie was as cheerful and happy as ever, and kissed her father, as he most affectionately and feelingly blessed her—but as the day wore away, and no Captain Selby came, I could perceive a restlessness in her manner quite new. Frequently she walked to the window, and if I addressed her, she seemed scarcely to hear me. In the evening a note was handed to Mr. Bertram—Annie looked all eagerness—it contained an invitation from Lord Randolph to a ball, which was to be held in marquees pitched for the occasion.

"I do not wish to go, papa," said Annie in a tone slightly sad.

"I am happy to hear you say so, my child, as it would have pained me to disappoint you," replied Mr. Bertram, "and I should have felt it inconsistent to take you—it was however very polite in Lord Randolph to remember us, and I must acknowledge his kindness. He left the room for the purpose of answering the invitation.

Several of Captain Selby's books were lying on the table, and one of which he had been reading aloud to us the day before, I perceived Annie select, as she stole away to the arbour. I smiled, as I continued to ply my needle on my work most indefatigably, although my thoughts were rambling with my sweet Annie's, and I began to trace all the circumstances of the last six weeks, which had brought to our acquaintance and our friendship a man, like Captain Selby—certainly one of the plainest I had seen, yet with so commanding an appearance, and combining so many estimable qualities, that it was impossible to know him without becoming deeply interested. Yet, I confess, when I thought of Annie, so young, so very beautiful, I scarcely thought it possible she could view him in any other light than that of a father.

"Strange things come to pass, however," said I mentally, "particularly when woman's heart is concerned."

Day after day glided away, and still Captain Selby came not. The one fixed for Lord Randolph's ball arrived—it was ushered in by sunshine. Mr. Bertram announced to us when we met at breakfast, that an unexpected letter received from a friend, on business of importance, would oblige him to ride as far as —, a distance of ten miles, and that it might be late in the evening when he returned.

"This will be a long, long day to me," said Annie, on hearing this, "without you, and without —." Here she stopped. Mr. Bertram smiled, as he patted her on the head, "Mrs. Mary will not run away from you my child, I dare say," he replied, "so you have still one companion left." Poor Annie made no answer—but she followed him to the door, and beheld him mount his pony and ride away, while she stood watching his receding figure until he was out of sight.