

value of his wife. He also bade me say that his dying wish and prayer was that no memory of him should stand in the way of your happiness, and that all the share he would crave in your future life was in your heart one kindly and forgiving thought. He thought it would not be very hard for you to grant his prayer, for you were ever the soul of angel goodness and unselfishness. That is my message, Lady Lundie. That is what I came here to-day to say.'

The calm, intense, passionless voice ceased, and the magnificent eyes looked down with mingled tenderness and compassion upon the golden head bowed low on the end of the couch. There was a moment's deep silence.

'Before I pass away from your sight for ever, Lady Lundie, I ask you,—though I have done you the greatest wrong one woman can do another,—I ask you to forgive me. Knowing you as I do, I am not afraid to crave even so much, because you are nobler than any woman I have ever met. One word to take with me to my solitude, and I am gone.'

Lady Lundie rose slowly to her feet. Her face, even in its absolute paleness, shone with the light of a generous and noble soul.

'Because of the unspeakable joy you have given to me to-day, even though it is mingled with bitterness, I forgive you, Lady Devanha, as I hope to be forgiven.'

She extended her hand once more. Lady Devanha raised it to her lips and left a tear upon it.

'Although I am a stranger to the language of prayer, Lady Lundie, I speak from a sincere heart,—God bless you and give you the happiness you deserve,' she said, and the proud, calm voice faltered now. 'Farewell.'

Lady Lundie would have detained her a moment, would have asked concerning her future life and plans, but in an instant she was gone. A few minutes later the whirl of the departing carriage told Caroline that the interview was at an end. In fear and trembling she stole to the drawing-room door and looked in. She saw her sister on her knees, and there was the sound of sobbing in the room. She shut the door again and stole away, knowing there was nothing to fear.

There could only be peace and healing in the first tears Lady Lundie had shed since her widowhood.