

mond, bitterly. "Let us leave her to the punishment which conscience, sooner or later, inflicts upon all who violate her laws. And now, dearest cousin, since you have broken this painful subject to me, may I entreat of you, as a great favor, never to mention Major Sternfield's name in my presence, still less the name of his wife. In order to reconcile my mind to this strange union, I must endeavour to forget the existence of the parties. I did not think I was so weak—that I could for a moment envy Marianne her lot."

The cousins parted, and Rosamond retired to her own chamber; for a long time she remained seated at the open window, her head resting upon her hand, in a sort of waking dream. Memory was busy with the past, and while she recalled every word that had ever passed between Dunstanville and her, she could scarcely believe that he had so soon forgotten her for another, and that other, the heartless being who had betrayed them both.

"Oh! how bitterly will he repent, when it is too late," thought she. "How he will loathe the fraud and falsehood which have worked his ruin. Poor Dunstanville! you have been cruelly deceived, and deserved a better fate. Had you reposed the same confidence in me, we might have been happy in each other's love at this moment. Oh! how happy!" Tears of anguish flowed, as these thoughts hovered on her lips. Hope expired in her heart—those fond hopes which cherish the early dreams and tender idolatries of youth. Dunstanville Sternfield was nothing now to her. The worshipped name must be breathed no more like a sacred thing—must no longer be enshrined in her heart, as the talisman of joy and gladness; the idol was broken at the base—the god had deserted the temple for ever.

She flung herself upon her knees, and prayed fervently, earnestly, and with childlike confidence; and anon the wild burst of passion was tranquillized—tears fell gently over her pallid, serene countenance, and a smile, pure and benignant as the bow of promise, lighted up the humid eyes, now bright with renewed hope, and holy ecstasy.

"The love of earth is not like Thy love, oh! my father, and my God!—henceforth, I dedicate my soul to thee."

She rose from her knees, and stepped into the balcony. The autumn day was bright and clear. A mellow glory rested upon the changing woods, and a little robin sang blithely upon a laurel spray in the gardens beneath.

"Oh, earth! How beautiful thou art. I can scarcely feel unhappy, while gazing upon thee. Thou art worthy of thy Creator. Ah! would that I were worthy of Him and thee."

Throwing her shawl over her shoulders, she wandered into the gardens, from thence into the spacious park, and the fresh and invigorating breeze revived her drooping spirits, and restored her mind to its former activity and cheerfulness.

A footpath, seldom traversed by any but the laborers employed on the estate, crossed a lonely, but very beautiful portion of the old domain, and this was a favorite walk with its fair mistress. Here the oaks were the oldest and most picturesque—the wild flowers bloomed the sweetest, and the short velvet sward was the greenest. A delicious calm brooded over the sylvan solitude, and the mind, fond of contemplation, found ample food for mental cultivation.

Rosamond had walked forward with rapid steps until she reached the heart of the green wilderness; then gently slacking her steps, she sauntered on, now bending over a glittering clump of moss, and examining, with critical eye, its minute beauties—now gathering a wreath of dark, glossy ivy leaves, from the supporting oak which nourished, with the life's flood, the insidious parasite.

A step rustled among the fallen trees. Rosamond raised her head with an involuntary start, as a short man, in tattered garments, and with a very sinister expression, presented himself before her, and blocked up her narrow path.

"The top of the mornin' to you, my purty lady. An' shure I am the fortunate man to get a glimpse of yer sweet face, who have be'n botherin' wid the sick and the afflicted; this many a sorrowful day are the starvin' childer 'crying for bread, an' never a bit to give them. "You seem in distressed circumstances," said Rosamond, beginning to recover from a fear which the presence of the intruder called up. "Go to the Hall, and I will endeavor to relieve you."

"Troth an' it's from the Hall I am, your ladyship; but the big bullies in the gay coats bade me go about my business, and tould me, the lyin' thieves, that yer ladyship would not demane yourself by spakin' to a saucy ragged beggar like me. Bad cess to them!"

"I am surprised at this. My people should know better than to speak harshly to an unfortunate fellow-creature. But you are Irish, and doubtless they did not understand your language."

The man shook his head. "Shure it's from Ireland I am, and spake as good English as any man of them; and was not yer ladyship's mother from the same place—and is it not nathral that you should understand your mother's tongue?"

"My mother was indeed Irish," said Rosamond, "and her country is as dear to me as my own."