

HELENA GRAHAM, OR THE BRIDE'S SACRIFICE.

CHAPTER X.

It was two days after the departure of Helena ere Herbert Clinton visited the parsonage again.

And then he heard of her departure with real surprise and affected concern; but he did not follow her to London, as Mrs. M'Calmont had prophesied.

His passion for Jessie was yet too new—the novelty had not worn off—the joy of knowing she was his wife, his own indisputable property, had not yet abated, as it would do some day, as it must do; for such quick, fierce, passionate, selfish love could not last.

And Jessie, the sly little child-wife, had gone on dreaming "Love's young dream," and never thinking how terrible one day would be her waking.

Since the bridal night, the mysterious phantom had never been seen; and both were beginning to hope it had only been an illusion of a heated imagination.

Mr. Clinton had accounted for the terrifying shriek and Jessie's fainting-fit in some obvious way of his own that quite satisfied the old lady, and lulled to sleep any suspicions she might have conceived.

One evening, as Herbert set out to keep an appointment with Jessie, he observed Evan standing, or, rather, sitting perched upon a gate, shading his eyes with his hands, and looking anxiously out to sea.

"Well, my boy, what has caught your attention in that direction—wild geese?"

"No, sir," said Evan, solemnly, "I see a sail."

"Well, and what of that?" said Mr. Clinton. "A sail is not such an unusual sight here, is it?"

"But there's a storm brewin', an' if the Lord ain't took 'special charge of that vessel the first land it makes will be Davy Jones's locker," said Evan.

"A storm, you blockhead?" exclaimed Clinton. "There's not a cloud in the sky."

"Jes' look over there, sir, and see that black cloud, about the size o' your hand."

"Well!" said Herbert. "Pretty soon that will be all over the sky, and then we shall have a tearing squall. The trees tell the wind's rising already, and you needn't be surprised if to-morrow mornin' you see the ruins o' that vessel spread all over the shore."

And Evan, with a doleful shake of his head, descended from his perch and sought the house.

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