

"By calling me Miss Annesley! I am not Miss Annesley, returned Beatrice very petulantly.

"Why, did you not quarrel with me for addressing you too familiarly at the park," said Colonel Brereton, surprised, yet amused; "how am I to please you?"

"I should not quarrel with you for doing so here, it would remind me of home."

"Then Beatrice it shall be: dear Beatrice, if you will," and he laid his hand on hers, as it rested on the table. Beatrice smiled through her tears, and from that moment an interest for her arose in the breast of Colonel Brereton, which never afterwards lessened. Lady Julia Russel now approached them, asking Beatrice if she could sing or play.

"I can do both, but not tonight," was her reply.

"I cannot take that answer back to Lady Brereton, who wishes to hear you," returned Lady Julia. "I live but to obey and please her," and she cast a languishing glance on Colonel Brereton, whose countenance had resumed its wonted cold gravity. "Come," persisted Lady Julia, "we do not expect a proficient, yet I have no doubt you sing very nicely; your sister Miss Annesley used not to be afraid of us."

"She had no cause; my sister Mary sings beautifully," returned Beatrice warmly.

"I think I have heard another voice as sweet," observed Colonel Brereton; "you have not forgotten the fairies' song, I hope; you will sing that to oblige my mother, will you not Beatrice?" She instantly gave her hand to him to lead her to the instrument. Lady Julia following them with an expression on her face of jealous astonishment, and deep-felt hatred and anger, the song was performed with simplicity, and united with so much melody that it called forth unanimous applause. The moment she had concluded it, Beatrice hastened away, like a child thankful that her task was completed. Lady Brereton then called her towards her, saying:

"Thank you, my love; you have taken us by surprise. I was not prepared to hear any thing so beautiful. Sir George, that pleases even you, I hope?"

"It does indeed," replied the amiable old man, patting Beatrice on the head; you are a good child and must promise to let me hear you sing every night." Colonel Brereton smiled, and looked evidently pleased, then drawing her arm within his, he conducted her to a couch, where they continued conversing together for a considerable time, while Lady Julia watched them with envious eyes; she could not be blind to the extreme beauty of our young heroine, whose countenance, now all smiles and animation, appeared the index of a mind pure and innocent as it was fair. She beheld the admiring, even tender gaze of Colonel Brereton, fixed upon it, and

her heart throbbed with agony—for she felt that in Beatrice she had a rival too powerful to be resisted.

"But she has violent passions, I am told," mentally said Lady Julia, "consequently she will not always appear to the advantage she now does. My affectionate attentions to his mother must gratify him, nor will I cease to pay them so long as I have hope."

"Lady Julia Russel was one of the six portionless daughters of the Earl of Morton, a most dissipated, bad man, who neglected every duty that he might devote himself to his lawless pleasures. Equally unfortunate in her mother, who had proved faithless to her lord, what could be expected from one reared in such a school; a few showy accomplishments were only hers, while her mind, being suffered to lie waste, became the receptacle of every nauseous weed; *what she was*, and what she *seemed*, how mournfully opposite. Lady Brereton pitied her, knowing that her home was an unhappy one, and had learnt to love her from her sedulous attentions to herself, ignorant of their real motive; she therefore made her a constant and a welcome guest at the Abbey, which opportunities Lady Julia endeavoured to improve by throwing out every lure she conceived likely to attract Colonel Brereton. Had she known him better, she might have spared herself the trouble, for a complete man of the world, he saw at once through her arts, and secretly despised them, though, from politeness, as a guest in his father's house, he paid her every due attention; to weaken the influence which he regretted to see she had acquired over his mother, he had urged the latter to invite Beatrice to Norwood, in the hope that her engaging simplicity might attach her, while the wholesome restraint it would prove to the volatile girl herself, might correct the faults engendered by a false indulgence. On separating for the night he whispered to her:

"You do not feel so forlorn and friendless now, sweet Beatrice, I hope?"

"Oh no, that shadow has passed," she replied, smiling:

"But another, and another may come, and what then?"

"I will come to you, and you shall chase them away."

"Agreed—here is my hand, will you take it; there is a dear girl; now all our differences are settled, God bless you."

Beatrice soon became an object of great attraction to the numerous visitors who frequented the Abbey, there was a freshness of feeling, and a nameless charm, about her romantic and enthusiastic character, which united to her beauty, gained for her the admiration of all those who look not beyond the surface of things; they beheld her as they would a lovely flower, caring not whether it had sprung from the