

many things—leave your work with Ursula and come with me.”

“Do, my dear child,” urged the good Ursula, “it will amuse you, and you shall see how much I will do by your return.”

Amy willingly consented, and was soon equipped for a walk. Arthur led her into the well stored gardens, and shady groves, and down to the lake, to look at the gay boat with its fine trappings. But, the highest treat, in his estimation, was a visit to his pony in the park, which he promised she should ride, and she was still raised higher in his regard, by the praises she bestowed on the sleek animal. who, the moment his young lord was perceived, trotted up to receive his caresses.

“And now I think I have shown you nearly all that is worth seeing within a walk, except Lion, and he is with Harold I suppose. I shall ask him to let us row in the boat this evening, it is too warm at present.”

“You have a flower garden have you not?” asked Amy, “in all the ornaments of the apartments yesterday, I missed these my favourites—would it not be a pleasant amusement to fill some of the vases?”

Eagerly did Arthur agree to her proposal, and soon, with the aid of one of the gardeners, they filled a basket with a choice collection, and carried them in triumph to the drawing room. Amy sat on a low stool, busily engaged in sorting them, while her young companion brought her all she wanted, kneeling before her to assist. Had a painter been present, he might have taken a beautiful sketch for a picture. Arthur, with his short curling hair, his bright dark eye, and his rosy cheek, watching Amy intently, his boy's cap thrown carelessly at his side, while she, with a countenance now all animation, arranged her flowers in vases of the richest porcelain—her long ringlets falling over the child, as she stooped, which he would playfully catch in his hands, laughing as he threw them into disorder. They were thus occupied, when Amy suddenly looking up, beheld the Earl standing near them earnestly gazing upon her. Her face instantly became crimsoned, while Arthur, on perceiving his brother, ran to him, saying:

“You are very troublesome, sir, for interrupting us; we wanted to have surprised you when we had finished.”

“You are a most engrossing young gentleman,” replied Lord Blondeville, smiling, “why may I not share your pleasures?”

“Oh, you do not understand how,” returned Arthur, endeavouring to keep him back, “Amy would rather I assisted her, would you not?”

“I have nearly completed my task,” she replied, in some confusion, as she rose.

“At least let me help to carry back this vase,”

said the Earl, taking it from her hands, “where would you wish it placed, Lady Amanda?”

“On that pedestal, if you please,” (directing him,) “but perhaps we have done wrong in gathering flowers for your rooms, you may not like them.”

“Do not think me so insensible,” replied the Earl, “when my sisters are here, the task devolves upon them, but when alone, I confess I do not remember such things—yet I delight in seeing them, since they assure me those are near, in whose society I can feel pleasure. My mother and my sisters only left me a fortnight ago, and you are come to fill up a blank which their departure made.”

“How I wish they were still here,” said Amy.

“I trust I may have the gratification of introducing you, ere long,” replied Lord Blondeville; “Mr. Martyn wishes me to invite at least one of my sisters to return, and stay while you favour us with your company.”

“How kind, how very considerate,” returned Amy, delightedly, “and do you think she will?”

“I hope so, but I almost fear Matilda will not leave my mother, and Emily is rather an invalid, it was a great favour their permitting this youngster to remain,” continued the Earl, stroking Arthur's curly head, who was fondly leaning against him, “but Mr. Martyn's valuable instructions were the great temptation.”

“Then Arthur is not always with you—oh, do not let him leave you while I am here.”

“You make me jealous of Arthur,” returned the Earl, smiling benignantly, “he has supplanted me, who am an older friend by some hours, that is scarcely fair, but he is an insinuating young dog, and wins all hearts—the devotion of my mother for him is almost painful.”

“Surely it must be the same for you?”

Amy said this in perfect innocence, with a countenance of surprised enquiry; but her eyes instantly fell beneath the expression of gratified admiration which she met in the Earl's. He answered not, as she turned away to finish the arrangement of her flowers—these were soon completed, assisted as she was by two such willing companions.

As they were leaving the room, Amy, with the intention of returning to her own, the Earl asked her if she would like to see the picture gallery. This was another treat which she could not but accept. Mrs. Bennet, the housekeeper, was then summoned—“for we should offend past forgiveness, were we to enter its precincts without her august presence,” said Lord Blondeville.

The good old lady came bustling, smiling and curtsying, with her bunch of keys by her side, and was fondly greeted by Arthur, who familiarly clasped her round the ample waist.

“Fie now Lord Arthur,” said she, evidently