

'I should not like to see you exposed to a tithe of the risks we have run,' he said quickly.

'Why not? Do you think I should not meet them fearlessly? Do you know I grow very weary at times of this sweet, quiet, monotonous life. I wonder if it is wrong to long for the strife of battle rather than the ease of peace? I cannot but think that such a life as mine is must foster selfishness and narrow prejudices. Indeed, I sometimes feel myself shirking unpleasant duties, and then I grow afraid. Papa needs me yet. He is not getting strong very fast; but I sometimes think if he were strong he would leave Nethercleugh. London has a deep attraction for him now.'

James Bethane stood in silence, watching the ripple of the burn, listening to its musical murmur as it danced and leaped joyously in its rocky bed. His whole heart was stirred. Dared he ask this woman, whom he loved and revered with all the strength of his true manhood, to share the struggle with him? Dared he offer her such things as he had, asking her for love's sake to come and make a home for herself and for him?—dared he do it?

'How dark it grows here; let us go,' she said presently with a slight shiver, and drew her white shawl more closely about her shoulders. He looked at her then; his eyes, deep-searching and keen, dwelt yearningly upon her sweet face until once more its colour rose. He took a step towards her; he touched her arm, his face dark with passionate pain.

'Beatrice! I have little to offer but my love. Of that you must know something; I cannot hide it! Will you come?'

She looked at him, her breath came quick and fast, but her eyes did not falter in their gaze. It was a