

asked Madame Legrande, in a tone of unusual interest, touched unconsciously by the poor girl's tender allusions, and her half subdued emotion, though it was rarely she troubled herself with the history, past or present, of those whom she employed to do the drudgery of her *profession*.

"My father, ma'am, who was a chemist, lost his life about three years ago, by a dreadful explosion, which took place in the course of some experiments he was making—and after his death I went to learn the trade of a dressmaker, by which I hoped in time to support my mother and my little brother. They remained in the cottage which my father hired from year to year at Bloomingdale, till the lease expired, and then they left it, and came into the city, where we procured cheap lodgings and lived once again together. My mother's health, which had always been feeble, failed very rapidly after my father's death, and before she died, the expences of her long sickness had nearly consumed the trifle which he left us —." Fanny paused a moment, overcome by many sad and painful recollections, but seeing that her auditor was interested in her little history, she wiped away her tears and resumed.

"When Harry and I found ourselves without parents or friends in the wide world, we scarcely knew what was to become of us—but I knew that we had a Father in heaven, who cared for and pitied us, and therefore I could not despair. We were nearly penniless, but I sold the few good articles of furniture we had brought from Bloomingdale, keeping only the musk-rose, from which we could not part; and, hiring a small chamber, we endeavoured to subsist upon as little as possible, lest, before I could earn more, we should expend the whole of the small sum in our possession. But then, from want of air and wholesome food, Harry became ill—I could not leave him to get work, and all that we had was soon gone. I cannot tell you how much we suffered before I obtained employment, but when he grew somewhat better I came here to seek it—since then I have not been idle, and while I can earn an honest livelihood, however hardly, and my dear Harry is spared to me, I will not be so wicked as to murmur. Dark as my lot seems, I have many blessings to be grateful for,—but above all do I thank God that he brightens my home, humble as it is, with human love, and renders light the burden of constant toil, by the thought that it is endured for one, without whom, even ease and wealth would be unwelcome gifts."

Fanny's pale, sweet face, as she ceased speaking, was radiant with a glow of tender and elevated feeling that made it truly beautiful. Even the selfish and worldly Madame Legrande, as she

listened to, and regarded her, was awed into admiration by the tenderness, the piety, the patient and holy fortitude of a creature so young, so gentle, and so desolate, yet had she not enough of the ideal in her soul, to comprehend the refined and delicate sentiment which made Fanny refuse, even in her most extreme destitution, to part with the rose in exchange for those external advantages which would at once have decided a more vulgar mind to accept them. Expressing, however, her sympathy for Fanny's trials, and her intention to befriend her so long as she continued deserving, she once more suggested the expediency of her giving up the rose, since, if she could *afford* to keep such a luxury, she must not complain, if she was not in future furnished with so constant employment, when there were others as worthy, and more *needy*, whom, to favour her, she had often, when work was not pressing, suffered to remain idle,—and with this covert menace the priestess of fashion turned and walked with a stately step from the show-room where the conversation had been held.

The truth was, Mrs. Harwood, in her anxiety to possess the musk-rose, then a novelty in the country, had offered nearly double the sum which Madame Legrande had named to Fanny—but the milliner's usual greediness of gain stimulating her to reap her own profit from the bargain, she purposed pocketing the remainder, as a sort of commission, to which she persuaded herself she was entitled, as acting agent in the business, and hence arose her eagerness to obtain the flower from Fanny, though a wish to oblige Mrs. Harwood, who was a liberal and constant customer of her own, made her still more desirous to succeed in the negotiation.

When Fanny left the shop, it was with the conviction that she had so deeply incurred the displeasure of Madame Legrande, that in all probability she should soon have to seek elsewhere for employment. And so in truth it proved,—the favour of the offended milliner was gradually withdrawn from her, and though, while she had any thing given her to do, Fanny accomplished it with marvellous celerity, and in her usual style of exquisite taste and neatness, not one word of commendation fell from the lips of Madame Legrande, nor were her cold looks, and chilling manner, in the slightest degree softened by the gentle and patient endurance of the uncomplaining girl. Vexed, indeed she was, to have her will thwarted in so quiet, yet firm a manner, by one so powerless and dependant, and chagrined, that in failing to obtain the musk-rose, she must be compelled to disappoint a lady, whom it was her especial wish and interest to oblige—and moreover to defraud her own purse of