

said the figure upon the bed. "I've got a touch of rheumatics."

"Should you like some boneset?" suggested Hepzibah.

"Guess not."

Meanwhile Carmelita, alone in the twilight, having finished her beads, sat thinking over her morning's expedition. Altogether it had left a pleasant impression upon her mind. The weather had been exquisite. The winding road by which they had passed, now thickly lined with houses, now leading by the smoke and grimness of factories, and again running parallel with a little stream and reaching into the freshness and peace of the country, had been delightful. She had been unconscious of the varied groups of gossip-mongers whose whisperings and gigglings had been noted with concealed but bitter annoyance by her companion. But she had been fully alive to every blossom-covered tree and every meadow, bursting into green, even under this austere sky. And in the blue of that same sky she had intensely rejoiced.

Mr. Rutherford was naturally associated with all this in her remembrance of the pleasantest hours which had fallen to her lot since her arrival at K——. Various little incidents of the walk came to her, not disagreeable. Obstacles in the way of branches, stones or brambles which her companion had so deftly removed from her path, pleasant greetings which he had bestowed upon certain poor people whom they had passed, all of whom had evidently known and respected him before, little snatches of conversation which she could recall as one remembers the phrases of a song. At the church he had been so attentive, reverent even, during the service, and on the way home he had told her how much travelling abroad had removed his country-bred prejudices against the faith, and how he had made warm friends amongst the Catholic clergy. And he had appealed

to her not to judge too hardly of the rigid antagonism to her faith which she would meet with around her.

"Think the best you can of us with that warm, charitable spirit of the South."

The two anxious old women upstairs might have been comforted had they known how near in sympathy to Carmelita, Andrew Rutherford had contrived to bring himself. It is true that the thought of him as a possible suitor had never entered her head. But he had crept into her mind as the only one who could understand her Catholic longings and aspirations, and perhaps also as one who in some distant future might himself come into the household of faith. A missionary spirit is latent in most women. Nothing more attracts them to a man than the hope of doing something for his spiritual welfare. If sometimes this proves an *ignis fatuus* it is at least a not ignoble one.

Taken altogether, that Sabbath day in grim New England had its own share of sweetness and light for the young Spaniard, and its twilight closing darkly in the shadows of the old house had a touch of peace and rest, a foreshadowing of happiness to come.

It would be difficult to put into words the precise means by which Carmelita, as the months went on, carried out her mission of warming, not only the old house at K——, but the village itself. She became, as it were, a rich and glowing exotic in its grayness and austerity. The angularities of her neighbors served to throw out the graceful curves of her own personality. Their reticence or their garrulity, equally unsympathetic and undemonstrative, gave a strange charm to her quick sympathy, her swift impulsiveness. The rustic freedom of the girl, usually in its own way self-respecting it is true, added beauty to her little reserves. Her dignity was a counterpoise to their somewhat free and easy good comradeship. Her beauty itself was of a kind new in that part of the world.