

thought he was. Mary could not deny that there was a charm and elegance in his manner well calculated to fascinate a gay and thoughtless girl; but to her it seemed false and hollow; there was no heart-warmth, none of that open frankness of character which wins upon a nature frank and confiding as its own. She had never liked him from the first. There was that involuntary repulsion for which she could not account, and which it was impossible to overcome. She strove to reason. She blamed herself for being prejudiced, and uncharitable, and now that Brackley was the affianced of her sister, Mary tried more than ever to get rid of her distrust.

'The wedding was what is called a 'brilliant affair.' By the guests, Mr. and Mrs. Brackley were declared to be formed for each other, and judging from outward appearances, there seemed to be nothing wanting to complete their happiness. Soon after their marriage, Adelaide and her husband went abroad, and passed their first winter together in the giddy vortex of Parisian gait.

'The admiration excited by her grace and beauty, when there were so many graceful and beautiful women to contest the palm, gave a still greater impetus to her vanity, and the rich dresses and most costly ornaments were ordered without any regard to outlay, that she might retain the epithet of 'queenly,' bestowed upon her by her admirers.

'She enjoyed but little of her husband's society, as it would have been in shocking bad taste for a husband to be caught, in a fashionable circle, paying any little civilities or attentions to his wife, and so she was frequently left to the charge of Monsieur De L'Orme, who performed the part, without receiving the name, of *cavaliere servente*. Mr. Brackley was, of course, at liberty to lavish his smiles and his politeness on any lady who, for the moment, he thought the most agreeable, and in one successive round of amusements was spent the first winter in Paris. In the spring, Adelaide wrote to her parents that her husband and herself had decided on staying abroad another year. They were to spend the summer months at Baden, and would return in winter to the French capital. The letter closed with a request for a large remittance, as Mr. Brackley had been disappointed in receiving the money he expected from his agent at home. The remittance was sent, and her father wrote kindly, but firmly, of the necessity there was for prudence and economy. The only remark made by Adelaide, as she put down her father's letter, was, 'Economy! what a vulgar word, it is tantamount to parsimony!' Once more in the gay circle of her admirers, Adelaide strove to forget the many unpleasant scenes with her husband, which had occurred during their late tour, when they had been obliged, in travelling, to spend not only hours but days together. Too proud to let the world suspect she was unhappy, no voice was more cheerful than hers, and no smile was brighter, as she returned the salutations that greeted her reappearance. She had married Vincent Brackley wilfully, and what had been his great attraction? She blushed as her heart answered the question. The attraction had been, not his gifted intellect, not his moral worth; but his fine person, and his graceful manners.

'Alas, alas, how beauty of person becomes positive deformity, when it is found to be but the covering for a corrupt mind. Admiration of the beautiful, love for it in every variety in which it is presented to us, seems to be an innate feeling of our nature. We gaze on a lovely picture, or a noble statue, with emotion akin to reverence; and when we look admiringly on the living beauty of one made in the likeness of God, how are we shocked to discover that the beauty is that of Lucifer, fair as the morning without, and dark as the midnight within.

'Although Adelaide was too proud to betray her unhappiness to the world, the world is generally clear-sighted enough in discovering faults, follies and misfortunes, and equally loud-mouthed in noising them abroad.

'Nor was there wanting matter for the tongue of scandal, when it was known that Mr. Brackley had eloped with the wife of a young officer who had been his most intimate friend, and who had frequently loaned him money to pay his debts of honor at Frescati's.

'Adelaide was humbled. She had been wounded, not in her affections, but in her pride. Her haughty spirit would have borne much could it have been concealed; but that her friends should see another preferred by her husband to herself, that they should know she had no power over his heart, this was indeed humiliating!

'And what would be said at home? How could she who had left it an envied bride, return a deserted wife? And how could she remain abroad without the means of living as she had done hitherto? In the last letters from her sister, Mary had plainly spoken of embarrassment in her father's affairs, and begged her to be more prudent. In this state of suffering, and while uncertain how to act, Adelaide was forced to listen to words of condolence from women who had envied her superior attractions, and who were secretly glad of her misfortunes.

'From De L'Orme she met with the kindest sympathy. His manner towards her was gentle and reserved, as if fearful of wounding her delicacy, by obtruding himself upon her notice.

'Her every look was studied, her every wish anticipated, and feeling the need of some friend on whom she might rely, she was grateful to him for his kindness.

'In less than a month after being deserted by her husband, another letter from home told of the dangerous

illness of her mother, and that her father was on the eve of bankruptcy. The shock was great.

'De L'Orme was with her when she received the letter, and her agitation on reading it was too great to be concealed. In a subdued and earnest tone he begged to know the cause of her distress. Was he not her friend? Glad of sympathy, and regarding him as a man of true honor, she told him the state of her father's affairs, and her own perplexity. De L'Orme listened with deep and quiet attention, and when Adelaide stopped, he sat silent for some minutes, without offering either condolence or advice. Then, suddenly, as if waking from a reverie, he said in an agitated tone, while he took her hand and passed it softly into his own, 'My dear Mrs. Brackley, will you confide in me?'

'There is no one else in whom I can confide. O, De L'Orme, among all the hollow smiles that day after day are given me, all the hollow professions to which I listen from those who triumph in my misery, how thankful is my poor heart that in this strange land I have still one friend.

'Adelaide, dearest,' said De L'Orme, passionately, 'you have spoken truly—you have one friend—a friend who loves you—who has long loved you—who will protect you while he has life—shall it not be so, my Adelaide?'

'Starting as if stung by a serpent, Adelaide sprang from her seat, and was about to leave the room without speaking. Misinterpreting her silence, De L'Orme followed and endeavoured to detain her.

'Touch me not, De L'Orme,' said Adelaide, with quivering lip, while neck, cheek, brow, were crimsoned with shame and indignation, 'touch me not, my confidence has been misplaced; but from you, De L'Orme, from you should not have come this added humiliation.'

'Listen to me, Adelaide. Your husband has left you alone and unprotected, he has broken the vows that made you his, and you are free. I will be to you—'

'The unhappy woman turned on him a look of proud and stern reproach, yet so mournful withal, that De L'Orme's eyes fell beneath her gaze, and he was too much confused to proceed.

'When he looked up she was gone. In her own chamber all Adelaide's assumed composure vanished. She threw herself on a couch and gave way to an agony of tears. Her pride had hitherto supported her. Through all her misfortunes none had dared by word or look, to treat her with undue familiarity, and now the only one in whom she had confided, was the first to make her feel how utterly defenceless and humiliating was her present position. Anything else she might have borne, rather than return alone to the home she had left so proudly, almost triumphantly. De L'Orme wrote repeatedly; but his letters were returned unopened, and with all speed Adelaide prepared to leave Paris. Her maid accompanied her to Havre, and was there dismissed: and alone and unattended, Adelaide embarked on board the packet. The weather was stormy, the voyage long and wearisome, and her health began to give way. Oh, how the stricken one longed for home! When she had landed and procured a carriage, she gave the driver her father's address, and in a state of nervous anxiety threw herself back in the seat, and tried to think how it would look at home.

'The day was drawing to a close, and the streets were thronged with multitudes all hurrying homeward. The laborer, with his weary frame and toil-stained garments, and the successful money-maker, with his self-satisfied bearing and fine apparel, were jostling each other in their eager haste. Their object was the same—to reach home—how widely different!

'With a beating heart Adelaide ascended the steps of her father's house. It had a strange deserted look. There was no light in the drawing-room, and the servant who opened the door was not old Hector, who had been in the family since her childhood. She was passing through the hall without speaking, when the servant asked 'who she wished to see?'

'Miss G——,' replied Adelaide, 'is she at home?'

'She does not live here, madam.'

'Not live here! this is Mr. G——'s residence, is it not?'

'The servant hesitated a moment, and then answered, 'It was, madam, but Mr. G—— moved away two weeks ago.'

'Adelaide was stunned, and leaned against the wall for support.

'Can you tell me where he has removed to?'

The man gave her the direction, and with sad forebodings, Adelaide turned from the home of her happy years. She could scarcely believe that the humble-looking tenement to which she had been directed could be the shelter of her parents and her sister. Parents! alas, she had but one. A week before her arrival her mother had died, even while praying that she might be spared to see her child. The shock of meeting her family under such altered circumstances preyed upon Adelaide's already feeble frame, and in four months after her return she was laid beside her mother, leaving an infant of two weeks old to the care of her sister.

'From the moment that misfortune overtook the once prosperous merchant, Herman Hope, the young clergyman to whom I have alluded, was a constant visitor when in the city. It was he who stood by the bedside of Adelaide's mother, when death released her from her sorrows, and it was his voice which repeated at the grave the blessed words, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' It was he who poured the baptismal water on the brow

of Adelaide's child, and, in her conflict with the King of Terrors, administered the consolations of religion to Adelaide herself. It was he who whispered comfort and resignation to the sadly stricken survivors, showing them that the 'Lord loveth whom he chasteneth,' and that 'those outward afflictions which are but for a moment, worketh for us an exceeding weight of glory.'

'Herman Hope was the last of a family who had one by one passed away, with a beaming of the eye and a burning of the cheek which was beautiful to the last. Often had Mary trembled as the azure veins in his forehead grew more transparent, and the bright flush came and went more rapidly; but Herman, buoyed by the hope of calling her his wife, gave no heed to the disease stealing steadily upon him. The knowledge came too soon. The physician told them his only hope for Herman's recovery was in a winter's residence at Santa Cruz.

'Poor Mary! how many a wakeful, tearful night, she spent in preparing the many little things a woman's love deems necessary for the comfort of an invalid. She could not go with him, and smooth his pillow, and day by day watch beside him, speaking tender words of love and hope. Her father, and her sister's helpless infant, claimed her care; and commending her betrothed to the protection of Him who watches over all his creatures, she turned to her home-duties with a feeling of loneliness greater than she had ever known before.

'Mary received a letter from her lover soon after his arrival. It was written in that glad and buoyant tone which always marks the renewed health of one who has been suffering from illness, and who feels the life-current once more flowing warmly through his veins.

'And now Mary's step grew lighter, and her heart-pulse beat quicker, as she played with the child, or administered some gentle restorative to her parent. It was time that she should receive another letter, but when none came, she thought it was because Herman wished to surprise her with his presence, and daily did she picture their happiness when he should again be at her side. Nestle a little longer, thou bright-winged angel of hope, nestle a little longer in the maiden's heart! A little longer let her dream, for hers will be a fearful waking! The beloved—the betrothed—has passed away to the Silent Land, and she sat not by him when the dark angel veiled his eyes in shadow—she kissed not his last breath, when the bright angel bore his soul to bliss. A lock of hair! a ring! and these are all that is left! Precious mementos of the dead, to be laid aside sacredly, to be wept over in secret, to be kissed by the lips, to be pressed to the heart until the hand can no longer clasp its treasures! Of Mary's sorrow I may not speak. It would be profanation. A wife bereaved of her husband, has no need to hide her grief. But a maiden bereaved of her betrothed, must fold the agony in her heart; maidenly delicacy prompts her to hide all sign of grief, and only in solitude can her pent-up feelings have vent in tears.

'Notwithstanding Mary's strict economy, the little that had been spared her father by his creditors was nearly spent, and the time she could steal from attendance on him, and the child, was given to her needle.

'Many a beautifully embroidered fabric was admired by her former associates, without their being aware that to the merchant's daughter was due the praise so freely given.

'A few years more, and Mary was left alone with the child. She still toiled on, though, owing to the failure of her eye-sight, she had ceased to embroider, and was obliged to resort to plain sewing to earn a subsistence. Some of her former friends wished to aid her, but she gently refused their kindness, and for fourteen years she has maintained herself and the orphan boy.'

Mr. Boardman paused, and Clara eagerly asked, 'Where is she now, papa? What is her name? How I should like to see such a woman! And she never got married? What a pity!' (Clara seemed to think that woman's only mission was the mission matrimonial.)

'Well, I should like to see her, though. Do you know where she lives, papa?'

'Yes, and if you had gone where I requested you to go yesterday, you would have known too.'

'Why pa, it can't be—no, no, it can't be Miss Grey?'

'Yes, Clara, it is Miss Grey of whom I have been speaking, one of the most amiable, suffering, self-sacrificing women I have ever known. Miss Grey, cradled like yourself in luxury, and now your mother's 'sewing woman, hired at so much a day!'

Clara blushed with shame, and her father proceeded.

'It is a long story I have told you, my daughter, but my feelings were too much interested to allow of my shortening its details. There is a brief tale connected with it which I will also relate to you.

'You remember that I said Mr. Grey had many vessels trading to foreign ports. The mate of one of these vessels was often at the office of the merchant, and sometimes at his house, on business, where he was always received with kindness. Frequently, at dusk, he met a very pretty girl leaving the house, who, he ascertained, did the plain sewing of the family. One evening they chanced to leave the house at the same time, and the mate walked by the young girl's side, and by degrees entered into conversation with her, which was only interrupted by her stopping before her own door, and thanking him for his civility. He still lingered, without bidding her good night, and with some little hesitation she invited him to enter.

'He did so gladly. After one or two more voyages