

when hesitating common sense plucked him by the sleeve; he must consult his mother before taking this grave step. it was well that reason thus restrained him, for such a declaration might have brought miss joliffe to a swoon. as it was, she noticed the cloud lifting on his face, and was pleased to think that her conversation cheered him. a little company was no doubt good for him, and she sought in her mind for some further topic of interest. yes, of course, she had it. lord blandamer was here this afternoon. he came just like anyone else might have come, in such a very kind and condescending way to ask after me. he feared that dear mr sharnalls death might have been too severe a shock for us both, and, indeed, it has been a terrible blow. he was so considerate, and sat for nearly an hour for forty seven minutes i should say by the clock, and took tea with us in the kitchen as if he were one of the family. i never could have expected such condescension, and when he went away he left a most polite message for you, sir, to say that he was sorry that you were not in, but he hoped to call again before long. the cloud had returned to westrays face. if he had been the hero of a novel his brow would have been black as night; as it was he only looked rather sulky. i shall have to go to london to night, he said stiffly, without acknowledging miss joliffes remarks; i shall not be back to morrow, and may be away a few days. i will write to let you know when i shall be back. miss joliffe started as if she had received an electric shock. to london to night, she began this very night yes, westray said, with a dryness that would have suggested of itself that the interview was to be terminated, even if he had not added: i shall be glad to be left alone now; i have several letters to write before i can get away. so miss euphemia than usual. he found the sick man in great anxiety, for he had waited until now for his son in vain, and feared that hermas had met with some accident or had abandoned him, and fled out into the world. paulus soothed him with gentle words, and told him of the errand on which he had sent the lad to the farther coast of the sea. we are never better disposed to be satisfied with even bad news than when we have expected it to be much worse; so stephanus listened to his friends explanation quite calmly, and with signs of approval. he could no longer conceal from himself that hermas was not ripe for the life of an anchorite, and since he had learned that his unhappy wife whom he had so long given up for lost had died a christian, he found that he could reconcile his thoughts to relinquishing the boy to the world. he had devoted himself and his son to a life of penance, hoping and striving that so glyceras soul might be snatched from damnation, and now he knew that she herself had earned her title to heaven. when will he come home again he asked paulus. in five or six days, was the answer. ali, the fisherman out of whose foot i took a thorn some time since informed me secretly, as i was going to church yesterday, that the blemmyes are gathering behind the sulphur mountains; when they have withdrawn, it will be high time to send hermas to alexandria. my brother is still alive, and for my sake he will receive him as a blood relation, for he too has been baptized. he may attend the school of catechumens in the metropolis, and if he if he that we shall see, interrupted paulus. for the present it flying at him, and now timidly retreating while it carefully held up one leg, which was wrapped in a many colored bandage. paulus recollected the enquiry which phoebicius lead addressed to the amalekite as to a greyhound, and he immediately guessed that the gauls runaway wife must be not far off. his heart beat more quickly, and although he did not immediately know how he should meet the disloyal wife, he felt himself impelled to go to seek her. without delay he followed the way by which the dog had come, and soon caught sight of a light garment, which vanished behind the nearest rock, and then behind a farther, and yet a farther one. at last he came up with the fleeing woman. she was standing at the very edge of a precipice, that rose high and sheer above the abyss a strange and fearful sight; her long golden hair had got tangled, and waved over her bosom and shoulders, half plaited, half undone. only one foot was firm on the ground; the other with its thin sandal all torn by the sharp stones was stretched out over the abyss, ready for the next fatal step. at the next instant she might disappear over the cliff, for though with her right hand she held on to a point of rock, paulus could see that the boulder had no connection with the rock on which she stood, and rocked too and fro. She