

## CHAPTER 9

**O**LIVER FELT SUCH JOY THAT HE ALMOST COULDN'T BEAR IT. Rose was going to live, and even the sun seemed to shine brighter because of it. He went out and picked the biggest bunch of flowers for her that he ever had. As he returned to the house, he saw a carriage pulling up. A young man jumped out. "Is she better or worse?" he cried.

"Better, much better!" Oliver said, happy to give good news. He saw his own joy reflected in the young man's face. He was about twenty-three, tall and handsome. Oliver realised that this was Mrs Maylie's son, Harry, whom he had posted the letter to.

Harry stayed with them waiting for Rose to recover. He insisted on coming with Oliver to pick flowers for Rose. Oliver liked him, and he noticed Rose did too. She never threw out the flowers that Harry brought, but kept them even after they had dried out. Indeed, most people who met Harry liked him. He planned to become a politician and be elected to Parliament. Those who knew him agreed that he would probably succeed very soon.

Day by day, Rose became stronger. But Oliver noticed that sometimes she looked unhappy. Harry noticed this too, and he spoke to his mother about it.

"I must talk to Rose," he said. "I love her. I've wanted to tell her so all my life, but I was waiting till I became rich or famous or successful. But now I see how foolish it is to wait. If she had – I can't say the word – if she had not gotten better, I would have lost my chance forever. You can't imagine how I suffered, thinking of that!"

Mrs Maylie was quiet. "I suppose you have suffered," she finally said.

"You suppose I have!" cried Harry. "How can you doubt it! I did – I did – you must know it!"

"Listen, Harry, Rose deserves someone who will love her all her life," Mrs Maylie replied. "You think you like her right now. But after you are elected to Parliament, you will meet many beautiful

