

lying dull and grey under the cloudy sky. But while they waited for the coachman to uncover the landau, a soft and yellow light began to show itself far out in the west; a break appeared in the clouds; and a vast comb of gold shone down on the plain of water beneath. The western skies were opening up; and what with this new and beautiful light, and what with the sweet air that awoke a thousand pleasant and pathetic memories, it seemed to Wenna Rosewarne that the tender spring-time was at length at hand, with all its wonder of yellow crocuses and pale snowdrops, and the first faint shimmerings of green on the hedges and woods. Her eyes filled with tears—she knew not why. Surely she was not old enough to know anything of the unspeakable sadness that comes to some when the heavens grow clearer and more clear, when a new life stirs in the trees, and the world awakes to the fairness of the spring. She was only eighteen; she had a lover; and she was as certain of his faithfulness as of her own.

In bidding them good-bye at the door of the inn, Mr. Harry Trelyon told them that he meant to remain in Eglosilyan for some months to come.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SPRING-TIME.

THE spring-time had indeed arrived—rapidly and imperceptibly; and all at once it seemed as if the world had grown green, and the skies fair and clear, and the winds sweet with a new and delightful sweetness. Each morning that Wenna went out brought some further wonder with it—along the budding hedgerows, in the colours of the valley, in the fresh warmth of the air, and the white light of the clouds. And at last the sea began to show its deep and resplendent summer blue, when the morning happened to be still, and there was a silvery haze along the coast.

“Mabyn, is your sister at home? And do you think she could go up to the Hall for a little while, for my mother wants to see her? And do you think she would walk round by the cliffs—it is such a splendid morning—if you came with her?”

“Oh yes, Mr. Trelyon,” said Mabyn, readily, and with far more respect and courtesy than she usually showed to the young gentleman. “I am quite sure Wenna can go; and I know she would like to walk round by the cliffs—she is always glad to do that—and I will tell her to get ready instantly. But I can’t go, Mr. Trelyon—I am exceedingly busy this morning.”

“Why, you have been reading a novel!”

“But I am about to be exceedingly busy,” said Mabyn, petulantly. “You can’t expect people to be always working—and I tell you I can’t go with you, Mr. Trelyon.”

“Oh, very well,” said he carelessly, “you needn’t show your temper.”

“My temper!” said Mabyn; but then recollecting herself, and smiling derisively, she went away to fetch her sister.

When Wenna came outside into the white sunlight, and went forward to shake hands with him, with her dark eyes lit up by a friendly smile, it seemed to him that not for many a day—not certainly during all the time of her engagement with Mr. Roscorla—had he seen her look so pleased, and happy, and contented. She still bore that quiet gravity of demeanour which had made him call her the little Puritan; and there was the same earnestness in her eyes as they regarded any one; but there was altogether a brighter aspect about her face that pleased him exceedingly. For he was very well disposed to this shy and yet matter-of-fact young lady; and was alternately amused by the quaintness of her motherly ways in dealing with the people about her, and startled into admiration by some sudden glimpse of the fine sincerity of her nature. He had done more to please her—he had gone to church several times, and tried to better his handwriting, and resolved to be more careful of speaking of parsons in her presence—than he ever thought he could have done to please any woman.

So these two set forth on this bright and cheerful morning; and one would have said, to see them as they went, that two happier young folks were not within the county of Cornwall at that moment. Wenna had a pleasant word for every one that passed; and when they had gone

by the mill, and reached the narrow path by the tiny harbour, where no more neighbours were to be seen, she appeared to transfer her abounding sympathy to all the objects around her, and she spoke to them, and laughed to them, so that all the world seemed to be friendly with her. Her sister used to say that her fingers tingled to the very tips with kindness; and at this moment she seemed as though she could have kissed her hand to all the birds and animals around, and wished them joy that they had so fine a morning.

"Ho, ho! Mr. Porpoise," she laughed and said, as she saw far below her a big fish slowly heel over in the blue water of the harbour; "don't you come too far up, or you won't like the stones in the stream, I know!"

There was a hawk hovering high in the air over Blackcliff—Treylon was watching it keenly.

"Oh, go away, you bad bird," she cried, "and let the poor little things alone!" And sure enough, at this moment, the motionless speck up there began to flutter its wings, and presently it sailed away over the cliff, and was seen no more.

"Mother Sheep," she said to the inattentive custodian of two very small lambs with very thick legs and uncertain gait, "why don't you look after your children?—you'll have them tumbling down the rocks into the sea in about a minute: that's about what you'll do!"

"Boom!" she said to a great humble-bee that buzzed along; and to a white butterfly that fluttered this way and that over the warm grass on the hill-side she called out, "My pretty lady, aren't you glad the summer is coming?"

She talked to the white and grey gulls that were wheeling over the sea, and to the choughs flying hither and thither about the steep precipices of the cliff. They did not answer her; but that was no matter. From her childhood she had believed that she knew them all, and that they knew her; and that even the rocks, and the sea, and the clouds regarded her, and spoke to her in a strange and silent fashion. Once she had come back from the mouth of the harbour on a sultry afternoon, when as yet the neighbours had heard nothing of the low mutterings of the distant and coming storm; and when her mother asked the child why

she was so silent, she said, "I have been listening to God walking on the sea."

Well, they sat down on a seat which fronted the wide opening in the cliffs and the great plain of the Atlantic beyond, that was this morning of a light and sunny sea-green, with here and there broad purple stains of shadow as the summer clouds passed rapidly over the sky from the west. In the warm sunshine, the gorse on the hill behind them, and the grass on the pasture-land, sweetened the air. The wind blew fresh in from the sea; and as the surging waves broke white along the rocks beneath them, the brisk breeze carried with it a flavour of salt from the fine clouds of the spray. The spring-time seemed to have given life and colour to the sea as well as to the land, for all the world was brilliant with the new brightness of the skies.

"And isn't it first-rate," said Master Harry, wishing to say something very pleasant to his companion, "that Mr. Roscorla is having such fine weather on his outward voyage? I am sure you would have been very anxious if there had been any storms about. I hope he will be successful; he's a good sort of fellow."

No one who was not acquainted with this young gentleman could have guessed at the dire effort he had to make in order to pronounce these few sentences. He was not accustomed to say formally civil things. He was very bad at paying compliments; and as for saying anything friendly of Mr. Roscorla, he had to do it with a mental grimace. But Wenna was very familiar with the lad and his ways. At another time she would have been amused and pleased to observe his endeavours to be polite; and now, if she hastened away from the subject, it was only because she never heard Mr. Roscorla's name mentioned without feeling embarrassment and showing it. She murmured something about a hope that Mr. Roscorla would not find the voyage to Jamaica fatiguing; and then, somewhat hastily, drew her companion's attention to another porpoise which was showing itself from time to time outside the rocks.

"I wish Roscorla had made me your guardian in his absence," said this blundering young man, who was determined to be on his best behaviour. "I quite agree with

Mabyn that you overwork yourself in doing for other people what the lazy beggars ought to do for themselves. Oh, I know more than you think. I'd wake some of them up if I had the chance. Why, they look on you as a sort of special Providence, bound to rescue them at any moment. I was told only yesterday of old Mother Truscott having said to a neighbour, 'Well, if Miss Wenna won't help me, then the Lord's will be done.'

"Oh yes, I know," said his companion, with some impatience; "she is always saying that. I said to her the other day, when I got out of temper, 'Why, of course the Lord's will will be done; you don't suppose He wants your permission? But if you'd only look after your own house, and bestir yourself, and keep it smart, your husband wouldn't go on as he does.' There's nothing I hate worse than that sort of pretended piety. Why, when Abiathar Annot's boy died, I thought he'd be out of his senses with grief, and I went up to see if he was all right about the house, and to say a friendly word to him; and directly I went inside the door he said to me, quite complacently, 'Well, Miss Rosewarne, you know we must bow to the will of the Lord, and accept his chastenings as mercies.' 'Oh,' said I, 'if you take it that way, I've no more to say,' and I left the place. I don't believe in all that sort of—"

She suddenly stopped, recollecting to whom she was speaking. Were these proper confessions to be made to a young man who had such a godless hatred of parsons, and churches, and all good things; and whose conversion to more respectable ways she had many a time wished to attempt? She dropped the subject; and Master Harry was so resolved to be proper and virtuous on this auspicious morning that he took no advantage of what she had said. He even, in an awkward fashion, observed that all religious people were not hypocrites; one had to draw distinctions. Of course there were pious people who were really sincere. He hoped Miss Wenna would not suspect him of being so prejudiced as not to know that. Miss Wenna was a little inclined to smile; but she controlled her lips; and Master Harry, having paid these ingenuous compliments to piety and virtue, rose with a frank sigh of relief, proposed that they should continue their walk up the hill, and was soon

engaged in telling her—with a much gayer tone in his voice and with a return to his old impertinent carelessness—of some wild adventure in cliff-hunting which he and his faithful Dick had encountered together.

They seemed to be in no great hurry, these two. It was a morning that invited toidleness. They chatted about all sorts of things, or were silent, with equal and happy indifference: he watching the seabirds, she stooping from time to time to pick up some tiny flower of pale yellow or purple. In this fashion they made their way up to the summit of the cliffs; and there before them lay the great plain of the windy sea, and the long wall or precipice running down into the south-west, and the high and bleak uplands marked by the square towers of small and distant churches. They struck across the fields to one of those churches—that which Master Harry had been persuaded to visit. The place was now silent and deserted enough; two jackdaws sat on the slender weather-cock; the sunlight was warm on the silvery grey tower, and on the long green grass in the churchyard, in which the first daisies of the spring had already appeared. Then they went down through some narrow lanes towards the higher portion of Eglosilyan; and under the hedges were masses of pale primroses, and the purple blossoms of the ground-ivy, and the golden stars of the celandine. They drew near some of the cottages; and in the gardens the flowering currant was in bloom, and everywhere there was a scent of wallflower. They crossed the main thoroughfare of the village; it was empty but for the presence of a small boy, who, with a slate slung on one side and a bag made of carpet slung on the other, had apparently been sent home from school for some reason or other. The youthful scholar most respectfully took off his cap to Miss Wenna as she gave him a kindly greeting.

"They say all that is owing to you," Trelyon remarked.

"All what?"

"The good manners of the people in this village. The women bob you a curtsy as you pass; the girls say good-morning or good-evening; the boys take off their caps, even if you are a perfect stranger. But you don't suppose that happens in every village in Cornwall? My mother was speaking about it only this morning."

Wenna was sufficiently surprised to know that she had got the credit of the courtesy shown to strangers by the Eglosilyan folks; but even more surprised to learn that Master Harry had deigned to engage in conversation with his mother. He also seemed to be taking his first lessons in civility.

"Oh," she said, "that boy ought to pay me every attention to make up for his bad conduct. He was once a sweetheart of mine, and he deceived me. He sold me for sixpence."

She sighed.

"It is true. He adopted me as his sweetheart, and every time I saw him he promised to marry me when he grew up. But there came a change. He avoided me, and I had to catch him, and ask him why. He confessed. I wasn't his sweetheart any more. His elder brother, aged ten, I think, had also wanted me for a sweetheart; and he had a sixpence; and sixpence was the price of a new sort of spinning-top that had just been put into the window at the Post-office; and the elder brother proposed to the younger brother to take the sixpence and buy the top, and hand me over. 'So yū baint my sweetheart anny mower,' said that young gentleman, forgetting his good English in his grief. But I think he has a tender recollection of me even now."

"I'd have thrashed the little brute for his meanness, if I had been you," said her companion, in his off-hand way.

"Oh no," she answered, with a meek sarcasm; "wasn't he only doing as a child what grown-up gentlemen are said to do? When there is money on the one hand and a sweetheart on the other, is not the sweetheart ordinarily thrown over?"

"What can you know about it?" he said bluntly. "In any case, *you* don't run any danger. Mr. Roscorla is not likely to be tempted by bags of gold."

Mr. Roscorla—always Mr. Roscorla. Wenna, who crimsoned deeply at the slightest reference to the relations between herself and her absent lover, began to be somewhat angry with this thoughtless lad, who would continually introduce the name. What was his object in doing so? To show her that he never failed to remember her position, and that that was his excuse for talking very frankly to

her, as he would have done to a sister? Or merely to please her by speaking of one who ought to be very dear to her? She was not indebted to him for this blundering effort of kindness; and on any less cheerful morning might have visited him with one of those fits of formal politeness or of constrained silence with which young ladies are accustomed to punish too forward acquaintances.

But Miss Wenna had it not in her heart to be reserved on this pleasant forenoon; she good-naturedly overlooked the pertinacious mistakes of her companion; and talked to him—and to the flowers, and birds, and trees around her—with a happy carelessness, until the two of them together made their way up to the Hall. Just as Master Harry opened the gate at the end of the avenue, and turned to let her through, he seemed for the first time to notice her dress. He made no scruple of stopping her for a moment to look at it.

"Oh, I say, I wish you could get my mother to dress like you!"

The burst of admiration was so genuine that Miss Wenna—being only a girl—was very much pleased indeed; and blushed a little, and would rather have passed on. There was nothing, indeed, remarkable about her costume—about the rough light grey dress with its touches here and there of blue, nor yet about the white hat with its forget-me-nots and big white daisies—except that it seemed to fit well a very pretty figure, and also that the blue suited the dark and clear complexion and the dark eyes and hair.

"I'm sick of her stalking about the house in the guise of a ghost—she all white, everything else black. I say, Wenna, don't you think you could get her to dress like a human being?"

"But if it is her wish, you ought to respect it."

"It's only a craze," he said impatiently.

"It may seem so to you," his companion said; "but she has her own reasons for it, and they deserve your sympathy, even though they may not convince you. And you ought not to speak in that harsh way of one who is so very good and gentle, and who is so considerate towards you."

"Oh, you always find excuses for people," he said roughly. "Everybody should be considered, and respected, and have

their fine feelings praised and coddled, according to you. Everybody is perfect, according to you."

"Oh dear, no," she said quite humbly. "I know one or two people whose conduct and habits, and their manners, too, might be very much improved indeed."

"I suppose you mean me?" he said.

"And if I did?" she said boldly. "Don't you think, when you want your mother to be just as you would have her to be, that she might turn round and say that there was a great deal more in you that she might wish to have altered? You know her manner of life is not necessarily wrong merely because you can't understand it. As for yours——"

"Go ahead!" he cried, with a loud and suddenly good-natured laugh. "Heap up all my sins on my head! I'm getting used to be lectured now. Please, Miss Puritan, would you like me to get a surplice and come and sing hymns in the choir?"

Miss Puritan did not answer. There was no look of annoyance on her face—only a certain calm reserve that told her companion that he had somehow wounded the friendly confidence that had sprung up between them during this pleasant morning ramble. And at this moment they reached the front of the Hall, where Mrs. Trelyon came forward to greet her visitor; so that Master Harry had no further opportunity just then of asking her whether he had offended her, and of making an apology. He followed them into the drawing-room and listened for a few minutes to his mother talking to Wenna about the Sewing Club. He became impatient with himself, and vexed, for Wenna seemed in no wise to recognize his presence; and of course his mother did not ask his advice about the purchase of flannel. He tossed about the books on the table; he teased an Angola cat that was lying before the fire until it tried to bite him, and then he put its nose into the water of a flower-vase. With the feather of a quill dipped in ink he drew a fox on one of the white tiles of the fireplace; and then he endeavoured to remove that work of art with the edge of a scarlet and gold footstool. These various occupations affording him no relief, he got up, stretched his legs, and said to his mother—

"Mother, you keep her here for lunch. I shall be back at two."

"Oh, but I can't stay so long," Wenna said, suddenly. "I know I shall be wanted at home."

"Oh no, you won't," the young gentleman responded, coolly. "I know you won't. Mabyn told me so. Besides, I am going down now to tell them you will be back at four."

And so he went away, but his walk down to the inn was not as pleasant as that roundabout ramble up to the Hall had been.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### ONLY A BASKET OF PRIMROSES.

"WHAT a busy life you must lead," said Mrs. Trelyon, looking with a gentle wonder at the young lady before her. "You seem to know how to do everything."

Miss Wenna coloured a little, and said something about having had to help her mother for many years past.

"And such a knowledge of the world as you have!" Mrs. Trelyon continued, unconsciously staring at the girl as if she were some strange phenomenon. "Where did you get it?"

"That I am sure I have not got," Wenna said, brightening considerably, "for the strangers who come to the inn of course don't speak to me, except one or two of the very old-ladies sometimes, and all they talk about is the scenery. But Mabyn and I read the remarks in the Visitors' Book; and these are very amusing, especially the poetry that the young gentlemen write; and indeed, Mrs. Trelyon, if one were to judge by that book, one would think that the world was very silly. The elderly gentlemen generally praise the cooking; the elderly ladies generally say something nice about the cleanliness of the bedrooms and the good attendance; and the young ladies write about anything, recommending other visitors to go to particular places, or saying what they think of the Cornish peasantry. I am sure they are all very good-natured to us; and say very nice things of the inn; but then it looks so silly. And the young gentlemen

are far the worst—especially the University young gentlemen, for they write such stupid poetry and make such bad jokes. I suppose it is that the fresh air gives them very good spirits, and they don't care what they say, and they never expect that their friends will see what they have written. I have noticed, though, that the walking gentlemen never write such things when they are leaving; for they are always too anxious about the number of miles they have to get over on that day; and they are always anxious, too, about the heels of their stockings. If you would like to see the book—"

Wenna stopped. Mrs. Trelyon had been very good in extending a sort of acquaintance to her, and now proposed to help her in a way with her work. But she was going too far in expecting that this reserved and silent lady should become a visitor at the inn, or interest herself in its commonplace affairs. At this moment, indeed, Mrs. Trelyon was so very much reserved, that she did not notice either Wenna's tentative invitation or her embarrassment when she cut it short.

"I wish," she said absently, showing what she had been thinking about, "I wish you could get Harry to go to one of the Universities."

It was now Wenna's turn to stare. Did the mother of that young man seriously think that this stranger-girl had such an influence over him?

"Oh, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said, "how could I——?"

"He would do anything for you," the gentle lady said, with much simplicity and honesty. "He pays no attention to anything I say to him; but he would do anything for you. His whole manner changes when you are in the house. I think you are the only person in the world he is afraid of. And it was so good of you to induce him to go to church."

"I am sure it was not I," said Wenna, getting rather afraid.

"But I know," said Mrs. Trelyon, quite affectionately, "for I have seen everybody else try and fail. You see, my dear, you are in a peculiar position. You are young, and a pleasant companion for a young man; and as you are no relation of his he is courteous to you. And then, you see, your being engaged to be married enables him to speak

freely to you and treat you as a friend; and I think, besides, you have acquired some means of keeping him in check, and having authority over him, and I am sure he would do more for you than for any one I know. As for me, I have never had any control over him; but he is at least civil to me when you are in the room."

Wenna rose.

"Mrs. Trelyon," she said, "don't you think it is a pity to stay indoors on such a beautiful morning? The air is quite mild and warm outside."

She was glad to get out. There was something in this declaration of her responsibility for the young man's conduct which considerably startled and frightened her. It was all very well for her to administer an occasional sharp reproof to him when he was laughing and joking with herself and Mabyn; but to become the recognized mistress of so wild a pupil as Master Harry—to have his own mother appeal to her—that was quite a different affair. And on this occasion, when Mrs. Trelyon had got a shawl, and come outside with her guest, all her talk was about her son, and his ways, and his prospects. It was very clear that with all her lamentations over his conduct, Mrs. Trelyon was very fond of the young man, and was quite assured too that he had the brains to do anything he might be induced to undertake. Wenna listened in a vague way to all these complaints, and speculations, and covert praises; she did not find her position so embarrassing in the open air as in that close drawing-room. They walked through the leafy alleys of the garden, unconsciously regarding the beautiful colour of the new spring flowers, and listening to the larks singing high up in the blue. From time to time, as they turned, they caught a glimpse of hills all ablaze with gorse; and near the horizon a long line of pale azure with a single white ship visible in the haze. On the other side of the valley a man was harrowing; they could hear him calling to the horses, and the jingling of the chains. Then there was the murmur of the stream far below, where the sunlight just caught the light green of the larches. These, and the constant singing of the birds around them, were the only sounds that accompanied their talk, as they wandered this way and that, by brilliant garden plots or through shaded

avenues, where the air was sweet with the fresh scents of the opening summer.

And at last they came back to the proposal that Wenna should try to persuade Master Harry to go to Oxford or Cambridge.

"But, Mrs. Trelyon," the girl said earnestly, "I am quite sure you mistake altogether my relations with your son. I could not presume to give him advice. It would not be my place to do so even if we were on the footing of friends, and that, at present, is out of the question. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon, that because Mr. Trelyon in coming about the inn was good-natured enough to make the acquaintance of my father, and to talk to us girls, it would not do for any of us to forget how we are situated. I don't anyway—perhaps because I am proud—but, at all events, I should not presume on Mr. Trelyon's good nature. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon?"

"I see that you are a very practical, and sensible, and plain-spoken young lady," her companion said, regarding her with a kindly look. "But I think you don't do my son justice. It is not thoughtlessness that made him make your acquaintance. I don't think he ever did a more prudent thing in his life before. And then, dear Miss Rosewarne, you must remember—if I may speak of such a thing—that you will soon be the wife of one of the very few friends we have about here; and you must excuse us if we claim you as a friend already, and try to take advantage of your friendship. Surely you understand?"

Wenna was not persuaded; but she was, at all events, very pleased to see that occasionally Mrs. Trelyon could forget her brooding sentimental fancies, and become comparatively bright and talkative.

"Now will you say a word to him when he comes home for lunch?"

"Oh no, I can't do that, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said; "it would be quite rude of me to do that. Besides, if you would not be displeased with me for saying so, I don't think going to a University would do him any good. don't think—I hope you won't be vexed with me—that he has had sufficient schooling. And isn't there an examination before you could get in? Well, I don't know about that; but I

am quite sure that if he did get in, he would be too proud to put himself in competition with the other young men who were properly prepared for study, and he would take to boating, or cricket, or some such thing. Now, don't you think, Mrs. Trelyon, he would be as well occupied in amusing himself here, where you might gradually get him to take an interest in something besides shooting and fishing? He knows far more things than most people fancy, I know that. My father says he is very clever and can pick up anything you tell him; and that he understands more about the management of an estate, and about the slate quarries, and about mining, too, than people imagine. And as for me," added the girl bravely, "I will say this, that I think him very clever indeed, and that he will make a straightforward and honourable man, and I should like to see him in Parliament, where he would be able to hold his own, I know."

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Trelyon, with a joyful face, "I am so grateful to you. I am so proud to know you think so highly of him. And won't you say a word to him? He will do whatever you please."

But Miss Wenna had somehow been startled into that confession; and the sudden burst of honesty left her considerably ashamed and embarrassed. She would not promise to intermeddle in the matter, whatever she had been induced to say about the future of the young man. She stooped to pick up a flower to cover her confusion; and then she asked Mrs. Trelyon to be good enough to excuse her staying to lunch.

"Oh, no, I dare not do that," Mrs. Trelyon said; "Harry would pull the house down when he found I had let you go. You know we have no visitors at present; and it will be such a pleasure to have him lunch with me; he seldom does; and never at all if there are visitors. But really, Miss Rosewarne, it is so inconsiderate of me to talk always of him, as if you were as much interested as myself. Why, the whole morning we have not said a word about you and all you are looking forward to. I do hope you will be happy. I am sure you will be, for you have such a sensible way of regarding things, and all is sure to go well. I must say that I thought Harry was a little more mad than usual

when he first told me about that money ; but now I know you, I am very, very glad indeed, and very pleased that I could be of some little service to Mr. Roscorla for your sake."

The girl beside her did not understand ; she looked up with wondering eyes.

"What money, Mrs. Trelyon ?"

"I mean the money that Harry got for Mr. Roscorla—the money, you know, for those Jamaica estates ; is it possible Mr. Roscorla did not tell you before he left ?"

"I have not heard anything about it, Mrs. Trelyon, and I hope you will tell me at once," Wenna said, with some decision in her tone, but with a strange sinking at her heart.

"You don't know, then ?" Mrs. Trelyon said, suddenly fearing she had been indiscreet. "Oh, it is nothing, a mere business arrangement. Of course, gentlemen don't care to have these things talked over. I hope you won't mention it, dear Miss Rosewarne ; I really thought you might have overheard them speaking of the matter."

Wenna said nothing. The soft dark eyes looked a little troubled, but that was all. And presently, up came young Trelyon, full of good spirits, and noise, and bustle ; and he drove his mother and Wenna before him into the house ; and hurried up the servants, and would open the wine himself. His mother checked him for whistling at luncheon ; his reply was to toss the leg of a fowl on to the hearthrug, where a small and shaggy terrier immediately began to worry it. He put the Angola cat on the table to see if it would eat some Cornish cream off his plate. His pigeons got to know of his being in the house, and came flying about the windows and walking jerkily over the lawn ; he threw up the windows and flung them a couple of handfuls of crumbs.

"Oh, Miss Wenna," said he, "would you like to see my tame fox ? I am sure you would. Matthews, you cut round to the stables and tell old Luke to bring that fox here—off you go—leave the claret this side."

"But I do not wish to see the fox ; I particularly dislike foxes," said Wenna with some asperity ; and Matthews was recalled.

Master Harry grinned to himself ; it was the first time he

had been able to get her to speak to him. From the beginning of luncheon she had sat almost silent, observing his vagaries and listening to his random talk in silence ; when she spoke it was always in answer to his mother. Very soon after luncheon she begged Mrs. Trelyon to excuse her going away ; and then she went and put on her hat.

"I'll see you down to the inn," said Master Harry, when she came out to the hall door.

"Thank you, it is quite unnecessary," she said, somewhat coldly.

"Oh," said he, "you may be as ill-tempered as you please, but I shall conquer you by my extreme politeness."

At another time she would have laughed at the idea of this young gentleman complimenting himself on his politeness ; now, as she walked quietly down the gravelled path to the gate, she was very grave, and, indeed, took no notice of his presence.

"Wenna," said he, after he had shut the gate, and rejoined her, "is it fair to make such a fuss about a chance word ? I think you are very hard. I did not mean to offend you."

"You have not offended me, Mr. Trelyon."

"Then why do you look so—so uncomfortable ?"

She made no answer.

"Now look here, do be reasonable. Are you vexed because I called you Wenna ? Or is it because I spoke about singing in the choir ?"

"No," she said, simply, "I was not thinking of anything of that kind ; and I am not vexed."

"Then what is the matter ?"

For another second or two she was silent, apparently from irresolution ; then she suddenly stopped in the middle of the road, and confronted him.

"Mr. Trelyon," she said, "is it true that you have given Mr. Roscorla money, and on my account ?"

"No, it is not," he said, considerably startled by her tone. "I lent him some money—the money he wanted to take to Jamaica."

"And what business had you to do anything of the sort ?" she demanded, with the shame in her heart lending a strangely unusual sharpness to her voice.



"Well," said the young man, quite humbly, "I thought it would be a service both to you and to him; and that there was no harm in it. If he succeeds he will pay me back. It was precious silly of him to tell you anything about it; but still, Miss Wenna—you must see—now don't be unreasonable—what harm could there be in it?"

She stood before him, her eyes cast down, her pale face a trifle flushed, and her hands clasped tight.

"How much was it?" she said in a low voice.

"Now, now, now," he answered her, in a soothing way, "don't you make a fuss about it; it is a business transaction; men often lend money to each other—what a fool he must have been to have—I beg your pardon——" and then he stopped, frowning at his own stupidity.

"How much was it?"

"Well, if you must know, five thousand pounds."

"Five thousand pounds?" she repeated absently. "I am sure my father has not so much money. But I will bid you good-bye now, Mr. Trelyon."

And she held out her hand.

"Mayn't I walk down with you to the village?" said he, looking rather crestfallen.

"No, thank you," she said quietly, and then she went away.

Well, he stood looking after her for a few seconds. Now that her back was turned to him and she was going away, there was no longer any brightness in the fresh spring woods, nor any colour in the clear skies overhead. She had been hard on him, he felt; and yet there was no anger or impatience in his heart, only a vague regret that somehow he had wounded her, and that they had ceased to be good friends. He stood so for a minute or two, and then he suddenly set out to overtake her. She turned slightly just as he got up.

"Miss Wenna," he said, rather shamefacedly, "I forgot to ask you whether you would mind calling in at Mrs. Luke's as you go by. There is a basket of primroses there for you. I set the children to gather them about an hour ago; I thought you would like them."

She said she would; and then he raised his cap—looked at her just for one moment—and turned and walked away.

Wenna called for the basket, and a very fine basket of flowers it was, for Mrs. Luke said that Master Harry had given the children sixpence apiece to gather the finest primroses they could get, and everyone knows what Cornish primroses are. Wenna took away the flowers, not paying any particular attention to them; and it was only when she got into her own room—and when she felt very much inclined to sit down and cry—that she noticed lying among the large and pale yellow primroses a bit of another flower which one of the children had, doubtless, placed there. It was merely a stalk of the small pink-flowered saxifrage, common in cottagers' gardens, and called in some places London-pride. In other parts of the country they tenderly call it *None-so-pretty*.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CONFIDENCES.

MEANWHILE, during the time that Wenna Rosewarne had been up at Trelyon Hall, her place in the inn had been occupied by a very handsome, self-willed, and gay-hearted young lady, who had endeavoured, after a somewhat wild fashion, to fulfil her sister's duties. She had gone singing through the house to see that the maids had put the rooms right; she had had a fight with Jennifer about certain jellies; she had petted her mother and teased her father into a good humour; after which she went outside in her smart print dress and bright ribbons, and sat down on the bench of black oak at the door. She formed part of a pretty picture there; the bright April day was still shining all around, on the plashing water of the mill, on the pigeons standing on the roof, and on the hills beyond the harbour, which were yellow with masses of gorse.

"And now," said this young lady to herself, "the question is, can I become a villain? If I could only get one of the persons out of a story to tell me how they managed to do it successfully, how fine that would be! Here is the letter in my pocket—of course it has his address in it. I burn the letter. Wenna doesn't write to him. He gets angry, and writes again and again. I burn