"Perhaps so—I don't know."

"But you like it, surely?"

"Not half so well as town."

"Good heavens! Miss Milward! Can you look at these lovely hills and valleys—why, just look about you a minute, and hear the music of the birds and insects and that delightful little waterfall, and the banks full of ferns and wild flowers. Now, can you say that New York has anything to compare with it?"

"It is beautiful," she was forced to admit,as she stopped with him behind the others to take in the scene, "but it is not that. It is different with you. You were born here. Your friends, all you care for, are here. I know what you are thinking. You look it, if you don't say it, whenever we meet—that I am ungrateful, dissatisfied."

"You seem so unhappy, and I think it is a pity. I do not allude to that," he said, lowering his voice as his eyes fell on her mourning, "a great trouble can only be softened by time."

"You seem to think that pretty scenery, a roof over your head, and fine weather, are all that are needed for complete happiness," said Emily, indignantly. "They may be enough for some people, but they are not for me. You can't understand the want of some one to talk to who feels as you feel; whose ideas—in short, I am out of place. To be happy, one must have friends; and people can't care for each other who haven't a single thought in common."

"You do not give me credit for much intellect, Miss Milward; but apart from that, if you will forgive me for saying so, I think there is more than one here who would be quite capable of entering into your thoughts and feelings if you would only allow them to try."

Emily said no more, but walked quickly so that they soon rejoined her father and aunt. There was a flush on her cheek, and a compression about her mouth that showed she was offended.

"Why did I talk to him?" she asked herself angrily. "I might have known what to expect. Suppose it was because he has more sense than most of these country people."

Shortly after, Blakely took leave, while the others walked home almost in silence. The farmer looked sideways more than once at his daughter's face; but as he received only monosyllables in reply to the remarks he threw out at intervals, he gave up and became moody and abstracted himself.

The evening being sultry and oppressive in-doors, Emily stole out and wandered alone in the dusk in the large, old-fashioned garden. The air was full of the scent of stocks, pinks and flowers that bloomed in friendly companionship with the humbler growths common to the kitchen garden.

There was little dew, so she trod and re-trod the soft turf paths, her head bent, her ears dead to the melody that stole out of the adjacent woods, where a thrush was sending a clear, thrilling song trembling into the still air.

To and fro she glided, looking, in the light wrap she had thrown round her, like some unquiet ghost, shadowy and unreal in the gathering shades. The fragrance of a cigar made her look up, to see her father close at hand, he having come up unheard on the soft grass.

Flinging away his cigar, he turned and walked at her side.

"Emily," he began, "I have something to say to you, but I don't know quite how to say it."

As she did not assist him by a reply, he went on, after a pause—

"Things have not turned out quite as I expected, and I can't see how to better them. You have been here a month now—time enough to be quite settled down and at home."

A sigh was the only answer when he stopped, but it said as much as words.

"It is hard on you, poor child," he said, checking the echo of her sigh, and knitting his brows with a perplexed look, "very hard. I thought a quiet home would be enough. I forgot that you were accustomed to other ways of living. In short, my girl, I see you are not happy here with us. I have transplanted you, and the soil don't suit. What's to be done?"

"It can not be helped," she said, wearily, stopping to lean on a little gate that opened into a wood."

"Can't it?" said Milward, stopping, too. "I won't keep you against your will. I suppose we have been separated too many years ever to—for you ever to feel—like a daughter."

There was silence between them, but the thrush still poured fourth his jubilant notes.

"You see it all comes to this," the farmer continued. "I have brought you here and it doesn't answer. You shall go back to your old life."

"How can I?" asked Emily, with a sob.

"There was more than one of your old friends offered you a home. You have spoken of a Miss Somebody who asked you to go abroad with her. Go. Write and tell her that you have changed your mind. Go where you like. You know better than I do what ways there are. I will provide you with means as I have done before."

"And you?"

"I? Never mind me. I would rather do without you than have you look so spiritless. It's only another of my blunders."

A letter recently received came into Emily's mind, in which a friend begged her to join in a trip to Europe—an invitation she had put aside as out of the question. Her heart leaped with a quick sense of freedom, and her head rose hopefully.

"There would always be this home you could come back to—if you were tired, if you wanted rest or change. Perhaps it would be best for you. Take a week or so to think it over, and then tell me what you'd like best to do."