“During the next four months I did not enter Mrs. Graham's house, nor she mine; but still the ladies continued to talk about her, and still our acquaintance continued, though slowly, to advance. As for their talk, I paid but little attention to that (when it related to the fair hermit, I mean), and the only information I derived from it was, that one fine frosty day she had ventured to take her little boy as far as the vicarage, and that, unfortunately, nobody was at home but Miss Millward; nevertheless, she had sat a long time, and, by all accounts, they had found a good deal to say to each other, and parted with a mutual desire to meet again. But Mary liked children, and fond mammas like those who can duly appreciate their treasures.

But sometimes I saw her myself, not only when she came to church, but when she was out on the hills with her son, whether taking a long, purpose-like walk, or - on special fine days - leisurely rambling over the moor or the bleak pasture-lands, surrounding the old hall, herself with a book in her hand, her son gamboling about her; and, on any of these occasions, when I caught sight of her in my solitary walks or rides, or while following my agricultural pursuits, I generally contrived to meet or overtake her, for I rather liked to see Mrs. Graham, and to talk to her, and I decidedly liked to talk to her little companion, whom, when once the ice of his shyness was fairly broken, I found to be a very amiable, intelligent, and entertaining little fellow; and we soon became excellent friends - how much to the gratification of his mamma I cannot undertake to say.” **Chapter 6**

“ ‘My darling angel - my own Helen,' cried I, now passionately kissing the hand I still retained, and throwing my left arm around her, 'you never shall repent, if it depend on me alone. But have you thought of your aunt?' I trembled for the answer, and clasped her closer to my heart in the instinctive dread of losing my new- found treasure.

'My aunt must not know of it yet,' said she. 'She would think it a rash, wild step, because she could not imagine how well I know you; but she must know you herself, and learn to like you. You must leave us now, after lunch, and come again in spring, and make a longer stay, and cultivate her acquaintance, and I know you will like each other.'

'And then you will be mine,' said I, printing a kiss upon her lips, and another, and another; for I was as daring and impetuous now as I had been backward and constrained before.

'No - in another year,' replied she, gently disengaging herself from my embrace, but still fondly clasping my hand.

'Another year! Oh, Helen, I could not wait so long!' ” **chapter 53.**