

TOURVEL & ROSEMONDE

Rosemonde: Oh my dear, whatever is it?

Tourvel: It's all right. I'm all right now.

Rosemonde: We must send for a doctor, my dear.

Tourvel: No, no please, I don't need a doctor, I'm perfectly all right now.

Rosemonde: We mustn't take any chances.

Tourvel: No, I just ... I must talk to you for a moment. Come and sit by me. I can't speak very loud. What I have to say is too difficult.

(beat)

I must leave this house first thing in the morning. I am most desperately in love. To leave here is the last thing in the world I want to do, but I'd rather die than have to live with the guilt. I don't mind if I die; to live without him will be no life at all, but that's what I have to do. Can you understand what I'm saying?

Rosemonde: Of course. My dear girl. None of this is any surprise to me. The only thing which might surprise is how little the world changes. Of course, you must leave if you feel it's the right thing to do.

Tourvel: And what should I do then? What's your advice?

Rosemonde: If I remember rightly, in such matters, all advice is useless. You can't speak to the patient in the grip of a fever. We must talk again when you're closer to recovery.

Tourvel: I've never been so unhappy.

Rosemonde: I'm sorry to say this, but those who are most worthy of love are never made happy by it. You're too young to have understood that.

Tourvel: But why? Why should that be?

Rosemonde: Do you still think men love the way we do? No. Men enjoy the happiness they feel, we can only enjoy the happiness we give. They're not capable of devoting themselves exclusively to one person. So, to hope to be made happy by love is a certain cause of grief. I'm devoted to my nephew, but what is true of most men is doubly so of him.

Tourvel: And yet ... he could have ... just now. He took pity on me, I saw it happen. I saw his decision not to take advantage of me.

Rosemonde: If he has released you, my dear child, it's because your example over these few weeks has genuinely affected and improved him. If he's let you go, you must go.

Tourvel: *(Sobbing)* I will. I will.

Rosemonde: There, there. And even if you had given way, my dear girl, God knows how hard you've struggled against it. There now.

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