

but her words fell upon his ears as distinctly as the tolling of the death-bell.

"Ralph Wilson, this is your work."—

"I! my lady! I did not kill him. I did not strike him hard enough for that. It was master that ordered me to beat him. I begged him to have mercy on the lad. Oh, Lord! who would have thought of his taking it so to heart," the old man blubbered aloud.

"A slanderous tongue is sharper than a two edged sword. To noble natures like his, it strikes home to the heart. You are an old man, Ralph, standing upon the verge of the grave. You have accused my son of theft, have declared upon your word of honour as a christian that you saw him commit the robbery."

"Yes, my lady; a dreadful business, my lady—but too true."

"I demand in proof of this, that you lay your hand upon the dead brow of your victim, and swear by the living God, by your hopes of salvation through the blood of Christ, and as you wish to escape the fires of hell—that you saw him do it."

The man made a few steps forward. His face suddenly became livid, large drops of perspiration broke out upon his forehead, his teeth chattered together, an ague fit of fear convulsed his whole frame.

"You dare not do it!" said Mrs. Leatrim, pointing to the calm majestic face of her son. "To witness against him now were to lie in the face of God."

"I have murdered him!" said the old man, turning from the bed, and sinking on his knees at his master's feet—"It was I stole the money."

"You!" and the doctor tried to shake himself free from the withered hands that clutched his garments. "Alas! my poor injured boy."

"I did it," continued Ralph, in a tone of despair. "The devil tempted me, as he did Judas to betray his master. I have been a villain all my life! I loved gold! I worshipped it! I lost no opportunity of obtaining it—and it has destroyed my miserable soul."

"But why did you lay the robbery of the box on George?" asked the doctor. "You were safe from detection. I never suspected you."

"But *he* did," returned the old man bitterly—"I saw it in his eye, I knew it by his manner. He believed me to be a rogue, though he dare not say so before your reverence, and I hated him because he knew my character. To ensure my own safety I denounced him."

"And what do you think of your work?" and the doctor turned the old man's face towards his dead son.

"Mercy! mercy!" shrieked the wretch. "I would rather suffer eternal punishment than look in that face again."

"You will have to meet it once more, and that before long, Ralph