

"Leave me alone for that," said the ruffian. "The day is breaking, we must part—we have both melancholy duties to perform."

"I wish the funeral was over," returned Godfrey. "I hate being forced to act a conspicuous part in such a grave farce."

"Your cousin will help you out. He is the real mourner—you the actor. Remember what I hinted to you, and let me know your opinion in a few days."

"The risk is too great," said Godfrey, shrugging his shoulders. "When I am reduced to my last shift, it will be time to talk of that."

The grey misty dawn was just struggling into day when Godfrey left the cottage. Mathews looked after him, as, opening a side gate that led to a foot-path which intersected the Park, he vanished from his sight, muttering to himself: "Well, there goes the greatest scoundrel that ever was unhung. He has never shed blood, or done what I have done; but, hang me if I would exchange characters with him. He thinks to make a fool of me. But—my soul! if I do not make him repay, in a thousand fold, the injuries which he has heartlessly heaped upon me and mine!"

In a very enviable mood Godfrey pursued his way through the lonely park. The birds had not yet sung their matin hymn to awaken the earth. Deep silence rested upon the august face of creation. Not a breath of air stirred the branches heavy with dew drops. The hour was full of beauty and mystery. An awe fell insensibly upon the heart, as if it saw the eye of God visibly watching over the sleeping world. Its influence was felt even by the selfish, petted Godfrey. The deep silence, the strange stillness, the uncertain light, the scenes he had lately witnessed, his altered fortunes, his degrading pursuits, the fallen and depraved state of his mind, crowded into his thoughts at once, and filled his bosom with keen remorse and painful regrets. "Oh, that I could repent!" he cried, stopping and clasping his hands together, and fixing his eyes mournfully upon the earth—"that I could believe that there was a God, a heaven, a hell! Yet, if there were no such things hereafter—why this stifling sense of guilt, this ever haunting, miserable consciousness of unworthiness? Am I worse than other men, or are all men alike—the circumstances in which they are placed, producing that which we denominate good or evil in their characters? What, if I were to determine to renounce the evil and cling to the good, would it yet be well with me? Would Juliet, like a good angel, consent to be my guide, and lead me gently back to the forsaken paths of purity and peace?"

Whilst the voice in his heart yet spake to him for good, another voice sounded in his ears, and all his virtuous resolutions melted into air.

"Godfrey," said the voice of Mary Mathews. "Dear Mr. Godfrey, have I become so indifferent

to you, that you will neither look at me nor speak to me?"

She was the last person upon earth whom, at that moment, he wished to see. The sight of her recalled him to a sense of his degradation, and all that he had lost by his unhappy connexion with her, and he secretly wished that she had died instead of her father.

"Mary," he said coldly; "what do you want with me? The morning is damp and raw. You had better go home."

"What do I want with you?" reiterated the girl; "and is it come to that! Can you, who have so often sworn to me, that you loved me better than aught on earth, in heaven, now ask me in my misery what I want with you?"

"Hot headed, rash young men will swear, and foolish fond girls will believe them," said Godfrey, putting his arm carelessly about her waist, and drawing her towards him. "So it has been since the world begun—and so it will be until the end of time."

"Was all you told me then, false?" said the girl, leaning her head back upon his shoulder; and fixing her large, beautiful, tearful eyes upon his face.

That look of unutterable fondness banished all Godfrey's good resolutions. He kissed the tears from her eyes as he replied:

"Not exactly, Mary. But you expect too much."

"I only ask you not to cease to love me," said Mary, "not to leave me, Godfrey, for another."

"Who put such nonsense into your head?"

"William told me," said the girl, "that you were going to marry Miss Whitmore."

"If such were the case, Mary, do you think I should be such a fool as to tell William?"

"Oh! I am afraid it is but too true," said Mary, bursting into tears afresh. "You do not love me as you did, Godfrey. When we first met and loved, you used to sit by my side for hours, looking into my face, and holding my hand in yours, and we were so happy—too happy to speak. We lived but in each other's eyes, and I hoped—fondly hoped, that that blessed dream would last for ever. I did not care for the anger of father, or brother, or for the contempt of the neighbours. One kiss from those dear lips, one kind word breathed from your mouth, sunk from my ear into my heart, and I gloried in what I ought to have considered my shame. Oh! why are you changed, Godfrey? Why should my love remain, like a covered fire, consuming my heart to ashes, and making me a prey to tormenting doubts and fears, while you seem unmoved by my sorrow, and contented in my absence?"

"You attribute that to indifference, which is but the effect of circumstances," said Godfrey, somewhat embarrassed by her importunities. "Perhaps,