

sured by him of the frightful fact, that I had, really and truly, engaged myself to travel in a coach, which, really and truly did start at five in the morning. But as the novel-writers of the good old Minerva school used, in similar cases, to say—'in pity to my sympathizing reader's feeling,' I must draw the mysterious veil of concealment over my, oh! too acute sufferings! These, I must own, were in no little degree aggravated by the manner of my friend. Mark, as a sort of foil to his many excellent qualities, has one terrible failing: it is a knack of laughing at one's fortunes; or, to use his own palliating phrase, he has a habit of looking at the ridiculous side of things. Ridiculous! Heavens? as if any one possessing a spark of humanity could perceive any thing to excite his mirth in the circumstance of a fellow creature's being forced out of his bed at such an hour! After exhibiting many contortions of the mouth, produced by a decent desire to maintain a gravity suitable to the occasion, he, at length, burst into a loud laugh; and exclaiming (with a want of feeling I shall never entirely forget,) 'Well I wish you joy of your journey: *you must be up at four!*' away he went. It may be asked why I did not forfeit my forty-four shillings, and thus escape the calamity. No; the laugh would have been too much against me; so, resolving to put a bold face on the matter, I—I will not I say walked—I positively swaggard about the streets of Bristol, for an hour or two, with all the self-importance of one who has already performed some extraordinary exploit, and is conscious that the wondering gaze of the multitude is directed towards him. Being condemned to the miseries, it was but fair I should enjoy the honours of the undertaking. To every person I met, with whom I had the slightest acquaintance, I said aloud, 'I start at five to-morrow morning!' at the same time adjusting my cravat and pulling up my collar: and I went into three or four shops and purchased trifles, for which I had no earthly occasion, for the pure gratification of my vain-glory, in saying, 'Be sure you send them to-night, for I start at five in the morning!' But beneath all this show of gallantry, my heart, like that of many another hero on equally desperate occasions—

my heart was ill at ease. I have often thought that my feelings, for the whole of that distressing afternoon, must have been very like those of a person about to go, for a first time, up in a balloon. I returned to Reeves' hotel, College-green, where I was lodging. 'I'll pack my portmanteau' (the contents of which were scattered about in the drawers, on the table, and on the chairs)—'that will be so much gained on the enemy,' thought I; but on looking at my watch, I found I had barely time to dress for dinner; the Norringtons, with whom I was engaged, being punctual people. No matter, I'll pack to-night.' 'Twas well I came to that determination; for the instant I entered the drawing room, Norrington rang the bell, and just said to the servant who appeared at its summons, 'Dinner;' a dissyllable which, when so uttered, timed, and accompanied is a polite hint that the dinner has not been improved by your late arrival.

My story, however, had arrived there before me; and I must do my friend the justice to say, that all that kindness could do for me, under the circumstances, was done. Two or three times, indeed, Mark looked at me full in the face, and laughed outright without any apparent cause for such a manifestation of mirth; and once when, after a few glasses of wine, I had almost ceased to think of the fate that awaited me, Miss Adelaide suddenly inquired, 'Do you *really* start at five?' 'isnt that rather early?'—'*Rather,*' replied I, with all the composure I could assume. But for a smile, and a sly look at her papa, I might have attributed the distressing question to thoughtlessness, rather than a deliberate desire to inflict pain. To parody a well-known line, I may say that, upon the whole

"To me this Twelfth-night was no night of mirth."

Before twelve o'clock I left a pleasant circle revelling in all the delights of Twelfth-cake, pam-loo, king-and-queen, and forfeits, to pack my portmanteau.

"And inly ruminate the morning's danger!"

The individual who, at this time, so ably filled the important office of 'Boot,' at the hotel, was a character. Be it remembered that, in his youth, he had been discharged from his place for omitting to call a gentleman