

abode only in the calm and tranquil homes, where religion reigns; but then Mary is so very serious."

The rooms were filling fast—and many lovely girls were amongst the guests, whose bright, merry countenances seemed in unison with the thoughts of Beatrice. The instant the band commenced playing she was led forward by Colonel Brereton to join the waltz, when all eyes became rivetted upon her; so exquisitely graceful was her performance—when it ceased he hurried her into a deep recess, whose windows were filled with fragrant plants, and said to her, in a low voice:

"Beatrice, dear, I have one request to make: which you will oblige me by acceding to—do not waltz with any one but myself, and do not dance at all with Lord Stepney—should he ask you, tell him you are engaged, and then come to me—that is he leaning against the orchestra."

Beatrice turned her eyes in the direction and encountered the fixed gaze of a stranger, on whose once handsome face might be traced the fearful effects of a dissipated life in the pale and sunken cheek which gave to his appearance years twice the number he had seen. She blushed as she marked the notice he bestowed upon her, and enquired the reason of Colonel Brereton's prohibition.

"That I cannot give you, Beatrice," he replied; "my wish is a sufficient one, I am sure for you."

"I don't know that," she returned, smiling; but the affectionate manner in which she laid her hand in his as she said this, contradicted her words—he pressed it warmly, when again they mingled in the gay dance. There were so many friends present, to whom Colonel Brereton wished to pay attention that he felt he could not with propriety, allow Beatrice to engross him, however much he might have wished it—yet he lingered near her till another led her from him, when he sought out a young lady as his partner for the set which had just begun to form. Now amongst the defects in the disposition of Beatrice, the passion of jealousy reigned despotically; as yet it had scarcely been called into notice, save for trivial childish causes; but the time was arriving when it was to acquire a strength more fearful, more dangerous. Indulged as she had been, and the first thought of, and cared for at home, she could not bear to see any notice or attention given to another, which she conceived to be her right alone. Her love for Colonel Brereton was strongly tinged with this selfishness—no one, she thought, ought to share his admiration with her—his eyes must be closed to their perfections, their amiable qualities, and open only to hers. She never made the reflection that in making her his choice in preference to all who he had ever seen, he had paid her the highest compliment man can pay to woman. This was not enough—she must be his exclusive thought—none else must dare obtrude themselves on his notice, and if they seemed to admire or like him, they instantly became objects

of her extreme hate. How much of earth was mixed with her affection—how little of that love enjoined by God.

On perceiving Colonel Brereton, when the dance had ended, conduct his partner, (who was a beautiful girl), to a couch, sit down by her, and enter into a lively conversation with her, she began to feel restless and uneasy, heeding not the remarks made by her companion, who at length, tired with the effort to amuse her, became silent. After watching them awhile, she turned to him, with the inquiry of—

"Who is that young lady Colonel Brereton is talking to?"

"She is the honourable Miss Gaveston, and a great heiress; highly accomplished and extremely amiable," was the reply.

"I do not think her handsome," returned Beatrice, biting her lip, impatiently.

"Do you not, indeed? she is considered so, I assure you. Mark what a sweet expression there is in her countenance; so mild, so feminine."

Beatrice did look, when she perceived the dark eyes of Miss Gaveston raised to those of Colonel Brereton, who appeared to be listening to her with interest and attention.

"She seems horridly affected," said Beatrice, pulling a beautiful bouquet which she held in her hand to pieces.

Her companion smiled, but made no answer. At the same moment the lively Lord Charles Claperton approached her, accompanied by Lord Stepney, who, he said, had requested an introduction.

"Now comes my time to punish him," thought Beatrice. "He shall see that I can flirt as well as another."

"If Miss Annesley is permitted to waltz, will she favour me with her hand?" inquired his lordship, laying a stress upon the word.

"Permitted?" repeated Beatrice, forcing a smile, while anger rankled at her heart. "Who is to prevent me?"

"I beg pardon," returned Lord Charles; "but I told my friend that you were under martial law, and must obtain leave. Was I incorrect?"

Beatrice involuntarily glanced towards Colonel Brereton, who was regarding her attentively, while a frown contracted his brow. "Ha, ha! he is annoyed; I am glad of that," again thought Beatrice, who, giving her hand to Lord Stepney, said aloud: "I own no law but my own will, therefore I shall be happy to waltz with you."

"That is right. I am glad to see you have the spirit to resist foolish prejudices," replied Lord Charles, smiling as Lord Stepney, casting on him a look full of meaning, drew her arm within his.

On seeing this, Colonel Brereton was at her side in an instant.

"Beatrice, can you have forgotten your engagement to me," he enquired, in a voice which ex-