

"The wind blows a perfect hurricane. Ah! do not let us prosecute our journey to-night."

"Are you afraid of shadows?" he cried, with a sneer; "or do you tremble at the yelling of the blast? You have nothing to fear from the storm; its fury is already past, and before morning you will enjoy rest and safety."

"Have you brought the conveyance?"

"Yes, I have. The driver waits for us at the edge of the wood. The inequalities of the heath made it impossible to drive up to the door. We should have been here hours ago, but the landlord of the George would not let his horses start in the storm. Come, be quick! the horses will take cold."

"And must I walk over the dreary heath to that fearful looking wood?"

"Nonsense!—there's no alternative. Make haste! You have met me too often in the dark, Jane, in that very wood, to make me believe that you are afraid of ghosts."

"Can't you let the creature stay where she is?" cried the poacher, waking up. "It is a sorry night for females to travel in. You are welcome to the use of that bed. It is hard enough, but you may have a worse before you die."

"Don't croak, George," said Redgrave. "I dare say the bed is good enough, but I have no wish to try it. Here's a trifle, old boy, for your attention to my wife. Should we ever come this way I will not forget you."

"He put some money into the man's hand, and throwing my cloak over my shoulders, he drew my arm through his, and we left the house."

"The cold pitiless wind cut me through, and I faltered at every step. My companion maintained a sullen silence; and to every question I put to him, he returned vague and unsatisfactory answers."

"Dear Army, what made you so late?"

"Business of importance."

"And where are you going?"

"Home."

"In what part of the country is it situated?"

"You will know soon."

"Good heavens! Army—why this reserve—why these short answers?"

"It suits my humour. Married men are not so complaisant as lovers. But quicken your steps, Jane! I must be far from this spot before morning."

"I cannot walk faster. I am dropping with fatigue."

"Come, no fine airs, Jane, or I must hasten your motions; you shall sleep sound enough ere long."

"He turned his eyes upon me as the moon burst from the clouds, and I caught the same

dark, dubious expression, which had always inspired me with a secret dread. A sudden horror came over me. It was impossible to mistake the meaning that that look unconsciously betrayed. The dreadful truth rushed upon my mind. I made a sudden pause; we were just at the edge of the wood.

"Why do you draw back, Jane? Are you afraid of me? Of me, your husband?"

"Oh, God!" I cried, "your looks terrify me. I know not what to think. I dare not enter the dark wood."

"Nonsense! You have only to cross it. The chaise is on the road, waiting for us at the other side. If you detain the driver much longer, he will return to the town without us."

"Let him return. I will not go into that wood."

"Jane!" he cried, grasping my arm with ferocity, "you think I am going to murder you!"

"Such a thought did enter my mind," I said, firmly, for the horrible vision of the night again presented itself to my bewildered fancy.

"Foolish, weak girl! you deserve to be punished for these unjust suspicions. Let us proceed without further delay."

"The heavy clouds again closed over the moon—the wind roared in the tops of the old oaks—and we were involved in darkness. The blast came to my excited fancy loaded with shrieks and groans, and horrible outcries; and I unconsciously murmured in my superstitious terror:

"The Lord have mercy upon us! The spirits of the dead are abroad to-night!"

"Army, flung me rudely from him, and cried in an angry voice:

"A truce to this folly—I have no patience with it. The girl's mad! Stay here while I go into the wood and order the chaise to this spot."

"Oh! do not leave me," I cried, in a tone of agony; but the next moment I felt relieved that he was gone.

"I sat down upon the ground, to collect my thoughts, and rest my weary limbs. Some minutes of torturing suspense elapsed, and I began to upbraid myself for my cruel and unjust suspicions, when a voice came to me through the roaring of the tempest—a wild, unnatural, appalling voice. It was the voice of my husband, calling to me from the depths of the wood.

"Jane! Jane!" Murder and death were in every tone. A sudden panic seized me—I sprang like lightning from the earth; and disengaging myself from the heavy cloak that enveloped me, I fled from the spot. Fear gave wings to my feet; the dread of death and future judgment