

alarmed us all. I was afraid that the French had effected a landing upon the coast."

"Yes, I assure you, Mr. William, it had the effect of spoiling your old friend Mrs. Cudden's appetite," said Mr. Strong. "The poor old lady was just sitting down to dine with me, upon a fine pair of ducks, and green peas, and she was so frightened lest it should be Bony and his fleet, that she left me to do the honours of the table, and ran and hid herself under a bed."

"I have no doubt that you did ample justice to the creature comforts," returned William, sarcastically. "It was a skirmish between the smuggler Christian, and the revenue officers. The smugglers mustered in great force. They accomplished their object in defiance of the King's men, and have wounded the officer in command, and killed two of his men. And these young ladies were gossiping with Mr. Chatworth, within range of the smugglers' guns."

"Charlotte! How is this?" said the Colonel, raising his heavy eyes, and fixing them sternly upon his daughter.

"The meeting was purely accidental," returned she. "I did not know that he was in the country."

"It is false! You are deceiving me!" cried the old man, rising from the table in great anger. "Unworthy girl, you were born to be a disgrace to your family."

"You would say so, my dear sir, if you knew all," continued his son. "After all my sister's fair words and promises, she was actually going to elope with this godless reprobate if I had not prevented it. Miss Rosier was present and can answer to the truth of what I say."

"I shall not appeal to Miss Rosier. Your word, my son, is sufficient. Go to your apartment, Charlotte, and let me see your face no more, until you have repented of this great sin."

Charlotte rose and staggered towards the door. Mr. Strong likewise rose, and led her back to her father.

"Brother," he said, "you are too severe. Part not with the maiden in anger. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Daughter, kiss your parent, and ask his forgiveness!"

"I have not sinned against him," said Charlotte firmly. "I sinned against my own soul, when I broke a sacred engagement to please him. My heart is too full. I cannot ask his pardon."

The eyes of the two met. The tears seemed to dry upon the large expanded orbs of the daughter; and they glanced back upon the cold, stern, face of her father, a glance of proud defiance. It did not escape the observation of the good priest. He took her by the hand and led her gently apart. "You are both in the wrong," he said. "A mu-

tual explanation will be necessary, but the spirit which now possesses you is of this world; in its nature it is sinful and devilish. I will reason with your father, young lady, until a better spirit prevails with him. In the mean while go to your closet, and seek in earnest prayer a holier frame of mind. Yield not to the tempter. Remember that such as the present is his hour, and the power of darkness."

"Dear, worthy friend, I leave my cause in your hand," said Charlotte. "Pity me, and pray for me."

She left the room. The meal proceeded in silence, unbroken save by the blessing pronounced at its termination, by the minister. After the tea equipage was removed, Mr. William gave a circumstantial account of the meeting between the lovers, and what had passed in his hearing. Mildred was called upon for her testimony, which she gave with great truth and simplicity. The relation only served to exasperate the colonel. Mrs. Stainer blamed Charlotte for her inconsistent conduct; at the same time, she pitied and tried to extenuate her fault. After a long silence Mr. Strong spoke to this effect.

"Forgive me, Colonel, if I think your conduct to your daughter, harsh and imprudent. There is much, too much, of human pride mingled with your opposition to her wishes."

"You are presuming too much upon your sacred calling, Sir," said William Stainer, interrupting him. "If I were Colonel Stainer, I would not submit to be lectured in my own house, and upon a subject which so nearly concerned myself."

"Be calm, young man," returned the minister quietly. "I am a peace maker, not a peace breaker, and I well know when it is my duty to speak, and when to be silent. The happiness of one who is (I hope) dear to us all, is concerned, and woe be to me if I hold my tongue when conscience urges me to speak boldly out."

"Do not mind William," said the Colonel, "It is love for me, and his high sense of what is due to his sister's honor, gave utterance to those hasty words. To you, Sir, I always listen with attention."

"Well then, to be candid with you," continued Mr. Strong, "I consider that your daughter, for a long time past, has laboured under temporary aberrations of reason."

"How—mad! exclaimed father and son staring at each other in horror."

"Something very near it. This, I fear, has been produced by the unfortunate circumstances which have hindered her marriage with the man of her choice. The poor child is to be treated with tenderness, and regarded with pity; and I beseech you both, not only to alter your line of conduct