

aversion, while in Fétis he recognised a still subtler scoundrel. He had heard enough of Mr. Topsparkle's early history to know that he had been notorious for his vices even among the openly vicious, and that such a man should progress from vices to crimes seemed within the limits of probability.

And Judith, the woman Lavendale adored, was in the power of this man, and by her insolent defiance, her attitude of open scorn, might at any hour of her life provoke that evil nature beyond endurance. Hitherto she had made the tyrant her slave; but his jealousy had been aroused, the tiger had shown his claws, and who should say when jealousy might culminate in murder?

“Poor giddy soul, she treats him lightly enough, and has hitherto been mistress of the situation,” thought Lavendale; “but she does not know upon what a precipice she is treading. She does not know the man or his true history. And in that house in Soho, where she queens it so gaily, his victim died. There is the atmosphere of crime in the midst of all that splendour. Would to God I could guard her from harm! I might have saved her—might have