

eye which told that she was bent on some mischief.

"What a pretty muslin this is of yours," she said, as she loitered near Miss Churchill; "I should so like to have a dress for my my doll of it." While speaking, she contrived to fasten the thin muslin to the ension of the chair in which her young friend was sitting.

"Would you, dear? I am glad I can gratify you," replied Mary kindly, "for I have a piece large enough for that purpose which I will send you. But do you not think, Isabella, that you are too old to continue such childish pastimes?"

"Very possibly I may be, but I thank you for your kind offer, and now be sure, you don't disappoint me," and she kissed her hand gracefully as she left the room.

The mother watched her retreating footsteps with a glance of proud fondness, as she said,

"I do not know what is to be done with Isabella; though naturally intelligent, she will not study, and she nurses her doll now with as much care as she did seven years ago." But then she is so kind hearted and affectionate, I cannot be severe with her."

"And so she must be ruined," exclaimed Clarence impatiently; "there is no kindness in that, dear mother!"

Miss Churchill soon rose to depart, but in attempting to move, she found the chair falling on her, and in her confusion turning round hastily, to ascertain the cause, the thin dress tore. Clarence sprang forward to assist the blushing girl, and as he drew forth the pin which had fastened the dress to the chair, he readily divined the author of the mischief; while the face of Isabella that moment appearing at the window, and as quickly withdrawn with a laugh of glee, confirmed his suspicions. The rent was sewed up, Mrs. Aubrey making many apologies for her daughter; and as Miss Churchill was about to depart, Clarence remarked with surprise, that not only her cheek was flushed, but that a tear moistened her eye.

"Can she be such a simpleton," he thought, "as to distress herself thus, merely because her dress is torn?"

He accompanied her to the door saying,

"I hope you will pardon my rude sister, Miss Churchill; she has been sadly spoiled."

She glanced towards him, and with a smile of peculiar sweetness, replied,

"Oh! certainly; Isabella, though wild, is kind-hearted, and would not have injured my dress for worlds, had she known its value to me, as the last gift of my poor dear papa." Her voice was slightly tremulous, as she mentioned the loved name.

This then was the secret of her unwonted emotion, and it made Clarence regard her with increased respect; he entered the dining-room, and finding Isabella there alone, addressed her sternly.

"What mean you, wild one! in thus playing off monkey-tricks, which would be only pardonable in an idiot; I am truly ashamed of you for you are a disgrace to the family. It is well Gerald was not here to see your performance. At any rate, you must write Miss Churchill an apology."

"I shall do no such thing," she replied with flashing eyes, "and I would not care if Mr. Stanmore had been here. I am as clever as you, or he, and had I travelled half as much, could discourse as eloquently of 'Alpine scenery, shattered columns, and ired ruins.'"

Clarence could not repress a smile at the attempted sarcasm, which was intended to be annihilating. Isabella noticed the contemptuousness of the smile, and her proud spirit instantly rose. Without a moment's thought she raised her hand and struck her brother on the mouth with such passionate violence that the blood started from the lip. The sight of this, recalled her senses, and she stood before him, like a convicted culprit, with downcast look. Clarence, however, did not deign a glance towards her, but left the room saying, "Truly you are a fit companion for the savages alone." He locked the door upon her and went in search of his mother, the blood yet on his face.

"Clarence, where have you been," she cried, terrified to see him thus, "how have you hurt yourself?"

"I have only been with my kind-hearted, affectionate sister," he replied in a tone of bitter irony, "I have not escaped her without a gentle token of affection. Truly, my mother! we may well be proud of so lovely a being."

"Isabella!" exclaimed his mother, "it is not possible she would do that."

"She has, nevertheless, given me a blow, the effects of which you see; you will not doubt my word."

"You must have provoked her very much," replied the mother, apologizing; "she has not been used to contradiction, or restraint."

"Then the sooner she is used to them, the better; and I have locked her up to give her a taste of the one."

"Locked her up!" exclaimed the mother in horror; "you surely have not dared to treat her like a brute."

"Why should I not, when she behaves like one? When it becomes unsafe for society to allow an individual to go at large, he is imprisoned; in Isabella's case, such treatment is necessary."