

long straggling line of picturesque white-washed cottages which composed the larger portion of the village, when the figure of a gentleman, pacing slowly to and fro, in the front of a decent looking inn, arrested my attention. There was something in the air and manner of the stranger, that appeared perfectly familiar to me. He raised his head as I approached—the recognition was mutual.

“Geoffrey Moncton !”

“George Harrison !—who should have thought of meeting you in this out of the way place ?”

“There is an old saying, Geoffrey, and a very common one, which says “Talk of the devil and he’s sure to appear.” I was thinking of you at the very moment when I raised my eyes, and saw you before me.”

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than lies in thy philosophy,” returned I, laughing ; “but let us in, and discuss these matters over a good dinner and a glass of wine. I have a thousand things to tell you since we met, which could not be crowded into the small compass of a letter.”

“Hush ! do not speak so loud,” returned he, glancing suspiciously around ; “these walls contain one, whom you would not much care to trust with secrets.”

“How—is he here ?”

“You know whom I mean ?”

“Robert Moncton !—He passed me on the road.”

“Did he not recognize you ?”

“I think not—his eyes were bent upon the ground—he never raised his head. Besides, I am so greatly altered since last we met, I wonder, George, that you knew me so easily again ?”

“Love and hatred are great sharpeners of the sight,” said George. “It is as hard to forget an enemy as a friend. But come this way, I have a private room, where we can chat unperceived by the arch enemy.”

“I should like to know what brings him this road,” said I, flinging my weary length upon a crazy old sofa, which was placed in the room more for ornament than use, and whose gay chintz cover, like charity, hid a multitude of defects ; “no good I fear ?”

“I cannot exactly tell,” replied George ; “there is some new scheme in the wind ! Henry Bell, who fills my old place in this office, informed me that a partial reconciliation had taken place, by letter, between the father and son ; and that the latter had appointed this village as a place of meeting, when they will proceed to Moncton Park together—on what errand, is of course unknown. Their object is, most probably, to discover either the death of Dinah North, or the place of her concealment.”

“They are a pair of precious scoundrels,” said I, “and their confederation portends little good to me.”

“Fear not, Geoffrey, you are beyond the reach of their malice. Moncton is not aware of the return of Walters—this circumstance will be a death blow to all his hopes. But I have not thanked you, my friend,” continued George, rising hastily, and pressing my hand firmly between his own ; “for your noble, disinterested kindness to me. I was on my way to Elm Grove to see you, and one, whom but for your generous sacrifice of self, I could never have hoped to meet in this world again.”

“Say nothing about it, dear George ; perhaps the sacrifice is less than you imagine ; at all events, I no longer regret it, and am too happy in being instrumental to your happiness. But why did you disguise the name of your beloved ? Had you candidly told me all, I need not have wounded, by my indifference, one dear and faithful heart.”

“Your mind was so occupied by the image of Catharine Lee, I dared not.”

“It would have saved me a great deal of misery.”

“It would have destroyed our friendship.”

“You wrong me, George ; honesty would have been the best policy—I could have given up Catharine Lee. Your want of candour and confidence, may have been the means of destroying Margaret Moncton.”

“Do not look so dreadfully severe, Geoffrey—truth is the best guide of all our actions, but it was my love for you, that made me disguise the truth. Indeed, you were too ill at the time to bear it.”

He took my hand, and looked so tenderly and reproachfully in my face, that I could no longer harbour against him an unkind thought. He had suffered so much mental uneasiness on his own, and still greater on my account, that to have been angry with him on so slight a cause, would have rendered me unworthy of his friendship. But I was far from well, low spirited, and out of humour with myself and the whole world. I felt oppressed with the mysterious and unaccountable dejection of mind, which so often precedes some unlooked for calamity. In vain were all my efforts to rouse myself from this morbid lethargy—the dark cloud that weighed down my spirits, would not be dispelled. I strove to be gay, but the laugh died upon my lips, or was choked by involuntary sighs. George, who was anxiously watching my countenance, now joined me at the open window.

“You are not well, Geoffrey ?—your journey has fatigued you—lie down, and rest for a few hours.”

“No, I will resume my journey.”

“What, in the face of the tempest, which is rapidly collecting its terrors ?”

“I am not afraid of the elements.”

“What disturbs you ?”

“My own thoughts—do not laugh at me, dear George. I am oppressed by melancholy anticipations of evil—a painful consciousness of the sorrows of life, and the wickedness of man. Let me have