

seeming somewhat to confide on his honor, at the same time that by her firmness in resisting all improper advances, she should command his respect, she might possibly awake and turn to account, those higher and nobler sentiments which she had already discovered, as forming no inconsiderable part of his varied character. She accepted his proffered arm, and though her heart beat almost audibly against her bosom, she ascended the long flight of steps which led to the parterre with a mien comparatively calm. An elderly female of respectable appearance stood in the outer hall, and to her charge was the lady consigned.

"And, mark me, Mrs. Brown," said her master—"you are to look upon this lady as the absolute mistress of my household—see that you treat her accordingly."

"Your Lordship's commands shall be truly observed!" returned the housewife (for such was the office filled by worthy Mrs. Brown) making at the same time a formal curtsy to the lady.

She then led the way to a richly furnished dressing-room, and throwing open a bed-chamber of corresponding magnificence:

"These, madam, are your apartments," said she, in tones whose icy coldness formed a strange contrast to her open and good humoured countenance. The lady answered not a word, and Mrs. Brown looking at her for the first time, saw that her eyes rested admiringly on a picture which hung above the mantel-piece. It was the full length portrait of a gentleman in the prime of life, and attired in a sort of half-military undress that gave in its extreme plainness and want of ornament, no token of the wearer's rank, yet on the high and noble brow, in the clear and eagle eye, and in the form which seemed to tower aloft in haughty superiority, it was easy to distinguish the proud patrician. Yet it was not the faultless symmetry of the form, nor yet the beauty of the dark handsome features, which had power to arrest the listless gaze of the sorrowing girl,—no it was the eyes—the living, flashing eyes—full of high and generous feeling, which thus riveted her attention, and awoke in her heart a strange and undefined sensation never felt before.

"Madam!" said again the worthy housekeeper, in a voice of increased peevishness—"is it your pleasure that I should assist you off with those things?" giving a contemptuous glance at the masquerade garments of the lady. "Truly," she added in an undertone "you might have waited, my fine lady, to put on some head-gear, great as your hurry was!"

Outwardly, however, she smoothed her face into a look of tolerable respect.

"I thank you, good Mrs. Brown—for so I think your master called you," (the housekeeper curtisied.) "I believe I shall not trouble you—I am accustomed to perform these little offices for myself. I am now so exhausted from want of rest, and still more"—here she suddenly checked herself, and then quickly went on—"I am so overcome with fatigue, that I must beg to be left a few hours to repose."

Thus civilly dismissed, Mrs. Brown withdrew to discuss with her friend the steward the event of the morning. She had scarcely descended the stairs, however, when she was summoned to the presence of her master, and once more received his orders to treat the lady with all possible respect, and further to provide for her with the utmost despatch a fitting wardrobe. He then retired to seek that rest which even he felt so necessary.

When Henrietta (whom we shall henceforth call by her right name) awoke from her dreamless slumber, the sun had already attained his mid-day height, and shone in all the radiance of his summer light. Not a cloud was visible in the blue vault of heaven, and all the beautiful variety of wood and lawn, and hill and dale, which lay spread before the castle, seemed hushed into deepest repose by the burning heat of the atmosphere. Immediately at the foot of the hill on which the castle stood, lay a sheet of water, whose silvery bosom stretched far away to the west, and was crowned on the opposite shore by a richly wooded upland. Henrietta was still gazing with intense delight on the fair scene before her, when Mrs. Brown appeared, and with a respectful obeisance announced that in the adjoining dressing-room she had prepared the *toilette de matin*. Then with a sort of sarcastic deference she went on to say that her lord was most anxious to pay his respects to his fair guest, and begged to be permitted to breakfast with her.

"No, no, Mrs. Brown!" exclaimed Henrietta with sudden earnestness; "say to your lord that I must pray him to hold me excused for this morning—I do not feel equal to the interview—no—no—not to-day!"

Mrs. Brown looked at her with an inquiring eye—for a moment she seemed to regard her more kindly, but doubt and distrust again resumed their place, and she inquired in the same chilling accents whether she would have breakfast served immediately.

"Yes! here, Mrs. Brown! But will you have the goodness to inform me who your master is?"

"Really, madam! it is rather strange that you would seem ignorant of his name and quality,"