

and lived a while in the utmost felicity, although entirely unknown.

"I spent the most part of the day time in hunting, this being almost our sole dependence for subsistence. One night I returned rather later than usual with a nice fat rabbit and a brace of quails, filled with anticipations of the delightful reception my sweet wife would give me in return for my valuable game. I opened the rude door of our lonely habitation as softly as I could, intending to surprise Emily. I walked on tiptoe into the room, in which I had formerly always found her at her needle work, but instead of her beautiful form and smiling countenance, rising as usual to welcome me home, I saw nothing but her empty chair beside her work-stand, and her muslin handkerchief, which she had been working upon, lying on the stand half finished. Every thing else was in its proper place. But, alas! she who gave them their life-touch, she who was my soul! my life! was not to be seen. I stood for a moment lost in wonder, then a thought struck me that she might be in the other room, (for there were only two rooms in our humble dwelling). I rushed into it, but she was not there. I ransacked every hole and corner where it was possible for her to be found, but in vain. I called loudly upon her name, but echo only answered. I then rushed wildly into the street, and after uselessly searching the adjoining woods, and a rivulet which trickled past our door, I hastened to the first neighbour's house, which was not more than a mile and a half, and; out of breath and almost fainting with hunger and fatigue, begged of them to tell me where my wife was. Alarmed at my situation, they inquired into the circumstances, and after hearing all I could inform them, and gathering a party of other neighbours, we all set off to search the woods. But, alas! my Emily was gone beyond our reach! For three successive days and nights did we keep up the search, but no tidings could we hear of her in all our travels.

"Despairing of ever seeing her again, I gathered up what few things I had of any value, and disposing of them for what they would fetch, I went to New York. It was there I became acquainted with Mr. Pestley, to whom I related my sad story, and with whom I lived on the most intimate terms of friendship.

"About nine months ago I received information where my Emily might be found; but I was solicited, in consideration of some particular reasons, not to hasten my determination to molest her, until she had brought her love intrigue with Bantwick to a final consummation. Since then I have had regular information of all that has transpired; and now I come to see what I want of you." Here the stranger looked keenly into Juet's face as if to read his thoughts, and then said: "Can I depend upon your assistance to work a card?"

"If you have an honourable object in view, sir, I'm your man," said Juet, who hardly knew what to make of the man's story.

"Oh, what I want of you is merely to keep dark, and do as I direct you."

"Well."

"I have some papers here," said the stranger, pulling out a sealed packet from his side pocket, "showing that Emily Dartmouth is my lawfully wedded wife, by virtue of which I come to claim her as my own."

Juet for a moment looked perplexed, then incredulously said:

"I never should have suspected this of her, she always appeared so innocent and pretty."

"No one could; but things happen sometimes that we cannot account for. What could have been her motive for leaving me as she did, I never could divine—but let that pass—will you go with me?"

Juet hesitated a moment in deep thought—he endeavoured to examine the case in its various bearings. At length, as if a bright thought had struck him, he answered in the affirmative.

"You will?"

"Honour bright! honour bright!" interrupted Juet, anticipating the stranger's meaning; "and now for the papers."

"It is not necessary that you should read their contents. You see the packet here in my hand—you may rely upon what I tell you as truth. All I want of you, at present, is to go with me tonight and show me Emily's sleeping room. I merely wish to reconnoitre. If she does not choose to go with me peaceably, why—there is more than one way to skin a cat, you know—you understand?"

"Let me alone for that," replied Juet, with a peculiar shake of the head.

"Well then, now let us to the tavern, and here, by the way, is a piece for you—be faithful, and your reward is sure and ample," and the stranger slid a sovereign into Juet's hand, who, after eyeing it a moment as if in doubt whether it was best to accept of it, at length thrust it into his breeches pocket, at the same time muttering something unintelligibly between his teeth, and shaking his head dubiously.

They now returned to the hotel, when a bottle of champagne was ordered, and they made themselves free with its contents. Late in the evening they went together and took their way towards Mr. Bartel's farm-house, where arriving, Juet pointed out the room in which he supposed Emily Dartmouth lodged. It was on the ground floor and next to the outer wall. Mr. Juet halted in the highway a short distance from the house, while the stranger proceeded cautiously along until he arrived under the window which Juet had pointed out to him as belonging to Emily's apartment. Here he halted,