

day when he should be able to take a farm of his own, and Menie would be the mistress of it. But Berwick Fair came—Willie had a cow to sell, and Menie was to accompany him to the fair. Now the cow was sold, and Willie was gallanting Menie and three or four of her companions about the streets: he could not do less than be-tow a fairing upon each, and he led them to a booth, where the usual luxuries of a fair were spread out. At the booth Willie found his master's daughter with some of her own acquaintances. She was dressed more gaily than Menie Morrison and her face was also fair to look upon, but it wanted the soul, the charm that glowed in the countenance of the humble orphan. It had long been whispered about the farmstead, and at the farmsteads around it, that "Miss Jean was fond o' Willie Forbes," and some even said that it was through her partiality he obtained his stewardship. Menie had heard this, and it troubled her; for the breeze that scarce moves the down on the thistle will move the breast of a woman that loves. Miss Jean accosted the young steward for her fairing. "Ye shall ha'e that," said Willie, "but there's naething good enough here for the like o' you; come awa' to ane o' the shops." So saying, he disengaged himself from Menie Morrison's, and without thinking of what he did, offered it to his master's daughter, and left Menie and her friends at the booth. Poor Menie stood motionless, a mist seemed to gather before her eyes, and the crowd passed before her as a dream: "Ye see how it is," observed her companions: *naething here guid enough for her*—if you speak to him again, Menie, ye deserve to beg in the causie!" Her pride was wounded; her heart was touched; a cloud fell upon her affections. Such is human nature that it frequently happens revenge and love are at each other's elbows.

Now Menie was not without other admirers, and it so happened that one of these, who had more pretensions to the world's goods than Willie Forbes, came up at the moment, while her bosom was struggling with bitter feelings. For the first time Menie turned not away at his approach; he was more liberal in his fairings than Willie could have been: as the custom then was, and in some instances still is, they heard the sounds of music and dancing. Willie's rival pressed Menie and her companions to "step up an' hae a reel." They complied, and she accompanied them, scarce knowing what she did.

In a few minutes Willie returned to the booth, but Menie was not there. His eyes wandered among the crowd; he walked up and down the streets, but he found her not. Something told him he had done wrong; he had slighted Menie. At length a "good natured friend" informed him she was dancing with young laird Lister. The intelligent was wormwood to his spirit: he hastened to the dancing room, and there he beheld Menie "the observed of all observers," gliding among her rustic companions lightly as you have seen a butterfly kiss a flower. For a moment and he was proud to look upon her as the queen of the room; but he saw his rival hand her to a seat and his blood boiled: he approached her: she returned his salutation with a cold glance. Another reel had been danced; Willie offered her his hand for her partner in the next.

"I'm engaged," said the hitherto gentle Menie, "but maybe Miss Jean will hae na objections, *if there's onything good enough for her here!*" At that moment Willie's rival put his arm through Menie's; she stood by his side, the music struck up, and away they glided through the winding dance. Willie uttered a short, desperate oath, which we dare not write, and hurried from the room. But scarce had he left till confusion and a sickness of heart come upon Menie. She went wrong in the dance, she stood still, her bosom heaved to bursting, she uttered a cry and fell upon the floor.

She, in her turn, felt that she had done wrong, and on recovering she left her companions, and returned home alone. She doubted not but Willie was there before her. The road seemed longer than it had ever been done before, for her heart was heavy. She reached his mother's cottage. She listened at the door; she heard not Willie's voice, as she trembled she knew not why. She entered. "The old woman rose to meet her.

"Weel, hinny," said she, "hae ye gae back again? what sort o' a fair has there been? where is Willie?"

Menie turned towards the bink, to lay aside her bonnet, and was silent.

"What's the matter wi' ye, bairn?" continued the old woman; "is Willie no wi' ye where is he?"

"He is comin', *Ifancy*," returned Menie and she sobbed as she spoke.

"Bairn! bairn! there's something no right," cried the mother, "between ye. Some foolish quarrel, I warrant. But tell me what