

and terrible penance have I paid for my transgressions. Twelve years' endurance of gnawing remorse is no slight visiting of the youthful error of trusting a deceitful man, without the superadded miseries it has been mine to suffer."

"I am sure," said I, "that you have not deserved the treatment you have experienced."

"You shall hear my story and judge for yourself. Have no concern about the wench, she is deaf and dumb, or she would never have been left with me; and she has given us another bond for her silence—she has fallen asleep, and will not wake till she has been shook and pinched at least five minutes.

"Know then, that I am an Englishwoman, born in the county of Surrey, but educated and residing in England till my eighteenth year. Our family consisted of myself and two brothers; a fourth, the eldest child, died the day I was born. My father died when I was young, leaving us in very embarrassed circumstances, and for many years dependent on the rental of a small estate, possessed by our mother in her maiden right, secured to her in strict settlement, and thus placed beyond the reach of the creditors of my father, who, at his decease, swept away every farthing of his property not so secured. My mother had a brother, who, while yet a boy, left England in the service of the East-India Company. After a long absence, he returned with a high military reputation, and with what, as far as substantial enjoyment—the sirloin-of-beef and bottle-of-claret happiness goes, is a great deal better, a large fortune."

Each succeeding word and sentence of this narrative assisted to fasten on my mind the impression that I had heard the story before.

"I believe, madam," said I, interrupting her, "that no part of the sketch you have given is new to me. Certain I am that I have heard a story which, as far as you have related yours, is so much like it, that the coincidences would form a miracle if the story regarded two families, or distinct sets of persons. And yet I must be mistaken, for the names of those who were concerned in that which I heard were——Danvers."