

still, something like a bitter smile, stole over her face, as she whispered :

"And, why should it not be so? Why should not the form as well as the spirit, change? Is that dim, faded semblance reflected in the mirror, more unlike its youthful type, than my present, hopeless, heavy heart is to the joyful life that once coursed through my veins? Why should I ask or expect that light and happiness should sparkle in the eye and lip, when they have fled forever from the soul within?"

As if wishing to shake off the new and mournful train of ideas into which she had fallen, she raised the taper, and carelessly passed around the apartment, without even glancing at the pictures and statues which had excited so often her girlish admiration. Her rapid survey concluded, she threw herself on a couch at some distance from the portrait. In setting down her taper on the table near her, a porcelain vase in which a few autumn flowers displayed their scentless bloom, attracted her attention. For a moment she looked earnestly at it. Yes, it was the same—the very vase in which the false Rockingham's flowers had been so often preserved, even before she knew aught of the giver. The thought brought no emotion in its train, no blush dyed her marble cheek, and a faint smile, either of wonder or contempt, betokened the feelings with which the woman now regarded this relic of the girl's early fancy.

"My first love!" she murmured. "Oh! how inapplicable, how untrue the name. How could I have ever fancied myself into the belief, that he was dear to me, but he was handsome and fascinating, favored by circumstances, I, young and childishly inexperienced. Why, had I loved him, the very first suspicion of his falsehood would have killed me, but, instead of that, at the very moment it was breathed into my ear, my heart was wasting itself in agonizing regrets for the forfeited favour of another. And that other, oh! how vainly I have striven to banish his image from the heart he won by no effort of his own, how I have striven in the intercourse of strangers, the learned and the gifted, in the bewildering changes of new lands and new scenes, to obliterate from memory the one haunting recollection that has embittered life. Why, why! did I ever meet Edgar Arlingford? Why was he so noble, so faultless, and worse than all, why did he so cruelly reveal to me, the tale of his own dawning preference, at the very moment too, that he was abjuring me for ever! But, for that wild thought I might be more reconciled to, nay, even happy in the new destiny awaiting me, that destiny I

can no longer avert, for I have trifled with *him* too long."

She covered her face with her hands, as she spoke, and a half sigh, half shudder ran through her frame. But what was the destiny Eva so darkly alluded to—who was the mysterious person, of whom she had spoken? Anticipating the voice of public report, which was likely to soon noise it abroad, we will at once inform the reader, both of it, and the purpose which had brought the Huntingdon's back to England. It was to celebrate, with all becoming splendour, at the family mansion, the nuptials of their daughter with her early suitor, Sir George Leland.

To recount to the reader, step by step, the means by which Lady Huntingdon had won her daughter to yield her consent to a union she had once regarded with such shuddering abhorrence, were too wearisome, nor will we attempt, either to describe, with anything like detail, the course of the five long years that the family had passed abroad. Their result was plainly seen in poor Eva's sad, sorrow-worn brow, and wearied, almost broken spirit. The two first had been to her, years of almost unmitigated misery, devoted entirely to nursing her mother through a long and dangerous illness. The office of attendant on Lady Huntingdon, even in the very bloom of her youth and happiness, had been no sinecure, but since her temper had grown doubly harsh and morose from disappointment and sickness, it had become almost insupportable. On Eva, fell the whole weight of the countless faults and imperfections of that undisciplined character. To Eva, Lady Huntingdon looked for attendance, amusement, care, and yet, that heart, so utterly encased in its own intense selfishness, had neither love nor gratitude for the gentle young being, whose bloom and youth were alike withering beneath the Upas-like shadow of her own gloomy egotism. For many weary months the invalid and her daughter sojourned in an isolated, though elegant villa, in the environs of Nice, whilst her husband, wearied, and perhaps, not without reason, of his domestic ties, sought distraction in the gaieties of Paris. A winter passed amidst its amusements, was followed up by way of enlivening contrast, by a summer excursion to Norway, and then Lord Huntingdon joined his family. After a few months spent in penitent goodness at her villa, he prevailed on his wife to accompany him to Rome for the Carnival. As Lady Huntingdon's health was somewhat improved by the pure, balmy breezes of Nice, she consented, and the change was at least, a happy relief to Eva. About a