

"To-morrow, then, sir," she said, "to-morrow be it. I am not accustomed to be thus mastered by my feelings; but a review of those days—the fall from affection and fortune that followed—does, indeed, almost replace their first bitterness."

"My dear lady," I replied, "I can sympathise with you, at least. Possibly I may assist you also in those future plans to which, I doubt not, this confidence has reference. But enough now; to-morrow we will resume."

Having made the necessary arrangements for my visitors very readily, I had ample leisure, and early in the afternoon was once more listening to Mrs. Manners. I must continue the story in her own words:—

"The hour of Mr. Manners' expected return at last arrived. I was anxiously preparing for his coming, listening to the sounds without, commenting mentally on the malevolence of the world, when his servant dashed up the sweep alone. How my heart beat!—he brought a letter. I cannot trust myself to read it, even now; take it, sir," and she handed it to me. I took the letter. Its very look wore tale of grief. How often had it been blotted with tears!—there were some yet warm upon it! It ran:—

"DEAREST, DEAREST JULIA,—Why did you insist upon my going this journey? What has it not cost? I am mad! Do not curse me—forget me—you cannot forgive me. I dare not think! I cannot part with our boy; at least, not now. Some day he shall see you. Farewell!—I must say farewell! No, do not forget me, gentle, confiding, adored women! Bless the baby—kiss him—kiss him a thousand times; but never let him know his father lives! I am miserable—I must forever be so. Farewell!—farewell!

"RICHARD MANNERS."

I returned the letter without a word. With an effort, she continued:—

"I read it to the end, and fainted. Then comes a blank: for weeks I was delirious; but life was spared, and I awoke to all its bitterness. I then learned that Mr. Manners was at Florence, residing with Mrs. Morton. He had not written, although information of my perilous state had been conveyed to him. I was forgotten. He refused, too, to surrender the child. I learned, likewise, he was about taking legal measures to possess himself of my last. I knew not what to do. My friends advised a resort to the law; but to this I would not listen. While hesitating what path to choose, I was waited upon by a middle aged man, who stated himself to be the business clerk of Messrs. ———, agents for Mr. Turnpenny. Having purchased my life interest from Mr. Manners, Mr. T. was desirous of possession. I requested the gentleman to be seated, and immediately despatched a servant to Mr. Steady, who, for many years, had managed the affairs of my father. Fortunately he was at home. He hastened to me; and the papers were put into his hands. I observed, as he read his