

the conversation is suspended,—and the sweet but detested flute sends its soft notes abroad. How he hated the deceiving lips which were thus breathing that melody on the fragrant air,—and how eloquently its sudden notes told the story of the bower : the meeting, the interrupted conversation, the heartless strain which was resorted to as a subterfuge. The domestic lights glittering from the cottage, were seen amid the dark greens, and contrasted picturesquely with the broad pure beam of the lamp of night,—but the little home scene had no longer home attractions for the self-supposed unwelcome visitor. He walked up the path, along the well known serpentine path, with feelings quite rife for an angry encounter. As he reached the garden, and entered it, the flute also ceased,—and the figures in the bower rose from their former sitting attitude. He was not many paces from the spot, when Lorrain—for the darker figure, as was supposed, was his—offered his arm to Jane, and pointed to the path which led to the cottage. This was a crowning to the mortifications of William,—he was, then, to be openly shunned, to be heartlessly insulted, to be deserted, cast off, as unworthy of notice. But Jane paused—the arm was again proffered, and again the path pointed out, and they began to move slowly to the woodbine porch. Silent endurance was now passed, and the tortured man exclaimed in a tone of suppressed passion :

“Miss Seymour, I crave a moment’s conversation.”

Jane paused again, and again gentle force was used to induce her to continue her retreat. But William was now beside her.

“Miss Seymour,” he continued, “I request to be informed whether I am an unwelcome intruder on your evening’s leisure.”

“Mr. Mervin,” ejaculated Jane, “I did not expect this abruptness from you.”

“Has that sop,” continued Mervin, “so supplanted me in your friendly esteem, that my presence must be the signal for your withdrawal,—only say so, and I will never more disturb your bower musings.”

“You are an insolent fellow,” said Lorrain.

“William—William !” exclaimed Jane, as she disengaged her arm from that of her companion, “your words surprise and offend me.”

“Your insolent turbulence shall not go unpunished,” said the excited Lorrain, as with his left hand he grasped his scabbard and brought his sword handle within grasp of his right.

“For mercy’s sake,” shrieked Jane,—“Mr. Lorrain, do not think of drawing your sword.”

“Oh, yes,” said Mervin, in a sarcastic tone, “oh, yes,—let him display his bravery before his mistress,—let him shed my blood, if he can, for daring to intrude on Miss Seymour’s bower. I deserve it, no doubt, and am only surprised at the suddenness of her new perceptions.”

The high words were heard at the cottage, and Mr. and Mrs. Seymour were seen approaching the spot.

“Mr. Mervin,” cried Mrs. Seymour, “is this your respect for our family, occasioning a riotous noise near our dwelling ?”

“Mr. Mervin,” said Seymour, interposing, “I cannot but feel much hurt at what I have overheard; but I cannot also be forgetful of the claims of an old friend; leave us now,—your continuance would be painful to all,—and to morrow afternoon a visit from you will be expected. It will be considered a favor, and an explanation must take place. Mervin bowed assent, and with feelings too strong for immediate utterance, he turned and retraced his steps towards his solitary home.