

nature. She gave the most unreserved confidence to her friend, who pitied, while she slightly condemned, her conduct.

"Mildred," she said, "your mother should not be kept in ignorance of your attachment. It is rash and imprudent. Forgive me, dear Mildred, if I think you act wrong."

"I cannot tell her," said Mildred. "I know that I have been imprudent, but my dear mother cannot keep a secret. She would tell the first gossip who came to the house, the whole story; and my character would suffer in consequence. Leave me to myself, Charlotte. My heart is strong. I shall be able to extricate myself from the chain which is around me; but if others interfere, and attempt to break it by force, they will rivet the links forever, and be the ruin of us both."

"I am not worthy to become your monitor. Mildred—I, who err so deeply myself. But I am sorry that your affections are so misplaced. My Lewis was long an accepted lover: the favoured and beloved of my father. A cruel destiny rends us apart. I am the martyr to an affection first encouraged by my parents, and strengthened by the approval of conscience. I am more to be pitied than blamed for my attachment. It is not my fault that I cannot cease to love."

"Under such circumstances, I should not try," said Mildred, as they turned into a deep heathery lane, which led to the beach. "I consider Mr. Chatworth an injured man; and your duty to your father can scarcely authorize you to treat him with cruelty and injustice."

"Surely such a construction cannot be placed upon my conduct," said Charlotte, sitting down upon the pebbly shelving bank of that desolate looking shore. "No, no, Mildred; it is written there," and she pointed mournfully upwards. "It was all decreed long, long ago."

"Then why should your conduct or your father's conduct grieve you?" said Mildred. "You cannot be responsible for circumstances over which you have no control. To blame me is equally absurd; we are but acting the part assigned to each. In destroying free will, you take away all moral responsibility."

"It is a great mystery, Mildred. You talk unwisely—you know nothing about it."

"My dear Charlotte, if I did not love you I should certainly quarrel with you," said Mildred, kissing her pale, upturned brow. "Sinner as I am, and little as I have hitherto studied these important subjects, I feel that I render more justice to the character of our great Creator than you do. I trust in his mercy; you despair of mercy—but hush. Who is here?"

Both the girls rose, as, riven to the teeth, with

heightened color, firm step, and flashing eye, Josiah Tasker himself stood before them. Bowing deeply to Mildred and slightly to Miss Stanner, he said, "Ladies, the smuggler's craft is bearing down upon us, to land her cargo on this spot. It is possible that she may be prevented. A strife will ensue, and it will be dangerous for you to remain here. I need scarcely suggest the propriety of your instant return."

Mildred looked enquiringly up in his face.

"Not by the path you came, Miss Rosier: it is beset with danger. If successful, our men will carry off the booty that way. Return by Westleton Heath and B—— Hall, and you will be safe."

"Thank you, Captain Tasker," for your courtesy," said Mildred, as she took her friend's arm and walked away. "Now, is he not handsome, Charlotte? A noble creature! How can I help loving him? Oh! how I hope they may succeed!"

"You know not what you wish, Mildred. It is an act of treason to wish success to men engaged in breaking the laws of their country. My dear girl, I tremble for you."

But her words were lost upon Mildred. Her whole soul was intent upon the fate of the smuggler. They had climbed a rugged path which led along the brow of the cliff to Westleton Heath. The narrow beach was hidden from their view by the steep projecting cliffs, but the sea lay sparkling before them; and gallantly did the little cutter spread her white wings to the favoring breeze, and stand in for the shore. "Oh! let us stop here for a few minutes: we are safe from observation," whispered Mildred; "and see her land her cargo. How pretty that little crimson pennon looks, streaming from the mast head, like hope in the gale."

They paused upon the high bluff, their arms entwined around each other. Mildred, all hope and expectation; Charlotte, a pale, beautiful image of despair.

"See, see!" cried Mildred; "they man the boat; her first cargo is safe on shore!" Swiftly and silently did the bold crew ply their oars to and from the vessel. The last cargo was already in the boat under the charge of their daring Captain himself, when a sudden discharge of fire arms was echoed by a shriek from both the terrified girls; and the heavily laden boat, as she touched the beach, was surrounded by Lieutenant Scarlett and his men.

"Scoundrel! Traitor! You are discovered at last!" shouted the Lieutenant, "Down with him boys, and the reward is your own!"

Then came the repeated discharge of fire arms, the shouts and curses of infuriated men. Silence for a moment, and then again a hubbub so wild