

brother! hard and cold as iron!—oh! God!—oh, God! is it thus I look upon that face again—can it be the same that I used to look upon with so fond a pride—can those staring eyes be those that but a few days since looked upon me with ineffable affection?—Oh! death—death! how awful is the change thou workest!—Oh, Arthur! Arthur!—you in whom the love of years was centered—you whose affection consoled me for all of this life's chilling disappointment,—you whose tenderness not even my frequent coldness and even unmerited reproaches had power to change! Are you, indeed, lost to me for ever? And shall I never again hear your voice speak comfort to this sad heart? No—no—no! “she murmured as her head fell hopelessly upon the bed, “he is gone, the brother of my heart—he is dead—and snatched away suddenly and by violence!” This latter thought reminded her that the manner of his death was still a mystery, and starting up at once, she hurried from the room. In the passage she was met by a servant, who informed her that Mr. Morrison wished to know whether he might be permitted to wait upon the ladies.

“Yes, by all means, yes; let him come here!” cried Mary, eagerly catching at the offer; she then entered the room where she had left Eleanor, and found the poor creature sunk in a death-like slumber, the maids having succeeded in getting her to bed. Mary motioned the attendants to withdraw, saying that she herself would watch by Mrs. Newburk. At this moment “mine host” entered the room. He was a man somewhat past the meridian of life, with a quiet unobtrusive demeanor, and to look upon his pale and rather sallow countenance you would never have taken him for “the landlord,” a character with which we are accustomed to associate a goodly rotundity of figure, together with a cheerful and rubicund set of features; not such, however, was Mr. Morrison, who, to say the truth, had much of the air and bearing of a gentleman. With all due deference, yet with the utmost ease of manner, Mr. Morrison addressed the lady:

“May I be permitted, madam, to offer my most sincere condolence for the awful calamity which has fallen upon your family? I do solemnly assure you, Miss Newburk, that I can sympathize with your grief, since it was impossible to know Mr. Arthur Newburk for so many years as I have known him, without being personally interested in his fate! I am furthermore grieved to learn that a second and scarcely less afflicting accident has to-day occurred to you. Let us hope, however, that poor Mrs. Newburk's derangement may prove but temporary!”

“You are very kind, Mr. Morrison, and I feel

grateful for your friendly sympathy; but will you have the goodness to inform me how—how!—.” She faltered, her tongue could not pronounce what she wished to express, but her auditor fully understood her.

“Perhaps it were as well,” he said with a polite bow, “that Miss Newburk should remain ignorant of the facts which led to this fatal event, yet as she requests to be made acquainted with them, I have only to comply, however reluctant I may be!” Mary was silent, but her anxious and eager gaze denoted her impatience, and Mr. Morrison resumed, “Would that I could say that the death of Mr. Newburk was owing to accident, as in that case, though your bereavement would be nothing lessened, yet you would have but fate to blame! But now I much fear that my recital will arouse feelings of a far sterner nature than grief ever gave.”

He paused a moment, as if to summon courage for a strong effort, and then began:

“You are, or have been acquainted, Miss Newburk, with a Mr. Hamilton, whose principal residence is, I believe, Fairfield Castle, in the County of Monaghan?”

A sudden light seemed to break in on Mary's mind—she started from her seat, stood for a moment with clasped hands, while her bosom heaved as though she were gasping for breath, but no word escaped her parched lips, and her eyes too plainly spoke her recognition of the name mentioned. Mr. Morrison noted the effect of his question, and went on:

“Well, madam! Mr. Hamilton called here on last Tuesday, to inquire for Mr. Newburk. The latter not being in the house, Mr. Hamilton left his card, saying that he would do himself the honor of calling at two o'clock in the afternoon. When the message was delivered to your brother, he was observed to change colour, but made no remark. He made it a point, however, to be in at the appointed hour, and when Mr. Hamilton returned, he was ushered into the drawing-room where Mr. Newburk was. I have since learnt, that for some time their conversation was far from being an angry one, but at length your brother was heard to speak in a loud and indignant tone, whereupon Mr. Hamilton took fire, it would appear, and after a violent altercation, that gentleman threw open the door and hurried from the house, his face (as my people assure me,) actually burning with fierce passion. That evening your brother was called upon by a friend of Mr. Hamilton's, with a hostile message from him, and need I say that poor Mr. Newburk was not slow in accepting it. When I learned what was going on, I took the liberty of endeavoring