

know not what you say! You know not what agony your words give me!"

"Do I not?" she said, mournfully; "and yet God knows, I have thought sometimes my brain would turn. But I think not of myself now—give the box to me, Max, I will give them to Mr. Blachford, and he shall promise to give you Helen for your bride."

"If you could act thus ungenerously, Fauna, I could not take advantage of it. Rather let me give these parchments to Mr. Blachford's nephew who is now in the hut."

"Do with them as you please," exclaimed Fauna, "it is written in yonder starry volume that I was born to accomplish your happiness at the expense of my own, and my fate must yet be fulfilled."

She vanished among the thick brushwood which surrounded the tumulus, while scarcely heeding her disappearance Max entered the wigwam. Finding that the frantic grief of Joanna had been succeeded by the stupor of exhaustion, he withdrew Ernest from her side, and gave him the box of papers, informing him how valuable its contents were.

"It is impossible for me to leave this unhappy girl," said Ernest; "I will remain with her while you procure some assistance."

Though very unwilling to leave his friend in so wild a spot, and with such painful companions, Max had no other alternative. The Indian guide had fled from the wigwam on the fall of D'Arcy, and Fauna's return was highly improbable. Hemlock Knoll was much the nearest habitation, but Max was by no means certain of finding his way thither through so intricate a path as that by which Fauna had conducted him, and in the night. It was, however, absolutely necessary to make the attempt, and, giving the pistol and knife which he had received from Fauna to Ernest, clasped his friend's hand once more in his own and departed.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

Oh! she was changed  
As by the sickness of the soul, her mind  
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes  
They had not their own lustre, but the look  
Which is not of the earth.

BYRON'S DREAM.

In the drawing-room at Hemlock Knoll, an interested group was collected round a table where Harald was sketching the capture of a pirate vessel in the Levant, by the *Artemisia*, while Mr. Warrender, who was well acquainted with the locality, and the sea-robbers who infest those nar-

row seas, was pointing out the errors which the young midshipman occasionally made in the situation of the Islands among which the engagement had taken place, but Helen was not among them. She stood at a glass door which opened on the lawn gazing into the clouded night, through which pale stars now and then gleamed, while in a distant bank of clouds, heaped up like some embattled city in the sky, brilliant and fantastic sheets of lightning were flashing. As she gazed, a figure appeared on the lawn and approached the cottage. It was Max, and his name involuntarily escaped from her. At the sound of her voice, Mr. Warrender looked quickly round, and at the same moment the young German entered. A minute sufficed to explain as much of the events of the last hour as Max judged it necessary to relate, the different emotions of wonder, anxiety, and horror, which his recital excited in his hearers may be imagined. Those of Alice though the least visible were not the least powerful.

"Tell Brian and two of the men to meet me at the door," said Mr. Blachford, "I will go myself."

Both Mr. Warrender and Harald rose to follow him, but ere they could reach the door, the sudden and near report of a pistol was heard; but he had stooped for a pencil-case that had fallen from his hand at the instant the shot was fired, and the ball passing over him grazed the forehead of Max, slightly cutting his temple, and lodged in the wall of the chamber. Max sprang towards the open glass door, from whence the shot had proceeded, but he stumbled against a footstool in his haste, and fell on the floor. It was all the work of a moment, and it was scarcely possible to tell for some instants who had suffered or who had escaped. Helen saw Max fall, the blood flowing rapidly down his face, and, believing him to be, perhaps, mortally wounded, all pride, all reserve vanished, and she threw herself on her knees at his side with a wild scream of agony, all the love she had so long struggled to repress, embodied in that cry of despair. The joy which thrilled through the heart of the young painter at this proof of her love sent the warm blood rushing through every vein. Springing to his feet, while the light that flashed in his eyes told her that her secret was revealed, he raised her from the floor.

"I am well, I am unhurt, it was but a scratch," he said.

For a moment she met his beaming glance with an answering look of truthful joy as she saw that he was safe, but the next her woman's nature prevailed, and she shrank away from his detaining