

teel service, and hold up your head with the best of them. I would not stay to be kicked and ordered about by this Mr. Godfrey. What is he? Not a shilling has he to bless himself with—and I am sure he does not care one farthing for you, nor the child."

"Oh! he loves me indeed, indeed he loves me—and the child. Oh, he will grieve for, the child! Mrs. Strawberry, if ever you were a mother yourself, have pity upon me; and shew me the baby!" She caught the woman by the hand, and looked up in her face with such an expression of longing, intense desire, that, harsh as she was, it melted her stony heart, and going to a closet, she returned with the babe in her arms. It was dressed in its little cap and long white night dress—a cold image of purity and perfect peace.

"Oh, mine own—mine own!" wailed the young mother, pressing the cold form convulsively against her bosom, as she rocked to and fro upon the pillow; "my blessed, innocent boy, you have left me for ever, and ever, and ever. My child—my infant love—I have wept for you—prayed for you—unborn, I have blessed you. Your smiles would have healed up the deep wounds of my broken heart. Together, we would have wandered to a distant land, where reproaches, and curses, and blows, would have never found us; and we would have been happy in each others love. Oh! my murdered child—I call upon you—but you cannot hear me! I weep for you—but you are deaf to my misery! Oh, woe is me—what shall I do, a' wanting thee. My heart is empty—the world is empty. Its promises are false—its love is departed—my child is dead, and I am alone—alone—alone."

"Come, give me the babe, Mary; I hear your brother's step upon the stair."

"You shall not have it!" cried the girl, starting up in the bed, her eyes flashing fire. "Your loud voice will waken him. He is mine—God gave him to me; and you shall not tear him from me. No other hand shall feed him, and rock him to sleep, but mine—"

'Lullaby baby—no danger shall come,'

My breast is thy pillow—my heart is thy home—  
That poor heart may break, but it ever shall be,  
True, true, to thy father, my baby, and thee!

'Weep, mother, weep!—thy poor infant is sleeping,  
A sleep, which no storms of the world can awaken,  
Ah, what avails all thy passionate weeping,  
The depths of that love which no sorrow has  
shaken!

'All useless and lost, in my desolate sadness,  
No sunbeam of hope, scatters light thro' the  
gloom;

Instead of the voice of rejoicing and gladness,  
I hear the wind wave the rank grass on the  
tomb."

Partly moaning, and partly singing, the poor creature, exhausted by a night of severe pain, and still greater mental anxiety, fell into a broken slumber, with the dead infant closely pressed to her bosom.

"Well, there they lie together—the dead and the living," said Mrs. Strawberry. "'Tis a piteous sight. I wish they were both bound to one place. We'll have no godd of this love-sick girl; and I have some fears myself of her brutal brother, and the father of the brat. I hear his voice. He's home. Well, they may just step up, and look at their work. If this is not murder, I wonder what is?"

And with a feeling of more humanity than Mrs. Strawberry was ever known to display, she arranged the coarse pillow which supported Mary's head, and, softly closing the door, descended the step ladder into the kitchen. She found Godfrey and Mathews in close conversation—the latter laughing immoderately.

"And he took the bait so easily, never suspected you? Ha! ha! ha!—let me look at the money? I can scarcely believe my own senses—ha! ha! ha!—Why, man, you have found out a more expeditious method of making gold than even your miserly uncle knew."

"Aye, but I have not his method of keeping it," said Godfrey. "But, Mathews, you may well rejoice. This proud boy is in our toils now—I have him as sure as fate. I must say, I felt a slight pang of remorse, when I saw him willing to dare so much for me, and he looked so like my father that I could almost have fancied that the dead looked through his eyes into my soul. Well, well; I have gone too far to recede; what must be, must be. None of us shape our own destinies, or some good angel would have warned Anthony of his danger."

"What the devil has become of Mary?" said Mathews, glancing around. "She and I had some words last night; it was a foolish piece of business, but she provoked me. I found her dressed up very smart, just at night-fall, and about to leave the house. I asked her where she was going so late in the evening; she answered, 'to hear the rangers preach down in the village. That she wanted to know what they had to say to her soul.' So I damned her soul, and bade her go back to her chamber, and not expose her shame to the world—and she grew fierce, and she asked me, tauntingly, who it was that had brought her to shame, and if I were not the greatest sinner of the two? So I struck her, in my anger."

"Struck her!" said Godfrey, starting back; "struck a woman! that woman your sister, and in her helpless situation; you dared not do such a cowardly, unmanly act?"

"I was drunk," said Mathews, gloomily, "and she was so aggravating that I am not so sure that you would have kept your hands off her, yourself."