

"million" as it is now; perhaps more so. It served to fill her head with the most ridiculous notions; and May, her husband, sanctioned them. Mrs. May had resolved that the child, Sophia, should be brought up a "lady; educated, and raised above her spere," as she rather often expressed it. In this resolve she was upheld not only by May but by her own sister, a Miss Foxaby, who was a lady's maid in a very fine family somewhere up West. Sophia had no objection in the world; she was already an incipient coquette, inordinately vain; and quite as much at home in the intricacies of the *Weekly Repository of Romance* as was her mother. Poor child! poor child! its pernicious teachings were growing with her growth, and strengthening with her strength.

Mrs. May was as good as her word. She cleared the square piano; which appeared to be laden with miscellaneous articles of culinary utility, not generally found in association with pianos; opened it, and put one of the wooden chairs before it. Miss Sophia, however, declined to disturb herself.

"What was the good of your father a buying of the hinstument, and what's the good of your having a genus for music, if you don't practise!" demanded Mrs. May. "Come, miss, no shuffling. And you have not looked at your book-lessons yet."

"Ma, how you do bother!"

"Come this minute, I say, or I'll put you to bed; and give them stupid romances to me," added Mrs. May, whisking the leaves out of the child's hand.

"You don't call them stupid when you read them yourself; and *you* don't like to be disturbed at them, though you disturb me," raved the girl, in a voice between screaming and sobbing. "The other night, when father kept asking for his supper, you were in the thick of the 'Blighted Rose,' and you wouldn't stir from it, and he had to get out the bread and cheese himself, and fetch the beer!"

"Never you mind that, miss. You come to the pianer as I bid you. It's not your place to reflect on me."

Sophia, finding resistance useless, flung a few books on the chair to make it higher, and flung herself upon them, dashing into what she called "the scales" and her mother "the jingles." Mrs. May drew a chair before the fire, placed her