

rejecting the offered assistance of the servant, when, having aided Eleanor to alight, she supported her tottering steps through the long hall, and up the wide staircase, into the drawing room, whither they were conducted. The waiter then withdrew, for the ostensible purpose of seeking Mr. Newburk. "Thank heaven! then, he still lives!" exclaimed Eleanor, with grateful fervor. It seemed as though a heavy weight had been suddenly removed from her heart, and she could have wept for very joy. Mary was silent. There was something in the waiter's words and manner that to her calmer mind appeared strange and unusual, so that she was far from participating in Eleanor's satisfaction. A considerable time had elapsed since the servant had left the room, and still no one entered, and Eleanor grew restless and impatient.

"Why, how strange it is, that Arthur delays so long—probably the man has forgotten to announce our arrival."

She then rang the bell, and forthwith a waiter appeared, but not the one they expected to see.

"Have the goodness to show us to Mr. Newburk's room,—we are his wife and sister."

The man, who appeared stupid to the last degree, and fit for anything rather than the office he actually filled, at once complied, and having conducted the two ladies up one flight of stairs, and along a spacious gallery, stopped before a door at the farther end, saying, "This is the room, ladies!" upon which he slowly unlocked the door, for the key had been standing in the lock—as he did so, Mary started back, while Eleanor caught hold of her arm with convulsive energy—"In the name of Heaven, why had you the door locked?—what is the matter?" Before the man could answer this question of Mary's, Eleanor was in the room. The curtains were closely drawn around the bed, and as Arthur was nowhere to be seen, she naturally looked for him there. With one spring she approached, and tearing open the intervening shade, stood for a moment silent, with her hand still outstretched, and her head bent eagerly forward. Another moment, and a wild, unearthly laugh rang through the apartment, and Mary, who just then caught Eleanor in her arms, as she looked upon her flashing eye, and fearfully distorted countenance, saw at once that she clasped a raving maniac—and Mary Newburk, as she made the discovery, could almost have envied her fate!—Oh, God! the horror of that fearful moment! Even her mind, with all its firmness and strength, was almost overpowered by the shock, which had quenched in Eleanor's soul the light of reason. Before her, in the stillness of death, lay that idolized brother,

who had long been the sole object of her affections. He was laid outside the bed-clothes fully dressed; one arm was laid across his chest, while the other lay stretched by his side, so that, judging by his attitude, one might have believed that his parting struggle had been neither protracted nor severe. But alas! the face belied such an assurance, for there, in the staring eyes and distended nostrils, and in the half open mouth, were fearful testimonials that the soul and body had been fiercely and violently rent asunder. Alas! that those features, erst so full of life and gaiety, and so expressive of every kindlier feeling, should have stiffened into rigidity, without one pitying or kindred hand to smooth them for the long sleep of the grave!—Even in that awful emergency Mary Newburk retained her wonted presence of mind, and though her very soul was wrung with fearful anguish, yet did she exclusively devote her attention to the bereaved and stricken creature who writhed and struggled in her close embrace.

"For God's sake, waiter!" she exclaimed, "send hither some women, that I may have this lady conveyed from the room!"

The man instantly withdrew, nowise unwilling to quit such a scene of horror, and in a few minutes two female servants came to Mary's aid. With their assistance she removed Eleanor to another apartment, where, leaving her for a brief space to the care of the attendants, she returned to the scene of death. With slow but firm step she sought the fatal chamber—she had determined, cost what it might, to smother her anguish, lest her strength both of mind and body should give way, and render her unfit for the solemn duties so suddenly devolved upon her. Her demeanor therefore was tolerably calm, as she entered and closed the door after her,—but when she found herself alone for the first time with the dead—when her eye again rested on the altered countenance of him who had been for so many long years her hope and pride, nature at once asserted her supremacy, and the grief of her heart burst forth like a torrent, all the more violent for having been temporarily restrained. With passionate fondness she bent over the body, and imprinted a long, long kiss on the pale, blue lips, and on the colorless cheek. With trembling hand did she smooth the dishevelled hair over the marble brow where the clammy dew of the grave was already settling. The icy touch chilled her very soul, and shrinking back in wild anguish, she sank upon her knees by the bed. Then raising the stiffened hand she pressed it to her lips and to her heart, while her streaming eyes were fixed upon the dead, pale face—"Your hand is cold, cold!—Oh! Arthur; my