

"——If there be a spell to stir the dead
 'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon."

BYRON.

"Die then, he said."

HOMER.

"It was evening when I left the dungeon, and sought the retirement of my quarters; my mind was agitated by a thousand hopes and fears, by a variety of joys and sorrows, I hoped that I had found a son and rejoiced in the hope, yet would a cloud of sorrow spread over the faint gleam of sunshine, which that hope conjured up, and I feared for the result, as I contemplated finding that son in the person of a convicted felon. The idea was revolting. I went to bed, but not to sleep, the thought that in Charles Osborne I beheld my son, still haunted me. Of this I could scarce entertain a doubt, yet having been so cruelly deprived of him for upwards of twenty years, to find him now—and in such a situation, oh! God, the pangs that thought cost me can only be known by one situated as I was at that moment.

"That night I slept not, and I arose on the first faint glimmering of day in the east. My resolution was soon taken, I would question Osborne as to the manner in which the likenesses came into his possession, at the same time I determined not to raise any false hopes in his breast, but ere I led him to believe that I was his father, to have the most convincing proofs, and if such were the case, to leave no efforts untried to effect his liberation. Accordingly, as early as circumstances permitted, I paid another visit to his cell, and having demanded how he had passed the previous night, I produced the miniatures and asked him to inform me how he had become possessed of them?

"'Sir,' he replied, 'I am indeed happy to see that trinket once more, I was fearful that during my fit of yesterday, the richness of it might have attracted the eyes of some of the soldiers, who happened to come in at the time, and that they had perhaps, taken it from me, and the supposition that I had lost it, caused me a greater pang than all the horrors of my situation.'

"'I am extremely sorry to have been the innocent cause of having given you any pain,' I answered, 'but Osborne, I must repeat my question, and in doing so, believe me I am not actuated by idle or impertinent curiosity, I always respected your feelings, never, as you are aware, having attempted to know more of your private affairs than you thought proper to

disclose—answer me then, I conjure you, how came those miniatures into your possession?

"The earnestness of my manner seemed to have made an impression on him as he replied—

"'I can refuse you nothing, sir, particularly as you have ever manifested an interest in me, and I am satisfied that if you had not some weighty reasons, you would not ask the question, yet to give you a just answer, I must relate a brief history of the events of my past life. So saying, he commenced as follows—but as I have been already too prolix with my own affairs, I must endeavour to condense his account of himself, by merely giving it in its abstract.

"'My memory, sir,' said he, 'carries me back to the period when I was about six years old. I well remember a woman, who even to my infant mind seemed a model of beauty. I also recollect an extraordinary looking man, who paid her frequent visits, yet those visits seemed to give her pain instead of pleasure. One day he had been unusually vehement in his desires, and left her in a high state of anger. On his departure she burst into tears, and lifting me on her knee, kissed my lips, as she hung that little trinket about my neck, and said, 'alas! my child, you will soon lose your mother.' I wept, although I could not tell the reason, and when I next saw her she was stretched on a bed, cold and stiff. I tried to kiss her, but they told me she was dead! I saw her no more.

"'The scene was changed, I found myself in a superb mansion, with all the paraphernalia of liveried servants, coaches, &c. I lived in this manner until I had attained the age of fifteen, with the idea that the master of the house was a near relation—accident discovered the contrary in the following manner—

"'A rich merchant who lived in the neighbourhood, had a most beautiful daughter, twenty years my junior, I loved her—passionately loved her, and she returned my love with an ardour equal to my own. I was now within a few months of eighteen. One evening as we were exchanging our mutual vows, we were discovered by her father, who instantly repairing to the Honourable Mr. Daley, (here I started,) acquainted him with what he had seen, and insisted that I should either marry his daughter, or never see her more. To the first of these demands Mr. Daley answered, in my presence, that as I was no relation of his, but merely sent to him by a friend, who paid for my education, &c., he could exercise no control over me. This was enough, the man