

arm tightly. 'speak to me of Julia, speak to me of my wife.' 'Be it so,' he said, 'but quit my coat. When you fled with the abandoned woman you had chosen, we condemned, we deplored, and we sometimes pitied; but when the urgent letters of your friends remained without reply, though they painted the supposed death-bed of your wife—when you rejected all counsel, and, as it was reported, were about to withdraw from the custody of its mother her remaining child, we threw you off, sir. But it was reserved for your crowning act, to raise the finger of every honest man in scorn, when you sold the heritage of your wife, to squander it on your paramour. Did you believe that might be forgotten, nor know what you became? Your wife has fled—I would that I knew where. And now farewell, Mr. Manners. I granted this interview—it must be our last.' He drew towards the door. I had not interrupted him; I was stunned by the extent of his charges, and the calamitous conclusion. His hand was already upon the lock, when I grasped him fiercely: 'Hold, sir!' I exclaimed, 'hold! By all that men deem sacred, by our former friendship, I am at least innocent of this you bring against me. I have sought in vain to open a correspondence with my family—to oppress them, never! There is something in the energy of real passion that compels respect. Creighton returned, and this time he sat down. He entered into those details with which you are already familiar. I solemnly declared my innocence of all imputed to me, beyond the first fatal step. I saw myself entangled in the meshes of some dark intrigue; but determined instantly to return to England, and unravel the whole, which I doubted not to accomplish. My wife and child flying, and from me, was too much. The connection with Mrs. Morton, which had grown up so strangely, continued in so much guilt, and gave birth to so much misery. I was firmly resolved to sunder. Turning to Creighton, I expressed this determination, and requested his assistance. 'Manners,' said he, 'is it possible you do not know this base woman? Unfortunate man, learn, then, for what a wretched being you have exchanged a virtuous wife and happy home. She was the mistress of an officer in the service, and discarded by him for—' 'Come, Creighton,' I interrupted him, 'come with me now, and bear witness to my steadiness of purpose.' 'Now?' 'Yes, now. This very night I must return. I will be on the road by day-dawn.' Creighton agreed to my request, and we hastened to the house I occupied. There, on our arrival, I found all consternation. Mrs. Morton had left for Pisa, in a travelling carriage, not an hour before, with a Courier who had entered my service at Paris. Creighton was thunderstruck. I hastened to my desk—it was open—its contents had been secured. For the moment I was penniless. To-morrow it would be easy enough to obtain friends; but