

and admiration, raised his bright, intelligent eyes to the latter's face, exclaiming:

"But, grand-papa has not seen Edgar's own mamma yet."

"Well said, my little hero," replied his father, "Carry, dear, where are you? Here, your Lordship," and he gently drew forward his shrinking, agitated wife, "Here is Mrs. Huntingdon, your very obedient and affectionate daughter-in-law."

Lord Huntingdon's glance rested a second, earnestly, kindly, upon her, and then warmly pressing her hand, he made way for her on the couch beside him, entering immediately into friendly conversation, and evidently as much pleased with her as with his beautiful grand-children.

"Ah! Eva," murmured young Huntingdon, who, leaning on his sister's chair, watched the scene with softened eyes. "It wants but *one* to make our happiness complete."

She pressed his hand silently in reply, but spoke not, for alas! she knew how averse was that one to forgiveness or reconciliation—how she had spurned her own tearful entreaties, and haughtily silenced those of the favored Arlingford. In a low though rapid tone the young man continued:

"To you alone, my gentle sister, dare I confide the restless hopes, the bitter regrets, that delicacy enjoins me to keep secret from poor Carry, and pride forbids me revealing to the rest of the world. To you, alone, will I whisper, that in the darkness of night, the glare of day, the thoughts of that mother I so ungratefully outraged—that mother who loved me so wildly and passionately, follows me, saddening my spirits, and clouding them even whilst surrounded by the caresses of my wife and children. Eva, she was heartless towards my father, unjust, cruelly unjust to yourself, but to me she was all, everything. 'Tis only of late years this reproachful consciousness, this species of remorse, has come over me. Long after my marriage my heart was cold and ungrateful to her as before, as indifferent to a reconciliation as her own; but since I have become a parent myself—since children have filled our hearth and home with sunshine, I have learned to understand the extent of my ingratitude towards her. When I sometimes look at Carry caressing our little Edgar, as if every hope of her soul were centered in him, trembling if his rosy cheek is a shade paler, watching beside his couch through the long night, if but a childish ache disturbed his repose, I think to myself what an accursed wretch would that boy be, if, when arrived to manhood, instead of repaying her cares a thousand fold, he should turn that love as a deadly curse

against the devoted heart that gave it. And yet, Eva, I, I, have done all this, ingrate that I have been! Did not my mother love me as well as Carry loves her son? Aye! more, Eva, for no husband or second child shared her deep, concentrated love, and yet I insulted, trampled on it, and broke, yes, Eva, broke her heart."

He paused, his cheek pale as marble, his lips quivering with agitation, and Eva herself deeply touched, endeavoured to soothe and encourage him.

"Yes, sister," he hurriedly resumed; "has she ever been the same since the hour of my marriage, not that I would revoke *that* even for her, for my gentle wife is *too* infinitely dear to me now; but it was *wrong* and cruel not to have prepared her in some degree for the change, not to have softened the stroke to her if possible. Eva, I have looked on the wreck I have made, I have seen the hopeless, deathlike brow, the bowed, emaciated figure of her, who six short years ago was a woman in the pride, the bloom of life, and as I silently gazed upon her, horror-struck, agonized, a secret voice whispered, 'Her son, her only son, has done all this.' Eva! Eva! reconcile me with my mother, or an eternal shadow will brood over my heart and home."

Ere his sister could reply to that trembling, impassioned adjuration, he had hurriedly left the room. The saddening effect of his mournful revelations, his hopeless appeal lingered long after round Eva's spirits, and when she and her lover turned at length their homeward steps to the Hall the latter wondered much at the shade that rested in her soft eyes, and the melancholy intonations that, unknown to herself, lingered in her subdued voice. Still, her sorrow, whatever it might have been, was a thing sacred in his eyes, and as she granted him not freely her confidence, he was determined not to force it. On their arrival at the Hall, it was a relief to both, to learn that Lady Huntingdon was confined for the evening, to her room, by a slight head-ache, whilst Lord Huntingdon, they knew, had ridden over from Elmswater, to the estate of a neighboring nobleman, and would not be home till late.

"We will have to depend on our own resources for amusement this evening, Eva," Arlingford cheerfully exclaimed; "It will give us a foreshadowing, an idea of the future, we are so soon to enter upon."

Eva replied only by one of her bright blushing smiles, but the latter was soon again succeeded by the sadness which had at first filled her betrothed with regret, and now commenced to inspire him with a vague feeling of anxiety and