

She, good soul, when the first surprise was over, said "she hardly kenned her bairn in sic a fine gentleman." He proceeded to the manse, and Mary marvelled at the change in his appearance and manner; yet she loved him not the less; but her father beheld the affectation and levity of his young friend, and grieved over them.

He had not been a month in the village when Mary gave him her hand, and they set out for London together. For a few weeks after their arrival, he spent his evenings at their own fireside, and they were blest in the society of each other. But it was not long until company again spread its seductive snares around him. Again he listened to the words—"We'll have another"—again he yielded to their temptation, and again the force of habit made him its slave. Night followed night, and he was irritable and unhappy, unless in the midst of his boon companions. Poor Mary felt the bitterness and anguish of a deserted wife; but she upbraided him not—she spoke not of her sorrows: health forsook her cheeks, and gladness had fled from her spirit; yet as she nightly sat hour after hour waiting his return, as he entered, she welcomed him with a smile, which not unfrequently was met with an imprecation or a frown. They had been married about two years. Mary was a mother, and oft at midnight she would sit weeping over the cradle of her child, mourning in secret for its thoughtless father.

It was her birth-day, her father had come to London to visit them; she had not told him of her sorrows, and she had invited a few friends to dine with them. They had assembled; but Adam was still absent. He had been unkind to her; this was an unkindness she did not expect from him. They were yet waiting, when a police-officer entered. His errand was soon told. Adam Brown had become a gambler, as well as a drunkard; he had been guilty of fraud and embezzlement; his guilt had been discovered, and the police were in quest of him. Mr. Douglas wrung his hands and groaned. Mary bore the dreadful blow with more than human fortitude. She uttered no scream: she shed no tears; for a moment she sat motionless—speechless. It was the dumbness of agony: with her child at her breast, and in the midst of her guests, she flung herself at her father's feet. "Father!" she exclaimed, "for my sake!—for my helpless child's sake—save! oh, save my poor husband!"

"For your sake, what I can do, I will do, dearest," groaned the old man.

A coach was ordered to the door, and the miserable wife and her father hastened to the office of her husband's employer.

When Adam Brown received intelligence that his guilt was discovered from a companion, he was carousing with others in a low gambling-house. Horror seized him, and he hurried from the room; but he returned in a few minutes. "We'll have another!" he exclaimed, in a tone of frenzy; and another was brought. He half filled a glass: he raised it to his lips; he dashed into it a deadly poison, and ere they could stay his hand, the fatal draught was swallowed. He had purchased a quantity of arsenic when he rushed from the house.

His fellow-gamblers were thronging around him, when his injured wife and her grief-stricken father entered the room. "Away tormenters!" he exclaimed, as his glazing eyes fell upon them, and he dashed his hands before his face.

"My husband! my dear husband!" cried Mary, flinging her arms around his neck. "Look on me; speak to me! All is well!"

He gazed on her face; he grasped her hand. "Mary, my injured Mary!" he exclaimed convulsively, "can you forgive me, you, you O God! I was once innocent! Forgive me, dearest? for our child's sake, curse not its guilty father!"

"Husband! Adam!" she cried, wringing his hand; "come with me, love, come! leave this horrid place: you have nothing to fear: your debt is paid."

"Paid!" he exclaimed, wildly: "Ha! ha! Paid!" They were his last words—convulsions came upon him: the film of death passed over his eyes, and his troubled spirit fled.

She clung round his neck; she yet cried "Speak to me!" She refused to believe that he was dead, and her reason seemed to have fled with his spirit.

She was taken from his body and conveyed home. The agony of grief subsided into stupor approaching imbecility. She was unconscious of all around: and within three weeks from the death of her husband, the broken spirit of Mary Douglas found rest, and her father returned in sorrow with his helpless orphan to Teviotdale.