

Yet I arose again and looked out at the door ; but the night was still dark and windy, and the rain did not cease to fall. I came back again, and, this time walking up behind her, where she sat before the fire, I leaned upon her chair, and looked over her shoulder and said, " I have many things to say to you, Alice, to-night, before I go."

" Hush !" she said, lifting her finger, and mocking my tone, " something very serious ?"

Even then, before I knew what she would say, I felt angry with her. The blood rushed to my face, and I spoke with a thick and hurried voice. I was prepared for her refusal. I pictured in that moment to myself the ridicule with which she would meet my words ; but I was resolved to know the worst that night, and I had settled in my mind the course that I would take. I told her briefly that I loved her, and asked her, almost abruptly, whether she would see me any more. She answered me, as I knew she would, with laughter—said she was disappointed in me—thought she had found a man more rational than his fellows, and finally told me not to see her any more till I repented of my folly. I waited for some little time till she had done, with my eye fixed steadfastly upon her. I would not trust myself to speak, lest I should raise my voice and be overheard ; but I felt how the love that I had borne her turned to hatred in that moment. All the history of our acquaintance ran through my mind in an instant. I saw plainly now, I thought, how light and vain she was ; how she abused the gifts of intellect and beauty, to mock and trifle with a deeper and more earnest nature. I held my hand out once, and said, " farewell," and, turning, left her abruptly.

I passed through the gate in the darkness, in the wind and rain, unmindful of every thing but my anger. Yet once, before I had gone many steps, I thought I heard a voice of some one calling. Could it be Alice ? I felt even tempted to return and see ; but I thought I might be mistaken, and my pride withheld me. I listened, and, not hearing it any more, I hurried on, thinking I had coined a fancy from a secret wish, and blamed myself for wavering in my purpose. I repeated her words to myself as I went, that my indignation might not lessen. I was filled with self-contempt for the weakness I had shown. I remembered how my whole

nature seemed to have changed for a while under the influence of my passion ; how I had vainly glorified myself for the effeminacy into which I had fallen, while thinking I had become a better man. Now, I felt ashamed of all these things, and would fain have forgotten them, and become again the selfish being that I was.

My aunt opened the door to me. She held a lamp in her hands, and saw me looking wild, and my clothes saturated with the rain. She asked me where I had been, but I answered her sharply, and went up into the workshop. I found my great hammer, and went down the stairs again, and out into the street. The cathedral yard was silent. I passed under the trees, and looked into the window where my statue stood, and saw it there. My intention was to get inside, but how I knew not, unless I could find my entrance by the scaffolding. I climbed up, and found that the masons had removed the window altogether and boarded up the place. I tried the boards, and found one looser than the rest. I pushed it, and it gave way, and fell back with a noise on the platform inside. I was afraid that it was heard, and drew back awhile, but the only house near was the verger's, at some distance across the yard, and I saw no lights there at any of the windows. After that I got through and replaced the board behind me.

I know not how the thought arose to destroy my statue, except that I was driven wild with passion, and scarcely knew what I was doing. I did not wait a moment to look at the work which had so rejoiced me in the carving—that had filled me full of hope when I saw it finished—the first token I had won of future honour in the art that I had chosen—but grasped my hand, and with blind fury struck it, unmindful of the noise I made, though every blow rang twice upon the roof. I shattered first the wings, and after a while, the whole figure fell beneath my blows upon the pavement. I cast my hammer down and climbed the platform again. The perspiration trickled down my face from the exertion ; but I had no fear ; I did not even reflect whether my noise had been heard ; but as I issued by the window, and the moon was darkened, some large bird that I had startled struck me in the face and made me start. I replaced the board again, and glided down the scaffolding. The yard