

will interfere with the performance of my promise; no wife or friend will ever share the love and devotion I now vow to her alone."

"Thank you, my beloved Edgar, for that promise. It has removed the last earthly doubt that weighed upon my heart, and now I can welcome that death we should both bless, for it has made us to each other all that we once were. Yes, I am dying! Edgar, my friend, my brother, farewell!"

"I clasped him passionately to my heart, and even struggling as he was in the last mortal pang, he feebly returned my embrace. Of the events that succeeded that terrible moment, his funeral, his interment, I remember nothing, for a delirious fever prostrated me on a sick couch, and for many weeks my poor mother feared that she would have two sons to mourn for instead of one. Thanks to the vigour and soundness of my constitution, I recovered, though so changed in appearance by my illness, that some of my friends could scarcely recognize me. The outward change, however, was not more wonderful than that wrought in the heart, which the mercy of Heaven had rendered as humble and forgiving, as it had once been haughty and revengeful. Faithful to the sacred promise I had made my dying brother, I never left my mother, sacrificing to her my restless longing to dispel, in change of scene, the utter weariness of life, the dreary void Florestan's death had left behind. Notwithstanding the extreme delicacy of my mother's constitution, and the shock it had received in the death of her other son, she was spared to me during the stormy period of youth, even after the dawning of manhood, and then, blessing me, praying Heaven to reward me here and hereafter for all the happiness with which I had surrounded her declining days, she passed from earth, to rejoin her other child. The void left in this aching heart by her loss, and that of my brother, has never yet been filled. Seventeen years have elapsed since Florestan's death, for he left this world, Eva, a year before you entered on it, and yet every word, every act of our past career, is as vividly impressed on memory as the events of yesterday. Time has softened my sorrow, my remorse, yet still in the hurry of the day, the silence of the night, do the prophetic denunciations he uttered, ere, stung to madness by my bitter and revengeful cruelty, he rushed from my presence, ring in my ears. They have ever haunted, and will haunt me to my dying day. Eva, my gentle, loving child, will you learn from my sad experience, or will you still remain implacable, still cherish feelings of enmity, of unkindness?"

"Ah, no!" was the sobbing reply. "I will do all that you wish, my friend, my more than father. Teach me only to live as you have lived, that I may die as poor Florestan died."

Large tears glittered in the eyes of her companion, and he inwardly vowed to be indeed a father for the future to that young and guileless child, to supply to her, who was perhaps more neglected than the poorest orphan, the place of parents, brother and friend. Kindly smoothing back the curls from her face, he murmured:

"Thanks, Eva! To direct you is a sweet, a grateful task. Amply, nobly, have I been repaid for the effort it has cost me to go back on the errors and follies of my early youth. But weep no more, dear Eva! Meet your trials, whatever they may be, with noble courage, not with tears."

"Ah! 'tis not for my sorrows, but for my errors, I am weeping now. Will you ever forget, Mr. Arlingford, the terrible words I uttered when under the influence of my blind passion? I fear you never, never, can."

"Eva!" was the gentle, though grave reply, "do you forget that you are talking to one who pointed once a murderous weapon against a brother's heart, who trampled on his profound affection, his entreaties for forgiveness, consenting only to a reconciliation when he lay on his death-bed? Ah! my child! I have erred too deeply myself to stand forth as a stern judge of the errors of others. But, let us leave this painful topic, and tell me, calmly, patiently, the substance of the conversation to which you have alluded. It regarded your accompanying your parents to town, did it not? Believe me, 'tis not from idle curiosity I inflict on you the pain of a reply; but I would fain be able to advise, to counsel you."

With a calmness, an impartiality that astonished herself, Eva related the dialogue we have already narrated to the reader, and then, without a single comment, awaited her companion's reply. The latter, who had with difficulty repressed the deep indignation it excited, replied:

"Well, Eva, we must not be too hasty in our decisions: but since your parents seem to think your presence would prove so great a burden to them in London, you had better not go. Here, with your studies, your books, you can be happy enough, even though your solitude will be uncheered by a mother's cares and caresses." A disdainful smile, despite his efforts, wreathed his lips as he spoke.

"But if mamma, from some particular motive, should insist on my accompanying her!" asked Eva.

"She will scarcely do that; but in any case I