

A plate of ice, and several basins containing blood, were lying on a table near the window, while numerous *serviettes*, saturated with the same fluid, were strewed confusedly about the floor. In a *fauteuil*, on the opposite side, lay the well-remembered hat and cloak, and at the further extremity of the chamber, within an alcove, stood a bed, the curtains of which were partially unclosed, disclosing the countenance of one on whose lips and face traces of blood were still discernible. At the foot of the bed, a female, whom Dormer instantly recognised as the servant by whom he had been admitted, knelt, with her face buried in her hands, and sobbing violently. That the unhappy Adeline had ruptured a blood-vessel, and was considered to be in a dying state, these alarming indications sufficiently testified, and Dormer gazed on her pale cheek, until his own blood chilled and crept within his veins. While he yet hesitated, uncertain how to act, the sufferer raised herself slowly on her pillow, and beckoned to him to approach. He did so; she extended her hand to him—it was cold as marble, and her glazed and fixed eye was turned on his, almost without power of expression, as she slowly murmured through her half-closed lips:—

“You are the friend of Clifford, I know, and you have been sent here by him, Oh, tell me, does he still hate me?”

Mistaking the hesitation produced on Dormer by his deep emotion for an unwillingness to communicate something unpleasant, she now became more anxious. Her eyes emitted a momentary lustre, and, with a wild and unnatural energy, that startled and drew the kneeling servant to her feet, she again demanded,—

“Oh, tell me, if you have pity, does he still hate me? But no, no, he cannot—I have never injured him.”

“So far from hating you,” rejoined Dormer, eagerly, “he has sent me to make his peace with you. Nay,” he pursued, perceiving the sudden effect produced by this assurance, and desirous of affording her even further consolation, “Delmaine still loves you as much as ever.”