

even his disappointed malevolence could have desired. With every vestige of colour banished from her pale cheek, Kate sank back upon her chair, and drawing her breath with difficulty, placed her hand upon her side, as if in pain. Heedless of her suffering—nay, rather rejoicing in it—the evil expression came across D'Almayne's face as, in a tone of sarcastic triumph, he exclaimed,—

"You love him! I was certain of it, and am fully avenged. Chained by your marriage vow to a decrepid imbecile, while you love another with all the depth and fire of your passionate nature, you will experience the torments of the damned. To the remorse and despair these reflections will engender,—a despair so desolating that you will live to regret even your decision of this morning,—I leave you. When your husband returns to-night, a ruined man, remember my words—the curse that you have brought upon yourself will have begun to work!"

Unable to reply, Kate remained leaning back, her eyes fixed upon him with a kind of horrible fascination. Leisurely drawing on his gloves, he appeared to be feasting his gaze with the misery he had created; then, casting on her a look of sardonic malevolence that a fiend might have emulated, but could scarcely have surpassed, he turned and quitted the apartment, and immediately afterwards the house.

Kate's reflections after D'Almayne had left her may easily be imagined; all feelings of resentment against the man who had insulted her were merged in the one thought that her cousin, Arthur Hazlehurst, had been her brother's unknown benefactor. When she had imagined him implacably offended at the unjustifiable manner in which, during their last interview, she had treated him, he was still watching over her interests, and with a chivalrous devotion to the remembrance of their former attachment (for such could be the only kindly sentiment he could now cherish towards her), he had come forward and saved her brother from the ruin which had appeared inevitable. She had received a note that morning from Frederick, informing her of his return from the Continent, and stating his intention of paying her a visit immediately, adding that he had obtained his benefactor's sanction to tell her to whom he was indebted for his present good fortune, and all other particulars she might wish to learn. While thus engaged, a knock at the door announced a visitor, and in another moment her brother's arms were thrown around her. Six months' foreign travel, and daily association with persons mixing in 'good society, had produced a great change in Fred Marsden's appearance: the handsome boy had become a fine manly young fellow, whose frank address and courteous manners were certain to ensure him a kindly welcome and greatly increase his chances of success in life. Fred had much to tell, and found an eager listener in Kate. Arthur was the best, kindest, wisest, most generous of men; Arthur had sent him abroad more to finish his education than for any use he could be of in a business point of view;