

Tick-tack! tick-tack! the slowly beating off seconds measured by a tall, old-fashioned clock. Not another sound; and Saul Harrington drew back into the room and closed the door.

"She'll come down again," he muttered, with the same, unpleasant laugh. "Trust her woman's nature. All latent yet, but it's there, and opportunity will bring it out. All her pretence. She knows that she will be my wife and girls like a little rough courting, or I'm no judge."

An hour, that seemed like two, passed slowly away, and then Saul Harrington rang the bell.

At the end of a minute a quiet, very old-looking woman in black, with white cap and old-fashioned muslin cross-over, came to the door.

"Go and tell Miss Gertrude I am waiting to see her again."

"She is with master, sir."

"Well, go and tell her, Mrs. Denton."

The woman shook her head.

"I dare not, sir. It would send master into a fit of fury."

"Pish! Never mind; I'll wait. How is he?"

The woman shook her head, lifted her white apron, and applied a corner to her eyes.

"None of that, Mrs. Denton," said Saul Harrington, with a sneering laugh. "So fond of him, eh?"

"Yes, sir. Dear old master."

"Ha, ha! Dear old master! Won't do, Denton, I'm too old. Don't wait."

"If it would please God to spare him for a score of years," said the old servant piously, as she left the room. "A bit harsh and a bit of a temper; but I know—I know."

"I'll wait and see her again, if I have to wait all night," said Saul Harrington to himself. "Hang this grim old house! It's almost as gloomy as a tomb."