

Night and Morning.

Book 1.
[Price 1.]

Three hours around his neck, and kissed him soothingly. He left his burning temples on her bosom, and nestled himself to her, as he had been wont to do, after some respite from the sum of his passion—his wayward instance. So they remained—their lips joined, their hearts clinging to each other—each from each being strong, save on holy sweet—said Philip, “I’m calm, and with a quiet smile,—soothed by mother; I will go at once to Mr. Plaskwith.”

“But you have no time for the couch now, Philip, and she has no time now in her hands, but what is her instantly selected a few shillings. “And if, if the man is rude, and you drive him—again, you must not subject yourself to insolence and mortification.”

“All will go well, don’t fear,” said Philip, cheerfully, and he left the room, and went to his destination.

The shop was of costly exterior, with a private entrance; over the shop was written: “Christopher Plask with Bookseller and Stationer”; on the private door, a brass plate, inscribed with “Plaskwith & Co.” Christopher Plask with Bookseller, and Stationer, and was shown by a small office number a few minutes the door opened, and the bookseller entered.

Mr. Christopher Plask with was a short, stout man, in trade-bordered breeches, and garters to match; a black coat, and waistcoat; he wore a large watch chain, with a prolonged bunch of seals, alternated by small keys and old-fashioned mourning rings. His complexion was pale and soiled, and his hair, dark and sleek. The bookseller valued him, himself, on a honest to goodness, and a very plain, simple, unostentatious manner, which he meant to be the indication of the vigorous and decisive character of his prototype.

“So you are the young gentleman, Mr. Roger Morton? You’re known?” Here Mr. Plask with took out his large pocket book, showed him the card, stating his name at the bottom, with what he designed for a piercings on a penetrative sheet.

“This is the letter—no! this is Sir Thomas Ch. impenetrable’s order for fifty copies of the last *Mercury*, containing his speech at the county meeting. Your age, young man?—and this time it is—lower? Yes, Mr. Roger Morton recommends you—a relation—unfortunate circumstances—well-educated—him! Well, young man, what have you to say for yourself?”

“Sir!”

“Can you cast accounts?—know book-keeping?—you know something of algebra, sir.”

“Algebra—I, oh, what else?”

“French and Latin?”

“Hum!—may be useful. Why do you wear your hair so long? look at mine. What’s your name?”

“Philip Morton.”

“Mr. Philip Morton, you have an intelligent countenance—I go a great deal by countenances. You know the terms?—most favorable to you. No premium!—settled with Roger. I give board and bed—and your own washing. Half regular apprenticeship only five p.m., when you will not set up in the same town. I will see to the indentures. When you can come?”

“When you please, sir.”

“A day after tomorrow, by six o’clock coach.”

“But, sir,” said Philip, “will there be no salary?—not even so small, that I could send to my mother?”

“Salary, at sixteen?—board and bedding premium! Salary, what for? Premiums have no salary—you will have every comfort.”

“Give me less comfort, that I may give my mother a little money, ever so little, and take out of my board. I do so with one meal a day.”

The bookseller was moved; he took a huge pinful of snuff out of his waist-coat pocket, and mused a moment. He then said to the re-examined Philip:

“Well, young man, I’ll tell you what we will do. You will be examined upon trial?—see if we like each other before we sign the indentures?—allow you, meanwhile, five shillings a week. If you show talent, will see if I and Roger can settle about some little allowance. Last, do eh?”

“Thank you, sir, yes,” said Philip, gratefully.

“Agreed, then. Follow me—present you to Mrs. P.”

Thus saying, Mr. Plask with returned the letter to the pocket-book, and the pocket-book to the pocket; and, putting his arms behind his head, he threw up his shirt and vest through the doorway into a small parlour, that looked upon a small garden. Here, seated round the table, were a thin lady, with a squat (Mrs. Plask with), two little girls (the Misses Plask with), also with squat—pinched faces, a yellowish tint of freckles and twigs, and a meanish trown—until the worse of washing, and a black velvet jacket and waistcoat. This young gentleman was very much freckled; wore his hair, which was dark and wiry, up at one side, down at the other; had a short, flat nose, and a thin mouth, when close to the snuff of cigar. Such was Mr. Plask with, Mr. Plask with’s factotum, formal in the shop, assistant editor of the *Mercury*. Mr. Plask with formally went the round of the introduction; Mrs. P. nodded each other, and grinned; Mr. Plimmins passed his hand over the glass, and glanced at the glass and his very polished hands.

“Now, Mrs. P., my second cup, and give Mr. Morton his dish of tea. Must be tried, air—not day. Jimina, ring—not, go to the stairs and call out, ‘More buttered toast?’ That’s the shortest way—promise to call again in time, Mr. Morton. Pray—hum, hum!—have you ever, by chance, studied the biography of the great Napoleon Bonaparte?”

Mr. Plimmins gulped down his tea, and kicked Philip under the table. Philip looked fiercely at the foreman, and replied sullenly, “No, sir.”

This reply was a very great man,—there is, on the dumb waiter! Look at it! see a likeness, eh?”

“Likeness, sir? I never saw Napoleon Bonaparte, ‘ar.”

“Never,” said him! Not just look round that room. Who does that bust put you in mind of?—who does it not? And when you have known me longer, ‘t will find a moral similitude—a moral, sir! Straightforward—short to the point—bold—determined!”

“Bless me, Mr. P.!” said Mrs. Plask with very querulously, “do make haste with your tea; the young gentleman, I suppose, wants to go home, and the coach passes in a quarter of an hour.”

“Have you seen Keen in Richard the Third,” Mr. Morton said. “Mr. Plimmins, ‘t have never seen a play.”

“Never seen a play! How very odd!”

“Not all, odd, Mr. Plimmins,” said the stationer. Mr. Morton has known troubles—so hand him the hot toast!”

To be continued.

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