

to Earnest and his father. They pledged him, when, as if seized by a sudden frenzy, he filled his measure thrice in hasty succession, draining it each time to the bottom, and then flung it down with a short, hoarse laugh. His sons, who would fain have joined with him, he repulsed with a firmness of manner which he had not before exhibited. "No, whelps," he said; "get sober as fast as ye can."

"We had better," whispered Earnest to his father, "not sleep in the cave to-night."

"Let me hear now o' your quarrel, Earnest," said Eathan; "your father was a more prudent man than you; and, however much he wronged me, did it without quarrelling."

"The quarrel was none of my seeking," replied Earnest. "I was insulted by your sons, and would have borne it for the sake of what they seemed to forget; but there was another whom they also insulted, and that I could not bear."

"The girl Henry. And what then?"

"Why, my cousins may tell the rest. They were mean enough to take odds against me, and I just beat the two spiritless fellows that did so."

But why record the quarrels of this unfortunate evening? An hour or two passed away in disagreeable bickerings, during which the patience of even the old fisherman was worn out, and that of Earnest had failed him altogether. They both quitted the cave, boisterous as the night was, — and it was now stormier than ever, — and, heaving off their boat till she rode at the full length of her swing from the shore, sheltered themselves under the sail. The Macinlas returned next evening to Tarbet; but, though the wind moderated during the day, the yawl of William Beth did not enter the Bay of Cromarty. Weeks passed away,