

252 ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM.

And form such sounds? If these heart-racking thoughts
 Precede the horrid act, what must ensue?
 Worse plague I cannot fear from Arden's death,
 But from his life—the death of him I love.
 Perish the hated husband.—Wherefore hated!
 Is he not all that my vain sex cou'd wish?
 My eyes, while they survey his graceful form,
 Condemn my heart, and wonder how it stray'd.
 He sighs—he starts—he groans. His body sleeps,
 But restless grief denies his mind repose.
 Perhaps he dreams of me; perhaps he sees me.
 Thus like a fury, broke from deepest hell,
 Lust in my heart, and murder in my hand——

[ALICIA drops the dagger. ARDEN starts up.]

ARDEN.

Her dagger, Michael——seize it, and I'm safe.
 How strong she is!—Oh! what a fearful dream!
 Before me still! speak, vision—art thou Alicia,
 Or but the coinage of my troubled brain?

ALICIA.

O Arden—husband—lord——

ARDEN.

Art thou my wife?
 Thou'rt substance—I am wrap'd in wonder—hence
 ——Hast lost all sense of fear, as well as shame,
 That thou durst haunt me thus, asleep and waking,
 Thou idol, and thou torment of my soul?

ALICIA.

My bleeding heart——

ARDEN.

Away, begone and leave me;
 Lest, in the transports of unbounded rage,
 I rush upon thee, and deface those charms,
 That first enslav'd my soul; mangle that face

Where