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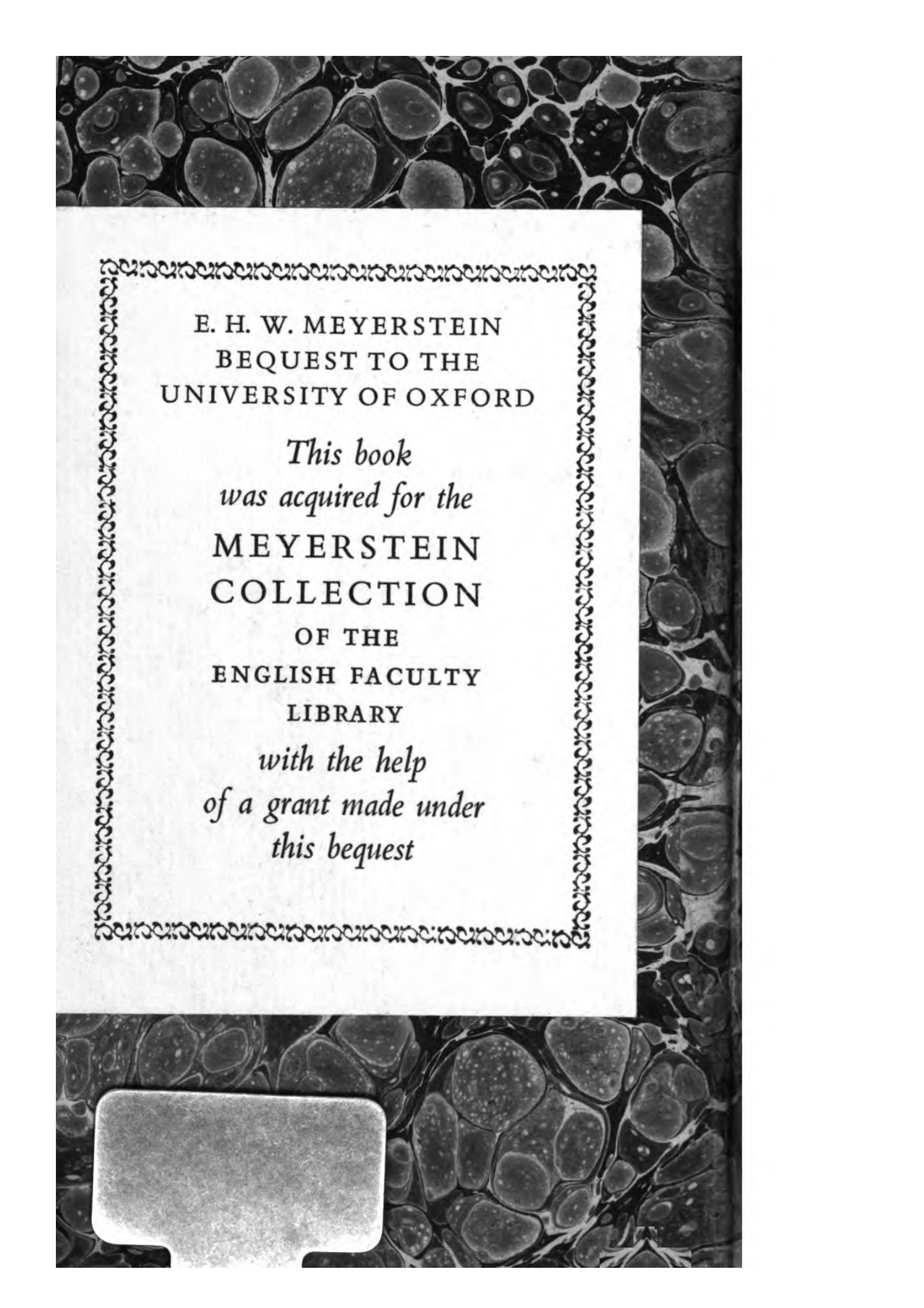
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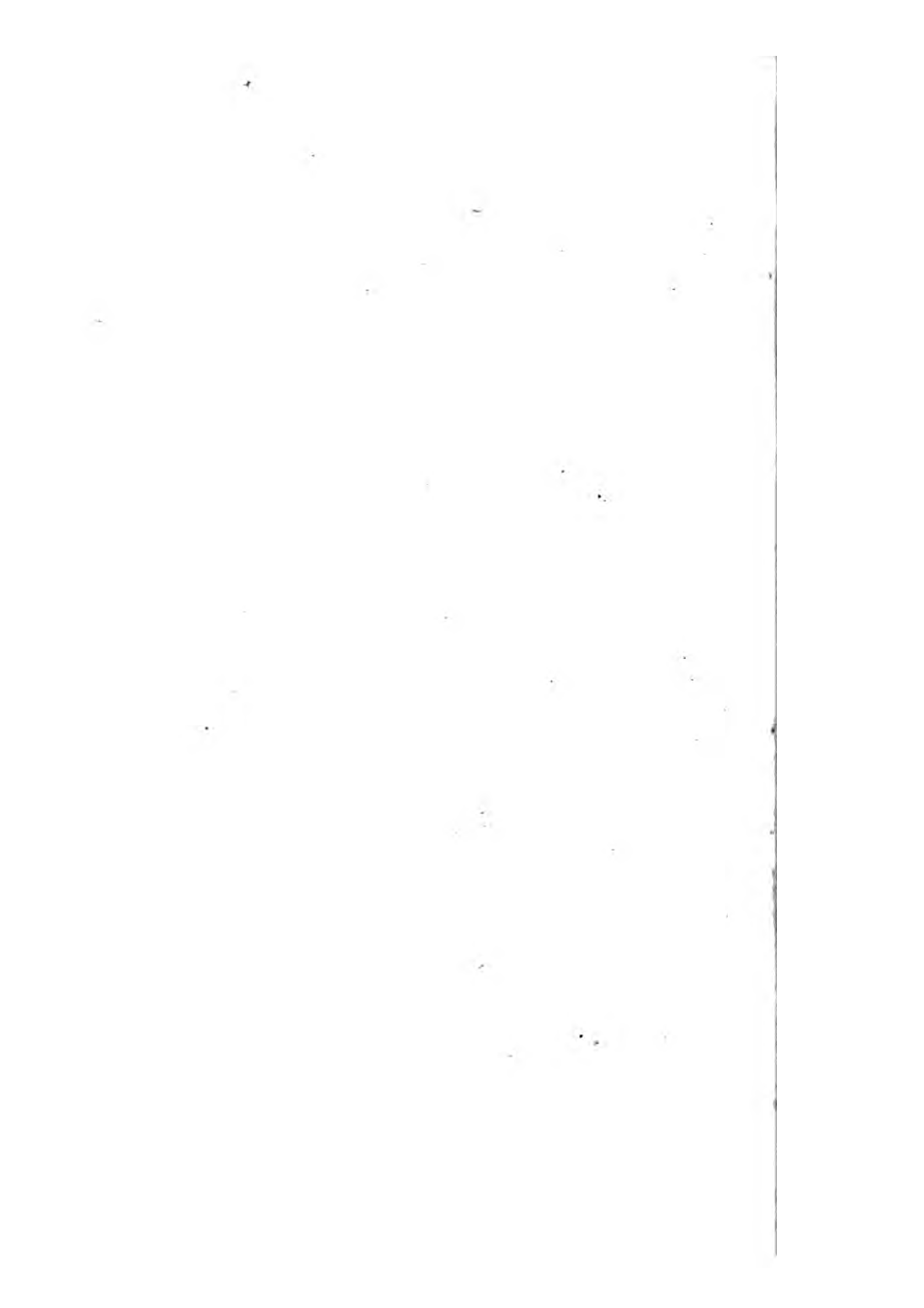


THE

MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,

A

ROMANCE.



THE
MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,

A
ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY
ANN RADCLIFFE,
AUTHOR OF THE ROMANCE OF THE FOREST, ETC.

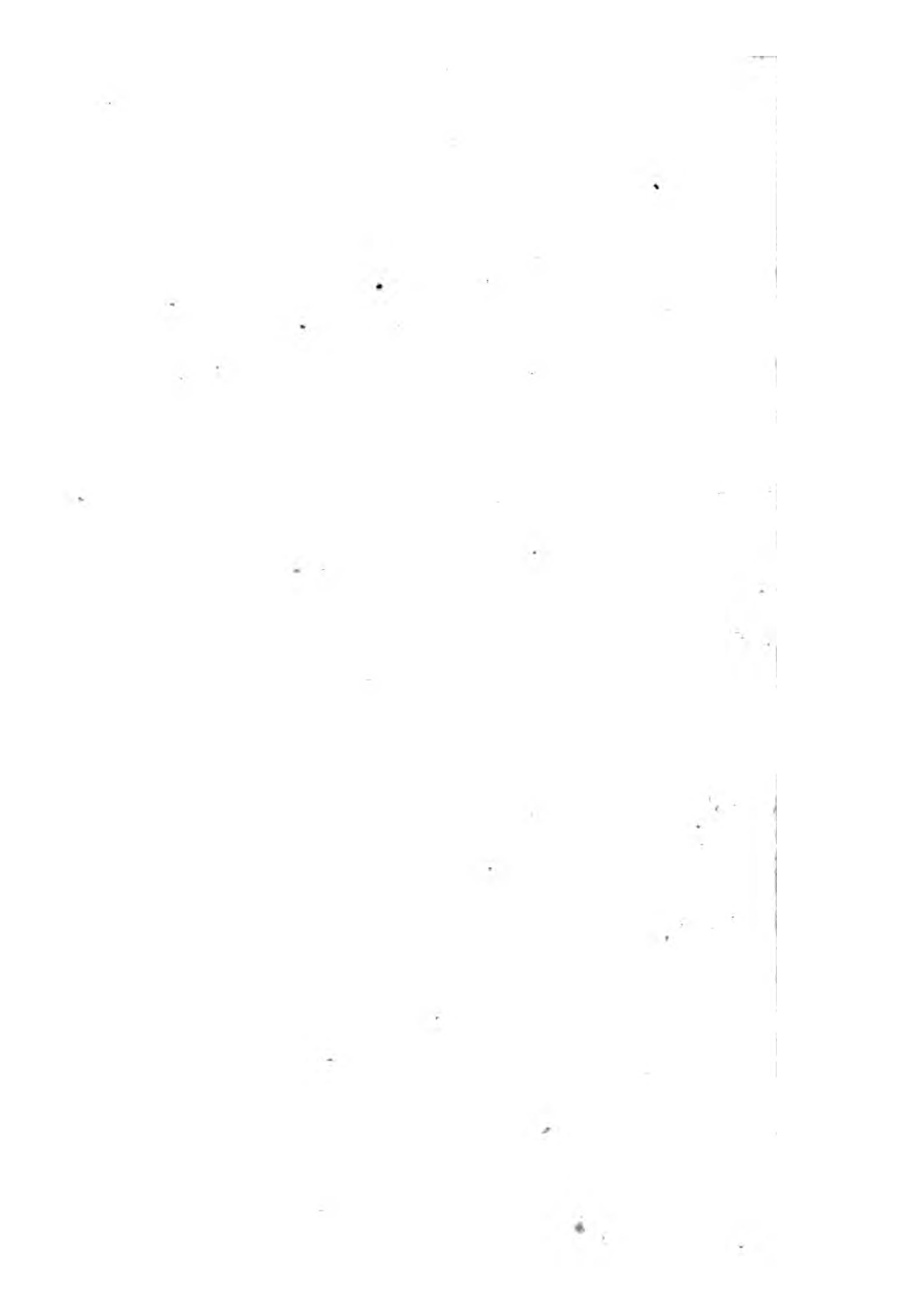
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Fate sits on these dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive me,
Her voice, in fullen echoes through the courts,
Tells of a nameless deed.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
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1794.



THE
MYSTERIES
OF
UDOLPHO,

CHAP. I.

“Where'er I roam, whatever realms I see,
My heart untravell'd still shall turn to thee.”

GOLDSMITH.

THE carriages were at the gates at an early hour; the bustle of the domestics, passing to and fro in the galleries, awakened Emily from harassing slumbers: her unquiet mind had, during the night, presented her with terrific images and obscure circumstances, concerning her affection and her future life. She now endeavoured to chase away the impressions they had left on her fancy; but from imaginary evils she awoke to the consciousness of real ones. Recol-

VOL. II:

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lecting

lecting that she had parted with Valancourt, perhaps for ever, her heart sickened as memory revived. But she tried to dismiss the dismal forebodings that crowded on her mind, and to restrain the sorrow which she could not subdue; efforts which diffused over the settled melancholy of her countenance an expression of tempered resignation, as a thin veil, thrown over the features of beauty, renders them more interesting by a partial concealment. But Madame Montoni observed nothing in this countenance except its unusual paleness, which attracted her censure. She told her niece, that she had been indulging in fanciful sorrows, and begged she would have more regard for decorum, than to let the world see that she could not renounce an improper attachment; at which Emily's pale cheek became flushed with crimson, but it was the blush of pride, and she made no answer. Soon after, Montoni entered the breakfast room, spoke little, and seemed impatient to be gone.

The windows of this room opened upon the garden. As Emily passed them, she saw the spot where she had parted with Valancourt on the preceding night: the remembrance pressed heavily on her heart, and she turned hastily away from the object that had awakened it.

The baggage being at length adjusted, the travellers entered their carriages, and Emily would have left the chateau without one sigh of regret, had it not been situated in the neighbourhood of Valancourt's residence.

From a little eminence she looked back upon Thoulouse, and the far-seen plains of Gascony, beyond which the broken summits of the Pyrenées appeared on the distant horizon, lighted up by a morning sun. "Dear pleasant mountains!" said she to herself, "how long may it be ere I see ye again, and how much may happen to make me miserable in the interval! Oh, could I now be certain, that I should ever return to ye, and find that Valancourt still lived

for me, I should go in peace! He will still gaze on ye, gaze when I am far away!"

The trees, that impended over the high banks of the road and formed a line of perspective with the distant country, now threatened to exclude the view of them; but the blueish mountains still appeared beyond the dark foliage, and Emily continued to lean from the coach window, till at length the closing branches shut them from her sight.

Another object soon caught her attention. She had scarcely looked at a person who walked along the bank, with his hat, in which was the military feather, drawn over his eyes, before, at the sound of wheels, he suddenly turned, and she perceived that it was Valancourt himself, who waved his hand, sprung into the road, and through the window of the carriage put a letter into her hand. He endeavoured to smile through the despair that overspread his countenance as she passed on. The remembrance of
that

that smile seemed impressed on Emily's mind for ever. She leaned from the window, and saw him on a knoll of the broken bank, leaning against the high trees that waved over him, and pursuing the carriage with his eyes. He waved his hand, and she continued to gaze till distance confused his figure, and at length another turn of the road entirely separated him from her sight.

Having stopped to take up Signor Cavigni at a chateau on the road, the travellers, of whom Emily was disrespectfully seated with Madame Montoni's woman in a second carriage, pursued their way over the plains of Languedoc. The presence of this servant restrained Emily from reading Valancourt's letter, for she did not choose to expose the emotions it might occasion to the observation of any person. Yet such was her wish to read this his last communication, that her trembling hand was every moment on the point of breaking the seal.

At length they reached the village, where they staid only to change horses, without alighting, and it was not till they stopped to dine, that Emily had an opportunity of reading the letter. Though she had never doubted the sincerity of Valancourt's affection, the fresh assurances she now received of it revived her spirits; she wept over his letter in tenderness, laid it by to be referred to when they should be particularly depressed, and then thought of him with much less anguish than she had done since they parted. Among some other requests, which were interesting to her, because expressive of his tenderness, and because a compliance with them seemed to annihilate for a while the pain of absence, he entreated she would always think of him at sun-set. "You will then meet me in thought," said he; "I shall constantly watch the sun-set, and I shall be happy in the belief, that your eyes are fixed upon the same object with mine, and that our minds are conversing. You know not, Emily, the
comfort

comfort I promise myself from these moments; but I trust you will experience it."

It is unnecessary to say with what emotion Emily, on this evening, watched the declining sun, over a long extent of plains, on which she saw it set without interruption, and sink towards the province which Valancourt inhabited. After this hour her mind became far more tranquil and resigned, than it had been since the marriage of Montoni and her aunt.

During several days the travellers journeyed over the plains of Languedoc; and then entering Dauphiny, and winding for some time among the mountains of that romantic province, they quitted their carriages and began to ascend the Alps. And here such scenes of sublimity opened upon them as no colours of language must dare to paint! Emily's mind was even so much engaged with new and wonderful images, that they sometimes banished the idea of Valancourt, though they more frequently

revived it. These brought to her recollection the prospects among the Pyrenées, which they had admired together, and had believed nothing could excel in grandeur. How often did she wish to express to him the new emotions which this astonishing scenery awakened, and that he could partake of them! Sometimes too she endeavoured to anticipate his remarks, and almost imagined him present. She seemed to have arisen into another world, and to have left every trifling thought, every trifling sentiment, in that below; those only of grandeur and sublimity now dilated her mind, and elevated the affections of her heart.

With what emotions of sublimity, softened by tenderness, did she meet Valancourt in thought, at the customary hour of sunset, when, wandering among the Alps, she watched the glorious orb sink amid their summits, his last tints die away on their snowy points, and a solemn obscurity steal over the scene! And when the last gleam
had

had faded, she turned her eyes from the west with somewhat of the melancholy regret that is experienced after the departure of a beloved friend; while these lonely feelings were heightened by the spreading gloom, and by the low sounds, heard only when darkness confines attention, which make the general stillness more impressive—leaves shook by the air, the last sigh of the breeze that lingers after sun-set, or the murmur of distant streams.

During the first days of this journey among the Alps, the scenery exhibited a wonderful mixture of solitude and inhabitation, of cultivation and barrenness. On the edge of tremendous precipices, and within the hollow of the cliffs, below which the clouds often floated, were seen villages, spires, and convent towers; while green pastures and vineyards spread their hues at the feet of perpendicular rocks of marble, or of granite, whose points, tufted with alpine shrubs, or exhibiting only massy crags, rose above each other, till they ter-

minated in the snow-topt mountain, whence the torrent fell, that thundered along the valley.

The snow was not yet melted on the summit of Mount Cenis, over which the travellers passed; but Emily, as she looked upon its clear lake and extended plain, surrounded by broken cliffs, saw, in imagination, the verdant beauty it would exhibit when the snows should be gone, and the shepherds, leading up the midsummer flocks from Piedmont, to pasture on its flowery summit, should add Arcadian figures to Arcadian landscape.

As she descended on the Italian side, the precipices became still more tremendous, and the prospects still more wild and majestic, over which the shifting lights threw all the pomp of colouring. Emily delighted to observe the snowy tops of the mountains under the passing influence of the day, blushing with morning, glowing with the brightness of noon, or just tinted with the purple evening. The haunt of man could

now

now only be discovered by the simple hut of the shepherd and the hunter, or by the rough pine bridge thrown across the torrent, to assist the latter in his chase of the chamois over crags where, but for this vestige of man, it would have been believed only the chamois or the wolf dared to venture. As Emily gazed upon one of these perilous bridges, with the cataract foaming beneath it, some images came to her mind, which she afterwards combined in the following

S T O R I E D S O N N E T .

The weary traveller, who, all night long,
 Has climb'd among the Alps' tremendous steeps,
 Skirting the pathless precipice, where throng
 Wild forms of danger; as he onward creeps
 If, chance, his anxious eye at distance sees
 The mountain-shepherd's solitary home,
 Peeping from forth the moon-illumin'd trees,
 What sudden transports to his bosom come!
 But, if between some hideous chasm yawn,
 Where the cleft pine a doubtful bridge displays,
 In dreadful silence, on the brink, forlorn
 He stands, and views in the faint rays

Far, far below, the torrent's rising surge,
 And listens to the wild impetuous roar ;
 Still eyes the depth, still shudders on the verge,
 Fears to return, nor dares to venture o'er.
 Desperate, at length the tottering plank he tries,
 His weak steps slide, he shrieks, he sinks—he dies!

Emily, often as she travelled among the clouds, watched in silent awe their billowy surges rolling below ; sometimes, wholly closing upon the scene, they appeared like a world of chaos, and, at others, spreading thinly, they opened and admitted partial catches of the landscape—the torrent, whose astounding roar had never failed, tumbling down the rocky chasm, huge cliffs white with snow, or the dark summits of the pine forests, that stretched mid-way down the mountains. But who may describe her rapture, when, having passed through a sea of vapour, she caught a first view of Italy ; when, from the ridge of one of those tremendous precipices that hang upon Mount Cenis and guard the entrance of that enchanting country, she looked down through
 the

the lower clouds, and, as they floated away, saw the grassy vales of Piedmont at her feet, and, beyond, the plains of Lombardy extending to the farthest distance, at which appeared, on the faint horizon, the doubtful towers of Turin?

The solitary grandeur of the objects that immediately surrounded her, the mountain-region towering above, the deep precipices that fell beneath, the waving blackness of the forests of pine and oak, which skirted their feet, or hung within their recesses, the headlong torrents that, dashing among their cliffs, sometimes appeared like a cloud of mist, at others like a sheet of ice—these were features which received a higher character of sublimity from the repoling beauty of the Italian landscape below, stretching to the wide horizon, where the same melting blue tint seemed to unite earth and sky.

Madame Montoni only shuddered as she looked down precipices near whose edge the chairmen trotted lightly and swiftly, almost,

almost, as the chamois bounded, and from which Emily too recoiled; but with her fears were mingled such various emotions of delight, such admiration, astonishment, and awe, as she had never experienced before.

Meanwhile the carriers, having come to a landing-place, stopped to rest, and the travellers being seated on the point of a cliff, Montoni and Cavigni renewed a dispute concerning Hannibal's passage over the Alps, Montoni contending that he entered Italy by way of Mount Cenis, and Cavigni, that he passed over Mount St. Bernard. The subject brought to Emily's imagination the disasters he had suffered in this bold and perilous adventure. She saw his vast armies winding among the defiles, and over the tremendous cliffs of the mountains, which at night were lighted up by his fires, or by the torches which he caused to be carried when he pursued his indefatigable march. In the eye of fancy, she perceived the gleam of arms through the duskiness of night,
the

the glitter of spears and helmets, and the banners floating dimly on the twilight; while now and then the blast of a distant trumpet echoed along the defile, and the signal was answered by a momentary clash of arms. She looked with horror upon the mountaineers, perched on the higher cliffs, assailing the troops below with broken fragments of the mountain; on soldiers and elephants tumbling headlong down the lower precipices; and, as she listened to the rebounding rocks, that followed their fall, the terrors of fancy yielded to those of reality, and she shuddered to behold herself on the dizzy height, whence she had pictured the descent of others.

Madame Montoni, meantime, as she looked upon Italy, was contemplating in imagination the splendour of palaces and the grandeur of castles, such as she believed she was going to be mistress of at Venice and in the Apennine, and she became, in idea, little less than a princess. Being no longer under the alarms which had deterred her
from

from giving entertainments to the beauties of Tholouse, whom Montoni had mentioned with more *eclat* to his own vanity than credit to their discretion, or regard to truth, she determined to give concerts, though she had neither ear nor taste for music; *conversazioni*, though she had no talents for conversation; and to outvie, if possible, in the gaieties of her parties and the magnificence of her liveries, all the nobleſſe of Venice. This blifsful reverie was ſomewhat obſcured, when ſhe recollected the Signor, her husband, who, though he was not averſe to the profit which ſometimes reſults from ſuch parties, had always ſhewn a contempt of the frivolous parade that ſometimes attends them; till ſhe conſidered that his pride might be gratified by displaying, among his own friends, in his native city, the wealth which he had neglected in France; and ſhe courted again the ſplendid illuſions that had charmed her before.

The travellers, as they deſcended, gradually, exchanged the region of winter for the
genial

genial warmth and beauty of spring. The sky began to assume that serene and beautiful tint peculiar to the climate of Italy; patches of young verdure, fragrant shrubs and flowers looked gaily among the rocks, often fringing their rugged brows, or hanging in tufts from their broken sides; and the buds of the oak and mountain ash were expanding into foliage. Descending lower, the orange and the myrtle, every now and then, appeared in some sunny nook, with their yellow blossoms peeping from among the dark green of their leaves, and mingling with the scarlet flowers of the pomegranate and the paler ones of the arbutus, that ran mantling to the crags above; while, lower still, spread the pastures of Piedmont, where early flocks were cropping the luxuriant herbage of spring.

The river Doria, which, rising on the summit of Mount Cenis, had dashed for many leagues over the precipices that bordered the road, now began to assume a less impetuous, though scarcely less romantic character,

character, as it approached the green vallies of Piedmont, into which the travellers descended with the evening sun; and Emily found herself once more amid the tranquil beauty of pastoral scenery; among flocks and herds, and slopes tufted with woods of lively verdure and with beautiful shrubs, such as she had often seen waving luxuriantly over the alps above. The verdure of the pasturage, now varied with the hues of early flowers, among which were yellow ranunculuses and pansy violets of delicious fragrance, she had never seen excelled.— Emily almost wished to become a peasant of Piedmont, to inhabit one of the pleasant embowered cottages which she saw peeping beneath the cliffs, and to pass her careless hours among these romantic landscapes. To the hours, the months, she was to pass under the dominion of Montoni, she looked with apprehension; while those which were departed she remembered with regret and sorrow.

In the present scenes her fancy often
gave

gave her the figure of Valancourt, whom she saw on a point of the cliffs, gazing with awe and admiration on the imagery around him; or wandering pensively along the vale below, frequently pausing to look back upon the scenery, and then, his countenance glowing with the poet's fire, pursuing his way to some overhanging height. When she again considered the time and the distance that were to separate them, that every step she now took lengthened this distance, her heart sunk, and the surrounding landscape charmed her no more.

The travellers, passing Novalesa, reached, after the evening had closed, the small and antient town of Susa, which had formerly guarded this pass of the Alps into Piedmont. The heights which command it had, since the invention of artillery, rendered its fortifications useless; but these romantic heights, seen by moon-light, with the town below, surrounded by its walls and watch-towers, and partially illumined, exhibited an interesting picture to Emily.

Here

Here they rested for the night at an inn, which had little accommodation to boast of; but the travellers brought with them the hunger that gives delicious flavour to the coarsest viands, and the weariness that ensures repose; and here Emily first caught a strain of Italian music, on Italian ground. As she sat after supper at a little window, that opened upon the country, observing an effect of the moon-light on the broken surface of the mountains, and remembering that on such a night as this she once had sat with her father and Valancourt, resting upon a cliff of the Pyrenées, she heard from below the long-drawn notes of a violin, of such tone and delicacy of expression, as harmonized exactly with the tender emotions she was indulging, and both charmed and surprised her. Cavigni, who approached the window, smiled at her surprise. "This is nothing extraordinary," said he, "you will hear the same, perhaps, at every inn on our way. It is one of our landlord's family who plays, I doubt not."

Emily,

Emily, as she listened, thought he could be scarcely less than a professor of music whom she heard; and the sweet and plaintive strains soon lulled her into a reverie, from which she was very unwillingly roused by the raillery of Cavigni, and by the voice of Montoni, who gave orders to a servant to have the carriages ready at an early hour on the following morning; and added, that he meant to dine at Turin.

Madame Montoni was exceedingly rejoiced to be once more on level ground; and, after giving a long detail of the various terrors she had suffered, which she forgot that she was describing to the companions of her dangers, she added a hope, that she should soon be beyond the view of these horrid mountains, "which all the world," said she, "should not tempt me to cross again." Complaining of fatigue she soon retired to rest, and Emily withdrew to her own room, when she understood from Annette, her aunt's woman, that Cavigni was nearly right in his conjecture concerning
the

the musician, who had awakened the violin with so much taste, for that he was the son of a peasant, inhabiting the neighbouring valley. “He is going to the Carnival at Venice,” added Annette, “for they say he has a fine hand at playing, and will get a world of money; and the Carnival is just going to begin: but for my part, I should like to live among these pleasant woods and hills, better than in a town; and they say Ma’moiselle, we shall see no woods, or hills, or fields, at Venice, for that it is built in the very middle of the sea.”

Emily agreed with the talkative Annette, that this young man was making a change for the worse, and could not forbear silently lamenting, that he should be drawn from the innocence and beauty of these scenes, to the corrupt ones of that voluptuous city.

When she was alone, unable to sleep, the landscapes of her native home, with Valancourt, and the circumstances of her departure, haunted her fancy; she drew pictures
of

of social happiness amidst the grand simplicity of nature, such as she feared she had bade farewell to for ever; and then, the idea of this young Piedmontese, thus ignorantly sporting with his happiness, returned to her thoughts, and, glad to escape awhile from the pressure of nearer interests, she indulged her fancy in composing the following lines.

THE PIEDMONTESE.

Ah, merry swain, who laugh'd along the vales,
 And with your gay pipe made the mountains ring,
 Why leave your cot, your woods, and thymy gales,
 And friends belov'd, for aught that wealth can
 bring?

He goes to wake o'er moon-light seas the string,
 Venetian gold his untaught fancy hails!
 Yet oft of home his simple carols sing,
 And his steps pause, as the last Alp he scales.
 Once more he turns to view his native scene—
 Far, far below, as roll the clouds away,
 He spies his cabin 'mid the pine-tops green,
 The well-known woods, clear brook, and pastures
 gay;

And thinks of friends and parents left behind,
 Of sylvan revels, dance, and festive song;
 And hears the faint reed swelling in the wind;
 And his sad sighs the distant notes prolong!

Thus

Thus went the swain, till mountain-shadows fell,
 And dimm'd the landscape to his aching sight ;
 And must he leave the vales he loves so well ?
 Can foreign wealth, and shows, his heart delight ?
 No, happy vales ! your wild rocks still shall hear
 His pipe, light sounding on the morning breeze ;
 Still shall he lead the flocks to streamlet clear,
 And watch at eve beneath the western trees.
 Away, Venetian gold—your charm is o'er !
 And now his swift step seeks the lowland bow'rs,
 Where, through the leaves, his cottage light *once*
 more
 Guides him to happy friends, and jocund hours.
 Ah, merry swain ! that laugh along the vales,
 And with your gay pipe make the mountains ring,
 Your cot, your woods, your thymy-scented gales—
 And friends belov'd—more joy than wealth can
 bring !

C H A P. II.

Titania. “ If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see our moon-light revels, go with us.”

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

EARLY on the following morning, the travellers set out for Turin. The luxuriant plain, that extends from the feet of the Alps to that magnificent city, was not then, as now, shaded by an avenue of trees nine miles in length; but plantations of olives, mulberry and palms, festooned with vines, mingled with the pastoral scenery, through which the rapid Po, after its descent from the mountains, wandered to meet the humble Doria at Turin. As they advanced towards this city, the Alps, seen at some distance, began to appear in all their awful sublimity; chain rising over chain

in long succession, their higher points darkened by the hovering clouds, sometimes hid, and at others seen shooting up far above them; while their lower steeps, broken into fantastic forms, were touched with blue and purplish tints, which, as they changed in light and shade, seemed to open new scenes to the eye. To the east stretched the plains of Lombardy, with the towers of Turin rising at a distance; and beyond, the Apennines, bounding the horizon.

The general magnificence of that city, with its vistas of churches and palaces, branching from the grand square, each opening to a landscape of the distant Alps or Apennines, was not only such as Emily had never seen in France, but such as she had never imagined.

Montoni, who had been often at Turin, and cared little about views of any kind, did not comply with his wife's request, that they might survey some of the palaces; but staying only till the necessary refreshments could be obtained, they set forward
for

for Venice with all possible rapidity. Montoni's manner, during this journey, was grave, and even haughty; and towards Madame Montoni he was more especially reserved; but it was not the reserve of respect so much as of pride and discontent. Of Emily he took little notice. With Cavigni his conversations were commonly on political or military topics, such as the convulsed state of their country rendered at this time particularly interesting. Emily observed, that, at the mention of any daring exploit, Montoni's eyes lost their fullness, and seemed instantaneously to gleam with fire; yet they still retained somewhat of a lurking cunning, and she sometimes thought that their fire partook more of the glare of malice than the brightness of valour, though the latter would well have harmonized with the high chivalric air of his figure, in which Cavigni, with all his gay and gallant manners, was his inferior.

On entering the Milanese, the gentlemen exchanged their French hats for the

Italian cap of scarlet cloth, embroidered ; and Emily was somewhat surpris'd to observe, that Montoni added to his the military plume, while Cavigni retained only the feather : which was usually worn with such caps : but she at length concluded, that Montoni assumed this ensign of a soldier for convenience, as a means of passing with more safety through a country over-run with parties of the military.

Over the beautiful plains of this country the devastations of war were frequently visible. Where the lands had not been suffered to lie uncultivated, they were often tracked with the steps of the spoiler ; the vines were torn down from the branches that had supported them, the olives trampled upon the ground, and even the groves of mulberry trees had been hewn by the enemy to light fires that destroyed the hamlets and villages of their owners. Emily turned her eyes with a sigh from these painful vestiges of contention, to the Alps of the Grison, that overlooked them to the north, whose
awful

awful solitudes seemed to offer to persecuted man a secure asylum.

The travellers frequently distinguished troops of soldiers moving at a distance; and they experienced, at the little inns on the road, the scarcity of provision and other inconveniencies, which are a part of the consequence of intestine war; but they had never reason to be much alarmed for their immediate safety, and they passed on to Milan with little interruption of any kind, ~~where~~ they staid not to survey the grandeur of the city, or even to view its vast cathedral, which was then building.

Beyond Milan, the country wore the aspect of a ruder devastation; and though every thing seemed now quiet, the repose was like that of death, spread over features, which retain the impression of the last convulsions.

It was not till they had passed the eastern limits of the Milanese, that the travellers saw any troops since they had left Milan, when, as the evening was drawing to a
 C 3 close,

close, they descried what appeared to be an army winding onward along the distant plains, whose spears and other arms caught the last rays of the sun. As the column advanced through a part of the road, contracted between two hillocks, some of the commanders, on horseback, were distinguished on a small eminence, pointing and making signals for the march; while several of the officers were riding along the line directing its progress, according to the signs communicated by those above; and others, separating from the vanguard, which had emerged from the pass, were riding carelessly along the plains, at some distance to the right of the army.

As they drew nearer, Montoni, distinguishing the feathers that waved in their caps, and the banners and liveries of the bands that followed them, thought he knew this to be the small army commanded by the famous captain Utaldo, with whom, as well as with some of the other chiefs, he was personally acquainted. He, therefore,

fore, gave orders that the carriages should draw up by the side of the road, to await their arrival, and give them the pass. A faint strain of martial music now stole by, and, gradually strengthening as the troops approached, Emily distinguished the drums and trumpets, with the clash of cymbals and of arms, that were struck by a small party, in time to the march.

Montoni being now certain that these were the bands of the victorious Utaldo, leaned from the carriage window, and hailed their general by waving his cap in the air; which compliment the chief returned by raising his spear, and then letting it down again suddenly, while some of his officers, who were riding at a distance from the troops, came up to the carriage, and saluted Montoni as an old acquaintance. The captain himself soon after arriving, his bands halted while he conversed with Montoni, whom he appeared much rejoiced to see; and from what he said, Emily

understood that this was a victorious army, returning into their own principality ; while the numerous waggons, that accompanied them, contained the rich spoils of the enemy, their own wounded soldiers, and the prisoners they had taken in battle, who were to be ransomed when the peace, then negotiating between the neighbouring states, should be ratified. The chiefs on the following day were to separate, and each, taking his share of the spoil, was to return with his own band to his castle. This was therefore to be an evening of uncommon and general festivity, in commemoration of the victory they had accomplished together, and of the farewell which the commanders were about to take of each other.

Emily, as these officers conversed with Montoni, observed with admiration, tinged with awe, their high martial air, mingled with the haughtiness of the noblesse of those days, and heightened by the
gallantry

gallantry of their dress, by the plumes towering on their caps, the armorial coat, Persian sash, and ancient Spanish cloak. Utaldo, telling Montoni that his army were going to encamp for the night near a village at only a few miles distance, invited him to turn back and partake of their festivity, assuring the ladies also, that they should be pleasantly accommodated; but Montoni excused himself, adding, that it was his design to reach Verona that evening; and, after some conversation concerning the state of the country towards that city, they parted.

The travellers proceeded without any interruption; but it was some hours after sunset before they arrived at Verona, whose beautiful environs were therefore not seen by Emily till the following morning; when, leaving that pleasant town at an early hour, they set off for Padua, where they embarked on the Brenta for Venice. Here the scene was entirely changed; no vestiges of war, such as had deformed the plains of the Milanese, appeared; on the contrary,

all was peace and elegance. The verdant banks of the Brenta exhibited a continued landscape of beauty, gaiety, and splendour. Emily gazed with admiration on the villas of the Venetian nobleffe, with their cool porticos and colonnades, overhung with poplars and cypresses of majestic height and lively verdure; on their rich orangeries, whose blossoms perfumed the air, and on the luxuriant willows, that dipped their light leaves in the wave, and sheltered from the sun the gay parties whose music came at intervals on the breeze. The Carnival did, indeed, appear to extend from Venice along the whole line of these enchanting shores; the river was gay with boats passing to that city, exhibiting the fantastic diversity of a masquerade in the dresses of the people within them; and, towards evening, groups of dancers frequently were seen beneath the trees.

Cavigni, meanwhile, informed her of the names of the noblemen to whom the several villas they passed belonged, adding light sketches

sketches of their characters, such as served to amuse rather than to inform, exhibiting his own wit instead of the delineation of truth. Emily was sometimes diverted by his conversation; but his gaiety did not entertain Madame Montoni, as it had formerly done; she was frequently grave, and Montoni retained his usual reserve.

Nothing could exceed Emily's admiration, on her first view of Venice, with its islets, palaces, and towers rising out of the sea, whose clear surface reflected the tremulous picture in all its colours. The sun, sinking in the west, tinted the waves and the lofty mountains of Friuli, which skirt the northern shores of the Adriatic, with a saffron glow, while on the marble porticos and colonnades of St. Mark were thrown the rich lights and shades of evening. As they glided on, the grander features of this city appeared more distinctly: its terraces, crowned with airy yet majestic fabrics, touched, as they now were, with the splendour of the setting sun, appeared as if they

had been called up from the ocean by the wand of an enchanter, rather than reared by mortal hands.

The sun, soon after, sinking to the lower world, the shadow of the earth stole gradually over the waves, and then up the towering sides of the mountains of Friuli, till it extinguished even the last upward beams that had lingered on their summits, and the melancholy purple of evening drew over them, like a thin veil. How deep, how beautiful was the tranquillity that wrapped the scene! All nature seemed to repose; the finest emotions of the soul were alone awake. Emily's eyes filled with tears of admiration and sublime devotion, as she raised them over the sleeping world to the vast heavens, and heard the notes of solemn music, that stole over the waters from a distance. She listened in still rapture, and no person of the party broke the charm by an enquiry. The sounds seemed to grow on the air; for so smoothly did the barge glide along, that its motion was not perceivable,

ceivable, and the fairy city appeared approaching to welcome the strangers. They now distinguished a female voice, accompanied by a few instruments, singing a soft and mournful air; and its fine expression, as sometimes it seemed pleading with the impassioned tenderness of love, and then languishing into the cadence of hopeless grief, declared, that it flowed from no feigned sensibility. Ah! thought Emily, as she sighed and remembered Valancourt, those strains come from the heart!

She looked round, with anxious enquiry; the deep twilight, that had fallen over the scene, admitted only imperfect images to the eye, but, at some distance on the sea, she thought she perceived a gondola: a chorus of voices and instruments now swelled on the air—so sweet, so solemn! it seemed like the hymn of angels descending through the silence of night! Now it died away, and fancy almost beheld the holy choir re-ascending towards heaven; then again it swelled with the breeze, trembled awhile,
and

and again died into silence. It brought to Emily's recollection some lines of her late father, and she repeated in a low voice,

——Oft I hear,
Upon the silence of the midnight air,
Celestial voices swell in holy chorus
That bears the soul to heaven!

The deep stillness, that succeeded, was as expressive as the strain that had just ceased. It was uninterrupted for several minutes, till a general sigh seemed to release the company from their enchantment. Emily, however, long indulged the pleasing sadness, that had stolen upon her spirits; but the gay and busy scene that appeared, as the barge approached St. Mark's Place, at length roused her attention. The rising moon, which threw a shadowy light upon the terraces, and illumined the porticos and magnificent arcades that crowned them, discovered the various company, whose light steps, soft guitars, and softer voices, echoed through the colonnades.

The

The music they heard before now passed Montoni's barge, in one of the gondolas, of which several were seen skimming along the moon-light sea, full of gay parties, catching the cool breeze. Most of these had music, made sweeter by the waves over which it floated, and by the measured sound of oars, as they dashed the sparkling tide. Emily gazed, and listened, and thought herself in a fairy scene; even Madame Montoni was pleased; Montoni congratulated himself on his return to Venice, which he called the first city in the world, and Cavigni was more gay and animated than ever.

The barge passed on to the grand canal, where Montoni's mansion was situated. And here, other forms of beauty and of grandeur, such as her imagination had never painted, were unfolded to Emily in the palaces of Sansovino and Palladio, as she glided along the waves. The air bore no sounds, but those of sweetness, echoing along each margin of the canal,
and

and from gondolas on its surface, while groups of masks were seen dancing on the moonlight terraces, and seemed almost to realize the romance of fairy-land.

The barge stopped before the portico of a large house, from whence a servant of Montoni crossed the terrace, and immediately the party disembarked. From the portico they passed a noble hall to a staircase of marble, which led to a saloon, fitted up in a style of magnificence that surprised Emily. The walls and ceiling were adorned with historical and allegorical paintings, in *fresco*; silver tripods, depending from chains of the same metal, illumined the apartment, the floor of which was covered with Indian mats painted in a variety of colours and devices; the couches and drapery of the lattices were of pale green silk, embroidered and fringed with green and gold. Balcony lattices opened upon the grand canal, whence rose a confusion of voices and of musical instruments, and the breeze that gave freshness to the apartment.

Emily,

Emily, considering the gloomy temper of Montoni, looked upon the splendid furniture of his house with surprise, and remembered the report of his being a man of broken fortune, with astonishment. “ Ah ! ” said she to herself, “ if Valancourt could but see this mansion, what peace would it give him ! He would then be convinced that the report was groundless.”

Madame Montoni seemed to assume the airs of a princess ; but Montoni was restless and discontented, and did not even observe the civility of bidding her welcome to her home.

Soon after his arrival, he ordered his gondola, and, with Cavigni, went out to mingle in the scenes of the evening. Madame then became serious and thoughtful. Emily, who was charmed with every thing she saw, endeavoured to enliven her ; but reflection had not, with Madame Montoni, subdued caprice and ill-humour, and her answers discovered so much of both, that Emily gave up the attempt of diverting her, and
with-

withdrew to a lattice, to amuse herself with the scene without, so new and so enchanting.

The first object that attracted her notice was a group of dancers on the terrace below, led by a guitar, and some other instruments. The girl, who struck the guitar, and another, who flourished a tambourine, passed on in a dancing step, and with a light grace and gaiety of heart, that would have subdued the goddesses of spleen in her worst humour. After these came a group of fantastic figures, some dressed as gondolieri, others as minstrels, while others seemed to defy all description. They sung in parts, their voices accompanied by a few soft instruments. At a little distance from the portico they stopped, and Emily distinguished the verses of Ariosto. They sung of the wars of the Moors against Charlemagne, and then of the woes of Orlando: afterwards the measure changed, and the melancholy sweetness of Petrarch succeeded. The magic of his grief was assisted by all
that

that Italian music and Italian expression, heightened by the enchantments of Venetian moonlight, could give.

Emily, as she listened, caught the pensive enthusiasm; her tears flowed silently, while her fancy bore her far away to France and to Valancourt. Each succeeding sonnet, more full of charming sadness than the last, seemed to bind the spell of melancholy: with extreme regret she saw the musicians move on, and her attention followed the strain till the last faint warble died in air. She then remained sunk in that pensive tranquillity which soft music leaves on the mind—a state like that produced by the view of a beautiful landscape by moonlight, or by the recollection of scenes marked with the tenderness of friends lost for ever, and with sorrows, which time has mellowed into mild regret. Such scenes are indeed, to the mind, like “those faint traces which the memory bears of music that is past.”

Other

Other sounds soon awakened her attention : it was the solemn harmony of horns, that swelled from a distance ; and, observing the gondolas arrange themselves along the margin of the terraces, she threw on her veil, and, stepping into the balcony, discerned, in the distant perspective of the canal, something like a procession, floating on the light surface of the water : as it approached, the horns and other instruments mingled sweetly, and soon after the fabled deities of the city seemed to have arisen from the ocean ; for Neptune, with Venice personified as his queen, came on the undulating waves, surrounded by tritons and sea-nymphs. The fantastic splendour of this spectacle, together with the grandeur of the surrounding palaces, appeared like the vision of a poet suddenly embodied, and the fanciful images, which it awakened in Emily's mind, lingered there long after the procession had passed away. She indulged herself in imagining what might be the
manners

manners and delights of a sea-nymph, till she almost wished to throw off the habit of mortality, and plunge into the green wave to participate them.

“How delightful,” said she, “to live amidst the coral bowers and crystal caverns of the ocean, with my sister nymphs, and listen to the sounding waters above, and to the soft shells of the tritons! and then, after sun-set, to skim on the surface of the waves round wild rocks and along sequestered shores, where, perhaps, some pensive wanderer comes to weep! Then would I soothe his sorrows with my sweet music, and offer him from a shell some of the delicious fruit that hangs round Neptune’s palace.”

She was recalled from her reverie to a mere mortal supper, and could not forbear smiling at the fancies she had been indulging, and at her conviction of the serious displeasure, which Madame Montoni would have expressed, could she have been made acquainted with them.

After

After supper, her aunt sat late, but Montoni did not return, and she at length retired to rest. If Emily had admired the magnificence of the saloon, she was not less surpris'd, on observing the half-furnished and forlorn appearance of the apartments she pass'd in the way to her chamber, whither she went through long suites of noble rooms, that seem'd, from their desolate aspect, to have been unoccupied for many years. On the walls of some were the faded remains of tapestry; from others, painted in *fresco*, the damps had almost withdrawn both colours and design. At length she reach'd her own chamber, spacious, desolate, and lofty, like the rest, with high lattices that opened towards the Adriatic. It brought gloomy images to her mind, but the view of the Adriatic soon gave her others more airy, among which was that of the sea-nymph, whose delights she had before amus'd herself with picturing; and, anxious to escape from serious reflections, she now endeavoured to throw her fanciful ideas into a

train, and concluded the hour with composing the following lines :

THE SEA-NYPH.

Down, down a thousand fathom deep,
Among the founding seas I go ;
Play round the foot of ev'ry steep
Whose cliffs above the ocean grow.

There, within their secret caves,
I hear the mighty rivers roar ;
And guide their streams through Neptune's waves
To bless the green earth's inmost shore :

And bid the freshen'd waters glide,
For fern-crown'd nymphs of lake, or brook,
Through winding woods and pastures wide,
And many a wild, romantic nook.

For this the nymphs, at fall of eve,
Oft dance upon the flow'ry banks,
And sing my name, and garlands weave
To bear beneath the wave their thanks.

In coral bow'rs I love to lie,
And hear the surges roll above,
And through the waters view on high
The proud ships sail, and gay clouds move.

And

And oft at midnight's stillest hour,
When summer seas the vessel lave,
I love to prove my charming pow'r
While floating on the moon-light wave.

And when deep sleep the crew has bound,
And the sad lover musing leans
O'er the ship's side, I breathe around
Such strains as speak no mortal means !

O'er the dim waves his searching eye
Sees but the vessel's lengthen'd shade ;
Above—the moon and azure sky ;
Entranc'd he hears, and half afraid !

Sometimes, a single note I swell,
That, softly sweet, at distance dies ;
Then wake the magic of my shell,
And choral voices round me rise !

The trembling youth, charm'd by my strain,
Calls up the crew, who, silent, bend
O'er the high deck, but lift in vain ;
My song is hush'd, my wonders end !

Within the mountain's woody bay,
Where the tall bark at anchor rides,
At twilight hour, with tritons gay,
I dance upon the lapsing tides :

And with my sister-nymphs I sport,
 Till the broad sun looks o'er the floods ;
 Then, swift we seek our crystal court,
 Deep in the wave, 'mid Neptune's woods.

In cool arcades and glassy halls
 We pass the sultry hours of noon,
 Beyond wherever sun-beam falls,
 Weaving sea-flowers in gay festoon.

The while we chant our ditties sweet
 To some soft shell that warbles near ;
 Join'd by the murmuring currents, fleet,
 That glide along our halls so clear.

There, the pale pearl and sapphire blue,
 And ruby red, and em'erald green,
 Dart from the domes a changing hue,
 And sparry columns deck the scene.

When the dark storm scowls o'er the deep,
 And long, long peals of thunder sound,
 On some high cliff my watch I keep
 O'er all the restless seas around :

Till on the ridgy wave afar
 Comes the lone vessel, labouring slow,
 Spreading the white foam in the air,
 With sail and top-mast bending low.

Then, plunge I 'mid the ocean's roar,
My way by quiv'ring lightnings shewn,
To guide the bark to peaceful shore,
And hush the sailor's fearful groan.

And if too late I reach its side
To save it from the 'whelming surge,
I call my dolphins o'er the tide,
To bear the crew where isles emerge.

Their mournful spirits soon I cheer,
While round the desert coast I go,
With warbled songs they faintly hear,
Oft as the stormy gust sinks low.

My music leads to lofty groves,
That wild upon the sea-bank wave;
Where sweet fruits bloom, and fresh spring roves,
And closing boughs the tempest brave.

Then, from the air spirits obey
My potent voice they love so well,
And, on the clouds, paint visions gay,
While strains more sweet at distance swell.

And thus the lonely hours I cheat,
Soothing the ship-wreck'd sailor's heart,
Till from the waves the storms retreat,
And o'er the east the day-beams dart.

Neptune for this oft binds me fast
To rocks below, with coral chain,
Till all the tempest's over-past,
And drowning seamen cry in vain.

Whoe'er ye are that love my lay,
Come, when red sun-set tints the wave,
To the still sands, where fairies play;
There, in cool seas, I love to lave.

C H A P. XVII.

“ He is a great observer, and he looks
 Quite through the deeds of men : he loves no plays,
 — — — — he hears no music ;
 Seldom he smiles ; and smiles in such a sort,
 As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit
 That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.
 Such men as he be never at heart's ease,
 While they behold a greater than themselves.”

JULIUS CÆSAR.

MONTONI and his companion did not return home, till many hours after the dawn had blushed upon the Adriatic. The airy groups, which had danced all night along the colonnade of St. Mark, dispersed before the morning, like so many spirits. Montoni had been otherwise engaged ; his soul was little susceptible of light pleasures. He delighted in the energies of the passions ; the difficulties and tempests of life, which
 wreck

wreck the happiness of others, roused and strengthened all the powers of his mind, and afforded him the highest enjoyments, of which his nature was capable. Without some object of strong interest, life was to him little more than a sleep; and, when pursuits of real interest failed, he substituted artificial ones, till habit changed their nature, and they ceased to be unreal. Of this kind was the habit of gaming, which he had adopted, first, for the purpose of relieving him from the languor of inaction, but had since pursued with the ardour of passion. In this occupation he had passed the night with Cavigni and a party of young men, who had more money than rank, and more vice than either. Montoni despised the greater part of these for the inferiority of their talents, rather than for their vicious inclinations, and associated with them only to make them the instruments of his purposes. Among these, however, were some of superior abilities, and a few whom Montoni

admitted to his intimacy, but even towards these he still preserved a decisive and haughty air, which, while it imposed submission on weak and timid minds, roused the fierce hatred of strong ones. He had, of course, many and bitter enemies; but the rancour of their hatred proved the degree of his power; and, as power was his chief aim, he gloried more in such hatred, than it was possible he could in being esteemed. A feeling so tempered as that of esteem, he despised, and would have despised himself also had he thought himself capable of being flattered by it.

Among the few whom he distinguished, were the Signors Bertolini, Orfino, and Verizzi. The first was a man of a gay temper, strong passions, dissipated, and of unbounded extravagance, but generous, brave, and unsuspecting. Orfino was reserved, and haughty; loving power more than ostentation; of a cruel and suspicious temper; quick to feel an injury, and relentless in avenging it; cunning and unsearchable in

contrivance, patient and indefatigable in the execution of his schemes. He had a perfect command of feature and of his passions, of which he had scarcely any, but pride, revenge and avarice; and, in the gratification of these, few considerations had power to restrain him, few obstacles to withstand the depth of his stratagems. This man was the chief favourite of Montoni. Verezzi was a man of some talent, of fiery imagination, and the slave of alternate passions. He was gay, voluptuous, and daring; yet had neither perseverance or true courage, and was meanly selfish in all his aims. Quick to form schemes, and sanguine in his hope of success, he was the first to undertake, and to abandon, not only his own plans, but those adopted from other persons. Proud and impetuous, he revolted against all subordination; yet those who were acquainted with his character, and watched the turn of his passions, could lead him like a child.

Such were the friends whom Montoni introduced to his family and his table, on the day after his arrival at Venice. There were also of the party a Venetian nobleman, Count Morano, and a Signora Livona, whom Montoni had introduced to his wife, as a lady of distinguished merit, and who, having called in the morning to welcome her to Venice, had been requested to be of the dinner party.

Madame Montoni received, with a very ill grace, the compliments of the Signors. She disliked them, because they were the friends of her husband ; hated them, because she believed they had contributed to detain him abroad till so late an hour of the preceding morning ; and envied them, since, conscious of her own want of influence, she was convinced, that he preferred their society to her own. The rank of Count Morano procured him that distinction which she refused to the rest of the company. The haughty fullness of her countenance and manner,
and

and the ostentatious extravagance of her dress, for she had not yet adopted the Venetian habit, were strikingly contrasted by the beauty, modesty, sweetness and simplicity of Emily, who observed, with more attention than pleasure, the party around her. The beauty and fascinating manners of Signora Livona, however, won her involuntary regard; while the sweetness of her accents and her air of gentle kindness awakened with Emily those pleasing affections, which so long had slumbered.

In the cool of the evening the party embarked in Montoni's gondola, and rowed out upon the sea. The red glow of sunset still touched the waves, and lingered in the west, where the melancholy gleam seemed slowly expiring, while the dark blue of the upper æther began to twinkle with stars. Emily sat, given up to pensive and sweet emotions. The smoothness of the water, over which she glided, its reflected images—a new heaven and trembling stars below the waves, with shadowy outlines of

towers and porticos, conspired with the stillness of the hour, interrupted only by the passing wave, or the notes of distant music; to raise those emotions to enthusiasm. As she listened to the measured sound of the oars, and to the remote warblings that came in the breeze, her softened mind returned to the memory of St. Aubert and to Valancourt, and tears stole to her eyes. The rays of the moon, strengthening as the shadows deepened, soon after threw a silvery gleam upon her countenance, which was partly shaded by a thin black veil, and touched it with inimitable softness. Hers was the *contour* of a Madona, with the sensibility of a Magdalen; and the pensive-uplifted eye, with the tear that glittered on her cheek, confirmed the expression of the character.

The last strain of distant music now died in air, for the gondola was far upon the waves, and the party determined to have music of their own. The Count Morano, who sat next to Emily, and who had been
observing

observing her for some time in silence, snatched up a lute, and struck the chords with the finger of harmony herself, while his voice, a fine tenor, accompanied them in a rondeau full of tender sadness. To him, indeed, might have been applied that beautiful exhortation of an English poet, had it then existed :

—————“ Strike up, my master,
But touch the strings with a religious softness!
Teach sounds to languish through the night’s dull ear
Till Melancholy starts from off her couch,
And Carelessness grows concert to attention !”

With such powers of expression the Countess sang the following

R O N D E A U .

Soft as yon silver ray, that sleeps
Upon the ocean’s trembling tide ;
Soft as the air, that lightly sweeps
Yon sail, that swells in stately pride :

Soft as the surge’s stealing note,
That dies along the distant shores,
Or warbled strain, that sinks remote——
So soft the sigh my bosom pours !

True as the wave to Cynthia's ray,
True as the vessel to the breeze,
True as the soul to music's sway,
Or music to Venetian seas:

Soft as yon silver beams, that sleep
Upon the ocean's trembling breast;
So soft, so true, fond Love shall weep,
So soft, so true, with *thee* shall rest.

The cadence with which he returned from the last stanza to a repetition of the first; the fine modulation in which his voice stole upon the first line, and the pathetic energy with which it pronounced the last, were such as only exquisite taste could give. When he had concluded, he gave the lute with a sigh to Emily, who, to avoid any appearance of affectation, immediately began to play. She sung a melancholy little air, one of the popular songs of her native province, with a simplicity and pathos that made it enchanting. But its well-known melody brought so forcibly to her fancy the scenes and the persons, among
which

which she had often heard it, that her spirits were overcome, her voice trembled and ceased—and the strings of the lute were struck with a disordered hand ; till, ashamed of the emotion she had betrayed, she suddenly passed on to a song so gay and airy, that the steps of the dance seemed almost to echo to the notes. *Bravissimo!* burst instantly from the lips of her delighted auditors, and she was compelled to repeat the air. Among the compliments that followed, those of the Count were not the least audible, and they had not concluded, when Emily gave the instrument to Signora Livona, whose voice accompanied it with true Italian taste.

Afterwards the Count, Emily, Cavigni, and the Signora, sung *canzonettes*, accompanied by a couple of lutes and a few other instruments. Sometimes the instruments suddenly ceased, and the voices dropped from the full swell of harmony into a low chant ; then, after a deep pause, they rose by degrees, the instruments one by one striking

striking up, till the loud and full chorus soared again to heaven !

Meanwhile, Montoni, who was weary of this harmony, was considering how he might disengage himself from his party, or withdraw with such of it as would be willing to play, to a Casino. In a pause of the music, he proposed returning to shore, a proposal which Orsino eagerly seconded, but which the Count and the other gentlemen as warmly opposed.

Montoni still meditated how he might excuse himself from longer attendance upon the Count, for to him only he thought excuse necessary, and how he might get to land, till the gondolieri of an empty boat, returning to Venice, hailed his people. Without troubling himself longer about an excuse, he seized this opportunity of going thither, and, committing the ladies to the care of his friends, departed with Orsino, while Emily, for the first time, saw him go with regret ; for she considered his presence a protection, though she knew

not what she should fear. He landed at St. Mark's, and, hurrying to a Casino, was soon lost amidst a crowd of gamesters.

Meanwhile, the Count having secretly dispatched a servant in Montoni's boat, for his own gondola and musicians, Emily heard, without knowing his project, the gay song of gondolieri approaching, as they sat on the stern of the boat, and saw the tremulous gleam of the moon-light wave, which their oars disturbed. Presently she heard the sound of instruments, and then a full symphony swelled on the air, and, the boats meeting, the gondolieri hailed each other. The Count then explaining himself, the party removed into his gondola, which was embellished with all that taste could bestow.

While they partook of a collation of fruits and ice, the whole band, following at a distance, in the other boat, played the most sweet and enchanting strains, and the Count, who had again seated himself by Emily, paid her unremitting attention,

tention, and sometimes, in a low but impassioned voice, uttered compliments which she could not misunderstand. To avoid them she conversed with Signora Livona, and her manner to the Count assumed a mild reserve, which, though dignified, was too gentle to repress his assiduities: he could see, hear, speak to no person, but Emily, while Cavigni observed him now and then, with a look of displeasure, and Emily, with one of uneasiness. She now wished for nothing so much as to return to Venice, but it was near midnight before the gondolas approached St. Mark's Place, where the voice of gaiety and song was loud. The busy hum of mingling sounds was heard at a considerable distance on the water, and, had not a bright moon-light discovered the city, with its terraces and towers, a stranger would almost have credited the fabled wonders of Neptune's court, and believed, that the tumult arose from beneath the waves.

They landed at St. Mark's, where the
gaiety

gaiety of the colonnades and the beauty of the night, made Madame Montoni willingly submit to the Count's solicitations to join the promenade, and afterwards to take a supper with the rest of the party, at his Casino. If any thing could have dissipated Emily's uneasiness, it would have been the grandeur, gaiety, and novelty of the surrounding scene, adorned with Palladio's palaces, and busy with parties of masqueraders.

At length they withdrew to the Casino, which was fitted up with infinite taste, and where a splendid banquet was prepared; but here Emily's reserve made the Count perceive, that it was necessary for his interest to win the favour of Madame Montoni, which, from the condescension she had already shewn to him, appeared to be an achievement of no great difficulty. He transferred, therefore, part of his attention from Emily to her aunt, who felt too much flattered by the distinction even to disguise her emotion; and, before the party broke up, he had entirely engaged the esteem of
Madame

Madame Montoni. Whenever he addressed her, her ungracious countenance relaxed into smiles, and to whatever he proposed she assented. He invited her, with the rest of the party, to take coffee, in his box at the opera, on the following evening, and Emily heard the invitation accepted, with strong anxiety, concerning the means of excusing herself from attending Madame Montoni thither.

It was very late before their gondola was ordered, and Emily's surprise was extreme, when, on quitting the Casino, she beheld the broad sun rising out of the Adriatic, while St. Mark's Place was yet crowded with company. Sleep had long weighed heavily on her eyes, but now the fresh sea-breeze revived her, and she would have quitted the scene with regret, had not the Count been present, performing the duty, which he had imposed upon himself, of escorting them home. There they heard that Montoni was not yet returned; and his wife, retiring in displeasure to her apartment,

ment, at length released Emily from the fatigue of further attendance.

Montoni came home late in the morning, in a very ill humour, having lost considerably at play, and, before he withdrew to rest, had a private conference with Cavigni, whose manner, on the following day, seemed to tell, that the subject of it had not been pleasing to him.

In the evening, Madame Montoni, who, during the day, had observed a sullen silence towards her husband, received visits from some Venetian ladies, with whose sweet manners Emily was particularly charmed. They had an air of ease and kindness towards the strangers, as if they had been their familiar friends for years; and their conversation was by turns tender, sentimental, and gay. Madame, though she had no taste for such conversation, and whose coarseness and selfishness sometimes exhibited a ludicrous contrast to their excessive refinement, could not remain wholly insensible to the captivations of their manner.

In a pause of conversation, a lady who was called Signora Herminia took up a lute, and began to play and sing, with as much easy gaiety, as if she had been alone. Her voice was uncommonly rich in tone, and various in expression; yet she appeared to be entirely unconscious of its powers, and meant nothing less than to display them. She sang from the gaiety of her heart, as she sat with her veil half thrown back, holding gracefully the lute, under the spreading foliage and flowers of some plants, that rose from baskets, and interlaced one of the lattices of the saloon. Emily, retiring a little from the company, sketched her figure, with the miniature scenery around her, and drew a very interesting picture, which, though it would not, perhaps, have borne criticism, had spirit and taste enough to awaken both the fancy and the heart. When she had finished it, she presented it to the beautiful original, who was delighted with the offering,

as

as well as the sentiment it conveyed, and assured Emily, with a smile of captivating sweetness, that she should preserve it as a pledge of her friendship.

In the evening Cavigni joined the ladies, but Montoni had other engagements; and they embarked in the gondola for St. Mark's, where the same gay company seemed to flutter as on the preceding night. The cool breeze, the glassy sea, the gentle sound of its waves, and the sweeter murmur of distant music; the lofty porticos and arcades, and the happy groups that fauntered beneath them; these, with every feature and circumstance of the scene, united to charm Emily, no longer teased by the officious attentions of Count Morano. But, as she looked upon the moon-light sea, undulating along the walls of St. Mark, and, lingering for a moment over those walls, caught the sweet and melancholy song of some gondolier as he sat in his boat below, waiting for his master, her softened mind
returned

returned to the memory of her home, of her friends, and of all that was dear in her native country.

After walking some time, they sat down at the door of a Casino, and, while Cavigni was accommodating them with coffee and ice, were joined by Count Morano. He sought Emily with a look of impatient delight, who, remembering all the attention he had shewn her on the preceding evening, was compelled, as before, to shrink from his assiduities into a timid reserve, except when she conversed with Signora Herminia and the other ladies of her party.

It was near midnight before they withdrew to the opera, where Emily was not so charmed but that, when she remembered the scene she had just quitted, she felt how infinitely inferior all the splendour of art is to the sublimity of nature. Her heart was not now affected, tears of admiration did not start to her eyes, as when she viewed the vast expanse of ocean, the grandeur of the heavens, and listened to the rolling waters,

waters, and to the faint music that, at intervals, mingled with their roar. Remembering these, the scene before her faded into insignificance.

Of the evening, which passed on without any particular incident, she wished the conclusion, that she might escape from the attentions of the Count; and, as opposite qualities frequently attract each other in our thoughts, thus Emily, when she looked on Count Morano, remembered Valancourt, and a sigh sometimes followed the recollection.

Several weeks passed in the course of customary visits, during which nothing remarkable occurred. Emily was amused by the manners and scenes that surrounded her, so different from those of France, but where Count Morano, too frequently for her comfort, contrived to introduce himself. His manner, figure and accomplishments, which were generally admired, Emily would, perhaps, have admired also, had her heart been disengaged from Valancourt,

lancourt, and had the Count forbore to persecute her with officious attentions, during which she observed some traits in his character, that prejudiced her against whatever might otherwise be good in it.

Soon after his arrival at Venice, Montoni received a packet from M. Quesnel, in which the latter mentioned the death of his wife's uncle, at his villa on the Brenta; and that, in consequence of this event, he should hasten to take possession of that estate and of other effects bequeathed to him. This uncle was the brother of Madame Quesnel's late mother; Montoni was related to her by the father's side, and though he could have had neither claim nor expectation concerning these possessions, he could scarcely conceal the envy which M. Quesnel's letter excited.

Emily had observed with concern, that, since they left France, Montoni had not even affected kindness towards her aunt, and that, after treating her, at first, with neglect, he now met her with uniform ill-humour

humour and reserve. She had never supposed, that her aunt's foibles could have escaped the discernment of Montoni, or that her mind or figure were of a kind to deserve his attention. Her surprise, therefore, at this match, had been extreme; but since he had made the choice, she did not suspect that he would so openly have discovered his contempt of it. But Montoni, who had been allured by the seeming wealth of Madame Cheron, was now severely disappointed by her comparative poverty, and highly exasperated by the deceit she had employed to conceal it, till concealment was no longer necessary. He had been deceived in an affair, wherein he meant to be the deceiver; out-witted by the superior cunning of a woman, whose understanding he despised, and to whom he had sacrificed his pride and his liberty, without saving himself from the ruin, which had impended over his head. Madame Montoni had contrived to have the greatest part of what she really did possess, settled upon herself:

what remained, though it was totally inadequate both to her husband's expectations, and to his necessities, he had converted into money, and brought with him to Venice, that he might a little longer delude society, and make a last effort to regain the fortunes he had lost.

The hints which had been thrown out to Valancourt, concerning Montoni's character and condition, were too true; but it was now left to time and occasion, to unfold the circumstances, both of what had, and of what had not been hinted, and to time and occasion we commit them.

Madame Montoni was not of a nature to bear injuries with meekness, or to resent them with dignity: her exasperated pride displayed itself in all the violence and acrimony of a little, or at least of an ill-regulated mind. She would not acknowledge, even to herself, that she had in any degree provoked contempt by her duplicity, but weakly persisted in believing, that she alone was to be pitied, and Montoni alone

alone to be censured ; for, as her mind had naturally little perception of moral obligation, she seldom understood its force but when it happened to be violated towards herself : her vanity had already been severely shocked by a discovery of Montoni's contempt ; it remained to be farther reproved by a discovery of his circumstances. His mansion at Venice, though its furniture discovered a part of the truth to unprejudiced persons, told nothing to those who were blinded by a resolution to believe whatever they wished. Madame Montoni still thought herself little less than a princess, possessing a palace at Venice, and a castle among the Apennines. To the castle di Udolpho, indeed, Montoni sometimes talked of going for a few weeks to examine into its condition, and to receive some rents ; for it appeared that he had not been there for two years, and that, during this period, it had been inhabited only by an old servant, whom he called his steward.

Emily listened to the mention of this journey with pleasure, for she not only expected from it new ideas, but a release from the persevering assiduities of Count Morano. In the country, too, she would have leisure to think of Valancourt, and to indulge the melancholy, which his image, and a recollection of the scenes of La Vallée, always blessed with the memory of her parents, awakened. The ideal scenes were dearer, and more soothing to her heart, than all the splendour of gay assemblies; they were a kind of talisman that expelled the poison of temporary evils, and supported her hopes of happy days: they appeared like a beautiful landscape, lighted up by a gleam of sunshine, and seen through a perspective of dark and rugged rocks.

But Count Morano did not long confine himself to silent assiduities; he declared his passion to Emily, and made proposals to Montoni, who encouraged, though Emily rejected, him: with Montoni for his
friend,

friend, and an abundance of vanity to delude him, he did not despair of success. Emily was astonished and highly disgusted at his perseverance, after she had explained her sentiments with a frankness that would not allow him to misunderstand them.

He now passed the greater part of his time at Montoni's, dining there almost daily, and attending Madame and Emily wherever they went; and all this, notwithstanding the uniform reserve of Emily, whose aunt seemed as anxious as Montoni to promote this marriage; and would never dispense with her attendance at any assembly where the Count proposed to be present.

Montoni now said nothing of his intended journey, of which Emily waited impatiently to hear; and he was seldom at home but when the Count, or Signor Orfino, was there, for between himself and Cavigni a coolness seemed to subsist, though the latter remained in his house. With Orfino, Montoni was frequently closeted for hours together, and, whatever might be the busi-

ness, upon which they consulted, it appeared to be of consequence, since Montoni often sacrificed to it his favourite passion for play, and remained at home the whole night. There was somewhat of privacy, too, in the manner of Orsino's visits, which had never before occurred, and which excited not only surprise, but some degree of alarm in Emily's mind, who had unwillingly discovered much of his character when he had most endeavoured to disguise it. After these visits, Montoni was often more thoughtful than usual; sometimes the deep workings of his mind entirely abstracted him from surrounding objects, and threw a gloom over his visage that rendered it terrible; at others, his eyes seemed almost to flash fire, and all the energies of his soul appeared to be roused for some great enterprise. Emily observed these written characters of his thoughts with deep interest, and not without some degree of awe, when she considered that she was entirely in his power; but forbore

forbore even to hint her fears, or her observations, to Madame Montoni, who discerned nothing in her husband, at these times, but his usual sternness.

A second letter from M. Quesnel announced the arrival of himself and his lady at the villa Miarenti; stated several circumstances of his good fortune, respecting the affair that had brought him into Italy; and concluded with an earnest request to see Montoni, his wife and niece, at his new estate.

Emily received, about the same period, a much more interesting letter, and which soothed for a while every anxiety of her heart. Valancourt, hoping she might be still at Venice, had trusted a letter to the ordinary post, that told her of his health, and of his unceasing and anxious affection. He had lingered at Thoulouse for some time after her departure, that he might indulge the melancholy pleasure of wandering through the scenes where he had been accustomed to behold her, and had thence

gone to his brother's chateau, which was in the neighbourhood of La Vallée. Having mentioned this, he added, " If the duty of attending my regiment did not require my departure, I know not when I should have resolution enough to quit the neighbourhood of a place which is endeared by the remembrance of you. The vicinity to La Vallée has alone detained me thus long at Estuviere : I frequently ride thither early in the morning, that I may wander, at leisure, through the day, among scenes, which were once your home, where I have been accustomed to see you, and to hear you converse. I have renewed my acquaintance with the good old Theresa, who rejoiced to see me, that she might talk of you : I need not say how much this circumstance attached me to her, or how eagerly I listened to her upon her favourite subject. You will guess the motive that first induced me to make myself known to Theresa : it was, indeed, no other than that of gaining admittance into the chateau
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and gardens, which my Emily had so lately inhabited: here, then, I wander, and meet your image under every shade: but chiefly I love to sit beneath the spreading branches of your favourite plane, where once, Emily, we sat together; where I first ventured to tell you, that I loved. O Emily! the remembrance of those moments overcomes me—I sit lost in reverie—I endeavour to see you dimly through my tears, in all the heaven of peace and innocence, such as you then appeared to me; to hear again the accents of that voice, which then thrilled my heart with tenderness and hope. I lean on the wall of the terrace, where we together watched the rapid current of the Garonne below, while I described the wild scenery about its source, but thought only of you. O Emily! are these moments passed for ever—will they never more return?”

In another part of his letter he wrote thus. “ You see my letter is dated on many different days, and, if you look back to the first, you will perceive, that I began to

write soon after your departure from France. To write was, indeed, the only employment that withdrew me from my own melancholy, and rendered your absence supportable, or rather, it seemed to destroy absence; for, when I was conversing with you on paper, and telling you every sentiment and affection of my heart, you almost appeared to be present. This employment has been from time to time my chief consolation, and I have deferred sending off my packet, merely for the comfort of prolonging it, though it was certain, that what I had written, was written to no purpose till you received it. Whenever my mind has been more than usually depressed I have come to pour forth its sorrows to you, and have always found consolation; and, when any little occurrence has interested my heart, and given a gleam of joy to my spirits, I have hastened to communicate it to you, and have received reflected satisfaction. Thus, my letter is a kind of picture of my life and of my thoughts for the last month,

and thus, though it has been deeply interesting to me, while I wrote it, and I dare hope will, for the same reason, be not indifferent to you, yet to other readers it would seem to abound only in frivolities. Thus it is always, when we attempt to describe the finer movements of the heart, for they are too fine to be discerned, they can only be experienced, and are therefore passed over by the indifferent observer, while the interested one feels, that all description is imperfect and unnecessary, except as it may prove the sincerity of the writer, and sooth his own sufferings. You will pardon all this egotism—for I am a lover.”

“ I have just heard of a circumstance, which entirely destroys all my fairy paradise of ideal delight, and which will reconcile me to the necessity of returning to my regiment, for I must no longer wander beneath the beloved shades, where I have been accustomed to meet you in thought.—La Vallée is let! I have reason to believe this is without your knowledge, from what

Theresa told me this morning, and, therefore, I mention the circumstance. She shed tears, while she related, that she was going to leave the service of her dear mistress, and the chateau where she had lived so many happy years ; and all this, added she, without even a letter from Mademoiselle to soften the news ; but it is all Mons. Quesnel's doings, and I dare say she does not even know what is going forward."

" Theresa added, That she had received a letter from him, informing her the chateau was let, and that, as her services would no longer be required, she must quit the place, on that day week, when the new tenant would arrive."

" Theresa had been surprised by a visit from M. Quesnel, some time before the receipt of this letter, who was accompanied by a stranger that viewed the premises with much curiosity."

Towards the conclusion of his letter, which is dated a week after this sentence, Valancourt adds, " I have received a sum-

mons

mons from my regiment, and I join it without regret, since I am shut out from the scenes that are so interesting to my heart. I rode to La Vallée this morning, and heard that the new tenant was arrived, and that Therefa was gone. I should not treat the subject thus familiarly if I did not believe you to be uninformed of this disposal of your house; for your satisfaction I have endeavoured to learn something of the character and fortune of your tenant, but without success. He is a gentleman, they say, and this is all I can hear. The place, as I wandered round the boundaries, appeared more melancholy to my imagination, than I had ever seen it. I wished earnestly to have got admittance, that I might have taken another leave of your favourite plane-tree, and thought of you once more beneath its shade: but I forbore to tempt the curiosity of strangers: the fishing-house in the woods, however, was still open to me; thither I went, and passed an hour, which I cannot even look back upon without emotion.

tion. O Emily! surely we are not separated for ever—surely we shall live for each other!”

This letter brought many tears to Emily's eyes; tears of tenderness and satisfaction on learning that Valancourt was well, and that time and absence had in no degree effaced her image from his heart. There were passages in this letter which particularly affected her, such as those describing his visits to La Vallée, and the sentiments of delicate affection that its scenes had awakened. It was a considerable time before her mind was sufficiently abstracted from Valancourt to feel the force of his intelligence concerning La Vallée. That Mons. Quesnel should let it, without even consulting her on the measure, both surprised and shocked her, particularly as it proved the absolute authority he thought himself entitled to exercise in her affairs. It is true, he had proposed, before she left France, that the chateau should be let, during her absence, and to the œconomical prudence of this
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she had nothing to object; but the committing what had been her father's villa to the power and caprice of strangers, and the depriving herself of a sure home, should any unhappy circumstances make her look back to her home as an asylum, were considerations that made her, even then, strongly oppose the measure. Her father, too, in his last hour, had received from her a solemn promise never to dispose of La Vallée; and this she considered as in some degree violated if she suffered the place to be let. But it was now evident with how little respect M. Quesnel had regarded these objections, and how insignificant he considered every obstacle to pecuniary advantage. It appeared, also, that he had not even condescended to inform Montoni of the step he had taken, since no motive was evident for Montoni's concealing the circumstance from her, if it had been made known to him: this both displeased and surprised her; but the chief subjects of her uneasiness were—the temporary disposal

disposal of La Vallée, and the dismissal of her father's old and faithful servant.—
 “ Poor Theresa,” said Emily, “ thou hadst not saved much in thy servitude, for thou wast always tender towards the poor, and believed'st thou shouldst die in the family, where thy best years had been spent. Poor Theresa!—now thou art turned out in thy old age to seek thy bread !”

Emily wept bitterly as these thoughts passed over her mind, and she determined to consider what could be done for Theresa, and to talk very explicitly to M. Quesnel on the subject; but she much feared that his cold heart could feel only for itself. She determined also to enquire whether he had made any mention of her affairs, in his letters to Montoni, who soon gave her the opportunity she sought, by desiring that she would attend him in his study. She had little doubt, that the interview was intended for the purpose of communicating to her a part of M. Quesnel's letter concerning the
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transactions at La Vallée, and she obeyed him immediately. Montoni was alone.

“ I have just been writing to Mons. Quesnel,” said he when Emily appeared, “ in reply to the letter I received from him a few days ago, and I wished to talk to you upon a subject that occupied part of it.”

“ I also wished to speak with you on this topic, sir,” said Emily.

“ It is a subject of some interest to you, undoubtedly,” rejoined Montoni, “ and I think you must see it in the light that I do; indeed it will not bear any other. I trust you will agree with me, that any objection founded on sentiment, as they call it, ought to yield to circumstances of solid advantage.”

“ Granting this, sir,” replied Emily, modestly, “ those of humanity ought surely to be attended to. But I fear it is now too late to deliberate upon this plan, and I must regret, that it is no longer in my power to reject it.”

“ It

“ It is too late,” said Montoni, “ but since it is so, I am pleased to observe, that you submit to reason and necessity without indulging useless complaint. I applaud this conduct exceedingly, the more, perhaps, since it discovers a strength of mind seldom observable in your sex. When you are older you will look back with gratitude to the friends who assisted in rescuing you from the romantic illusions of sentiment, and will perceive, that they are only the snares of childhood, and should be vanquished the moment you escape from the nursery. I have not closed my letter, and you may add a few lines to inform your uncle of your acquiescence. You will soon see him, for it is my intention to take you, with Madame Montoni, in a few days to Miarenti, and you can then talk over the affair.”

Emily wrote on the opposite page of the paper as follows :

“ It is now useless, sir, for me to remonstrate upon the circumstances of which
Signor

Signor Montoni informs me that he has written. I could have wished, at least, that the affair had been concluded with less precipitation, that I might have taught myself to subdue some prejudices, as the Signor calls them, which still linger in my heart. As it is, I submit. In point of prudence nothing certainly can be objected; but, though I submit, I have yet much to say on some other points of the subject, when I shall have the honour of seeing you. In the meantime I entreat you will take care of Theresa, for the sake of,

Sir,

Your affectionate niece,

EMILY ST. AUBERT."

Montoni smiled satirically at what Emily had written, but did not object to it, and she withdrew to her own apartment, where she sat down to begin a letter to Valancourt, in which she related the particulars of her journey, and her arrival at Venice, described some of the most striking scenes in the passage

page

sage over the Alps; her emotions on her first view of Italy; the manners and characters of the people around her, and some few circumstances of Montoni's conduct. But she avoided even naming Count Morano, much more the declaration he had made, since she well knew how tremblingly alive to fear is real love, how jealously watchful of every circumstance that may affect its interest; and she scrupulously avoided to give Valancourt even the slightest reason for believing he had a rival.

On the following day Count Morano dined again at Montoni's. He was in an uncommon flow of spirits, and Emily thought there was somewhat of exultation in his manner of addressing her, which she had never observed before. She endeavoured to repress this by more than her usual reserve, but the cold civility of her air now seemed rather to encourage than to depress him. He appeared watchful of an opportunity of speaking with her alone, and more than once solicited this; but Emily always replied,

replied, that she could hear nothing from him which he would be unwilling to repeat before the whole company.

In the evening, Madame Montoni and her party went out upon the sea, and as the Count led Emily to his *zendaletto*, he carried her hand to his lips, and thanked her for the condescension she had shewn him. Emily, in extreme surprize and displeasure, hastily withdrew her hand, and concluded that he had spoken ironically; but, on reaching the steps of the terrace, and observing by the livery, that it was the Count's *zendaletto*, which waited below, while the rest of the party, having arranged themselves in the gondolas, were moving on, she determined not to permit a separate conversation, and, wishing him a good evening, returned to the portico. The Count followed to expostulate and entreat, and Montoni, who then came out, rendered solicitation unnecessary, for, without condescending to speak, he took her hand, and led her to the *zendaletto*. Emily was

not silent ; she entreated Montoni, in a low voice, to consider the impropriety of these circumstances, and that he would spare her the mortification of submitting to them ; he, however, was inflexible.

“ This caprice is intolerable,” said he, “ and shall not be indulged : here is no impropriety in the case.”

At this moment, Emily’s dislike of Count Morano arose to abhorrence. That he should, with undaunted assurance, thus pursue her, notwithstanding all she had expressed on the subject of his addresses, and think, as it was evident he did, that her opinion of him was of no consequence, so long as his pretensions were sanctioned by Montoni, added indignation to the disgust which she had felt towards him. She was somewhat relieved by observing that Montoni was to be of the party, who seated himself on one side of her, while Morano placed himself on the other. There was a pause of some moments as the gondolieri prepared their oars, and Emily trembled from apprehension

hension of the discourse that might follow this silence. At length she collected courage to break it herself, in the hope of preventing fine speeches from Morano, and reproof from Montoni. To some trivial remark which she made, the latter returned a short and disobliging reply; but Morano immediately followed with a general observation, which he contrived to end with a particular compliment, and, though Emily passed it without even the notice of a smile, he was not discouraged.

“ I have been impatient,” said he, addressing Emily, “ to express my gratitude; to thank you for your goodness; but I must also thank Signor Montoni, who has allowed me this opportunity of doing so.”

Emily regarded the Count with a look of mingled astonishment and displeasure.

“ Why,” continued he, “ should you wish to diminish the delight of this moment by that air of cruel reserve?—Why seek to throw me again into the perplexities of doubt, by teaching your eyes to contradict

dict the kindness of your late declaration? You cannot doubt the sincerity, the ardour of my passion; it is therefore unnecessary, charming Emily! surely unnecessary, any longer to attempt a disguise of your sentiments."

"If I ever had disguised them, sir," said Emily, with recollected spirit, "it would certainly be unnecessary any longer to do so. I had hoped, sir, that you would have spared me any farther necessity of alluding to them; but, since you do not grant this, hear me declare, and for the last time, that your perseverance has deprived you even of the esteem, which I was inclined to believe you merited."

"Astonishing!" exclaimed Montoni: "this is beyond even my expectation, though I have hitherto done justice to the caprice of the sex! But you will observe, Mademoiselle Emily, that I am no lover, though Count Morano is, and that I will not be made the amusement of your capricious moments. Here is the offer of an alliance,
which

which would do honour to any family; yours, you will recollect, is not noble; you long resisted my remonstrances, but my honour is now engaged, and it shall not be trifled with.—You shall adhere to the declaration, which you have made me an agent to convey to the Count.”

“ I must certainly mistake you, sir,” said Emily; “ my answers on the subject have been uniform; it is unworthy of you to accuse me of caprice. If you have condescended to be my agent, it is an honour I did not solicit. I myself have constantly assured Count Morano, and you also, sir, that I never can accept the honour he offers me, and I now repeat the declaration.”

The Count looked with an air of surprise and enquiry at Montoni, whose countenance also was marked with surprise, but it was surprise mingled with indignation.

“ Here is confidence, as well as caprice !” said the latter. “ Will you deny your own words, Madam ?

“ Such a question is unworthy of an answer,

swer, sir ;” said Emily blushing ; you will recollect yourself, and be sorry that you have asked it.”

“ Speak to the point,” rejoined Montoni, in a voice of increasing vehemence. “ Will you deny your own words ; will you deny, that you acknowledged, only a few hours ago, that it was too late to recede from your engagements, and that you accepted the Count’s hand ?”

“ I will deny all this, for no words of mine ever imported it.”

“ Astonishing ! Will you deny what you wrote to Monf. Quesnel, your uncle ? if you do, your own hand will bear testimony against you. What have you now to say ?” continued Montoni, observing the silence and confusion of Emily.

“ I now perceive, sir, that you are under a very great error, and that I have been equally mistaken.”

“ No more duplicity, I entreat ; be open and candid, if it be possible.”

“ I have always been so, sir ; and can

claim no merit in such conduct, for I have had nothing to conceal."

"How is this, Signor?" cried Morano, with trembling emotion.

"Suspend your judgment, Count," replied Montoni, "the wiles of a female heart are unsearchable. Now, Madam, your *explanation*."

"Excuse me, sir, if I withhold my explanation till you appear willing to give me your confidence; assertion at present can only subject me to insult."

"Your explanation, I entreat you!" said Morano.

"Well, well," rejoined Montoni, "I give you my confidence; let us hear this explanation."

"Let me lead to it then, by asking a question."

"As many as you please," said Montoni, contemptuously.

"What, then, was the subject of your letter to Mons. Quesnel?"

“ The same that was the subject of your note to him, certainly. You did well to stipulate for my confidence before you demanded that question.”

“ I must beg you will be more explicit, sir; what was that subject?”

“ What could it be, but the noble offer of Count Morano,” said Montoni .

“ Then, sir, we entirely misunderstood each other,” replied Emily.

“ We entirely misunderstood each other too, I suppose,” rejoined Montoni, “ in the conversation which preceded the writing of that note? I must do you the justice to own, that you are very ingenious at this same art of misunderstanding.”

Emily tried to restrain the tears that came to her eyes, and to answer with becoming firmness. “ Allow me, sir, to explain myself fully, or to be wholly silent.”

“ The explanation may now be dispensed with; it is anticipated. If Count Morano still thinks one necessary, I will
give

give him an honest one.—You have changed your intention since our last conversation ; and, if he can have patience and humility enough to wait till to-morrow, he will probably find it changed again : but as I have neither the patience or the humility, which you expect from a lover, I warn you of the effect of my displeasure !”

“Montoni, you are too precipitate,” said the Count, who had listened to this conversation in extreme anxiety and impatience ;—“Signora, I entreat your own explanation of this affair !”

“Signor Montoni has said justly,” replied Emily, “that all explanation may now be dispensed with ; after what has passed I cannot suffer myself to give one. It is sufficient for me, and for you, sir, that I repeat my late declaration ; let me hope this is the last time it will be necessary for me to repeat it—I never can accept the honour of your alliance.”

“Charming Emily !” exclaimed the Count in an impassioned tone, “let not

resentment make you unjust; let me not suffer for the offence of Montoni!—Revoke——”

“ Offence!” interrupted Montoni——
“ Count, this language is ridiculous, this submission is childish!—speak as becomes a man, not as the slave of a pretty tyrant.”

“ You distract me, Signor; suffer me to plead my own cause; you have already proved insufficient to it.”

“ All conversation on this subject, sir,” said Emily, “ is worse than useless, since it can bring only pain to each of us: if you would oblige me, pursue it no farther.”

“ It is impossible, Madam, that I can thus easily resign the object of a passion, which is the delight and torment of my life.—I must still love—still pursue you with unremitting ardour;—when you shall be convinced of the strength and constancy of my passion, your heart must soften into pity and repentance.”

“ Is this generous, sir? is this manly? Can it either deserve or obtain the esteem
you

you solicit, thus to continue a persecution from which I have no present means of escaping?"

A gleam of moonlight that fell upon Morano's countenance, revealed the strong emotions of his soul; and, glancing on Montoni discovered the dark resentment, which contrasted his features.

"By heaven this is too much!" suddenly exclaimed the Count; "Signor Montoni, you treat me ill; it is from you that I shall look for explanation."

"From me, sir! you shall have it;" muttered Montoni, "if your discernment is indeed so far obscured by passion, as to make explanation necessary. And for you, Madam, you should learn, that a man of honour is not to be trifled with, though you may, perhaps, with impunity, treat a *boy* like a puppet.

This sarcasm roused the pride of Morano, and the resentment which he had felt at the indifference of Emily, being lost in indignation of the insolence of Montoni,

he determined to mortify him, by defending her.

“ This also,” said he, replying to Montoni’s last words, “ this also, shall not pass unnoticed. I bid you learn, sir, that you have a stronger enemy than a woman to contend with: I will protect Signora St. Aubert from your threatened resentment. You have misled me, and would revenge your disappointed views upon the innocent.”

“ Misled you !” retorted Montoni with quickness, “ is my conduct—my word”—then pausing, while he seemed endeavouring to restrain the resentment, that flashed in his eyes, in the next moment he added, in a subdued voice, “ Count Morano, this is a language, a sort of conduct to which I am not accustomed: it is the conduct of a passionate boy—as such, I pass it over in contempt.”

“ In contempt, Signor ?”

“ The respect I owe myself,” rejoined Montoni, requires, that I should converse
more

more largely with you upon some points of the subject in dispute. Return with me to Venice, and I will condescend to convince you of your error."

"Condescend, sir! but I will not condescend to be so conversed with."

Montoni smiled contemptuously; and Emily, now terrified for the consequences of what she saw and heard, could no longer be silent. She explained the whole subject upon which she had mistaken Montoni in the morning, declaring, that she understood him to have consulted her solely concerning the disposal of La Vallée, and concluding with entreating, that he would write immediately to M. Quesnel, and rectify the mistake.

But Montoni either was, or affected to be, still incredulous; and Count Morano was still entangled in perplexity. While she was speaking, however, the attention of her auditors had been diverted from the immediate occasion of their resentment, and their passion consequently became less.

Montoni desired the Count would order his servants to row back to Venice, that he might have some private conversation with him; and Morano, somewhat soothed by his softened voice and manner, and eager to examine into the full extent of his difficulties, complied.

Emily, comforted by this prospect of release, employed the present moments in endeavouring, with conciliating care, to prevent any fatal mischief between the persons who so lately had persecuted and insulted her.

Her spirits revived, when she heard once more the voice of song and laughter, resounding from the grand canal, and at length entered again between its stately piazzas. The *zendaletto* stopped at Montoni's mansion, and the Count hastily led her into the hall, where Montoni took his arm, and said something in a low voice, on which Morano kissed the hand he held, notwithstanding Emily's effort to disengage it, and, wishing her a good evening,
with

with an accent and look she could not misunderstand, returned to his *zendaletto* with Montoni.

Emily, in her own apartment, considered with intense anxiety all the unjust and tyrannical conduct of Montoni, the dauntless perseverance of Morano, and her own desolate situation, removed from her friends and country. She looked in vain to Valancourt, confined by his profession to a distant kingdom, as her protector; but it gave her comfort to know, that there was, at least, one person in the world, who would sympathize in her afflictions, and whose wishes would fly eagerly to release her. Yet she determined not to give him unavailing pain by relating the reasons she had to regret the having rejected his better judgment concerning Montoni; reasons, however, which could not induce her to lament the delicacy and disinterested affection that had made her reject his proposal for a clandestine marriage. The approaching interview with her uncle she regarded

with some degree of hope, for she determined to represent to him the distresses of her situation, and to entreat that he would allow her to return to France with him and Madame Quesnel. Then, suddenly remembering that her beloved La Vallée, her only home, was no longer at her command, her tears flowed anew, and she feared that she had little pity to expect from a man who, like M. Quesnel, could dispose of it without deigning to consult with her, and could dismiss an aged and faithful servant, destitute of either support or asylum. But, though it was certain that she had herself no longer a home in France, and few, very few friends there, she determined to return, if possible, that she might be released from the power of Montoni, whose particularly oppressive conduct towards herself, and general character as to others, were justly terrible to her imagination. She had no wish to reside with her uncle, M. Quesnel, since his behaviour to her late father and to herself, had been uniformly such as to con-

vince

vince her, that in flying to him she could only obtain an exchange of oppressors; neither had she the slightest intention of consenting to the proposal of Valancourt for an immediate marriage, though this would give her a lawful and a generous protector, for the chief reasons, which had formerly influenced her conduct, still existed against it, while others, which seemed to justify the step, would now be done away; and his interest, his fame were at all times too dear to her, to suffer her to consent to a union, which, at this early period of their lives, would probably defeat both. One sure, and proper asylum, however, would still be open to her in France. She knew that she could board in the convent, where she had formerly experienced so much kindness, and which had an affecting and solemn claim upon her heart, since it contained the remains of her late father. Here she could remain in safety and tranquillity, till the term, for which La Vallée might be let, should

should expire ; or, till the arrangement of M. Motteville's affairs enabled her so far to estimate the remains of her fortune, as to judge whether it would be prudent for her to reside there.

Concerning Montoni's conduct with respect to his letters to M. Quesnel, she had many doubts ; however he might be at first mistaken on the subject, she much suspected that he wilfully persevered in his error, as a means of intimidating her into a compliance with his wishes of uniting her to Count Morano. Whether this was or was not the fact, she was extremely anxious to explain the affair to M. Quesnel, and looked forward with a mixture of impatience, hope and fear, to her approaching visit.

On the following day, Madame Montoni, being alone with Emily, introduced the mention of Count Morano, by expressing her surprise, that she had not joined the party on the water the preceding
even-

evening, and at her abrupt departure to Venice. Emily then related what had passed, expressed her concern for the mutual mistake that had occurred between Montoni and herself, and solicited her aunt's kind offices in urging him to give a decisive denial to the Count's further addresses ; but she soon perceived, that Madame Montoni had not been ignorant of the late conversation, when she introduced the present.

“ You have no encouragement to expect from me,” said her aunt, “ in these notions. I have already given my opinion on the subject, and think Signor Montoni right in enforcing, by any means, your consent. If young persons will be blind to their interest, and obstinately oppose it, why, the greatest blessings they can have are friends, who will oppose their folly. Pray what pretensions of any kind do you think you have to such a match as is now offered you ?”

“ Not any whatever, Madam,” replied
Emily,

Emily, “ and, therefore, at least, suffer me to be happy in my humility.”

“ Nay, niece, it cannot be denied, that you have pride enough; my poor brother, your father, had his share of pride too; though, let me add, his fortune did not justify it.”

Emily, somewhat embarrassed by the indignation, which this malevolent allusion to her father excited, and by the difficulty of rendering her answer as temperate as it should be reprehensive, hesitated for some moments, in a confusion, which highly gratified her aunt. At length she said, “ My father’s pride, Madam, had a noble object—the happiness which he knew could be derived only from goodness, knowledge and charity. As it never consisted in his superiority, in point of fortune, to some persons, it was not humbled by his inferiority, in that respect, to others. He never disdained those, who were wretched by poverty and misfortune; he did sometimes despise

despise persons, who, with many opportunities of happiness, rendered themselves miserable by vanity, ignorance and cruelty. I shall think it my highest glory to emulate such pride."

"I do not pretend to understand any thing of these high-flown sentiments, niece; you have all that glory to yourself: I would teach you a little plain sense, and not have you so wise as to despise happiness."

"That would indeed not be wisdom, but folly," said Emily, "for wisdom can boast no higher attainment than happiness; but you will allow, Madam, that our ideas of happiness may differ. I cannot doubt, that you wish me to be happy, but I must fear you are mistaken in the means of making me so."

"I cannot boast of a learned education, niece, such as your father thought proper to give you, and, therefore, do not pretend to understand all these fine speeches about happiness. I must be contented to understand only common sense, and happy
would

would it have been for you and your father, if that had been included in his education.”

Emily was too much shocked by these reflections on her father's memory, to despise this speech as it deserved.

Madame Montoni was about to speak, but Emily quitted the room, and retired to her own, where the little spirit she had lately exerted yielded to grief and vexation, and left her only to her tears. From every review of her situation she could derive, indeed, only new sorrow. To the discovery, which had just been forced upon her, of Montoni's unworthiness, she had now to add, that of the cruel vanity, for the gratification of which her aunt was about to sacrifice her; of the effrontery and cunning, with which, at the time that she meditated the sacrifice, she boasted of her tenderness, or insulted her victim; and of the venomous envy, which, as it did not scruple to attack her father's character, could scarcely be expected to withhold from her own.

During

During the few days, that intervened between this conversation and the departure for Miarenti, Montoni did not once address himself to Emily. His looks sufficiently declared his resentment ; but that he should forbear to renew a mention of the subject of it, exceedingly surpris'd her, who was no less astonish'd, that, during three days, Count Morano neither visited Montoni, or was named by him. Several conjectures arose in her mind. Sometimes she feared that the dispute between them had been revived, and had ended fatally to the Count. Sometimes she was inclined to hope, that weariness, or disgust at her firm rejection of his suit had induced him to relinquish it ; and, at others, she suspected that he had now recourse to stratagem, and forbore his visits, and prevailed with Montoni to forbear the repetition of his name, in the expectation that gratitude and generosity would prevail with her to give him the consent, which he could not hope from love.

Thus passed the time in vain conjecture,
and

and alternate hopes and fears, till the day arrived when Montoni was to set out for the villa of Miarenti, which, like the preceding ones, neither brought the Count, or the mention of him.

Montoni having determined not to leave Venice, till towards evening, that he might avoid the heats, and catch the cool breezes of night, embarked about an hour before sun-set, with his family, in a barge, for the Brenta. Emily sat alone near the stern of the vessel, and, as it floated slowly on, watched the gay and lofty city lessening from her view, till its palaces seemed to sink in the distant waves, while its loftier towers and domes, illumined by the declining sun, appeared on the horizon, like those far-seen clouds which, in more northern climes, often linger on the western verge, and catch the last light of a summer's evening. Soon after, even these grew dim, and faded in distance from her sight; but she still sat gazing on the vast scene of cloudless sky, and mighty waters, and listening

in

in pleasing awe to the deep-founding waves, while, as her eyes glanced over the Adriatic, towards the opposite shores, which were, however, far beyond the reach of sight, she thought of Greece, and, a thousand classical remembrances stealing to her mind, she experienced that pensive luxury which is felt on viewing the scenes of ancient story, and on comparing their present state of silence and solitude with that of their former grandeur and animation. The scenes of the Illiad illapsed in glowing colours to her fancy—scenes, once the haunt of heroes—now lonely, and in ruins; but which still shone, in the poet's strain, in all their youthful splendour.

As her imagination painted with melancholy touches, the deserted plains of Troy, such as they appeared in this after-day, she reanimated the landscape with the following little story.

STANZAS.

S T A N Z A S.

O'er Ilion's plains, where once the warrior bled,
 And once the poet rais'd his deathless strain,
 O'er Ilion's plains a weary driver led
 His stately camels: For the ruin'd fane

Wide round the lonely scene his glance he threw,
 For now the red cloud faded in the west,
 And twilight o'er the silent landscape drew
 Her deep'ning veil; eastward his course he prest:

There, on the grey horizon's glimm'ring bound,
 Rose the proud columns of deserted Troy,
 And wandering shepherds now a shelter found
 Within those walls, where princes went to joy.

Beneath a lofty porch the driver pass'd,
 Then, from his camels heav'd the heavy load;
 Partook with them the simple, cool repast,
 And in short vesper gave himself to God.

From distant lands with merchandise he came,
 His all of wealth his patient servants bore;
 Oft deep-drawn sighs his anxious wish proclaim
 To reach, again, his happy cottage door;

For there, his wife, his little children, dwell;
 Their smiles shall pay the toil of many an hour:
 Ev'n now warm tears to expectation swell,
 As fancy o'er his mind extends her pow'r.

A death-

A death-like stillness reign'd, where once the song,
The song of heroes, wak'd the midnight air,
Save, when a solemn murmur roll'd along,
That seem'd to say—"For future worlds prepare."

For Time's imperious voice was frequent heard
Shaking the marble temple to its fall,
(By hands he long had conquer'd, vainly rear'd)
And distant ruins answer'd to his call.

While Hamet slept, his camels round him lay,
Beneath him, all his store of wealth was piled ;
And here, his cruse and empty wallet lay,
And there, the flute that cheer'd him in the wild.

The robber Tartar on his slumber stole,
For o'er the waste, at eve, he watch'd his train ;
Ah! who his thirst of plunder shall control ?
Who calls on him for mercy—calls in vain !

A poison'd poignard in his belt he wore,
A crescent sword depended at his side,
The deathful quiver at his back he bore,
And infants—at his very look had died !

The moon's cold beam athwart the temple fell,
And to his sleeping prey the Tartar led ;
But soft !—a startled camel shook his bell,
Then stretch'd his limbs, and rear'd his drowsy head.

Hamet

Hamet awoke ! the poignard glitter'd high !
Swift from his couch he sprung, and 'scap'd the blow ;
When from an unknown hand the arrows fly,
That lay the ruffian, in his vengeance, low.

He groan'd, he died ! from forth a column'd gate
A fearful shepherd, pale and silent, crept,
Who, as he watch'd his folded flock star-late,
Had mark'd the robber steal where Hamet slept.

He fear'd his own, and sav'd a stranger's life !
Poor Hamet clasp'd him to his grateful heart ;
Then, rous'd his camels for the dusty strife,
And, with the shepherd, hasten'd to depart.

And now, Aurora breathes her fresh'ning gale,
And faintly trembles on the eastern cloud ;
And now, the sun, from under twilight's veil,
Looks gaily forth, and melts her airy shroud.

Wide o'er the level plains, his slanting beams
Dart their long lines on Ilion's tower'd scite ;
The distant Hellespont with morning gleams,
And old Scamander winds his waves in light.

All merry found the camel bells, so gay,
And merry beats fond Hamet's heart, for he,
E'er the dim evening steals upon the day,
His children, wife and happy home shall see.

As Emily approached the shores of Italy she began to discriminate the rich features and varied colouring of the landscape—the purple hills, groves of orange pine and cypresses, shading magnificent villas, and towns rising among vineyards and plantations. The noble Brenta, pouring its broad waves into the sea, now appeared, and, when she reached its mouth, the barge stopped, that the horses might be fastened which were to tow it up the stream. This done, Emily gave a last look to the Adriatic, and to the dim sail,

———“ That from the sky-mix'd wave
“ Dawns on the sight,”

and the barge slowly glided between the green and luxuriant slopes of the river. The grandeur of the Palladian villas, that adorn these shores, was considerably heightened by the setting rays, which threw strong contrasts of light and shade upon the porticos and long arcades, and beamed a mellow lustre upon the orangeries and

the tall groves of pine and cypress, that overhung the buildings. The scent of oranges, of flowering myrtles, and other odoriferous plants was diffused upon the air, and often, from these embowered retreats, a strain of music stole on the calm, and “softened into silence.”

The sun now sunk below the horizon, twilight fell over the landscape, and Emily, wrapt in musing silence, continued to watch its features gradually vanishing into obscurity. She remembered her many happy evenings, when with St. Aubert she had observed the shades of twilight steal over a scene as beautiful as this, from the gardens of La Vallée, and a tear fell to the memory of her father. Her spirits were softened into melancholy by the influence of the hour, by the low murmur of the wave passing under the vessel, and the stillness of the air, that trembled only at intervals with distant music:—why else should she, at these moments, have looked on her attachment to Valancourt with presages so

very afflicting, since she had but lately received letters from him, that had soothed for a while all her anxieties? It now seemed to her oppressed mind, that she had taken leave of him for ever, and that the countries, which separated them, would never more be re-traced by her. She looked upon Count Morano with horror, as in some degree the cause of this; but apart from him, a conviction, if such that may be called, which arises from no proof, and which she knew not how to account for, seized her mind—that she should never see Valancourt again. Though she knew, that neither Morano's solicitations, nor Montoni's commands had lawful power to enforce her obedience, she regarded both with a superstitious dread, that they would finally prevail.

Lost in this melancholy reverie, and shedding frequent tears, Emily was at length roused by Montoni, and she followed him to the cabin, where refreshments were spread, and her aunt was seated alone. The

countenance of Madame Montoni was inflamed with resentment, that appeared to be the consequence of some conversation she had held with her husband, who regarded her with a kind of sullen disdain, and both preserved, for some time, a haughty silence. Montoni then spoke to Emily of Mons. Quesnel: "You will not, I hope, persist in disclaiming your knowledge of the subject of my letter to him?"

"I had hoped, sir, that it was no longer necessary for me to disclaim it," said Emily, "I had hoped, from your silence, that you was convinced of your error."

"You have hoped impossibilities then," replied Montoni; "I might as reasonably have expected to find sincerity and uniformity of conduct in one of your sex, as you to convict me of error in this affair."

Emily blushed, and was silent; she now perceived too clearly, that she had hoped an impossibility, for, where no mistake had been committed no conviction could follow;
and

and it was evident, that Montoni's conduct had not been the consequence of mistake, but of design.

Anxious to escape from conversation, which was both afflicting and humiliating to her, she soon returned to the deck, and resumed her station near the stern, without apprehension of cold, for no vapour rose from the water, and the air was dry and tranquil; here, at least, the benevolence of nature allowed her the quiet which Montoni had denied her elsewhere. It was now past midnight. The stars shed a kind of twilight, that served to shew the dark outline of the shores on either hand, and the grey surface of the river; till the moon rose from behind a high palm grove, and shed her mellow lustre over the scene. The vessel glided smoothly on: amid the stillness of the hour Emily heard, now and then, the solitary voice of the barge-men on the bank, as they spoke to their horses; while, from a remote part of the vessel, with melancholy song,

—“The sailor sooth'd,
Beneath the trembling moon, the midnight wave.”

Emily, meanwhile, anticipated her reception by Monsi. and Madame Quesnel; considered what she should say on the subject of La Vallée; and then, to withhold her mind from more anxious topics, tried to amuse herself by discriminating the faint-drawn features of the landscape, reposing in the moon-light. While her fancy thus wandered, she saw, at a distance, a building peeping between the moon-light trees, and, as the barge approached, heard voices speaking, and soon distinguished the lofty portico of a villa, overshadowed by groves of pine and sycamore, which she recollected to be the same, that had formerly been pointed out to her, as belonging to Madame Quesnel's relative.

The barge stopped at a flight of marble steps, which led up the bank to a lawn. Lights appeared between some pillars beyond the portico. Montoni sent forward his servant, and then disembarked with his family.

family. They found *Monf.* and *Madame* *Quefnel*, with a few friends, feated on fofas in the portico, enjoying the cool breeze of the night, and eating fruits and ices, while fome of their fervants at a little diftance, on the river's bank, were performing a fimple ferenade. *Emily* was now accuftomed to the way of living in this warm country, and was not furprifed to find *Monf.* and *Madame* *Quefnel* in their portico, two hours after midnight.

The ufual falutations being over, the company feated themfelves in the portico, and refreshments were brought them from the adjoining hall, where a banquet was fpread, and fervants attended. When the bufle of this meeting had fubfided, and *Emily* had recovered from the little flutter into which it had thrown her fpirits, ſhe was ſtruck with the fingular beauty of the hall, fo perfectly accommodated to the luxuries of the feafon. It was of white marble, and the roof, rifing into an open cupola, was fupported by columns of the

same material. Two opposite sides of the apartment, terminating in open porticos, admitted to the hall a full view of the gardens, and of the river scenery; in the centre a fountain continually refreshed the air, and seemed to heighten the fragrance, that breathed from the surrounding orangeries, while its dashing waters gave an agreeable and soothing sound. Etruscan lamps, suspended from the pillars, diffused a brilliant light over the interior part of the hall, leaving the remoter porticos to the softer lustre of the moon.

Monf. Quesnel talked apart to Montoni of his own affairs, in his usual strain of self-importance; boasted of his new acquisitions, and then affected to pity some disappointments, which Montoni had lately sustained. Meanwhile, the latter, whose pride at least enabled him to despise such vanity as this, and whose discernment at once detected under this assumed pity, the frivolous malignity of Quesnel's mind, listened to him in contemptuous silence, till

till he named his niece, and then they left the portico, and walked away into the gardens.

Emily, however, still attended to Madame Quesnel, who spoke of France (for even the name of her native country was dear to her) and she found some pleasure in looking at a person, who had lately been in it. That country, too, was inhabited by Valancourt, and she listened to the mention of it, with a faint hope, that he also would be named. Madame Quesnel, who, when she was in France, had talked with rapture of Italy, now, that she was in Italy, talked with equal praise of France, and endeavoured to excite the wonder and the envy of her auditors by accounts of places, which they had not been happy enough to see. In these descriptions she not only imposed upon them, but upon herself, for she never thought a present pleasure equal to one, that was passed; and thus the delicious climate, the fragrant orangeries and all the luxuries, which surrounded her, slept unnoticed, while

her fancy wandered over the distant scenes of a northern country.

Emily listened in vain for the name of Valancourt. Madame Montoni spoke in her turn of the delights of Venice, and of the pleasure she expected from visiting the fine castle of Montoni, on the Apennine; which latter mention, at least, was merely a retaliating boast, for Emily well knew, that her aunt had no taste for solitary grandeur, and, particularly, for such as the castle of Udolpho promised. Thus the party continued to converse, and, as far as civility would permit, to torture each other by mutual boasts, while they reclined on sofas in the portico, and were environed with delights both from nature and art, by which any honest minds would have been tempered to benevolence, and happy imaginations would have been soothed into enchantment.

The dawn, soon after, trembled in the eastern horizon, and the light tints of morning, gradually expanding, shewed the beautifully

tifully declining forms of the Italian mountains and the gleaming landscapes, stretched at their feet. Then the sun-beams, shooting up from behind the hills, spread over the scene that fine saffron tinge, which seems to impart repose to all it touches. The landscape no longer gleamed; all its glowing colours were revealed, except that its remoter features were still softened and united in the mist of distance, whose sweet effect was heightened to Emily by the dark verdure of the pines and cypresses, that over-arched the fore-ground of the river.

The market people, passing with their boats to Venice, now formed a moving picture on the Brenta. Most of these had little painted awnings, to shelter their owners from the sun-beams, which, together with the piles of fruit and flowers, displayed beneath, and the tasteful simplicity of the peasant girls, who watched the rural treasures, rendered them gay and striking objects. The swift movement of the boats down the

current, the quick glance of oars in the water, and now and then the passing chorus of peasants, who reclined under the sail of their little bark, or the tones of some rustic instrument, played by a girl, as she sat near her sylvan cargo, heightened the animation and festivity of the scene.

When Montoni and M. Quésnel had joined the ladies, the party left the portico for the gardens, where the charming scenery soon withdrew Emily's thoughts from painful subjects. The majestic forms and rich verdure of cypresses she had never seen so perfect before: groves of cedar, lemon, and orange, the spiry clusters of the pine and poplar, the luxuriant chestnut and oriental plane, threw all their pomp of shade over these gardens; while bowers of flowering myrtle and other spicy shrubs mingled their fragrance with that of flowers, whose vivid and various colouring glowed with increased effect beneath the contrasted umbrage of the groves. The air also was continually refreshed by rivulets, which, with

more taste than fashion, had been suffered to wander among the green recesses.

Emily often lingered behind the party, to contemplate the distant landscape, that closed a vista, or that gleamed beneath the dark foliage of the foreground;—the spiral summits of the mountains, touched with a purple tint, broken and steep above, but shelving gradually to their base; the open valley, marked by no formal lines of art; and the tall groves of cypress, pine and poplar, sometimes embellished by a ruined villa, whose broken columns appeared between the branches of a pine, that seemed to droop over their fall.

From other parts of the gardens, the character of the view was entirely changed, and the fine solitary beauty of the landscape shifted for the crowded features and varied colouring of inhabitation.

The sun was now gaining fast upon the sky, and the party quitted the gardens, and retired to repose.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

“ And poor Misfortune feels the lash of Vice.”

THOMPSON.

EMILY seized the first opportunity of conversing alone with *Monf. Quesnel*, concerning *La Vallée*. His answers to her enquiries were concise, and delivered with the air of a man, who is conscious of possessing absolute power and impatient of hearing it questioned. He declared, that the disposal of the place was a necessary measure; and that she might consider herself indebted to his prudence for even the small income that remained for her. “ But, however,” added he, “ when this Venetian Count (I have forgot his name) marries you, your present disagreeable state of dependence will cease. As a relation to you I rejoice in the circumstance, which is so fortunate

fortunate for you, and, I may add, so unexpected by your friends."

For some moments Emily was chilled into silence by this speech; and, when she attempted to undeceive him, concerning the purport of the note she had inclosed in Montoni's letter, he appeared to have some private reason for disbelieving her assertion, and, for a considerable time, persevered in accusing her of capricious conduct. Being, at length, however, convinced, that she really disliked Morano and had positively rejected his suit, his resentment was extravagant, and he expressed it in terms equally pointed and inhuman; for, secretly flattered by the prospect of a connection with a nobleman, whose title he had affected to forget, he was incapable of feeling pity for whatever sufferings of his niece might stand in the way of his ambition.

Emily saw at once in his manner all the difficulties, that awaited her, and, though no oppression could have power to make her renounce Valancourt for Morano, her fortitude

itude now trembled at an encounter with the violent passions of her uncle.

She opposed his turbulence and indignation only by the mild dignity of a superior mind; but the gentle firmness of her conduct served to exasperate still more his resentment, since it compelled him to feel his own inferiority, and, when he left her, he declared, that, if she persisted in her folly, both himself and Montoni would abandon her to the contempt of the world.

The calmness she had assumed in his presence failed Emily, when alone, and she wept bitterly, and called frequently upon the name of her departed father, whose advice to her from his death-bed she then remembered. "Alas!" said she, "I do indeed perceive how much more valuable is the strength of fortitude than the grace of sensibility, and I will also endeavour to fulfil the promise I then made; I will not indulge in unavailing lamentation, but will try to endure, with firmness, the oppression I cannot elude."

Some-

Somewhat soothed by the consciousness of performing a part of St. Aubert's last request, and of endeavouring to pursue the conduct which he would have approved, she overcame her tears, and, when the company met at dinner, had recovered her usual serenity of countenance.

In the cool of the evening, the ladies took the *fresco* along the bank of the Brenta in Madame Quesnel's carriage. The state of Emily's mind was in melancholy contrast with the gay groups assembled beneath the shades that overhung this enchanting stream. Some were dancing under the trees, and others reclining on the grass, taking ices and coffee and calmly enjoying the effect of a beautiful evening, on a luxuriant landscape. Emily, when she looked at the snow-capt Apennines, ascending in the distance, thought of Montoni's castle, and suffered some terror, lest he should convey her thither, for the purpose of enforcing her obedience; but the thought vanished, when she considered, that she was as much in
his

his power at Venice as she could be elsewhere.

It was moonlight before the party returned to the villa, where supper was spread in the airy hall, which had so much enchanted Emily's fancy, on the preceding night. The ladies seated themselves in the portico, till Mons. Quesnel, Montoni and other gentlemen, should join them at table, and Emily endeavoured to resign herself to the tranquillity of the hour. Presently, a barge stopped at the steps that led into the gardens, and, soon after, she distinguished the voices of Montoni and Quesnel, and then that of Morano, who, in the next moment, appeared. His compliments she received in silence, and her cold air seemed at first to discompose him; but he soon recovered his usual gaiety of manner, though the officious kindness of M. and Madame Quesnel Emily perceived disgusted him. Such a degree of attention she had scarcely believed could be shewn by M. Quesnel, for she had never before seen him otherwise than in the presence of his inferiors or equals.

When

When she could retire to her own apartment, her mind almost involuntarily dwelt on the most probable means of prevailing with the Count to withdraw his suit, and to her liberal mind none appeared more probable, than that of acknowledging to him a prior attachment and throwing herself upon his generosity for a release. When, however, on the following day, he renewed his addresses, she shrunk from the adoption of the plan she had formed. There was something so repugnant to her just pride, in laying open the secret of her heart to such a man as Morano, and in suing to him for compassion, that she impatiently rejected this design and wondered, that she could have paused upon it for a moment. The rejection of his suit she repeated in the most decisive terms she could select, mingling with it a severe censure of his conduct; but, though the Count appeared mortified by this, he persevered in the most ardent professions of admiration, till he was

was interrupted and Emily released by the presence of Madame Quesnel.

During her stay at this pleasant villa, Emily was thus rendered miserable by the assiduities of Morano, together with the cruelly exerted authority of M. Quesnel and Montoni, who, with her aunt, seemed now more resolutely determined upon this marriage than they had even appeared to be at Venice. M. Quesnel, finding, that both argument and menace were ineffectual in enforcing an immediate conclusion to it, at length relinquished his endeavours, and trusted to the power of Montoni and to the course of events at Venice. Emily, indeed, looked to Venice with hope, for there she would be relieved in some measure from the persecution of Morano, who would no longer be an inhabitant of the same house with herself, and from that of Montoni, whose engagements would not permit him to be continually at home. But amidst the pressure of her own misfortunes, she did not forget those of poor Theresa, for whom she

she pleaded with courageous tenderness to Quesnel, who promised, in slight and general terms, that she should not be forgotten.

Montoni, in a long conversation with M. Quesnel, arranged the plan to be pursued respecting Emily, and M. Quesnel proposed to be at Venice, as soon as he should be informed, that the nuptials were concluded.

It was new to Emily to part with any person, with whom she was connected, without feelings of regret; the moment, however, in which she took leave of M. and Madame Quesnel, was, perhaps, the only satisfactory one she had known in their presence.

Morano returned in Montoni's barge, and Emily, as she watched her gradual approach to that magic city, saw at her side the only person, who occasioned her to view it with less than perfect delight. They arrived there about midnight, when Emily was released from the presence of the Count, who,

who, with Montoni, went to a Casino, and she was suffered to retire to her own apartment.

On the following day, Montoni, in a short conversation, which he held with Emily, informed her, that he would no longer be *trifled* with, and that, since her marriage with the Count would be so highly advantageous to her, that folly only could object to it, and folly of such extent as was incapable of conviction, it should be celebrated without further delay, and, if that was necessary, without her consent.

Emily, who had hitherto tried remonstrance, had now recourse to supplication, for distress prevented her from foreseeing, that, with a man of Montoni's disposition, supplication would be equally useless. She afterwards enquired by what right he exerted this unlimited authority over her? a question, which her better judgment would have withheld her, in a calmer moment, from making, since it could avail her nothing, and would afford Montoni
another

another opportunity of triumphing over her defenceless condition.

“ By what right !” cried Montoni, with a malicious smile, “ by the right of my will ; if you can elude that, I will not enquire by what right you do so. I now remind you, for the last time, that you are a stranger, in a foreign country, and that it is your interest to make me your friend ; you know the means ; if you compel me to become your enemy—I will venture to tell you, that the punishment shall exceed your expectation. You may know *I am not to be trifled with.*”

Emily continued, for some time after Montoni had left her, in a state of despair, or rather of stupefaction ; a consciousness of misery was all that remained in her mind. In this situation Madame Montoni found her, at the sound of whose voice Emily looked up, and her aunt, somewhat softened by the expression of despair, that fixed her countenance, spoke in a manner more kind than she had ever yet done. Emily’s heart

was

was touched; she shed tears, and, after weeping for some time, recovered sufficient composure to speak on the subject of her distress, and to endeavour to interest Madame Montoni in her behalf. But, though the compassion of her aunt had been surprised, her ambition was not to be overcome, and her present object was to be the aunt of a Countess. Emily's efforts, therefore, were as unsuccessful as they had been with Montoni, and she withdrew to her apartment to think and weep alone. How often did she remember the parting scene with Valancourt, and wish, that the Italian had mentioned Montoni's character with less reserve! When her mind, however, had recovered from the first shock of this behaviour, she considered, that it would be impossible for him to compel her alliance with Morano, if she persisted in refusing to repeat any part of the marriage ceremony; and she persevered in her resolution to await Montoni's threatened vengeance rather than give herself for life to a man,

man, whom she must have despised for his present conduct, had she never even loved Valancourt: yet she trembled at the revenge she thus resolved to brave.

An affair, however, soon after occurred, which somewhat called off Montoni's attention from Emily. The mysterious visits of Orfino were renewed with more frequency since the return of the former to Venice. There were others, also, besides Orfino, admitted to these midnight councils, and among them Cavigni and Verezzi. Montoni became more reserved and austere in his manner than ever; and Emily, if her own interests had not made her regardless of his, might have perceived, that something extraordinary was working in his mind.

One night, on which a council was not held, Orfino came in great agitation of spirits, and dispatched his confidential servant to Montoni, who was at a Casino, desiring that he would return home immediately; but charging the servant not to

mention his name. Montoni obeyed the summons, and, on meeting Orsino, was informed of the circumstances, that occasioned his visit and his visible alarm, with a part of which he was already acquainted.

A Venetian nobleman, who had, on some late occasion, provoked the hatred of Orsino, had been way-laid and poniarded by hired assassins: and, as the murdered person was of the first connections, the Senate had taken up the affair. One of the assassins was now apprehended, who had confessed, that Orsino was his employer in the atrocious deed; and the latter, informed of his danger, had now come to Montoni to consult on the measures necessary to favour his escape. He knew, that, at this time, the officers of the police were upon the watch for him, all over the city; to leave it, at present, therefore, was impracticable, and Montoni consented to secrete him for a few days till the vigilance of justice should relax, and then to assist him in quitting Venice. He knew the danger he himself incurred

curred by permitting Orfino to remain in his house, but such was the nature of his obligations to this man, that he did not think it prudent to refuse him an asylum.

Such was the person whom Montoni had admitted to his confidence, and for whom he felt as much friendship as was compatible with his character.

While Orfino remained concealed in his house, Montoni was unwilling to attract public observation by the nuptials of Count Morano; but this obstacle was, in a few days, overcome by the departure of his criminal visitor, and he then informed Emily, that her marriage was to be celebrated on the following morning. To her repeated assurances, that it should not take place, he replied only by a malignant smile; and, telling her, that the Count and a priest would be at his house, early in the morning, he advised her no further to dare his resentment, by opposition to his will and to her own interest. “ I am now going out for the evening,” said he, “ remember, that I shall give your hand to

Count Morano in the morning." Emily, having, ever since his late threats, expected, that her trials would at length arrive to this crisis, was less shocked by the declaration, than she otherwise would have been, and she endeavoured to support herself by the belief, that the marriage could not be valid, so long as she refused before the priest to repeat any part of the ceremony. Yet, as the moment of trial approached, her long-harassed spirits shrunk almost equally from the encounter of his vengeance, and from the hand of Count Morano. She was not even perfectly certain of the consequence of her steady refusal at the altar, and she trembled, more than ever, at the power of Montoni, which seemed unlimited as his will, for she saw, that he would not scruple to transgress any law, if, by so doing, he could accomplish his project.

While her mind was thus suffering and in a state little short of distraction, she was informed that Morano asked permission to see her, and the servant had scarcely departed
with

with an excuse, before she repented that she had sent one. In the next moment, reverting to her former design, and determining to try, whether expostulation and entreaty would not succeed, where a refusal and a just disdain had failed, she recalled the servant, and, sending a different message, prepared to go down to the Count.

The dignity and assumed composure with which she met him, and the kind of pensive resignation, that softened her countenance, were circumstances not likely to induce him to relinquish her, serving, as they did, to heighten a passion, which had already intoxicated his judgment. He listened to all she said with an appearance of complacency and of a wish to oblige her; but his resolution remained invariably the same, and he endeavoured to win her admiration by every insinuating art he so well knew how to practise. Being, at length, assured, that she had nothing to hope from his justice, she repeated, in a solemn and im-

pressive manner, her absolute rejection of his suit, and quitted him with an assurance, that her refusal would be effectually maintained against every circumstance, that could be imagined for subduing it. A just pride had restrained her tears in his presence, but now they flowed from the fulness of her heart. She often called upon the name of her late father, and often dwelt with unutterable anguish on the idea of Valancourt.

She did not go down to supper, but remained alone in her apartment, sometimes yielding to the influence of grief and terror, and, at others, endeavouring to fortify her mind against them, and to prepare herself to meet, with composed courage, the scene of the following morning, when all the stratagem of Morano and the violence of Montoni would be united against her.

The evening was far advanced, when Madame Montoni came to her chamber with some bridal ornaments, which the Count had sent to Emily. She had, this
day,

day, purposely avoided her niece ; perhaps, because her usual insensibility failed her, and she feared to trust herself with a view of Emily's distress ; or possibly, though her conscience was seldom audible, it now reproached her with her conduct to her brother's orphan child, whose happiness had been entrusted to her care by a dying father.

Emily could not look at these presents, and made a last, though almost hopeless, effort to interest the compassion of Madame Montoni, who, if she did feel any degree of pity, or remorse, successfully concealed it, and reproached her niece with folly in being miserable, concerning a marriage, which ought only to make her happy. " I am sure," said she, " if I was unmarried, and the Count had proposed to me, I should have been flattered by the distinction : and if I should have been so, I am sure, niece, you, who have no fortune, ought to feel yourself highly honoured, and shew a proper gratitude and humility towards the

Count, for his condescension. I am often surpris'd, I must own, to observe how humbly he deports himself to you, notwithstanding the haughty airs you give yourself; I wonder he has patience to humour you so: if I was he, I know, I should often be ready to reprehend you, and make you know yourself a little better. I would not have flattered you, I can tell you, for it is this absurd flattery that makes you fancy yourself of so much consequence, that you think nobody can deserve you, and I often tell the Count so, for I have no patience to hear him pay you such extravagant compliments, which you believe every word of!"

"Your patience, madam, cannot suffer more cruelly on such occasions, than my own," said Emily.

"O! that is all mere affectation," rejoined her aunt. "I know that his flattery delights you, and makes you so vain, that you think you may have the whole world at your feet. But you are very much mistaken;

taken;

taken; I can assure you, niece, you will not meet with many such suitors as the Count: every other person would have turned upon his heel, and left you to repent at your leisure, long ago."

"O that the Count had resembled every other person, then!" said Emily, with a heavy sigh.

"It is happy for you, that he does not," rejoined Madame Montoni; "and what I am now saying is from pure kindness. I am endeavouring to convince you of your good fortune, and to persuade you to submit to necessity with a good grace. It is nothing to me, you know, whether you like this marriage or not, for it must be; what I say, therefore, is from pure kindness. I wish to see you happy, and it is your own fault if you are not so. I would ask you, now, seriously and calmly, what kind of a match you can expect, since a Count cannot content your ambition?"

"I have no ambition whatever, ma-
dam,"

dam," replied Emily, "my only wish is to remain in my present station."

"O! that is speaking quite from the purpose," said her aunt, "I see you are still thinking of *Monf. Valancourt*. Pray get rid of all those fantastic notions about love, and this ridiculous pride, and be something like a reasonable creature. But, however, this is nothing to the purpose—for your marriage with the Count takes place to-morrow, you know, whether you approve it or not. The Count will be trifled with no longer."

Emily made no attempt to reply to this curious speech; she felt it would be mean, and she knew it would be useless. *Madame Montoni* laid the Count's presents upon the table, on which Emily was leaning, and then, desiring she would be ready early in the morning, bade her good-night. "Good-night, madam," said Emily, with a deep sigh, as the door closed upon her aunt, and she was left once more to her
OWN

own sad reflections. For some time she sat so lost in thought, as to be wholly unconscious where she was; at length, raising her head, and looking round the room, its gloom and profound stillness awed her. She fixed her eyes on the door, through which her aunt had disappeared, and listened anxiously for some sound, that might relieve the deep dejection of her spirits; but it was past midnight, and all the family, except the servant, who sat up for Montoni, had retired to bed. Her mind, long harassed by distress, now yielded to imaginary terrors; she trembled to look into the obscurity of her spacious chamber, and feared she knew not what; a state of mind, which continued so long, that she would have called up Annette, her aunt's woman, had her fears permitted her to rise from her chair, and to cross the apartment.

These melancholy illusions at length began to disperse, and she retired to her bed, not to sleep, for that was scarcely possible,

but to try, at least, to quiet her disturbed fancy, and to collect strength of spirits sufficient to bear her through the scene of the approaching morning.

C H A P. V.

“ Dark power! with shudd’ring, meek submitted
thought

Be mine to read the visions old
Which thy awak’ning bards have told,
And, lest they meet my blasted view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true.”

COLLINS’ ODE TO FEAR.

EMILY was recalled from a kind of slumber, into which she had, at length, sunk, by a quick knocking at her chamber door. She started up in terror, for Montoni and Count Morano instantly came to her mind; but, having listened in silence for some time, and recognising the voice of Annette, she rose and opened the door. “What brings you hither so early?” said Emily, trembling excessively. She was unable to support herself, and sat down on the bed.

“ Dear

“ Dear ma’amfelle !” said Annette, “ do not look so pale. I am quite frightened to see you. Here is a fine bustle below stairs, all the servants running to and fro, and none of them fast enough ! Here is a bustle, indeed, all of a sudden, and nobody knows for what !”

“ Who is below besides them ?” said Emily, “ Annette, do not trifle with me !”

“ Not for the world, ma’amfelle, I would not trifle for the world ; but one cannot help making one’s remarks, and there is the Signor in such a bustle, as I never saw him before ; and he has sent me to tell you, ma’am, to get ready immediately.”

“ Good God support me !” cried Emily, almost fainting, “ Count Morano is below, then !”

“ No, ma’amfelle, he is not below that I know of,” replied Annette, “ only his *Excellenza* sent me to desire you would get ready directly to leave Venice, for that the gondolas would be at the steps of the canal in a few minutes : but I must hurry back

to my lady, who is just at her wits end, and knows not which way to turn for haste."

" Explain, Annette, explain the meaning of all this before you go," said Emily, so overcome with surprise and timid hope, that she had scarcely breath to speak.

" Nay, ma'amfelle, that is more than I can do. I only know that the Signor is just come home in a very ill humour, that he has had us all called out of our beds, and tells us we are all to leave Venice immediately."

" Is Count Morano to go with the Signor?" said Emily, " and whither are we going?"

" I know neither, ma'am, for certain; but I heard Ludovico say something about going, after we got to *Terra-firma*, to the Signor's castle among some mountains, that he talked of."

" The Apennines!" said Emily, eagerly, " O! then I have little to hope!"

" That is the very place, ma'am. But
cheer

cheer up, and do not take it so much to heart, and think what a little time you have to get ready in, and how impatient the Signor is. Holy St. Mark! I hear the oars on the canal; and now they come nearer, and now they are dashing at the steps below; it is the gondola, sure enough.”

Annette hastened from the room; and Emily prepared for this unexpected flight as fast as her trembling hands would permit, not perceiving, that any change in her situation could possibly be for the worse. She had scarcely thrown her books and clothes into her travelling trunk, when, receiving a second summons, she went down to her aunt's dressing-room, where she found Montoni impatiently reproving his wife for delay. He went out, soon after, to give some further orders to his people, and Emily then enquired the occasion of this hasty journey; but her aunt appeared to be as ignorant as herself, and to undertake the journey with more reluctance.

The family at length embarked, but neither

ther Count Morano, or Cavigni, was of the party. Somewhat revived by observing this, Emily, when the gondolieri dashed their oars in the water, and put off from the steps of the portico, felt like a criminal, who receives a short reprieve. Her heart beat yet lighter, when they emerged from the canal into the ocean, and lighter still, when they skimmed past the walls of St. Mark, without having stopped to take up Count Morano:

The dawn now began to tint the horizon, and to break upon the shores of the Adriatic. Emily did not venture to ask any questions of Montoni, who sat, for some time, in gloomy silence, and then rolled himself up in his cloak, as if to sleep, while Madame Montoni did the same; but Emily, who could not sleep, undrew one of the little curtains of the gondola, and looked out upon the sea. The rising dawn now enlightened the mountain-tops of Friuli, but their lower sides, and the distant waves, that rolled at their feet, were still in deep shadow.

Emily

Emily, sunk in tranquil melancholy, watched the strengthening light spreading upon the ocean, shewing successively Venice and her islets, and the shores of Italy, along which boats, with their pointed latin sails, began to move.

The gondolieri were frequently hailed, at this early hour, by the market-people, as they glided by towards Venice, and the *Lagune* soon displayed a gay scene of innumerable little barks, passing from *Terra-firma* with provisions. Emily gave a last look to that splendid city, but her mind was then occupied by considering the probable events, that awaited her, in the scenes, to which she was removing, and with conjectures, concerning the motive of this sudden journey. It appeared, upon calmer consideration, that Montoni was removing her to his secluded castle, because he could there, with more probability of success, attempt to terrify her into obedience ; or, that, should its gloomy and sequestered scenes fail of this effect, her forced marriage with the
 Count

Count could there be solemnized with the secrecy, which was necessary to the honour of Montoni. The little spirit, which this reprieve had recalled, now began to fail, and, when Emily reached the shore, her mind had sunk into all its former depression.

Montoni did not embark on the Brenta, but pursued his way in carriages across the country, towards the Apennine; during which journey, his manner to Emily was so particularly severe, that this alone would have confirmed her late conjecture, had any such confirmation been necessary. Her senses were now dead to the beautiful country, through which she travelled. Sometimes she was compelled to smile at the *naïveté* of Annette, in her remarks on what she saw, and sometimes to sigh, as a scene of peculiar beauty recalled Valancourt to her thoughts, who was indeed seldom absent from them, and of whom she could never hope to hear in the solitude, to which she was hastening.

At

At length, the travellers began to ascend among the Apennines. The immense pine-forests, which, at that period, overhung these mountains, and between which the road wound, excluded all view but of the cliffs aspiring above, except, that, now and then, an opening through the dark woods allowed the eye a momentary glimpse of the country below. The gloom of these shades, their solitary silence, except when the breeze swept over their summits, the tremendous precipices of the mountains, that came partially to the eye, each assisted to raise the solemnity of Emily's feelings into awe; she saw only images of gloomy grandeur, or of dreadful sublimity, around her; other images, equally gloomy and equally terrible, gleamed on her imagination. She was going she scarcely knew whither, under the dominion of a person, from whose arbitrary disposition she had already suffered so much, to marry, perhaps, a man who possessed neither her affection, or esteem; or to endure, beyond
the

the hope of succour, whatever punishment revenge, and that Italian revenge, might dictate. —The more she considered what might be the motive of the journey, the more she became convinced, that it was for the purpose of concluding her nuptials with Count Morano, with that secrecy which her resolute resistance had made necessary to the honour, if not to the safety, of Montoni. From the deep solitudes, into which she was immersing, and from the gloomy castle, of which she had heard some mysterious hints, her sick heart recoiled in despair, and she experienced, that, though her mind was already occupied by peculiar distress, it was still alive to the influence of new and local circumstance; why else did she shudder at the idea of this desolate castle?

As the travellers still ascended among the pine forests, steep rose over steep, the mountains seemed to multiply, as they went, and what was the summit of one eminence proved to be only the base of another. At length, they reached a little plain, where
the

the drivers stopped to rest the mules, whence a scene of such extent and magnificence opened below, as drew even from Madame Montoni a note of admiration. Emily lost, for a moment, her sorrows, in the immensity of nature. Beyond the amphitheatre of mountains, that stretched below, whose tops appeared as numerous almost, as the waves of the sea, and whose feet were concealed by the forests—extended the *Campagna* of Italy, where cities and rivers, and woods and all the glow of cultivation were mingled in gay confusion. The Adriatic bounded the horizon, into which the Po and the Brenta, after winding through the whole extent of the landscape, poured their fruitful waves. Emily gazed long on the splendours of the world she was quitting, of which the whole magnificence seemed thus given to her sight only to increase her regret on leaving it; for her, Valancourt alone was in that world; to him alone her heart turned, and for him alone fell her bitter tears.

From

From this sublime scene the travellers continued to ascend among the pines, till they entered a narrow pass of the mountains, which shut out every feature of the distant country, and, in its stead, exhibited only tremendous crags, impending over the road, where no vestige of humanity, or even of vegetation, appeared, except here and there the trunk and scathed branches of an oak, that hung nearly headlong from the rock, into which its strong roots had fastened. This pass, which led into the heart of the Apennine, at length opened to day, and a scene of mountains stretched in long perspective, as wild as any the travellers had yet passed. Still vast pine-forests hung upon their base, and crowned the ridgy precipice, that rose perpendicularly from the vale, while, above, the rolling mists caught the sun-beams, and touched their cliffs with all the magical colouring of light and shade. The scene seemed perpetually changing, and its features to assume new forms, as the winding road brought

brought them to the eye in different attitudes ; while the shifting vapours, now partially concealing their minuter beauties and now illuminating them with splendid tints, assisted the illusions of the sight.

Though the deep vallies between these mountains were, for the most part, clothed with pines, sometimes an abrupt opening presented a perspective of only barren rocks, with a cataract flashing from their summit among broken cliffs, till its waters, reaching the bottom, foamed along with unceasing fury ; and sometimes pastoral scenes exhibited their “ green delights ” in the narrow vales, smiling amid surrounding horror. There herds and flocks of goats and sheep, browsing under the shade of hanging woods, and the shepherd’s little cabin, reared on the margin of a clear stream, presented a sweet picture of repose.

Wild and romantic as were these scenes, their character had far less of the sublime, than had those of the Alps, which

guard the entrance of Italy. Emily was often elevated, but seldom felt those emotions of indescribable awe, which she had so continually experienced, in her passage over the Alps.

Towards the close of day, the road wound into a deep valley. Mountains, whose shaggy steeps appeared to be inaccessible, almost surrounded it. To the east, a vista opened, that exhibited the Apennines in their darkest horrors ; and the long perspective of retiring summits, rising over each other, their ridges clothed with pines, exhibited a stronger image of grandeur, than any that Emily had yet seen. The sun had just sunk below the top of the mountains she was descending, whose long shadow stretched athwart the valley, but his sloping rays, shooting through an opening of the cliffs, touched with a yellow gleam the summits of the forest, that hung upon the opposite steeps, and streamed in full splendour upon the towers and battlements of a castle, that spread its extensive ramparts

along the brow of a precipice above. The splendour of these illumined objects was heightened by the contrasted shade, which involved the valley below.

“ There,” said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, “ is Udolpho.”

Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper, as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From those too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duski-ness of evening. Silent, lonely and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all, who
dared

dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity, and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen, rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend.

The extent and darkness of these tall woods awakened terrific images in her mind, and she almost expected to see banditti start up from under the trees. At length, the carriages emerged upon a heathy rock, and, soon after, reached the castle gates, where the deep tone of the portal bell, which was struck upon to give notice of their arrival, increased the fearful emotions, that had assailed Emily. While they waited till the servant within should come to open the gates, she anxiously surveyed the edifice : but the gloom, that overspread it, allowed her to distinguish little more than a part of its outline, with the massy walls of the ramparts, and to know, that it was vast, ancient and dreary. From the

parts she saw, she judged of the heavy strength and extent of the whole. The gateway before her, leading into the courts, was of gigantic size, and was defended by two round towers, crowned by overhanging turrets, embattled, where, instead of banners, now waved long grass and wild plants, that had taken root among the mouldering stones, and which seemed to sigh, as the breeze rolled past, over the desolation around them. The towers were united by a curtain, pierced and embattled also, below which appeared the pointed arch of an huge portcullis, surmounting the gates: from these, the walls of the ramparts extended to other towers, overlooking the precipice, whose shattered outline, appearing on a gleam, that lingered in the west, told of the ravages of war.— Beyond these all was lost in the obscurity of evening.

While Emily gazed with awe upon the scene, footsteps were heard within the gates, and the undrawing of bolts; after which

an ancient servant of the castle appeared, forcing back the huge folds of the portal, to admit his lord. As the carriage-wheels rolled heavily under the portcullis, Emily's heart sunk, and she seemed, as if she was going into her prison; the gloomy court, into which she passed, served to confirm the idea, and her imagination, ever awake to circumstance, suggested even more terrors, than her reason could justify.

Another gate delivered them into the second court, grass-grown, and more wild, than the first, where, as she surveyed through the twilight its desolation—its lofty walls, overtopped with briony, moss and nightshade, and the embattled towers that rose above,—long-suffering and murder came to her thoughts. One of those instantaneous and unaccountable convictions, which sometimes conquer even strong minds, impressed her with its horror. The sentiment was not diminished, when she entered an extensive gothic hall, obscured by the gloom

of evening, which a light, glimmering at a distance through a long perspective of arches, only rendered more striking. As a servant brought the lamp nearer, partial gleams fell upon the pillars and the pointed arches, forming a strong contrast with their shadows, that stretched along the pavement and the walls.

The sudden journey of Montoni had prevented his people from making any other preparations for his reception, than could be had in the short interval, since the arrival of the servant, who had been sent forward from Venice; and this, in some measure, may account for the air of extreme desolation, that every where appeared.

The servant, who came to light Montoni, bowed in silence, and the muscles of his countenance relaxed with no symptom of joy.—Montoni noticed the salutation by a slight motion of his hand, and passed on, while his lady, following, and looking round with a degree of surprise and discontent, which she

she seemed fearful of expressing, and Emily, surveying the extent and grandeur of the hall in timid wonder, approached a marble stair-case. The arches here opened to a lofty vault, from the centre of which hung a tripod lamp, which a servant was hastily lighting; and the rich fret-work of the roof, a corridor, leading into several upper apartments, and a painted window, stretching nearly from the pavement to the ceiling of the hall, became gradually visible.

Having crossed the foot of the stair-case, and passed through an anti-room, they entered a spacious apartment, whose walls, wainscoted with black larch-wood, the growth of the neighbouring mountains, were scarcely distinguishable from darkness itself. "Bring more light," said Montoni, as he entered. The servant, setting down his lamp, was withdrawing to obey him, when Madame Montoni observing, that the evening air of this mountainous region was cold, and that she should like a

fire, Montoni ordered that wood might be brought.

While he paced the room with thoughtful steps, and Madame Montoni sat silently on a couch, at the upper end of it, waiting till the servant returned, Emily was observing the singular solemnity and desolation of the apartment, viewed, as it now was, by the glimmer of the single lamp, placed near a large Venetian mirror, that duskily reflected the scene, with the tall figure of Montoni passing slowly along, his arms folded, and his countenance shaded by the plume, that waved in his hat.

From the contemplation of this scene, Emily's mind proceeded to the apprehension of what she might suffer in it, till the remembrance of Valancourt, far, far distant! came to her heart, and softened it into sorrow. A heavy sigh escaped her: but, trying to conceal her tears, she walked away to one of the high windows, that opened upon the ramparts, below which,
spread

spread the woods she had passed in her approach to the castle. But the night-shade sat deeply on the mountains beyond, and their indented outline alone could be faintly traced on the horizon, where a red streak yet glimmered in the west. The valley between was sunk in darkness.

The scene within, upon which Emily turned on the opening of the door, was scarcely less gloomy. The old servant, who had received them at the gates, now entered, bending under a load of pine-branches, while two of Montoni's Venetian servants followed with lights.

“Your *Excellenza* is welcome to the castle,” said the old man, as he raised himself from the hearth, where he had laid the wood: “it has been a lonely place a long while; but you will excuse it, Signor, knowing we had but short notice. It is near two years, come next feast of St. Mark, since your *Excellenza* was within these walls.”

“You have a good memory, old Carlo,”

said Montoni: "it is thereabout; and how hast thou contrived to live so long?"

"A-well-a-day, fir, with much ado; the cold winds, that blow through the castle in winter, are almost too much for me; and I thought sometimes of asking your *Excel- lenza* to let me leave the mountains, and go down into the lowlands. But I don't know how it is—I am loth to quit these old walls I have lived in so long."

"Well, how have you gone on in the castle, since I left it?" said Montoni.

"Why much as usual, Signor, only it wants a good deal of repairing. There is the north tower—some of the battlements have tumbled down, and had liked one day to have knocked my poor wife (God rest her soul!) on the head. Your *Excellenza* must know"——

"Well, but the repairs," interrupted Montoni.

"Aye, the repairs," said Carlo: "a part of the roof of the great hall has fallen in,
and

and all the winds from the mountains rushed through it last winter, and whistled through the whole castle so, that there was no keeping one's self warm, be where one would. There, my wife and I used to sit shivering over a great fire in one corner of the little hall, ready to die with cold, and"——

"But there are no more repairs wanted," said Montoni, impatiently.

"O Lord! your *Excellenza*, yes—the wall of the rampart has tumbled down in three places; then, the stairs, that lead to the west gallery, have been a long time so bad, that it is dangerous to go up them; and the passage leading to the great oak chamber, that overhangs the north rampart—one night last winter I ventured to go there by myself, and your *Excellenza*"——

"Well, well, enough of this," said Montoni, with quickness: "I will talk more with thee to-morrow."

The fire was now lighted; Carlo swept the hearth, placed chairs, wiped the dust

from a large marble table that stood near it, and then left the room.

Montoni and his family drew round the fire. Madame Montoni made several attempts at conversation, but his sullen answers repulsed her, while Emily sat endeavouring to acquire courage enough to speak to him. At length, in a tremulous voice, she said, “ May I ask, sir, the motive of this sudden journey ? ”—After a long pause, she recovered sufficient courage to repeat the question.

“ It does not suit me to answer enquiries,” said Montoni, “ nor does it become you to make them ; time may unfold them all : but I desire I may be no further harassed, and I recommend it to you to retire to your chamber, and to endeavour to adopt a more rational conduct, than that of yielding to fancies, and to a sensibility, which, to call it by the gentlest name, is only a weakness.”

Emily rose to withdraw. “ Good night, madam,” said she to her aunt, with an
assumed

assumed composure, that could not disguise her emotion.

“ Good night, my dear,” said Madame Montoni, in a tone of kindness, which her niece had never before heard from her ; and the unexpected endearment brought tears to Emily’s eyes. She curtsied to Montoni, and was retiring ; “ But you do not know the way to your chamber,” said her aunt. Montoni called the servant, who waited in the anti-room, and bade him send Madame Montoni’s woman, with whom, in a few minutes, Emily withdrew.

“ Do you know which is my room ?” said she to Annette, as they crossed the hall.

“ Yes, I believe I do, ma’amfelle ; but this is such a strange rambling place ! I have been lost in it already : they call it the double chamber, over the south rampart, and I went up this great stair-case to it. My lady’s room is at the other end of the castle.”

Emily ascended the marble stair-case,
and

and came to the corridor, as they passed through which, Annette resumed her chat—
 “ What a wild lonely place this is, ma’am ! I shall be quite frightened to live in it. How often, and often I have wished myself in France again ! I little thought, when I came with my lady to see the world, that I should ever be shut up in such a place as this, or I would never have left my own country ! This way, ma’amfelle, down this turning. I can almost believe in giants again, and such like, for this is just like one of their castles ; and, some night or other ; I suppose I shall see fairies too, hopping about in that great old hall, that looks more like a church, with its huge pillars, than any thing else.”

“ Yes,” said Emily, smiling, and glad to escape from more serious thought, “ if we come to the corridor, about midnight, and look down into the hall, we shall certainly see it illuminated with a thousand lamps, and the fairies tripping in gay circles to the sound of delicious music ; for it is in
 such

such places as this, you know, that they come to hold their revels. But I am afraid, Annette, you will not be able to pay the necessary penance for such a fight: and, if once they hear your voice, the whole scene will vanish in an instant."

"O! if you will bear me company, ma'amfelle, I will come to the corridor, this very night, and I promise you I will hold my tongue; it shall not be my fault if the show vanishes.—But do you think they will come?"

"I cannot promise that with certainty, but I will venture to say, it will not be your fault if the enchantment should vanish."

"Well, ma'amfelle, that is saying more than I expected of you: but I am not so much afraid of fairies, as of ghosts, and they say there are a plentiful many of them about the castle: now I should be frightened to death, if I should chance to see any of them. But hush! ma'amfelle, walk softly! I have thought, several times, something passed by me."

“ Ridiculous !” said Emily, “ you must not indulge such fancies.”

“ O ma’am ! they are not fancies, for aught I know ; Benedetto says these dismal galleries and halls are fit for nothing but ghosts to live in ; and I verily believe, if I *live* long in them I shall turn to one myself !”

“ I hope,” said Emily, “ you will not suffer Signor Montoni to hear of these weak fears ; they would highly displease him.”

“ What, you know then, ma’amfelle, all about it !” rejoined Annette. “ No, no, I do know better than to do so ; though, if the Signor can sleep sound, nobody else in the castle has any right to lie awake, I am sure.” Emily did not appear to notice this remark.

“ Down this passage, ma’amfelle ; this leads to a back stair-case. O ! if I see any thing, I shall be frightened out of my wits !

“ That will scarcely be possible,” said Emily, smiling, as she followed the winding
ing

ing of the passage, which opened into another gallery : and then Annette, perceiving that she had missed her way, while she had been so eloquently haranguing on ghosts and fairies, wandered about through other passages and galleries, till, at length, frightened by their intricacies and desolation, she called aloud for assistance : but they were beyond the hearing of the servants, who were on the other side of the castle, and Emily now opened the door of a chamber on the left.

“ O ! do not go in there, ma’amfelle,” said Annette, “ you will only lose yourself further.”

“ Bring the light forward,” said Emily, “ we may possibly find our way through these rooms.”

Annette stood at the door, in an attitude of hesitation, with the light held up to shew the chamber, but the feeble rays spread through not half of it. “ Why do you hesitate ?” said Emily, “ let me see whither this room leads.”

Annette

Annette advanced reluctantly. It opened into a suite of spacious and ancient apartments, some of which were hung with tapestry, and others wainscoted with cedar and black larch-wood. What furniture there was, seemed to be almost as old as the rooms, and retained an appearance of grandeur, though covered with dust, and dropping to pieces with the damps, and with age.

“How cold these rooms are, ma’amfelle!” said Annette: “nobody has lived in them for many, many years, they say. Do let us go.”

“They may open upon the great staircase, perhaps,” said Emily, passing on till she came to a chamber, hung with pictures, and took the light to examine that of a foldier on horseback in a field of battle.— He was darting his spear upon a man, who lay under the feet of the horse, and who held up one hand in a supplicating attitude. The foldier, whose beaver was up, regarded him with a look of vengeance, and
the

the countenance, with that expression, struck Emily as resembling Montoni. She shuddered, and turned from it. Passing the light hastily over several other pictures, she came to one concealed by a veil of black silk. The singularity of the circumstance struck her, and she stopped before it, wishing to remove the veil, and examine what could thus carefully be concealed, but somewhat wanting courage. "Holy Virgin! what can this mean?" exclaimed Annette. "This is surely the picture they told me of at Venice."

"What picture?" said Emily. "Why a picture—a picture," replied Annette, hesitatingly—"but I never could make out exactly what it was about, either."

"Remove the veil, Annette."

"What! I, ma'amselle!—I! not for the world!" Emily, turning round, saw Annette's countenance grow pale. "And pray, what have you heard of this picture, to terrify you so, my good girl?" said she.

"No-

“ Nothing, ma’amfelle: I have heard nothing, only let us find our way out.”

“ Certainly: but I wish first to examine the picture; take the light, Annette, while I lift the veil.” Annette took the light, and immediately walked away with it, disregarding Emily’s calls to stay, who, not choosing to be left alone in the dark chamber, at length followed her. “ What is the reason of this, Annette?” said Emily, when she overtook her, “ what have you heard concerning that picture, which makes you so unwilling to stay when I bid you?”

“ I don’t know what is the reason, ma’amfelle,” replied Annette, “ nor anything about the picture, only I have heard there is something very dreadful belonging to it—and that it has been covered up in black *ever since*—and that nobody has looked at it for a great many years—and it somehow has to do with the owner of this castle before Signor Montoni came to the possession of it—and”——

“ Well, Annette,” said Emily, smiling,

“ I per-

“ I perceive it is as you say—that you know nothing about the picture.”

“ No, nothing, indeed, ma’amfelle, for they made me promise never to tell: but”——

“ Well,” rejoined Emily, who observed that she was struggling between her inclination to reveal a secret, and her apprehension for the consequence, “ I will enquire no further”——

“ No, pray, ma’am, do not.”

“ Left you should tell all,” interrupted Emily.

Annette blushed, and Emily smiled, and they passed on to the extremity of this suite of apartments, and found themselves, after some farther perplexity, once more at the top of the marble stair-case, where Annette left Emily, while she went to call one of the servants of the castle to shew them to the chamber, for which they had been seeking.

While she was absent, Emily’s thoughts returned to the picture; an unwillingness

to tamper with the integrity of a servant, had checked her enquiries on this subject, as well as concerning some alarming hints, which Annette had dropped respecting Montoni; though her curiosity was entirely awakened, and she had perceived, that her questions might easily be answered. She was now, however, inclined to go back to the apartment and examine the picture; but the loneliness of the hour and of the place, with the melancholy silence that reigned around her, conspired with a certain degree of awe, excited by the mystery attending this picture, to prevent her. She determined, however, when day-light should have re-animated her spirits, to go thither and remove the veil. As she leaned from the corridor, over the stair-case, and her eyes wandered round, she again observed, with wonder, the vast strength of the walls, now somewhat decayed, and the pillars of solid marble, that rose from the hall, and supported the roof.

A servant now appeared with Annette,
and

and conducted Emily to her chamber, which was in a remote part of the castle, and at the end of the very corridor, from whence the suite of apartments opened, through which they had been wandering. The lonely aspect of her room made Emily unwilling that Annette should leave her immediately, and the dampness of it chilled her with more than fear. She begged Caterina, the servant of the castle, to bring some wood and light a fire.

“Aye, lady, it’s many a year since a fire was lighted here,” said Caterina.

“You need not tell us that, good woman,” said Annette; “every room in the castle feels like a well. I wonder how you contrive to live here; for my part, I wish myself at Venice again.” Emily waved her hand for Caterina to fetch the wood.

“I wonder, ma’am, why they call this the double chamber?” said Annette, while Emily surveyed it in silence and saw that it was lofty and spacious, like the others she had seen, and, like many of them, too,
had

had its walls lined with dark larch-wood. The bed and other furniture was very ancient, and had an air of gloomy grandeur, like all that she had seen in the castle. One of the high casements, which she opened, overlooked a rampart, but the view beyond was hid in darkness.

In the presence of Annette, Emily tried to support her spirits, and to restrain the tears, which, every now and then, came to her eyes. She wished much to enquire when Count Morano was expected at the castle, but an unwillingness to ask unnecessary questions, and to mention family concerns to a servant, withheld her. Meanwhile, Annette's thoughts were engaged upon another subject: she dearly loved the marvellous, and had heard of a circumstance, connected with the castle, that highly gratified this taste. Having been enjoined not to mention it, her inclination to tell it was so strong, that she was every instant on the point of speaking what she had heard. Such a strange circumstance,
too,

too, and to be obliged to conceal it, was a severe punishment; but she knew, that Montoni might impose one much severer, and she feared to incur it by offending him.

Caterina now brought the wood, and its bright blaze dispelled, for a while, the gloom of the chamber. She told Annette, that her lady had enquired for her, and Emily was once again left to her own sad reflections. Her heart was not yet hardened against the stern manners of Montoni, and she was nearly as much shocked now, as she had been when she first witnessed them. The tenderness and affection, to which she had been accustomed, till she lost her parents, had made her particularly sensible to any degree of unkindness, and such a reverse as this no apprehension had prepared her to support.

To call off her attention from subjects, that pressed heavily upon her spirits, she rose and again examined her room and its furniture. As she walked round it, she

passed a door, that was not quite shut, and, perceiving, that it was not the one, through which she entered, she brought the light forward to discover whither it led. She opened it, and, going forward, had nearly fallen down a steep, narrow stair-case, that wound from it, between two stone walls. She wished to know to what it led, and was the more anxious, since it communicated so immediately with her apartment; but, in the present state of her spirits, she wanted courage to venture into the darkness alone. Closing the door, therefore, she endeavoured to fasten it, but, upon further examination, perceived, that it had no bolts on the chamber side, though it had two on the other. By placing a heavy chair against it, she in some measure remedied the defect; yet she was still alarmed at the thought of sleeping in this remote room alone, with a door opening she knew not whither, and which could not be perfectly fastened on the inside. Sometimes she wished to entreat of Madame Montoni, that Annette might have
leave

leave to remain with her all night, but was deterred by an apprehension of betraying what would be thought childish fears, and by an unwillingness to increase the apt terrors of Annette.

Her gloomy reflections were, soon after, interrupted by a footstep in the corridor, and she was glad to see Annette enter with some supper, sent by Madame Montoni. Having a table near the fire, she made the good girl sit down and sup with her; and, when their little repast was over, Annette, encouraged by her kindness and stirring the wood into a blaze, drew her chair upon the hearth, nearer to Emily, and said,—“ Did you ever hear, ma’amfelle, of the strange accident, that made the Signor lord of this castle?”

“ What wonderful story have you now to tell ?” said Emily, concealing the curiosity, occasioned by the mysterious hints she had formerly heard on that subject.

“ I have heard all about it, ma’amfelle,” said Annette, looking round the chamber and drawing closer to Emily; “ Benedetto

told it me as we travelled together : says he, ‘ Annette, you don’t know about this castle here, that we are going to?’ No, says I, Mr. Benedetto, pray what do you know? But, ma’amfelle, you can keep a secret, or I would not tell it you for the world ; for I promised never to tell, and they say, that the Signor does not like to have it talked of.”

“ If you promised to keep this secret,” said Emily, “ you do right not to mention it.”

Annette paused a moment, and then said, “ O, but to you, ma’amfelle, to you I may tell it safely, I know.”

Emily smiled, “ I certainly shall keep it as faithfully as yourself, Annette.”

Annette replied very gravely, that would do, and proceeded—“ This castle, you must know, ma’amfelle, is very old, and very strong, and has stood out many sieges, as they say. Now it was not Signor Montoni’s always, nor his father’s ; no ; but, by some
law

law or other, it was to come to the Signor, if the lady died unmarried."

"What lady?" said Emily.

"I am not come to that yet," replied Annette, "it is the lady I am going to tell you about, ma'amfelle: but, as I was saying, this lady lived in the castle, and had every thing very grand about her, as you may suppose, ma'amfelle. The Signor used often to come to see her, and was in love with her, and offered to marry her; for, though he was somehow related, that did not signify. But she was in love with somebody else, and would not have him, which made him very angry, as they say, and you know, ma'amfelle, what an ill-looking gentleman he is, when he is angry. Perhaps she saw him in a passion, and therefore would not have him. But, as I was saying, she was very melancholy and unhappy, and all that, for a long while, and—Holy Virgin! what noise is that? did not you hear a sound, ma'amfelle?"

"It was only the wind," said Emily,

“ but do come to the end of your story.”

“ As I was saying—O, where was I?—as I was saying—she was very melancholy and unhappy a long while, and used to walk about upon the terrace, there, under the windows, by herself, and cry so! it would have done your heart good to hear her. That is—I don’t mean good, but it would have made you cry too, as they tell me.”

“ Well, but, Annette, do tell me the substance of your tale.”

“ All in good time, ma’am; all this I heard before at Venice, but what is to come I never heard till to-day. This happened a great many years ago, when Signor Montoni was quite a young man. The lady—they called her Signora Laurentini, was very handsome, but she used to be in great passions, too, sometimes, as well as the Signor. Finding he could not make her listen to him—what does he do, but leave the castle, and never comes near it for a long time! but it was all one to her; she

was

was just as unhappy whether he was here or not, till one evening, Holy St. Peter! ma'amfelle," cried Annette, "look at that lamp, see how blue it burns!" She looked fearfully round the chamber. "Ridiculous girl!" said Emily, "why will you indulge those fancies? Pray let me hear the end of your story, I am weary."

Annette still kept her eyes on the lamp, and proceeded in a lower voice. "It was one evening, they say, at the latter end of the year, it might be about the middle of September, I suppose, or the beginning of October; nay, for that matter, it might be November, for that, too, is the latter end of the year, but that I cannot say for certain, because they did not tell me for certain themselves. However, it was at the latter end of the year, this grand lady walked out of the castle into the woods below, as she had often done before, all alone, only her maid was with her. The wind blew cold, and strewed the leaves about, and whistled dismally among those

great old chefnut trees, that we paffed, ma'amfelle, as we came to the caſtle—for Benedetto ſhewed me the trees as he was talking—the wind blew cold, and her woman would have perſuaded her to return : but all would not do, for ſhe was fond of walking in the woods, at evening time, and, if the leaves were falling about her, ſo much the better.

“ Well, they ſaw her go down among the woods, but night came, and ſhe did not return ; ten o'clock, eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock came, and no lady ! Well, the ſervants thought to be ſure, ſome accident had befallen her, and they went out to ſeek her. They ſearched all night long, but could not find her, or any trace of her ; and, from that day to this, ma'amfelle, ſhe has never been heard of.”

“ Is this true, Annette ?” ſaid Emily, in much ſurpriſe.

“ True, ma'am !” ſaid Annette, with a look of horror, “ yes, it is true, indeed. But they do ſay,” ſhe added, lowering her voice,

voice, " they do say, that the Signora has been seen, several times since, walking in the woods and about the castle in the night : several of the old servants, who remained here some time after, declare they saw her ; and, since then, she has been seen by some of the vassals, who have happened to be in the castle, at night. Carlo, the old steward, could tell such things, they say, if he would."

" How contradictory is this, Annette !" said Emily, " you say nothing has been since known of her, and yet she has been seen !"

" But all this was told me for a great secret," rejoined Annette, without noticing the remark, " and I am sure, ma'am, you would not hurt either me or Benedetto, so much as to go and tell it again." Emily remained silent, and Annette repeated her last sentence.

" You have nothing to fear from my indiscretion," replied Emily, " and let me advise you, my good Annette, be discreet

yourself, and never mention what you have just told me to any other person. Signor Montoni, as you say, may be angry if he hears of it. But what enquiries were made concerning the lady?"

"O! a great deal, indeed, ma'amfelle, for the Signor laid claim to the castle directly, as being the next heir, and they said, that is the judges, or the senators, or somebody of that sort, said, he could not take possession of it till so many years were gone by, and then, if, after all, the lady could not be found, why she would be as good as dead, and the castle would be his own; and so it is his own. But the story went round, and many strange reports were spread, so very strange, ma'amfelle, that I shall not tell them."

"That is stranger still, Annette," said Emily, smiling, and rousing herself from her reverie. "But, when Signora Laurentini was afterwards seen in the castle, did nobody speak to her?"

"Speak—speak to her!" cried Annette,

nette, with a look of terror; "no, to be sure."

"And why not?" rejoined Emily, willing to hear further.

"Holy Mother! speak to a spirit!"

"But what reason had they to conclude it was a spirit, unless they had approached, and spoken to it?"

"O ma'amfelle, I cannot tell. How can you ask such shocking questions? But nobody ever saw it come in, or go out of the castle; and it was in one place now, and then the next minute in quite another part of the castle; and then it never spoke, and, if it was alive, what should it do in the castle if it never spoke? Several parts of the castle have never been gone into since, they say, for that very reason."

"What, because it never spoke?" said Emily, trying to laugh away the fears, that began to steal upon her.—"No, ma'amfelle, no;" replied Annette, rather angrily, "but because something has been seen there. They say, too, there is an old cha-

pel adjoining the west side of the castle, where, any time at midnight, you may hear such groans!—it makes one shudder to think of them!—and strange sights have been seen there——”

“ Pr’ythee, Annette, no more of these silly tales,” said Emily.

“ Silly tales, ma’amfelle! O, but I will tell you one story about this, if you please, that Caterina told me. It was one cold winter’s night that Caterina (she often came to the castle then, she says, to keep old Carlo and his wife company, and so he recommended her afterwards to the Signor, and she has lived here ever since) Caterina was sitting with them in the little hall, says Carlo, ‘ I wish we had some of those figs to roast, that lie in the store-closet, but it is a long way off, and I am loth to fetch them; do, Caterina,’ says he, ‘ for you are young and nimble, do bring us some, the fire is in a nice trim for roasting them; they lie,’ says he, in such a corner of the store-room, at the end of the north-gallery; here,

here, take the lamp,' says he, 'and mind, as you go up the great stair-case, that the wind, through the roof, does not blow it out.' So, with that, Caterina took the lamp—Hush! ma'amfelle, I surely heard a noise!"

Emily, whom Annette had now infected with her own terrors, listened attentively; but every thing was still, and Annette proceeded:

"Caterina went to the north-gallery, that is the wide gallery we passed, ma'am, before we came to the corridor, here. As she went with the lamp in her hand, thinking of nothing at all—There, again!" cried Annette, suddenly—"I heard it again!—it was not fancy, ma'amfelle!"

"Hush!" said Emily, trembling. They listened, and, continuing to sit quite still, Emily heard a low knocking against the wall. It came repeatedly. Annette then screamed loudly, and the chamber door slowly opened.—It was Caterina, come to
tell

tell Annette, that her lady wanted her. Emily, though she now perceived who it was, could not immediately overcome her terror; while Annette, half laughing, half crying, scolded Caterina heartily for thus alarming them; and was also terrified lest what she had told had been overheard.— Emily, whose mind was deeply impressed by the chief circumstance of Annette's relation, was unwilling to be left alone, in the present state of her spirits; but, to avoid offending Madame Montoni, and betraying her own weakness, she struggled to overcome the illusions of fear, and dismissed Annette for the night.

When she was alone, her thoughts recurred to the strange history of Signora Laurentini and then to her own strange situation, in the wild and solitary mountains of a foreign country, in the castle, and the power of a man, to whom, only a few preceding months, she was an entire stranger; who had already exercised an usurped authority

thority over her, and whose character she now regarded, with a degree of terror, apparently justified by the fears of others. She knew, that he had invention equal to the conception and talents to the execution of any project, and she greatly feared he had a heart too void of feeling to oppose the perpetration of whatever his interest might suggest. She had long observed the unhappiness of Madame Montoni, and had often been witness to the stern and contemptuous behaviour she received from her husband. To these circumstances, which conspired to give her just cause for alarm, were now added those thousand nameless terrors, which exist only in active imaginations, and which set reason and examination equally at defiance.

Emily remembered all that Valancourt had told her, on the eve of her departure from Languedoc, respecting Montoni, and all that he had said to dissuade her from venturing on the journey. His fears had often since appeared to her prophetic—

now

now they seemed confirmed. Her heart, as it gave her back-the image of Valancourt, mourned in vain regret, but reason soon came with a consolation, which, though feeble at first, acquired vigour from reflection. She considered, that, whatever might be her sufferings, she had withheld from involving him in misfortune, and that, whatever her future sorrows could be, she was, at least, free from self-reproach.

Her melancholy was assisted by the hollow sighings of the wind along the corridor and round the castle. The cheerful blaze of the wood had long been extinguished, and she sat with her eyes fixed on the dying embers, till a loud gust, that swept through the corridor, and shook the doors and casements, alarmed her, for its violence had moved the chair she had placed as a fastening, and the door, leading to the private stair-case, stood half open. Her curiosity and her fears were again awakened. She took the lamp to the top of the steps, and stood hesitating whether to go down; but
again

again the profound stillness and the gloom of the place awed her, and, determining to enquire further, when day-light might assist the search, she closed the door, and placed against it a stronger guard.

She now retired to her bed, leaving the lamp burning on the table; but its gloomy light, instead of dispelling her fear, assisted it; for, by its uncertain rays, she almost fancied she saw shapes flit past her curtains and glide into the remote obscurity of her chamber.—The castle clock struck one before she closed her eyes to sleep.

C H A P. VI.

“ I think it is the weakness of mine eyes,
That shapes this monstrous apparition.
It comes upon me !”

JULIUS CÆSAR.

DAYLIGHT dispelled from Emily's mind the glooms of superstition, but not those of apprehension. The Count Morano was the first image, that occurred to her waking thoughts, and then came a train of anticipated evils, which she could neither conquer, or avoid. She rose, and, to relieve her mind from the busy ideas, that tormented it, compelled herself to notice external objects. From her casement she looked out upon the wild grandeur of the scene, closed nearly on all sides by alpine steeps, whose tops, peeping over each other, faded from the eye in misty hues, while the
pro-

promontories below were dark with woods, that swept down to their base, and stretched along the narrow vallies. The rich pomp of these woods was particularly delightful to Emily; and she viewed with astonishment the fortifications of the castle spreading along a vast extent of rock, and now partly in decay, the grandeur of the ramparts below, and the towers and battlements and various features of the fabric above. From these her sight wandered over the cliffs and woods into the valley, along which foamed a broad and rapid stream, seen falling among the crags of an opposite mountain, now flashing in the sun-beams, and now shadowed by over-arching pines, till it was entirely concealed by their thick foliage. Again it burst from beneath this darkness in one broad sheet of foam, and fell thundering into the vale. Nearer, towards the west, opened the mountain-vista, which Emily had viewed with such sublime emotion, on her approach to the castle: a thin dusky vapour, that rose from
the

the valley, overspread its features with a sweet obscurity. As this ascended and caught the sun-beams, it kindled into a crimson tint, and touched with exquisite beauty the woods and cliffs, over which it passed to the summit of the mountains; then, as the veil drew up, it was delightful to watch the gleaming objects, that progressively disclosed themselves in the valley—the green turf—dark woods—little rocky recesses—a few peasants' huts—the foaming stream—a herd of cattle, and various images of pastoral beauty. Then, the pine-forests brightened, and then the broad breast of the mountains, till, at length, the mist settled round their summit, touching them with a ruddy glow. The features of the vista now appeared distinctly, and the broad deep shadows, that fell from the lower cliffs, gave strong effect to the streaming splendour above; while the mountains, gradually sinking in the perspective, appeared to shelve into the Adriatic sea, for such Emily imagined to be the gleam

gleam of blueish light, that terminated the view.

Thus she endeavoured to amuse her fancy, and was not unsuccessful. The breezy freshness of the morning, too, revived her. She raised her thoughts in prayer, which she felt always most disposed to do, when viewing the sublimity of nature, and her mind recovered its strength.

When she turned from the casement, her eyes glanced upon the door she had so carefully guarded, on the preceding night, and she now determined to examine whether it led; but, on advancing to remove the chairs, she perceived, that they were already moved a little way. Her surprise cannot easily be imagined, when, in the next minute, she perceived that the door was fastened.—She felt, as if she had seen an apparition. The door of the corridor was locked as she had left it, but this door, which could be secured only on the outside, must have been bolted, during the night. She became seriously uneasy at the thought

thought of sleeping again in a chamber, thus liable to intrusion, so remote, too, as it was from the family, and she determined to mention the circumstance to Madame Montoni, and to request a change.

After some perplexity she found her way into the great hall, and to the room, which she had left, on the preceding night, where breakfast was spread, and her aunt was alone, for Montoni had been walking over the environs of the castle, examining the condition of its fortifications, and talking for some time with Carlo. Emily observed, that her aunt had been weeping, and her heart softened towards her, with an affection, that shewed itself in her manner, rather than in words, while she carefully avoided the appearance of having noticed, that she was unhappy. She seized the opportunity of Montoni's absence to mention the circumstance of the door, to request that she might be allowed another apartment, and to enquire again, concerning the occasion of their sudden journey. On the first sub-
ject

ject her aunt referred her to Montoni, positively refusing to interfere in the affair; on the last, she professed utter ignorance.

Emily, then, with a wish of making her aunt more reconciled to her situation, praised the grandeur of the castle and the surrounding scenery, and endeavoured to soften every unpleasing circumstance attending it. But, though misfortune had somewhat conquered the asperities of Madame Montoni's temper, and, by increasing her cares for herself, had taught her to feel in some degree for others, the capricious love of rule, which nature had planted and habit had nourished in her heart, was not subdued. She could not now deny herself the gratification of tyrannizing over the innocent and helpless Emily, by attempting to ridicule the taste she could not feel.

Her satirical discourse was, however, interrupted by the entrance of Montoni, and her countenance immediately assumed a mingled expression of fear and resentment, while he seated himself at the breakfast-table,

table, as if unconscious of there being any person but himself in the room.

Emily, as she observed him in silence, saw, that his countenance was darker and sterner than usual. "O could I know," said she to herself, "what passes in that mind; could I know the thoughts, that are known there, I should no longer be condemned to this torturing suspense!" Their breakfast passed in silence, till Emily ventured to request, that another apartment might be allotted to her, and related the circumstance which made her wish it.

"I have no time to attend to these idle whims," said Montoni, "that chamber was prepared for you, and you must rest contented with it. It is not probable, that any person would take the trouble of going to that remote stair-case, for the purpose of fastening a door. If it was not fastened, when you entered the chamber, the wind, perhaps, shook the door and made the bolts slide. But I know not why I should undertake to account for so trifling an occurrence."

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This explanation was by no means satisfactory to Emily, who had observed, that the bolts were rusted, and consequently could not be thus easily moved; but she forbore to say so, and repeated her request.

“If you will not release yourself from the slavery of these fears,” said Montoni, sternly, “at least forbear to torment others by the mention of them. Conquer such whims, and endeavour to strengthen your mind. No existence is more contemptible than that, which is embittered by fear.” As he said this, his eye glanced upon Madame Montoni, who coloured highly, but was still silent. Emily, wounded and disappointed, thought her fears were, in this instance, too reasonable to deserve ridicule; but, perceiving, that, however they might oppress her, she must endure them, she tried to withdraw her attention from the subject.

Carlo soon after entered with some fruit: “Your *Excellenza* is tired after your long ramble,” said he, as he set the fruit upon the table; “but you have more to see after

breakfast. There is a place in the vaulted passage leading to"——

Montoni frowned upon him, and waved his hand for him to leave the room. Carlo stopped, looked down, and then added, as he advanced to the breakfast-table, and took up the basket of fruit, "I made bold, your *Excellenza*, to bring some cherries, here, for my honoured lady and my young mistress. Will your ladyship taste them, madam?" said Carlo, presenting the basket, "they are very fine ones, though I gathered them myself, and from an old tree, that catches all the south sun; they are as big as plums, your ladyship."

"Very well, old Carlo," said Madame Montoni; "I am obliged to you."

"And the young Signora, too, she may like some of them," rejoined Carlo, turning with the basket to Emily, "it will do me good to see her eat some."

"Thank you, Carlo," said Emily, taking some cherries, and smiling kindly.

"Come, come," said Montoni, impatiently,

tiently, "enough of this. Leave the room, but be in waiting. I shall want you presently."

Carlo obeyed, and Montoni, soon after, went out to examine further into the state of the castle; while Emily remained with her aunt, patiently enduring her ill humour, and endeavouring, with much sweetness, to sooth her affliction, instead of resenting its effect.

When Madame Montoni retired to her dressing-room, Emily endeavoured to amuse herself by a view of the castle. Through a folding door, she passed from the great hall to the ramparts, which extended along the brow of the precipice, round three sides of the edifice; the fourth was guarded by the high walls of the courts, and by the gateway, through which she had passed, on the preceding evening. The grandeur of the broad ramparts, and the changing scenery they overlooked, excited her high admiration; for the extent of the terraces allowed

the features of the country to be seen in such various points of view, that they appeared to form new landscapes. She often paused to examine the gothic magnificence of Udolpho, its proud irregularity, its lofty towers and battlements, its high-arched casements, and its slender watch-towers, perched upon the corners of turrets. Then she would lean on the wall of the terrace, and, shuddering, measure with her eye the precipice below, till the dark summits of the woods arrested it. Wherever she turned, appeared mountain-tops, forests of pine and narrow glens, opening among the Apennines and retiring from the sight into inaccessible regions.

While she thus leaned, Montoni, followed by two men, appeared, ascending a winding path, cut in the rock below. He stopped upon a cliff, and, pointing to the ramparts, turned to his followers, and talked with much eagerness of gesticulation.—Emily perceived, that one of these men was
Carlo;

Carlo; the other was in the dress of a peasant, and he alone seemed to be receiving the directions of Montoni.

She withdrew from the walls, and pursued her walk, till she heard at a distance the sound of carriage wheels, and then the loud bell of the portal, when it instantly occurred to her, that Count Morano was arrived. As she hastily passed the folding doors from the terrace, towards her own apartment, several persons entered the hall by an opposite door. She saw them at the extremity of the arcades, and immediately retreated; but the agitation of her spirits, and the extent and darkness of the hall, had prevented her from distinguishing the persons of the strangers. Her fears, however, had but one object, and they had called up that object to her fancy;—she believed that she had seen Count Morano.

When she thought that they had passed the hall, she ventured again to the door, and proceeded, unobserved, to her room, where she remained, agitated with apprehensions,

and listening to every distant sound. At length, hearing voices on the rampart, she hastened to her window, and observed Montoni, with Signor Cavigni, walking below, conversing earnestly, and often stopping and turning towards each other, at which times their discourse seemed to be uncommonly interesting.

Of the several persons who had appeared in the hall, here was Cavigni alone: but Emily's alarm was soon after heightened by the steps of some one in the corridor, who, she apprehended, brought a message from the Count. In the next moment, Annette appeared.

“ Ah! ma'amfelle,” said she, “ here is the Signor Cavigni arrived! I am sure I rejoiced to see a christian person in this place; and then he is so good-natured too, he always takes so much notice of me!— And here is also Signor Verezzi, and who do you think besides, ma'amfelle?”

“ I cannot guess, Annette; tell me quickly.”

“ Nay,

“Nay, ma'am, do guess once.”

“Well, then,” said Emily, with assumed composure, “it is—Count Morano, I suppose.”

“Holy Virgin!” cried Annette, “are you ill, ma'amfelle? you are going to faint! let me get some water.”

Emily sunk into a chair; “Stay, Annette,” said she, feebly, “do not leave me—I shall soon be better; open the casement.—The Count, you say—he is come then?”

“Who, I!—the Count! No, ma'amfelle, I did not say so.” “He is *not* come then?” said Emily, eagerly. “No, ma'amfelle.”

“You are sure of it?”

“Lord bless me!” said Annette, “you recover very suddenly, ma'am! why, I thought you was dying, just now.”

“But the Count—you are sure, is not come?”

“O yes, quite sure of that, ma'amfelle. Why, I was looking out through the grate

in the north turret, when the carriages drove into the court-yard, and I never expected to see such a goodly fight in this dismal old castle! but here are masters and servants, too, enough to make the place ring again. O! I was ready to leap through the rusty old bars, for joy!—O! who would ever have thought of seeing a christian face in this huge dreary house? I could have kissed the very horses that brought them.”

“ Well, Annette, well, I am better now.”

“ Yes, ma’amfelle, I see you are. O! all the servants will lead merry lives here, now; we shall have singing and dancing in the little hall, for the Signor cannot hear us there—and droll stories—Ludovico’s come, ma’am; yes, there is Ludovico come with them! You remember Ludovico, ma’am—a tall, handsome, young man—Signor Cavigni’s lacquey—who always wears his cloak with such a grace, thrown round his left arm, and his hat set on so smartly, all on one side, and——”

“ No,”

“ No,” said Emily, who was wearied by her loquacity.

“ What, ma’amfelle ! don’t you remember Ludovico—who rowed the Cavaliero’s gondola, at the last regatta, and won the prize ? And who used to sing such sweet verses about Orlandos and about the Black-a-moors, too ; and Charly—Charly—magne, yes, that was the name, all under my lattice, in the west portico, on the moonlight nights at Venice ? O ! I have listened to him !” —

“ I fear, to thy peril, my good Annette,” said Emily ; “ for it seems his verses have stolen thy heart. But let me advise you ; if it is so, keep the secret ; never let him know it.”

“ Ah—ma’amfelle !—how can one keep such a secret as that ?”

“ Well, Annette, I am now so much better, that you may leave me.”

“ O, but, ma’amfelle, I forgot to ask—how did you sleep in this dreary old chamber last night ?” — “ As well as usual.” — “ Did

you hear no noises?"—"None."—"Nor see any thing?"—"Nothing."—"Well, that is surprising!"—"Not in the least: and now tell me, why you ask these questions."

"O, ma'amfelle! I would not tell you for the world, nor all I have heard about this chamber, either; it would frighten you so."

"If that is all, you have frightened me already, and may therefore tell me what you know, without hurting your conscience."

"O Lord! they say the room is haunted, and has been so these many years."

"It is by a ghost, then, who can draw bolts," said Emily, endeavouring to laugh away her apprehensions; "for I left that door open, last night, and found it fastened this morning."

Annette turned pale, and said not a word.

"Do you know whether any of the servants fastened this door in the morning, before I rose?"

"No,

“ No, ma’am, that I will be bound they did not ; but I don’t know : shall I go and ask, ma’amfelle ? ” said Annette, moving hastily towards the corridor.

“ Stay, Annette, I have other questions to ask ; tell me what you have heard concerning this room, and whither that staircase leads.”

“ I will go and ask it all directly, ma’am ; besides, I am sure my lady wants me. I cannot stay now, indeed, ma’am.”

She hurried from the room, without waiting Emily’s reply, whose heart, lightened by the certainty, that Morano was not arrived, allowed her to smile at the superstitious terror, which had seized on Annette ; for, though she sometimes felt its influence herself, she could smile at it, when apparent in other persons.

Montoni having refused Emily another chamber, she determined to bear with patience the evil she could not remove, and,

in order to make the room as comfortable as possible, unpacked her books, her sweet delight in happier days, and her soothing resource in the hours of moderate sorrow: but there were hours when even these failed of their effect; when the genius, the taste, the enthusiasm of the sublimest writers were felt no longer.

Her little library being arranged on a high chest, part of the furniture of the room, she took out her drawing utensils, and was tranquil enough to be pleased with the thought of sketching the sublime scenes, beheld from her windows; but she suddenly checked this pleasure, remembering how often she had soothed herself by the intention of obtaining amusement of this kind, and had been prevented by some new circumstance of misfortune.

“How can I suffer myself to be deluded by hope,” said she, “and, because Count Morano is not yet arrived, feel a momentary happiness? Alas! what is it to me,

whether he is here to-day, or to-morrow, if he comes at all?—and that he will come—it were weakness to doubt.”

To withdraw her thoughts, however, from the subject of her misfortunes, she attempted to read, but her attention wandered from the page, and, at length, she threw aside the book, and determined to explore the adjoining chambers of the castle. Her imagination was pleased with the view of ancient grandeur, and an emotion of melancholy awe awakened all its powers, as she walked through rooms, obscure and desolate, where no footsteps had passed probably for many years, and remembered the strange history of the former possessor of the edifice. This brought to her recollection the veiled picture, which had attracted her curiosity, on the preceding night, and she resolved to examine it. As she passed through the chambers, that led to this, she found herself somewhat agitated; its connection with the late lady of the castle, and the conversation of Annette, together with
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the circumstance of the veil, throwing a mystery over the subject, that excited a faint degree of terror. But a terror of this nature, as it occupies and expands the mind, and elevates it to high expectation, is purely sublime, and leads us, by a kind of fascination, to seek even the object, from which we appear to shrink.

Emily passed on with faltering steps, and having paused a moment at the door, before she attempted to open it, she then hastily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, which appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, that hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and then, with a timid hand, lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall—perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture, and, before she could leave the chamber, she dropped senseless on the floor.

When she recovered her recollection, the remembrance of what she had seen had nearly deprived her of it a second time.

She

She had scarcely strength to remove from the room, and regain her own; and, when arrived there, wanted courage to remain alone. Horror occupied her mind, and excluded, for a time, all sense of past, and dread of future misfortune: she seated herself near the casement, because from thence she heard voices, though distant, on the terrace, and might see people pass, and these, trifling as they were, were reviving circumstances. When her spirits had recovered their tone, she considered, whether she should mention what she had seen to Madame Montoni, and various and important motives urged her to do so, among which the least was the hope of the relief, which an overburdened mind finds in speaking of the subject of its interest. But she was aware of the terrible consequences, which such a communication might lead to; and, dreading the indiscretion of her aunt, at length, endeavoured to arm herself with resolution to observe a profound silence, on the subject. Montoni and Verezzi soon
after

after passed under the casement, speaking cheerfully, and their voices revived her. Presently the Signors Bertolini and Cavigni joined the party on the terrace, and Emily, supposing that Madame Montoni was then alone, went to seek her; for the solitude of her chamber, and its proximity to that where she had received so severe a shock, again affected her spirits.

She found her aunt in her dressing-room, preparing for dinner. Emily's pale and affrighted countenance alarmed even Madame Montoni; but she had sufficient strength of mind to be silent on the subject, that still made her shudder, and which was ready to burst from her lips. In her aunt's apartment she remained, till they both descended to dinner. There she met the gentlemen lately arrived, who had a kind of busy seriousness in their looks, which was somewhat unusual with them, while their thoughts seemed too much occupied by some deep interest, to suffer them to bestow much attention either on Emily, or
 Madame

Madame Montoni. They spoke little, and Montoni less. Emily, as she now looked on him, shuddered. The horror of the chamber rushed on her mind. Several times the colour faded from her cheeks, and she feared, that illness would betray her emotions, and compel her to leave the room; but the strength of her resolution remedied the weakness of her frame; she obliged herself to converse, and even tried to look cheerful.

Montoni evidently laboured under some vexation, such as would probably have agitated a weaker mind, or a more susceptible heart, but which appeared, from the sternness of his countenance, only to bend up his faculties to energy and fortitude.

It was a comfortless and silent meal. The gloom of the castle seemed to have spread its contagion even over the gay countenance of Cavigni, and with this gloom was mingled a fierceness, such as she had seldom seen him indicate. Count Morano was not named, and what conversation there was,
 turned

turned chiefly upon the wars, which at that time agitated the Italian states, the strength of the Venetian armies, and the characters of their generals.

After dinner, when the servants had withdrawn, Emily learned, that the cavalier, who had drawn upon himself the vengeance of Orfino, had since died of his wounds, and that strict search was still making for his murderer. The intelligence seemed to disturb Montoni, who mused, and then enquired, where Orfino had concealed himself. His guests, who all, except Cavigni, were ignorant, that Montoni had himself assisted him to escape from Venice, replied, that he had fled in the night with such precipitation and secrecy, that his most intimate companions knew not whither. Montoni blamed himself for having asked the question, for a second thought convinced him, that a man of Orfino's suspicious temper was not likely to trust any of the persons present with the knowledge of his asylum. He considered himself, however,

as entitled to his utmost confidence, and did not doubt, that he should soon hear of him.

Emily retired with Madame Montoni, soon after the cloth was withdrawn, and left the cavaliers to their secret councils, but not before the significant frowns of Montoni had warned his wife to depart, who passed from the hall to the ramparts, and walked, for some time, in silence, which Emily did not interrupt, for her mind was also occupied by interests of its own. It required all her resolution, to forbear communicating to Madame Montoni the terrible subject, which still thrilled her every nerve with horror; and sometimes she was on the point of doing so, merely to obtain the relief of a moment; but she knew how wholly she was in the power of Montoni, and, considering, that the indiscretion of her aunt might prove fatal to them both, she compelled herself to endure a present and an inferior evil, rather than to tempt a future and a heavier one. A strange kind
of

of presentiment frequently, on this day, occurred to her;—it seemed as if her fate rested here, and was by some invisible means connected with this castle.

“ Let me not accelerate it,” said she to herself: “ for whatever I may be reserved, let me, at least, avoid self-reproach.”

As she looked on the massy walls of the edifice, her melancholy spirits represented it to be her prison; and she started as at a new suggestion, when she considered how far distant she was from her native country, from her little peaceful home, and from her only friend—how remote was her hope of happiness, how feeble the expectation of again seeing him! Yet the idea of Valancourt, and her confidence in his faithful love, had hitherto been her only solace, and she struggled hard to retain them. A few tears of agony started to her eyes, which she turned aside to conceal.

While she afterwards leaned on the wall of the rampart, some peasants, at a little distance, were seen examining a breach, before
which

which lay a heap of stones, as if to repair it, and a rusty old cannon, that appeared to have fallen from its station above. Madame Montoni stopped to speak to the men, and enquired what they were going to do. "To repair the fortifications, your ladyship," said one of them; a labour which she was somewhat surpris'd, that Montoni should think necessary, particularly since he had never spoken of the castle, as of a place, at which he meant to reside for any considerable time; but she pass'd on towards a lofty arch, that led from the south to the east rampart, and which adjoined the castle, on one side, while, on the other, it supported a small watch-tower, that entirely commanded the deep valley below. As she approached this arch, she saw, beyond it, winding along the woody descent of a distant mountain, a long troop of horse and foot, whom she knew to be soldiers, only by the glitter of their pikes and other arms, for the distance did not allow her to discover the colour of their liveries.

As

As she gazed, the vanguard issued from the woods into the valley, but the train still continued to pour over the remote summit of the mountain, in endless succession; while, in the front, the military uniform became distinguishable, and the commanders, riding first, and seeming, by their gestures, to direct the march of those that followed, at length, approached very near to the castle.

Such a spectacle, in these solitary regions, both surprised and alarmed Madame Montoni, and she hastened towards some peasants, who were employed in raising bastions before the south rampart, where the rock was less abrupt than elsewhere. These men could give no satisfactory answers to her enquiries, but, being roused by them, gazed in stupid astonishment upon the long cavalcade. Madame Montoni, then thinking it necessary to communicate farther the subject of her alarm, sent Emily to say, that she wished to speak to Montoni; an errand her niece did not approve, for she
dreaded

dreaded his frowns, which she knew this message would provoke ; but she obeyed in silence.

As she drew near the apartment, in which he sat with his guests, she heard them in earnest and loud dispute, and she paused a moment, trembling at the displeasure, which her sudden interruption would occasion. In the next, their voices sunk all together ; she then ventured to open the door, and, while Montoni turned hastily and looked at her, without speaking, she delivered her message.

“ Tell Madam Montoni I am engaged,” said he.

Emily then thought it proper to mention the subject of her alarm. Montoni and his companions rose instantly and went to the windows, but, these not affording them a view of the troops, they at length proceeded to the ramparts, where Cavigni conjectured it to be a legion of *Condottieri*, on their march towards Modena.

One part of the cavalcade now extended
along

along the valley, and another wound among the mountains towards the north, while some troops still lingered on the woody precipices, where the first had appeared, so that the great length of the procession seemed to include an whole army. While Montoni and his family watched its progress, they heard the found of trumpets and the clash of cymbals in the vale, and then others, answering from the heights. Emily listened with emotion to the shrill blast, that woke the echoes of the mountains, and Montoni explained the signals, with which he appeared to be well acquainted, and which meant nothing hostile. The uniforms of the troops, and the kind of arms they bore, confirmed to him the conjecture of Cavigni, and he had the satisfaction to see them pass by, without even stopping to gaze upon his castle. He did not, however, leave the rampart, till the bases of the mountains had shut them from his view, and the last murmur of the trumpet floated away on the wind. Cavigni and Verezzi
were

were inspirited by this spectacle, which seemed to have roused all the fire of their temper; Montoni turned into the castle in thoughtful silence.

Emily's mind had not yet sufficiently recovered from its late shock, to endure the loneliness of her chamber, and she remained upon the ramparts; for Madame Montoni had not invited her to her dressing-room, whither she had gone evidently in low spirits, and Emily, from her late experience, had lost all wish to explore the gloomy and mysterious recesses of the castle. The ramparts, therefore, were almost her only retreat, and here she lingered, till the gray haze of evening was again spread over the scene.

The cavaliers supped by themselves, and Madame Montoni remained in her apartment, whither Emily went, before she retired to her own. She found her aunt weeping, and in much agitation. The tenderness of Emily was naturally so soothing, that it seldom failed to give comfort to the

drooping heart: but Madame Montoni's was torn, and the softest accents of Emily's voice were lost upon it. With her usual delicacy, she did not appear to observe her aunt's distress, but it gave an involuntary gentleness to her manners, and an air of solicitude to her countenance, which Madame Montoni was vexed to perceive, who seemed to feel the pity of her niece to be an insult to her pride, and dismissed her as soon as she properly could. Emily did not venture to mention again the reluctance she felt to her gloomy chamber, but she requested that Annette might be permitted to remain with her till she retired to rest; and the request was somewhat reluctantly granted. Annette, however, was now with the servants, and Emily withdrew alone.

With light and hasty steps she passed through the long galleries, while the feeble glimmer of the lamp she carried only shewed the gloom around her, and the passing air threatened to extinguish it. The lonely silence, that reigned in this part of the castle,

awed

awed her ; now and then, indeed, she heard a faint peal of laughter rise from a remote part of the edifice, where the servants were assembled, but it was soon lost, and a kind of breathless stillness remained. As she passed the suite of rooms which she had visited in the morning, her eyes glanced fearfully on the door, and she almost fancied she heard murmuring sounds within, but she paused not a moment to enquire.

Having reached her own apartment, where no blazing wood on the hearth dissipated the gloom, she sat down with a book, to enliven her attention, till Annette should come, and a fire could be kindled. She continued to read till her light was nearly expired, but Annette did not appear, and the solitude and obscurity of her chamber again affected her spirits, the more, because of its nearness to the scene of horror, that she had witnessed in the morning. Gloomy and fantastic images came to her mind. She looked fearfully towards the door of

the stair-case, and then, examining whether it was still fastened, found that it was so. Unable to conquer the uneasiness she felt at the prospect of sleeping again in this remote and insecure apartment, which some person seemed to have entered during the preceding night, her impatience to see Annette, whom she had bidden to enquire concerning this circumstance, became extremely painful. She wished also to question her, as to the object, which had excited so much horror in her own mind, and which Annette on the preceding evening had appeared to be in part acquainted with, though her words were very remote from the truth, and it appeared plainly to Emily, that the girl had been purposely misled by a false report: above all she was surpris'd, that the door of the chamber, which contained it, should be left unguarded. Such an instance of negligence almost surpass'd belief. But her light was now expiring; the faint flashes it threw upon the walls called
up

up all the terrors of fancy, and she rose to find her way to the habitable part of the castle, before it was quite extinguished.

As she opened the chamber door, she heard remote voices, and, soon after, saw a light issue upon the further end of the corridor, which Annette and another servant approached. "I am glad you are come," said Emily: "what has detained you so long? Pray light me a fire immediately."

"My lady wanted me, ma'amfelle," replied Annette in some confusion; "I will go and get the wood."

"No," said Caterina, "that is my business," and left the room instantly, while Annette would have followed; but, being called back, she began to talk very loud, and laugh, and seemed afraid to trust a pause of silence.

Caterina soon returned with the wood, and then, when the cheerful blaze once more animated the room, and this servant had withdrawn, Emily asked Annette, whe-

ther she had made the enquiry she bade her. “ Yes, ma’amfelle,” said Annette, “ but not a soul knows any thing about the matter : and old Carlo,—I watched him well, for they say he knows strange things—old Carlo looked so as I don’t know how to tell, and he asked me again and again, if I was sure the door was ever unfastened. Lord, says I—am I sure I am alive? And as for me, ma’am, I am all astounded, as one may say, and would no more sleep in this chamber, than I would on the great cannon at the end of the east rampart.” “ And what objection have you to that cannon, more than to any of the rest?” said Emily smiling : “ the best would be rather a hard bed.”

“ Yes, ma’amfelle, any of them would be hard enough for that matter ; but they do say, that something has been seen in the dead of night, standing beside the great cannon, as if to guard it.”

“ Well! my good Annette, the people who tell such stories, are happy in having
you.

you for an auditor, for I perceive you believe them all."

"Dear ma'amfelle! I will shew you the very cannon; you can see it from these windows!"

"Well," said Emily, "but that does not prove, that an apparition guards it."

"What! not if I shew you the very cannon! Dear ma'am, you will believe nothing."

"Nothing probably upon this subject, but what I see," said Emily.—"Well, ma'am, but you shall see it, if you will only step this way to the casement."—Emily could not forbear laughing, and Annette looked surprised. Perceiving her extreme aptitude to credit the marvellous, Emily forbore to mention the subject she had intended, lest it should overcome her with ideal terrors, and she began to speak on a lively topic—the regattas of Venice.

"Aye, ma'amfelle, those rowing matches," said Annette, "and the fine moon-light nights, are all, that are worth seeing in Ve-

nice. To be sure that moon is brighter than any I ever saw; and then to hear such sweet music, too, as Ludovico has often and often sung under the lattice by the west portico! Ma'amfelle, it was Ludovico, that told me about that picture, which you wanted so to look at last night, and—”

“What picture?” said Emily, wishing Annette to explain herself.

“O! that terrible picture with the black veil over it.”

“You never saw it, then?” said Emily.

“Who, I!—No, ma'amfelle, I never did. But this morning,” continued Annette, lowering her voice, and looking round the room, “this morning, as it was broad daylight, do you know, ma'am, I took a strange fancy to see it, as I had heard such odd hints about it, and I got as far as the door, and should have opened it, if it had not been locked!”

Emily, endeavouring to conceal the emotion this circumstance occasioned, enquired at what hour she went to the chamber,

ber, and found, that it was soon after herself had been there. She also asked further questions, and the answers convinced her, that Annette, and probably her informer, were ignorant of the terrible truth, though in Annette's account something very like the truth, now and then, mingled with the falsehood. Emily now began to fear, that her visit to the chamber had been observed, since the door had been closed, so immediately after her departure; and dreaded lest this should draw upon her the vengeance of Montoni. Her anxiety, also, was excited to know whence, and for what purpose, the delusive report, which had been imposed upon Annette, had originated, since Montoni could only have wished for silence and secrecy; but she felt, that the subject was too terrible for this lonely hour, and she compelled herself to leave it, to converse with Annette, whose chat, simple as it was, she preferred to the stillness of total solitude.

Thus they sat, till near midnight, but

not without many hints from Annette, that she wished to go. The embers were now nearly burnt out; and Emily heard, at a distance, the thundering sound of the hall doors, as they were shut for the night. She, therefore, prepared for rest, but was still unwilling that Annette should leave her. At this instant, the great bell of the portal sounded. They listened in fearful expectation, when, after a long pause of silence, it sounded again. Soon after, they heard the noise of carriage wheels in the court-yard. Emily sunk almost lifeless in her chair; "It is the Count," said she.

"What, at this time of night, ma'am!" said Annette: "no, my dear lady. But, for that matter, it is a strange time of night for any body to come!"

"Nay, pr'ythee, good Annette, stay not talking," said Emily in a voice of agony—"Go, pr'ythee, go, and see who it is."

Annette left the room, and carried with her the light, leaving Emily in darkness, which a few moments before would have terrified

terrified her in this room, but was now scarcely observed by her. She listened and waited, in breathless expectation, and heard distant noises, but Annette did not return. Her patience, at length, exhausted, she tried to find her way to the corridor, but it was long before she could touch the door of the chamber, and, when she had opened it, the total darkness without made her fear to proceed. Voices were now heard, and Emily even thought she distinguished those of Count Morano, and Montoni. Soon after, she heard steps approaching, and then a ray of light streamed through the darkness, and Annette appeared, whom Emily went to meet.

“ Yes, ma’amfelle,” said she, “ you was right, it is the Count sure enough.”

“ It is he !” exclaimed Emily, lifting her eyes towards heaven and supporting herself by Annette’s arm.

“ Good Lord ! my dear lady, don’t be in such a *fluster*, and look so pale, we shall soon hear more.”

“ We shall, indeed !” said Emily, moving as fast as she was able towards her apartment. “ I am not well ; give me air.” Annette opened a casement, and brought water. The faintness soon left Emily, but she desired Annette would not go till she heard from Montoni.

“ Dear ma’amfelle ! he surely will not disturb you at this time of night ; why he must think you are asleep.”

“ Stay with me till I am so, then,” said Emily, who felt temporary relief from this suggestion, which appeared probable enough, though her fears had prevented its occurring to her. Annette, with secret reluctance, consented to stay, and Emily was now composed enough to ask her some questions ; among others, whether she had seen the Count.

“ Yes, ma’am, I saw him alight, for I went from hence to the grate in the north turret, that overlooks the inner court-yard, you know. There I saw the Count’s carriage, and the Count in it, waiting at the
great

great door,—for the porter was just gone to bed—with several men on horseback all by the light of the torches they carried.”—Emily was compelled to smile. “When the door was opened, the Count said something, that I could not make out, and then got out, and another gentleman with him. I thought, to be sure, the Signor was gone to bed, and I hastened away to my lady’s dressing-room, to see what I could hear. But in the way I met Ludovico, and he told me that the Signor was up, counselling with his master and the other Signors, in the room at the end of the north gallery; and Ludovico held up his finger, and laid it on his lips, as much as to say—There is more going on, than you think of, Annette, but you must hold your tongue. And so I did hold my tongue, ma’amfelle, and came away to tell you directly.”

Emily enquired who the cavalier was, that accompanied the Count, and how Montoni received them; but Annette could not inform her.

“Ludo-

“Ludovico,” she added, “had just been to call Signor Montoni’s valet, that he might tell him they were arrived, when I met him.”

Emily sat musing, for some time, and then her anxiety was so much increased, that she desired Annette would go to the servants’ hall, where it was possible she might hear something of the Count’s intention, respecting his stay at the castle.

“Yes, ma’am,” said Annette with readiness; “but how am I to find the way, if I leave the lamp with you?”

Emily said she would light her, and they immediately quitted the chamber. When they had reached the top of the great stair-case, Emily recollected, that she might be seen by the Count, and, to avoid the great hall, Annette conducted her through some private passages to a back stair-case, which led directly to that of the servants.

As she returned towards her chamber, Emily began to fear, that she might again lose herself in the intricacies of the castle, and again be shocked by some mysterious spectacle;

spectacle ; and, though she was already perplexed by the numerous turnings, she feared to open one of the many doors, that offered. While she stepped thoughtfully along, she fancied, that she heard a low moaning at no great distance, and, having paused a moment, she heard it again and distinctly. Several doors appeared on the right hand of the passage. She advanced, and listened. When she came to the second, she heard a voice, apparently in complaint, within, to which she continued to listen, afraid to open the door, and unwilling to leave it. Convulsive sobs followed, and then the piercing accents of an agonizing spirit burst forth. Emily stood appalled, and looked through the gloom, that surrounded her, in fearful expectation. The lamentations continued. Pity now began to subdue terror ; it was possible she might administer comfort to the sufferer, at least, by expressing sympathy, and she laid her hand on the door. While she hesitated she thought she knew this voice, disguised as it was by tones of grief. Having,
there-

therefore, set down the lamp in the passage, she gently opened the door, within which all was dark, except that from an inner apartment a partial light appeared ; and she stepped softly on. Before she reached it, the appearance of Madame Montoni, leaning on her dressing-table, weeping, and with a handkerchief held to her eyes, struck her, and she paused.

Some person was seated in a chair by the fire, but who it was she could not distinguish. He spoke, now and then, in a low voice, that did not allow Emily to hear what was uttered, but she thought, that Madame Montoni, at those times, wept the more, who was too much occupied by her own distress, to observe Emily, while the latter, though anxious to know what occasioned this, and who was the person admitted at so late an hour to her aunt's dressing-room, forbore to add to her sufferings by surprising her, or to take advantage of her situation, by listening to a private discourse. She, therefore, stepped softly back, and, after
some

some further difficulty, found the way to her own chamber, where nearer interests, at length, excluded the surprise and concern she had felt, respecting Madame Montoni.

Annette, however, returned without satisfactory intelligence, for the servants, among whom she had been, were either entirely ignorant, or affected to be so, concerning the Count's intended stay at the castle. They could talk only of the steep and broken road they had just passed, and of the numerous dangers they had escaped, and express wonder how their lord could choose to encounter all these, in the darkness of night; for they scarcely allowed, that the torches had served for any other purpose but that of shewing the dreariness of the mountains. Annette, finding she could gain no information, left them, making noisy petitions, for more wood on the fire and more supper on the table.

“And now, ma'amselle,” added she, “I am so sleepy!—I am sure, if you was so
sleepy,

sleepy, you would not desire me to sit up with you."

Emily, indeed, began to think it was cruel to wish it; she had also waited so long, without receiving a summons from Montoni, that it appeared he did not mean to disturb her, at this late hour, and she determined to dismiss Annette. But, when she again looked round her gloomy chamber, and recollected certain circumstances, fear seized her spirits, and she hesitated.

"And yet it were cruel of me to ask you to stay, till I am asleep, Annette," said she, "for I fear it will be very long before I forget myself in sleep."

"I dare say it will be very long, ma'am-felle," said Annette.

"But, before you go," rejoined Emily, "let me ask you—Had Signor Montoni left Count Morano, when you quitted the hall?"

"O no, ma'am, they were alone together."

"Have

“ Have you been in my aunt’s dressing-room, since you left me ?”

“ No, ma’amfelle, I called at the door as I passed, but it was fastened ; so I thought my lady was gone to bed.”

“ Who, then, was with your lady just now ?” said Emily, forgetting, in surprise, her usual prudence.

“ Nobody, I believe, ma’am,” replied Annette, “ nobody has been with her, I believe, since I left you.”

Emily took no further notice of the subject, and, after some struggle with imaginary fears, her good nature prevailed over them so far, that she dismissed Annette for the night. She then sat, musing upon her own circumstances and those of Madame Montoni, till her eye rested on the miniature picture, which she had found, after her father’s death, among the papers he had enjoined her to destroy. It was open upon the table, before her, among some loose drawings, having, with them, been taken out of a little box by Emily, some hours before.

before. The sight of it called up many interesting reflections, but the melancholy sweetness of the countenance soothed the emotions, which these had occasioned. It was the same style of countenance as that of her late father, and, while she gazed on it with fondness on this account, she even fancied a resemblance in the features. But this tranquillity was suddenly interrupted, when she recollected the words in the manuscript, that had been found with this picture, and which had formerly occasioned her so much doubt and horror. At length, she roused herself from the deep reverie, into which this remembrance had thrown her; but, when she rose to undress, the silence and solitude, to which she was left, at this midnight hour, for not even a distant sound was now heard, conspired with the impression the subject she had been considering had given to her mind, to appall her. Annette's hints, too, concerning this chamber, simple as they were, had not failed to affect her, since they followed.

lowed a circumstance of peculiar horror, which she herself had witnessed, and since the scene of this was a chamber nearly adjoining her own.

The door of the stair-case was, perhaps, a subject of more reasonable alarm, and she now began to apprehend, such was the aptitude of her fears, that this stair-case had some private communication with the apartment, which she shuddered even to remember. Determined not to undress, she lay down to sleep in her clothes, with her late father's dog, the faithful *Manchon*, at the foot of the bed, whom she considered as a kind of guard.

Thus circumstanced, she tried to banish reflection, but her busy fancy would still hover over the subjects of her interest, and she heard the clock of the castle strike two, before she closed her eyes.

From the disturbed slumber, into which she then sunk, she was soon awakened by a noise, which seemed to arise within her chamber; but the silence, that prevailed, as she
fearfully

fearfully listened, inclined her to believe, that she had been alarmed by such sounds as sometimes occur in dreams, and she laid her head again upon the pillow.

A return of the noise again disturbed her; it seemed to come from that part of the room, which communicated with the private stair-case, and she instantly remembered the odd circumstance of the door having been fastened, during the preceding night, by some unknown hand. Her late alarming suspicion, concerning its communication, also occurred to her. Her heart became faint with terror. Half raising herself from the bed, and gently drawing aside the curtain, she looked towards the door of the stair-case, but the lamp, that burnt on the hearth, spread so feeble a light through the apartment, that the remote parts of it were lost in shadow. The noise, however, which, she was convinced, came from the door, continued. It seemed like that made by the undrawing of rusty bolts, and often ceased, and was then renewed more gently, as

if the hand, that occasioned it, was restrained by a fear of discovery. While Emily kept her eyes fixed on the spot, she saw the door move, and then slowly open, and perceived something enter the room, but the extreme duskiness prevented her distinguishing what it was. Almost fainting with terror, she had yet sufficient command over herself, to check the shriek, that was escaping from her lips, and, letting the curtain drop from her hand, continued to observe in silence the motions of the mysterious form she saw. It seemed to glide along the remote obscurity of the apartment, then paused, and, as it approached the hearth, she perceived, in the stronger light, what appeared to be a human figure. Certain remembrances now struck upon her heart, and almost subdued the feeble remains of her spirits; she continued, however, to watch the figure, which remained for some time motionless, but then, advancing slowly towards the bed, stood silently at the feet, where the curtains, being a little open, allowed her still to see it; terror, however,

however, had now deprived her of the power of discrimination, as well as of that of utterance.

Having continued there a moment, the form retreated towards the hearth, when it took the lamp, held it up, surveyed the chamber, for a few moments, and then again advanced towards the bed. The light at that instant awakening the dog, that had slept at Emily's feet, he barked loudly, and, jumping to the floor, flew at the stranger, who struck the animal smartly with a sheathed sword, and, springing towards the bed, Emily discovered—Count Morano!

She gazed at him for a moment in speechless affright, while he, throwing himself on his knee at the bed-side, besought her to fear nothing, and, having thrown down his sword, would have taken her hand, when the faculties, that terror had suspended, suddenly returned, and she sprung from the bed, in the dress, which surely a kind of prophetic apprehension had prevented her, on this night, from throwing aside.

Morano rose, followed her to the door, through which he had entered, and caught her hand, as she reached the top of the staircase, but not before she had discovered, by the gleam of a lamp, another man half-way down the steps. She now screamed in despair, and, believing herself given up by Montoni, saw, indeed, no possibility of escape.

The Count, who still held her hand, led her back into the chamber.

“Why all this terror?” said he, in a tremulous voice. “Hear me, Emily: I come not to alarm you; no, by Heaven! I love you too well—too well for my own peace.”

Emily looked at him for a moment, in fearful doubt.

“Then leave me, sir,” said she, “leave me instantly.”

“Hear me, Emily,” resumed Morano, “hear me! I love, and am in despair—yes—in despair. How can I gaze upon you, and know, that it is, perhaps, for the last time, without suffering all the phrensy of de-

spair? But it shall not be so; you shall be mine, in spite of Montoni and all his villany."

"In spite of Montoni!" cried Emily eagerly: "what is it I hear?"

"You hear, that Montoni is a villain," exclaimed Morano with vehemence,—“a villain who would have sold you to my love!—Who—”

"And is he less, who would have bought me?" said Emily, fixing on the Count an eye of calm contempt. "Leave the room, sir, instantly," she continued in a voice, trembling between joy and fear, "or I will alarm the family, and you may receive that from Signor Montoni's vengeance, which I have vainly supplicated from his pity." But Emily knew, that she was beyond the hearing of those, who might protect her.

"You can never hope any thing from his pity," said Morano, "he has used me infamously, and my vengeance shall pursue him. And for you, Emily, for you, he has new plans more profitable than the last, no doubt."

doubt." The gleam of hope, which the Count's former speech had revived, was now nearly extinguished by the latter ; and, while Emily's countenance betrayed the emotions of her mind, he endeavoured to take advantage of the discovery.

" I lose time," said he : " I came not to exclaim against Montoni ; I came to solicit, to plead—to Emily ; to tell her all I suffer, to entreat her to save me from despair, and herself from destruction. Emily ! the schemes of Montoni are insearchable, but, I warn you, they are terrible ; he has no principle, when interest, or ambition leads. Can I love you, and abandon you to his power ? Fly, then, fly from this gloomy prison, with a lover, who adores you ! I have bribed a servant of the castle to open the gates, and, before to-morrow's dawn, you shall be far on the way to Venice."

Emily, overcome by the sudden shock she had received, at the moment, too, when she had begun to hope for better days, now thought she saw destruction surround her on

every side. Unable to reply, and almost to think, she threw herself into a chair, pale and breathless. That Montoni had formerly sold her to Morano, was very probable; that he had now withdrawn his consent to the marriage, was evident from the Count's present conduct; and it was nearly certain, that a scheme of stronger interest only could have induced the selfish Montoni to forego a plan, which he had hitherto so strenuously pursued. These reflections made her tremble at the hints, which Morano had just given, which she no longer hesitated to believe; and, while she shrunk from the new scenes of misery and oppression, that might await her in the castle of Udolpho, she was compelled to observe, that almost her only means of escaping them was by submitting herself to the protection of this man, with whom evils more certain and not less terrible appeared,—evils, upon which she could not endure to pause for an instant.

Her silence, though it was that of agony,
 encouraged

encouraged the hopes of Morano, who watched her countenance with impatience, took again the resisting hand she had withdrawn, and, as he pressed it to his heart, again conjured her to determine immediately. "Every moment we lose, will make our departure more dangerous," said he: "these few moments lost may enable Montoni to overtake us."

"I beseech you, sir, be silent," said Emily faintly: "I am indeed very wretched, and wretched I must remain. Leave me—I command you, leave me to my fate."

"Never!" cried the Count vehemently: "let me perish first! But forgive my violence! the thought of losing you is madness. You cannot be ignorant of Montoni's character, you may be ignorant of his schemes—nay, you must be so, or you would not hesitate between my love and his power."

"Nor do I hesitate," said Emily.

"Let us go, then," said Morano, eagerly

kissing her hand, and rising, "my carriage waits, below the castle walls."

"You mistake me, sir," said Emily. "Allow me to thank you for the interest you express in my welfare, and to decide by my own choice. I shall remain under the protection of Signor Montoni."

"Under his protection!" exclaimed Morano, proudly, "his *protection!* Emily, why will you suffer yourself to be thus deluded? I have already told you what you have to expect from his *protection.*"

"And pardon me, sir, if, in this instance, I doubt mere assertion, and, to be convinced, require something approaching to proof."

"I have now neither the time, or the means of adducing proof," replied the Count.

"Nor have I, sir, the inclination to listen to it, if you had."

"But you trifle with my patience and my distress," continued Morano. "Is a marriage with a man, who adores you, so
very

very terrible in your eyes, that you would prefer to it all the misery, to which Montoni may condemn you in this remote prison? Some wretch must have stolen those affections, which ought to be mine, or you could not thus obstinately persist in refusing an offer, that would place you beyond the reach of oppression." Morano walked about the room, with quick steps, and a disturbed air.

"This discourse, Count Morano, sufficiently proves, that my affections ought not to be yours," said Emily, mildly, "and this conduct, that I should not be placed beyond the reach of oppression, so long as I remained in your power. If you wish me to believe otherwise, cease to oppress me any longer by your presence. If you refuse this, you will compel me to expose you to the resentment of Signor Montoni."

"Yes, let him come," cried Morano furiously, "and brave *my* resentment! Let him dare to face once more the man he has so courageously injured; danger shall teach

him morality, and vengeance justice—let him come, and receive my sword in his heart!”

The vehemence, with which this was uttered, gave Emily new cause of alarm, who arose from her chair, but her trembling frame refused to support her, and she resumed her seat;—the words died on her lips, and, when she looked wistfully towards the door of the corridor, which was locked, she considered it was impossible for her to leave the apartment, before Morano would be apprised of, and able to counteract, her intention.

Without observing her agitation, he continued to pace the room in the utmost perturbation of spirits. His darkened countenance expressed all the rage of jealousy and revenge; and a person, who had seen his features under the smile of ineffable tenderness, which he so lately assumed, would now scarcely have believed them to be the same.

“Count Morano,” said Emily, at length recovering her voice, “calm, I entreat you,
these

these transports, and listen to reason, if you will not to pity. You have equally misplaced your love, and your hatred.—I never could have returned the affection, with which you honour me, and certainly have never encouraged it; neither has Signor Montoni injured you, for you must have known, that he had no right to dispose of my hand, had he even possessed the power to do so. Leave, then, leave the castle, while you may with safety. Spare yourself the dreadful consequences of an unjust revenge, and the remorse of having prolonged to me these moments of suffering.”

“Is it for mine, or for Montoni’s safety, that you are thus alarmed?” said Morano, coldly, and turning towards her with a look of acrimony.

“For both,” replied Emily, in a trembling voice.

“Unjust revenge!” cried the Count, resuming the abrupt tones of passion. “Who, that looks upon that face, can imagine a punishment adequate to the injury he would

have done me? Yes, I will leave the castle; but it shall not be alone. I have trifled too long. Since my prayers and my sufferings cannot prevail, force shall. I have people in waiting, who shall convey you to my carriage. Your voice will bring no succour; it cannot be heard from this remote part of the castle; submit, therefore, in silence to go with me."

This was an unnecessary injunction, at present; for Emily was too certain, that her call would avail her nothing; and terror had so entirely disordered her thoughts, that she knew not how to plead to Morano, but sat, mute and trembling, in her chair, till he advanced to lift her from it, when she suddenly raised herself, and, with a repulsive gesture, and a countenance of forced serenity, said, "Count Morano! I am now in your power; but you will observe, that this is not the conduct which can win the esteem you appear so solicitous to obtain, and that you are preparing for yourself a load of remorse, in the miseries of a friendless orphan, which
can

can never leave you. Do you believe your heart to be, indeed, so hardened, that you can look without emotion on the suffering, to which you would condemn me?"—

Emily was interrupted by the growling of the dog, who now came again from the bed, and Morano looked towards the door of the stair-case, where no person appearing, he called aloud, "Cesario!"

"Emily," said the Count, "why will you reduce me to adopt this conduct? How much more willingly would I persuade, than compel you to become my wife! but, by Heaven! I will not leave you to be sold by Montoni. Yet a thought glances across my mind, that brings madness with it. I know not how to name it. It is preposterous—it cannot be.—Yet you tremble—you grow pale! It is! it is so;—you—you—love Montoni!" cried Morano, grasping Emily's wrist, and stamping his foot on the floor.

An involuntary air of surprise appeared on her countenance. "If you have indeed believed so," said she, "believe so still."

“That look, those words confirm it,” exclaimed Morano, furiously. “No, no, no, Montoni had a richer prize in view, than gold. But he shall not live to triumph over me!—This very instant—”

He was interrupted by the loud barking of the dog.

“Stay, Count Morano,” said Emily, terrified by his words, and by the fury expressed in his eyes, “I will save you from this error.—Of all men, Signor Montoni is not your rival; though, if I find all other means of saving myself vain, I will try whether my voice may not arouse his servants to my succour.”

“Assertion,” replied Morano, “at such a moment, is not to be depended upon. How could I suffer myself to doubt, even for an instant, that he could see you, and not love?—But my first care shall be to convey you from the castle. Cefario! ho, —Cefario!”

A man now appeared at the door of the stair-case, and other steps were heard ascending.

ing. Emily uttered a loud shriek, as Morano hurried her across the chamber, and, at the same moment, she heard a noise at the door, that opened upon the corridor. The Count paused an instant, as if his mind was suspended between love and the desire of vengeance; and, in that instant, the door gave way, and Montoni, followed by the old steward and several other persons, burst into the room.

“ Draw !” cried Montoni to the Count, who did not pause for a second bidding, but, giving Emily into the hands of the people, that appeared from the stair-case, turned fiercely round. “ This in thine heart, villain !” said he, as he made a thrust at Montoni with his sword, who parried the blow, and aimed another, while some of the persons, who had followed him into the room, endeavoured to part the combatants, and others rescued Emily from the hands of Morano’s servants.

“ Was it for this, Count Morano,” said
Montoni,

Montoni, in a cool sarcastic tone of voice, "that I received you under my roof, and permitted you, though my declared enemy, to remain under it for the night? Was it, that you might repay my hospitality with the treachery of a fiend, and rob me of my niece?"

"Who talks of treachery?" said Morano, in a tone of unrestrained vehemence. "Let him that does, shew an unblushing face of innocence. Montoni, you are a villain! If there is treachery in this affair, look to yourself as the author of it. *If*—do I say? *I*—whom you have wronged with unexampled baseness, whom you have injured almost beyond redress! But why do I use words?—Come on, coward, and receive justice at my hands!"

"Coward!" cried Montoni, bursting from the people who held him, and rushing on the Count, when they both retreated into the corridor, where the fight continued so desperately, that none of the spectators dared approach

proach them, Montoni swearing, that the first, who interfered, should fall by his sword.

Jealousy and revenge lent all their fury to Morano, while the superior skill and the temperance of Montoni enabled him to wound his adversary, whom his servants now attempted to seize, but he would not be restrained, and, regardless of his wound, continued to fight. He seemed to be insensible both of pain and loss of blood, and alive only to the energy of his passions. Montoni, on the contrary, persevered in the combat, with a fierce, yet wary, valour; he received the point of Morano's sword on his arm, but, almost in the same instant, severely wounded and disarmed him. The Count then fell back into the arms of his servant, while Montoni held his sword over him, and bade him ask his life. Morano, sinking under the anguish of his wound, had scarcely replied by a gesture, and by a few words, feebly articulated, that he would not—when he fainted; and Montoni was
then

then going to have plunged the sword into his breast, as he lay senseless, but his arm was arrested by Cavigni. To the interruption he yielded without much difficulty, but his complexion changed almost to blackness, as he looked upon his fallen adversary, and ordered, that he should be carried instantly from the castle.

In the mean time, Emily, who had been withheld from leaving the chamber during the affray, now came forward into the corridor, and pleaded a cause of common humanity, with the feelings of the warmest benevolence, when she entreated Montoni to allow Morano the assistance in the castle, which his situation required. But Montoni, who had seldom listened to pity, now seemed rapacious of vengeance, and, with a monster's cruelty, again ordered his defeated enemy to be taken from the castle, in his present state, though there were only the woods, or a solitary neighbouring cottage, to shelter him from the night.

The Count's servants having declared,

that they would not move him till he revived, Montoni's stood inactive, Cavigni remonstrating, and Emily, superior to Montoni's menaces, giving water to Morano, and directing the attendants to bind up his wound. At length, Montoni had leisure to feel pain from his own hurt, and he withdrew to examine it.

The Count, meanwhile, having slowly recovered, the first object he saw, on raising his eyes, was Emily, bending over him with a countenance strongly expressive of solicitude. He surveyed her with a look of anguish.

“ I have deserved this,” said he, “ but not from Montoni. It is from you, Emily, that I have deserved punishment, yet I receive only pity !” He paused, for he had spoken with difficulty. After a moment, he proceeded. “ I must resign you, but not to Montoni. Forgive me the sufferings I have already occasioned you ! But for *that* villain—his infamy shall not go unpunished. Carry me from this place,”
said

said he to his servants. " I am in no condition to travel : you must, therefore, take me to the nearest cottage, for I will not pass the night under his roof, although I may expire on the way from it."

Cesario proposed to go out, and enquire for a cottage, that might receive his master, before he attempted to remove him : but Morano was impatient to be gone ; the anguish of his mind seemed to be even greater than that of his wound, and he rejected, with disdain, the offer of Cavigni to entreat Montoni, that he might be suffered to pass the night in the castle. Cesario was now going to call up the carriage to the great gate, but the Count forbade him. " I cannot bear the motion of a carriage," said he : " call some others of my people, that they may assist in bearing me in their arms."

At length, however, Morano submitted to reason, and consented, that Cesario should first prepare some cottage to receive him. Emily, now that he had recovered his senses, was about to withdraw from the corridor,

ridor, when a message from Montoni commanded her to do so, and also that the Count, if he was not already gone, should quit the castle immediately. Indignation flashed from Morano's eyes, and flushed his cheeks.

“ Tell Montoni,” said he, “ that I shall go when it suits my own convenience ; that I quit the castle, he dares to call his, as I would the nest of a serpent, and that this is not the last he shall hear from me. Tell him, I will not leave *another* murder on his conscience, if I can help it.”

“ Count Morano ! do you know what you say ?” said Cavigni.

“ Yes, Signor, I know well what I say, and he will understand well what I mean. His conscience will assist his understanding, on this occasion.”

“ Count Morano,” said Verezzi, who had hitherto silently observed him, “ dare again to insult my friend, and I will plunge this sword in your body.”

“ It would be an action worthy the friend
of

of a villain!" said Morano, as the strong impulse of his indignation enabled him to raise himself from the arms of his servants; but the energy was momentary, and he sunk back, exhausted by the effort. Montoni's people, meanwhile, held Verezzi, who seemed inclined, even in this instant, to execute his threat; and Cavigni, who was not so depraved as to abet the cowardly malignity of Verezzi, endeavoured to withdraw him from the corridor; and Emily, whom a compassionate interest had thus long detained, was now quitting it in new terror, when the supplicating voice of Morano arrested her, and, by a feeble gesture, he beckoned her to draw nearer. She advanced with timid steps, but the fainting languor of his countenance again awakened her pity, and overcame her terror.

"I am going from hence for ever" said he: "perhaps, I shall never see you again. I would carry with me your forgiveness, Emily; nay more—I would also carry your good wishes."

"You

“ You have my forgiveness, then,” said Emily, “ and my sincere wishes for your recovery.”

“ And only for my recovery ?” said Morano, with a sigh. “ For your general welfare,” added Emily.

“ Perhaps I ought to be contented with this,” he resumed ; “ I certainly have not deserved more ; but I would ask you, Emily, sometimes to think of me, and, forgetting my offence, to remember only the passion which occasioned it. I would ask, alas ! impossibilities : I would ask you to love me ! At this moment, when I am about to part with you, and that, perhaps, for ever, I am scarcely myself. Emily—may you never know the torture of a passion like mine ! What do I say ? O, that, for me, you might be sensible of such a passion !”

Emily looked impatient to be gone. “ I entreat you, Count, to consult your own safety,” said she, “ and linger here no longer. I tremble for the consequences of Signor Verzezzi’s passion, and of Montoni’s resentment, should he learn that you are still here.”

Morano's face was overspread with a momentary crimson, his eyes sparkled, but he seemed endeavouring to conquer his emotion, and replied in a calm voice, " Since you are interested for my safety, I will regard it, and be gone. But, before I go, let me again hear you say, that you wish me well," said he, fixing on her an earnest and mournful look.

Emily repeated her assurances. He took her hand, which she scarcely attempted to withdraw, and put it to his lips. " Farewel, Count Morano !" said Emily ; and she turned to go, when a second message arrived from Montoni, and she again conjured Morano, as he valued his life, to quit the castle immediately. He regarded her in silence, with a look of fixed despair. But she had no time to enforce her compassionate entreaties, and, not daring to disobey the second command of Montoni, she left the corridor, to attend him.

He was in the cedar parlour, that adjoined the great hall, laid upon a couch,

and suffering a degree of anguish from his wound, which few persons could have disguised, as he did. His countenance, which was stern, but calm, expressed the dark passion of revenge, but no symptom of pain; bodily pain, indeed, he had always despised, and had yielded only to the strong and terrible energies of the soul. He was attended by old Carlo and by Signor Bertolini, but Madame Montoni was not with him.

Emily trembled, as she approached and received his severe rebuke, for not having obeyed his first summons; and perceived, also, that he attributed her stay in the corridor to a motive, that had not even occurred to her artless mind.

“ This is an instance of female caprice,” said he, “ which I ought to have foreseen. Count Morano, whose suit you obstinately rejected, so long as it was countenanced by me, you favour, it seems, since you find I have dismissed him.”

Emily looked astonished. “ I do not
com-

comprehend you, sir," said she: "You certainly do not mean to imply, that the design of the Count to visit the double-chamber, was founded upon any approbation of mine."

"To that I reply nothing," said Montoni; "but it must certainly be a more than common interest, that made you plead so warmly in his cause, and that could detain you thus long in his presence, contrary to my express order—in the presence of a man, whom you have hitherto, on all occasions, most scrupulously shunned!"

"I fear, sir, it was a more than common interest, that detained me," said Emily calmly; "for of late I have been inclined to think, that of compassion is an uncommon one. But how could I, could *you*, sir, witness Count Morano's deplorable condition, and not wish to relieve it?"

"You add hypocrisy to caprice," said Montoni, frowning, "and an attempt at satire, to both; but, before you undertake to regulate the morals of other persons,
you

you should learn and practise the virtues, which are indispensable to a woman—sincerity, uniformity of conduct and obedience.”

Emily, who had always endeavoured to regulate her conduct by the nicest laws, and whose mind was finely sensible, not only of what is just in morals, but of whatever is beautiful in the female character, was shocked by these words; yet, in the next moment, her heart swelled with the consciousness of having deserved praise, instead of censure, and she was proudly silent. Montoni, acquainted with the delicacy of her mind, knew how keenly she would feel his rebuke; but he was a stranger to the luxury of conscious worth, and, therefore, did not foresee the energy of that sentiment, which now repelled his satire. Turning to a servant who had lately entered the room, he asked whether Morano had quitted the castle. The man answered, that his servants were then removing him, on a couch, to a neighbouring cottage. Montoni seem-

ed somewhat appeased, on hearing this; and, when Ludovico appeared, a few moments after, and said, that Morano was gone, he told Emily she might retire to her apartment.

She withdrew willingly from his presence; but the thought of passing the remainder of the night in a chamber, which the door from the stair-case made liable to the intrusion of any person, now alarmed her more than ever, and she determined to call at Madam Montoni's room, and request, that Annette might be permitted to be with her.

On reaching the great gallery, she heard voices seemingly in dispute, and, her spirits now apt to take alarm, she paused, but soon distinguished some words of Cavigni and Verezzi, and went towards them, in the hope of conciliating their difference. They were alone. Verezzi's face was still flushed with rage; and, as the first object of it was now removed from him, he appeared willing to transfer his resentment to Cavigni,

vigni, who seemed to be expostulating, rather than disputing, with him.

Verezzi was protesting, that he would instantly inform Montoni of the insult, which Morano had thrown out against him, and above all, that, wherein he had accused him of murder.

“There is no answering,” said Cavigni, “for the words of a man in a passion; little serious regard ought to be paid to them. If you persist in your resolution, the consequences may be fatal to both. We have now more serious interests to pursue, than those of a petty revenge.”

Emily joined her entreaties to Cavigni's arguments, and they, at length, prevailed so far, as that Verezzi consented to retire, without seeing Montoni.

On calling at her aunt's apartment, she found it fastened. In a few minutes, however, it was opened by Madame Montoni herself.

It may be remembered, that it was by a door leading into the bed-room from a

back passage, that Emily had secretly entered a few hours preceding. She now conjectured, by the calmness of Madame Montoni's air, that she was not apprised of the accident, which had befallen her husband, and was beginning to inform her of it, in the tenderest manner she could, when her aunt interrupted her, by saying, she was acquainted with the whole affair.

Emily knew indeed, that she had little reason to love Montoni, but could scarcely have believed her capable of such perfect apathy, as she now discovered towards him; having obtained permission, however, for Annette to sleep in her chamber, she went thither immediately.

A track of blood appeared along the corridor, leading to it; and on the spot, where the Count and Montoni had fought, the whole floor was stained. Emily shuddered, and leaned on Annette, as she passed. When she reached her apartment, she instantly determined, since the door of the stair-case had been left open, and that Annette

nette was now with her, to explore whither it led,—a circumstance now materially connected with her own safety. Annette accordingly, half curious and half afraid, proposed to descend the stairs; but, on approaching the door, they perceived, that it was already fastened without, and their care was then directed to the securing it on the inside also, by placing against it as much of the heavy furniture of the room, as they could lift. Emily then retired to bed, and Annette continued on a chair by the hearth, where some feeble embers remained.

C H A P. VII.

“ Of aery tongues, that syllable men’s names
On sands and shores and desert wilderneffes.”

MILTON.

IT is now necessary to mention some circumstances, which could not be related amidst the events of Emily’s hasty departure from Venice, or together with those, which so rapidly succeeded to her arrival in the castle.

On the morning of her journey, Count Morano had gone at the appointed hour to the mansion of Montoni, to demand his bride. When he reached it, he was somewhat surpris’d by the silence and solitary air of the portico, where Montoni’s lacqueys usually loitered ; but surpris’e was soon changed to astonishment, and astonishment to the rage of disappointment, when the door was opened by an old woman, who told his servants, that her master and his
family

family had left Venice, early in the morning, for *Terra-firma*. Scarcely believing what his servants told, he left his gondola, and rushed into the hall to enquire further. The old woman, who was the only person left in care of the mansion, persisted in her story, which the silent and deserted apartments soon convinced him was no fiction. He then seized her with a menacing air, as if he meant to wreak all his vengeance upon her, at the same time asking her twenty questions in a breath, and all these with a gesticulation so furious, that she was deprived of the power of answering them; then suddenly letting her go, he stamped about the hall, like a madman, cursing Montoni and his own folly.

When the good woman was at liberty, and had somewhat recovered from her fright, she told him all she knew of the affair, which was, indeed, very little, but enough to enable Morano to discover, that Montoni was gone to his castle on the Apennine. Thither he followed, as soon as his servants could

complete the necessary preparation for the journey, accompanied by a friend, and attended by a number of his people, determined to obtain Emily, or a full revenge on Montoni. When his mind had recovered from the first effervescence of rage, and his thoughts became less obscured, his conscience hinted to him certain circumstances, which, in some measure, explained the conduct of Montoni: but how the latter could have been led to suspect an intention, which, he had believed, was known only to himself, he could not even guess. On this occasion, however, he had been partly betrayed by that sympathetic intelligence, which may be said to exist between bad minds, and which teaches one man to judge what another will do in the same circumstances. Thus it was with Montoni, who had now received indisputable proof of a truth, which he had some time suspected—that Morano's circumstances, instead of being affluent, as he had been bidden to believe, were greatly involved. Montoni had been interested in his
suit,

suit, by motives entirely selfish, those of avarice and pride; the last of which would have been gratified by an alliance with a Venetian nobleman, the former by Emily's estate in Gascony, which he had stipulated, as the price of his favour, should be delivered up to him from the day of her marriage. In the mean time, he had been led to suspect the consequence of the Count's boundless extravagance; but it was not till the evening, preceding the intended nuptials, that he obtained certain information of his distressed circumstances. He did not hesitate then to infer, that Morano designed to defraud him of Emily's estate; and in this supposition he was confirmed, and with apparent reason, by the subsequent conduct of the Count, who, after having appointed to meet him on that night, for the purpose of signing the instrument, which was to secure to him his reward, failed in his engagement. Such a circumstance, indeed, in a man of Morano's gay and thoughtless character, and at a time when his mind was engaged by

the bustle of preparation for his nuptials, might have been attributed to a cause less decisive, than design; but Montoni did not hesitate an instant to interpret it his own way, and, after vainly waiting the Count's arrival, for several hours, he gave orders for his people to be in readiness to set off at a moment's notice. By hastening to Udolpho he intended to remove Emily from the reach of Morano, as well as to break off the affair, without submitting himself to useless altercation: and, if the Count meant what he called honourably, he would doubtless follow Emily, and sign the writings in question. If this was done, so little consideration had Montoni for her welfare, that he would not have scrupled to sacrifice her to a man of ruined fortune, since by that means he could enrich himself; and he forbore to mention to her the motive of his sudden journey, lest the hope it might revive should render her more intractable, when submission would be required.

With these considerations, he had left Ve-

nice ; and, with others totally different, Morano had, soon after, pursued his steps across the rugged Apennines. When his arrival was announced at the castle, Montoni did not believe, that he would have presumed to shew himself, unless he had meant to fulfil his engagement, and he, therefore, readily admitted him ; but the enraged countenance and expressions of Morano, as he entered the apartment, instantly undeceived him ; and, when Montoni had explained, in part, the motives of his abrupt departure from Venice, the Count still persisted in demanding Emily, and reproaching Montoni, without even naming the former stipulation.

Montoni, at length, weary of the dispute, deferred the settling of it till the morrow, and Morano retired with some hope, suggested by Montoni's apparent indecision. When, however, in the silence of his own apartment, he began to consider the past conversation, the character of Montoni, and some former instances of his duplicity, the hope, which he had admitted, vanished, and

he determined not to neglect the present possibility of obtaining Emily by other means. To his confidential valet he told his design of carrying away Emily, and sent him back to Montoni's servants to find out one among them, who might enable him to execute it. The choice of this person he entrusted to the fellow's own discernment, and not imprudently; for he discovered a man, whom Montoni had, on some former occasion, treated harshly, and who was now ready to betray him. This man conducted Cefario round the castle, through a private passage, to the stair-case, that led to Emily's chamber; then shewed him a short way out of the building, and afterwards procured him the keys, that would secure his retreat. The man was well rewarded for his trouble; how the Count was rewarded for his treachery, has already appeared.

Meanwhile, old Carlo had overheard two of Morano's servants, who had been ordered to be in waiting with the carriage, beyond the castle walls, expressing their surprise at their
master's

master's sudden, and secret departure, for the valet had entrusted them with no more of Morano's designs, than it was necessary for them to execute. They, however, indulged themselves in surmises, and in expressing them to each other; and from these Carlo had drawn a just conclusion. But, before he ventured to disclose his apprehensions to Montoni, he endeavoured to obtain further confirmation of them, and, for this purpose, placed himself, with one of his fellow-servants, at the door of Emily's apartment, that opened upon the corridor. He did not watch long in vain, though the growling of the dog had once nearly betrayed him. When he was convinced, that Morano was in the room, and had listened long enough to his conversation, to understand his scheme, he immediately alarmed Montoni, and thus rescued Emily from the designs of the Count.

Montoni, on the following morning, appeared as usual, except that he wore his wounded arm in a sling; he went out upon the ramparts; overlooked the men employed
in

in repairing them ; gave orders for additional workmen, and then came into the castle to give audience to several persons, who were just arrived, and who were shewn into a private apartment, where he communicated with them, for near an hour. Carlo was then summoned, and ordered to conduct the strangers to a part of the castle, which, in former times, had been occupied by the upper servants of the family, and to provide them with every necessary refreshment.— When he had done this, he was bidden to return to his master.

Meanwhile, the Count remained in a cottage in the skirts of the woods below, suffering under bodily and mental pain, and meditating deep revenge against Montoni. His servant, whom he had dispatched for a surgeon to the nearest town, which was, however, at a considerable distance, did not return till the following day, when, his wounds being examined and dressed, the practitioner refused to deliver any positive opinion, concerning the degree of danger attending them ;
but,

but, giving his patient a composing draught and ordering him to be kept quiet, remained at the cottage to watch the event.

Emily, for the remainder of the late eventful night, had been suffered to sleep, undisturbed; and, when her mind recovered from the confusion of slumber, and she remembered, that she was now released from the addresses of Count Morano, her spirits were suddenly relieved from a part of the terrible anxiety, that had long oppressed them; that which remained, arose chiefly from a recollection of Morano's assertions, concerning the schemes of Montoni. He had said, that plans of the latter, concerning Emily, were insurmountable, yet that he knew them to be terrible. At the time he uttered this, she almost believed it to be designed for the purpose of prevailing with her to throw herself into his protection, and she still thought it might be chiefly so accounted for; but his assertions had left an impression on her mind, which a consideration

tion

tion of the character and former conduct of Montoni did not contribute to efface. She, however, checked her propensity to anticipate evil; and, determined to enjoy this respite from actual misfortune, tried to dismiss thought, took her instruments for drawing, and placed herself at a window, to select into a landscape some features of the scenery without.

As she was thus employed, she saw, walking on the rampart below, the men, who had so lately arrived at the castle. The sight of strangers surprised her, but still more, of strangers such as these. There was a singularity in their dress, and a certain fierceness in their air, that fixed all her attention. She withdrew from the casement, while they passed, but soon returned to observe them further. Their figures seemed so well suited to the wildness of the surrounding objects, that, as they stood surveying the castle, she sketched them for banditti, amid the mountain-view of her picture, when

when she had finished which, she was surprised to observe the spirit of her group. But she had copied from nature.

Carlo, when he had placed refreshment before these men in the apartment assigned to them, returned, as he was ordered, to Montoni, who was anxious to discover by what servant the keys of the castle had been delivered to Morano, on the preceding night. But this man, though he was too faithful to his master quietly to see him injured, would not betray a fellow-servant even to justice; he, therefore, pretended to be ignorant who it was, that had conspired with Count Morano, and related, as before, that he had only overheard some of the strangers describing the plot.

Montoni's suspicions naturally fell upon the porter, whom he ordered now to attend. Carlo hesitated, and then with slow steps went to seek him.

Barnardine, the porter, denied the accusation with a countenance so steady and undaunted, that Montoni could scarcely believe

lieve

lieve him guilty, though he knew not how to think him innocent. At length, the man was dismissed from his presence, and, though the real offender, escaped detection.

Montoni then went to his wife's apartment, whither Emily followed soon after, but, finding them in high dispute, was instantly leaving the room, when her aunt called her back, and desired her to stay.—“ You shall be a witness,” said she, “ of my opposition. Now, sir, repeat the command, I have so often refused to obey.”

Montoni turned, with a stern countenance, to Emily, and bade her quit the apartment, while his wife persisted in desiring, that she would stay. Emily was eager to escape from this scene of contention, and anxious, also, to serve her aunt; but she despaired of conciliating Montoni, in whose eyes the rising *tempest* of his soul flashed terribly.

“ Leave the room,” said he, in a voice of thunder. Emily obeyed, and, walking down to the rampart, which the strangers had now left, continued to meditate on the
unhappy

unhappy marriage of her father's sister, and on her own desolate situation, occasioned by the ridiculous imprudence of her, whom she had always wished to respect and love. Madame Montoni's conduct had, indeed, rendered it impossible for Emily to do either; but her gentle heart was touched by her distress, and, in the pity thus awakened, she forgot the injurious treatment she had received from her.

As she sauntered on the rampart, Annette appeared at the hall door, looked cautiously round, and then advanced to meet her.

“Dear ma'amfelle, I have been looking for you all over the castle,” said she. “If you will step this way, I will shew you a picture.”

“A picture!” exclaimed Emily, and shuddered.

“Yes, ma'am, a picture of the late lady of this place. Old Carlo just now told me it was her, and I thought you would be curious to see it. As to my lady, you know, ma'amfelle, one cannot talk about such things to her.”—

“And

“ And so,” said Emily smilingly, “ as you must talk of them to somebody—”

“ Why, yes, ma’amfelle ; what can one do in such a place as this, if one must not talk ? If I was in a dungeon, if they would let me talk—it would be some comfort ; nay, I would talk, if it was only to the walls. But come, ma’amfelle, we lose time—let me shew you to the picture.”

“ Is it veiled ?” said Emily, pausing.

“ Dear ma’amfelle !” said Annette, fixing her eyes on Emily’s face, “ what makes you look so pale ?—are you ill ?”

“ No, Annette, I am well enough, but I have no desire to see this picture ; return into the hall.”

“ What ! ma’am, not to see the lady of this castle ?” said the girl—“ the lady, who disappeared so strangely ? Well ! now, I would have run to the furthest mountain we can see, yonder, to have got a sight of such a picture ; and, to speak my mind, that strange story is all, that makes me care about this old castle, though it makes me thrill all over, as it were, whenever I think of it.”

“ Yes, Annette, you love the wonderful ; but do you know, that, unless you guard against this inclination, it will lead you into all the misery of superstition ?”

Annette might have smiled in her turn, at this sage observation of Emily, who could tremble with ideal terrors, as much as herself, and listen almost as eagerly to the recital of a mysterious story. Annette urged her request.

“ Are you sure it is a picture ?” said Emily, “ Have you seen it ?—Is it veiled ?”

“ Holy Maria ! ma’amfelle, yes, no, yes. I am sure it is a picture—I have seen it, and it is not veiled !”

The tone and look of surprise, with which this was uttered, recalled Emily’s prudence ; who concealed her emotion under a smile, and bade Annette lead her to the picture. It was in an obscure chamber, adjoining that part of the castle, allotted to the servants. Several other portraits hung on the walls, covered, like this, with dust and cobweb.

“ That

“ That is it, ma’amfelle,” said Annette, in a low voice, and pointing. Emily advanced, and surveyed the picture. It represented a lady in the flower of youth and beauty; her features were handsome and noble, full of strong expression, but had little of the captivating sweetness, that Emily had looked for, and still less of the pensive mildness she loved. It was a countenance, which spoke the language of passion, rather than that of sentiment; a haughty impatience of misfortune—not the placid melancholy of a spirit injured, yet resigned.

“ How many years have passed, since this lady disappeared, Annette?” said Emily.

“ Twenty years, ma’amfelle, or thereabout, as they tell me; I know it is a long while ago.” Emily continued to gaze upon the portrait.

“ I think,” resumed Annette, “ the Signor would do well to hang it in a better place, than this old chamber. Now, in my mind, he ought to place the picture of a lady, who
gave

gave him all these riches, in the handsomest room in the castle. But he may have good reasons for what he does: and some people do say, that he has lost his riches, as well as his gratitude. But hush, ma'am, not a word!" added Annette, laying her finger on her lips. Emily was too much absorbed in thought, to hear what she said.

" 'Tis a handsome lady, I am sure," continued Annette: " the Signor need not be ashamed to put her in the great apartment, where the veiled picture hangs." Emily turned round. " But for that matter, she would be as little seen there, as here, for the door is always locked, I find."

" Let us leave this chamber," said Emily: " and let me caution you again, Annette; be guarded in your conversation, and never tell, that you know any thing of that picture."

" Holy mother!" exclaimed Annette, " it is no secret; why all the servants have seen it already!"

Emily started. " How is this?" said she—" Have seen it! When?—how?"

“ Dear, ma’amfelle, there is nothing surprising in that ; we had all a little more *ca-rioufness* than you had.”

“ I thought you told me, the door was kept locked ?” faid Emily.

“ If that was the cafe, ma’amfelle,” replied Annette, looking about her, “ how could we get here ?”

“ O ! you mean *this* picture,” faid Emily, with returning calmnefs. “ Well, Annette, here is nothing more to engage my attention ; we will go.”

Emily, as ſhe paſſed to her own apartment, ſaw Montoni go down to the hall, and ſhe turned into her aunt’s dressing-room, whom ſhe found weeping and alone, grief and reſentment ſtruggling on her countenance. Pride had hitherto reſtrained complaint. Judging of Emily’s diſpoſition from her own, and from a conſcioufnefs of what her treatment of her deſerved, ſhe had believed, that her griefs would be cauſe of triumph to her niece, rather than of ſympathy ; that ſhe would deſpiſe, not pity

her. But she knew not the tenderness and benevolence of Emily's heart, that had always taught her to forget her own injuries in the misfortunes of her enemy. The sufferings of others, whoever they might be, called forth her ready compassion, which dissipated at once every obscuring cloud to goodness, that passion or prejudice might have raised in her mind.

Madame Montoni's sufferings, at length, rose above her pride, and, when Emily had before entered the room, she would have told them all, had not her husband prevented her; now that she was no longer restrained by his presence, she poured forth all her complaints to her niece.

“ O Emily !” she exclaimed, “ I am the most wretched of women—I am indeed cruelly treated ! Who, with my prospects of happiness, could have foreseen such a wretched fate as this ?—who could have thought, when I married such a man as the Signor, I should ever have to bewail my lot ? But there is no judging what is for the

best—there is no knowing what is for our good ! The most flattering prospects often change—the best judgments may be deceived—who could have foreseen, when I married the Signor, that I should ever repent my *generosity* ?”

Emily thought she might have foreseen it, but this was not a thought of triumph. She placed herself in a chair near her aunt, took her hand, and, with one of those looks of soft compassion, which might characterize the countenance of a guardian angel, spoke to her in the tenderest accents. But these did not soothe Madame Montoni, whom impatience to talk made unwilling to listen. She wanted to complain, not to be consoled ; and it was by exclamations of complaint only, that Emily learned the particular circumstances of her affliction.

“ Ungrateful man !” said Madame Montoni, “ he has deceived me in every respect ; and now he has taken me from my country and friends, to shut me up in this old castle ; and, here he thinks he can compel me to

do whatever he designs ! But he shall find himself mistaken, he shall find that no threats can alter——But who would have believed ! who would have supposed, that a man of his family and apparent wealth had absolutely no fortune ?—no, scarcely a sequin of his own ! I did all for the best ; I thought he was a man of consequence, of great property, or I am sure I would never have married him,—ungrateful, artful man !” She paused to take breath.

“ Dear Madam, be composed,” said Emily : “ the Signor may not be so rich as you had reason to expect, but surely he cannot be very poor, since this castle and the mansion at Venice are his. May I ask what are the circumstances, that particularly affect you ?”

“ What are the circumstances !” exclaimed Madame Montoni with resentment : “ why is it not sufficient, that he had long ago ruined his own fortune by play, and that he has since lost what I brought him—and that now he would compel me

to sign away my settlement (it was well I had the chief of my property settled on myself!) that he may lose this also, or throw it away in wild schemes, which nobody can understand but himself? And, and—is not all this sufficient?”

“It is, indeed,” said Emily, “but you must recollect, dear madam, that I knew nothing of all this.”

“Well, and is it not sufficient,” rejoined her aunt, “that he is also absolutely ruined, that he is sunk deeply in debt, and that neither this castle, or the mansion at Venice, is his own, if all his debts, honourable and dishonourable, were paid!”

“I am shocked by what you tell me, madam,” said Emily.

“And is it not enough,” interrupted Madame Montoni, “that he has treated me with neglect, with cruelty, because I refused to relinquish my settlements, and, instead of being frightened by his menaces, resolutely defied him, and upbraided him with his shameful conduct? But I bore
all

all meekly, — you know, niece, I never uttered a word of complaint, till now ; no ! That such a disposition as mine should be so imposed upon ! That I, whose only faults are too much kindness, too much generosity, should be chained for life to such a vile, deceitful, cruel monster !”

Want of breath compelled Madame Montoni to stop. If any thing could have made Emily smile in these moments, it would have been this speech of her aunt, delivered in a voice very little below a scream, and with a vehemence of gesticulation and of countenance, that turned the whole into burlesque. Emily saw, that her misfortunes did not admit of real consolation, and, contemning the commonplace terms of superficial comfort, she was silent ; while Madame Montoni, jealous of her own consequence, mistook this for the silence of indifference, or of contempt, and reproached her with want of duty and feeling.

“ O ! I suspected what all this boasted

sensibility would prove to be!" rejoined she; "I thought it would not teach you to feel either duty, or affection, for your relations, who have treated you like their own daughter!"

"Pardon me, madam," said Emily, mildly, "it is not natural to me to boast, and if it was, I am sure I would not boast of sensibility—a quality, perhaps, more to be feared, than desired."

"Well, well, niece, I will not dispute with you. But, as I said, Montoni threatens me with violence, if I any longer refuse to sign away my settlements, and this was the subject of our contest, when you came into the room before. Now, I am determined no power on earth shall make me do this. Neither will I bear all this tamely. He shall hear his true character from me; I will tell him all he deserves, in spite of his threats and cruel treatment."

Emily seized a pause of Madame Montoni's voice, to speak. "Dear madam," said she, "but will not this serve to irritate

tate the Signor unnecessarily? will it not provoke the harsh treatment you dread?"

"I do not care," replied Madame Montoni, "it does not signify: I will not submit to such usage. You would have me give up my settlements, too, I suppose!"

"No, madam, I do not exactly mean that."

"What is it you do mean then?"

"You spoke of reproaching the Signor," —said Emily, with hesitation. "Why, does he not deserve reproaches?" said her aunt.

"Certainly he does; but will it be prudent in you, madam, to make them?"

"Prudent!" exclaimed Madame Montoni. "Is this a time to talk of prudence, when one is threatened with all sorts of violence?"

"It is to avoid that violence, that prudence is necessary," said Emily.

"Of prudence!" continued Madame Montoni, without attending to her, "of prudence towards a man, who does not scruple to break all the common ties of humanity in his conduct to me! And is it

for me to consider prudence in my behaviour towards him! I am not so mean."

"It is for your own sake, not for the Signor's, madam," said Emily modestly, "that you should consult prudence. Your reproaches, however just, cannot punish him, but they may provoke him to further violence against you."

"What! would you have me submit, then, to whatever he commands—would you have me kneel down at his feet, and thank him for his cruelties? Would you have me give up my settlements?"

"How much you mistake me, madam!" said Emily, "I am unequal to advise you on a point so important as the last: but you will pardon me for saying, that, if you consult your own peace, you will try to conciliate Signor Montoni, rather than to irritate him by reproaches."

"Conciliate indeed! I tell you, niece, it is utterly impossible; I disdain to attempt it."

Emily was shocked to observe the perverted

verted understanding and obstinate temper of Madame Montoni; but, not less grieved for her sufferings, she looked round for some alleviating circumstance to offer her. “Your situation is, perhaps, not so desperate, dear madam,” said Emily, “as you may imagine. The Signor may represent his affairs to be worse than they are, for the purpose of pleading a stronger necessity for his possession of your settlement. Besides, so long as you keep this, you may look forward to it as a resource, at least, that will afford you a competence, should the Signor’s future conduct compel you to sue for separation.”

Madame Montoni impatiently interrupted her. “Unfeeling, cruel girl!” said she, “and so you would persuade me, that I have no reason to complain; that the Signor is in very flourishing circumstances, that my future prospects promise nothing but comfort, and that my griefs are as fanciful and romantic as your own! Is it the way to console me, to endeavour to per-

suade me out of my senses and my feelings, because you happen to have no feelings yourself? I thought I was opening my heart to a person, who could sympathize in my distress, but I find, that your people of sensibility can feel for nobody but themselves! You may retire to your chamber."

Emily, without replying, immediately left the room, with a mingled emotion of pity and contempt, and hastened to her own, where she yielded to the mournful reflections, which a knowledge of her aunt's situation had occasioned. The conversation of the Italian with Valancourt, in France, again occurred to her. His hints, respecting the broken fortunes of Montoni, were now completely justified; those, also, concerning his character, appeared not less so, though the particular circumstances, connected with his fame, to which the stranger had alluded, yet remained to be explained. Notwithstanding, that her own observations and the words of Count Morano had convinced her, that Montoni's situation was

not

not what it formerly appeared to be, the intelligence she had just received from her aunt on this point, struck her with all the force of astonishment, which was not weakened, when she considered the present style of Montoni's living, the number of servants he maintained, and the new expences he was incurring, by repairing and fortifying his castle. Her anxiety for her aunt and for herself increased with reflection. Several assertions of Morano, which, on the preceding night, she had believed were prompted either by interest, or by resentment, now returned to her mind with the strength of truth. She could not doubt, that Montoni had formerly agreed to give her to the Count, for a pecuniary reward ;— his character, and his distressed circumstances justified the belief ; these, also, seemed to confirm Morano's assertion, that he now designed to dispose of her, more advantageously for himself, to a richer suitor.

Amidst the reproaches, which Morano had thrown out against Montoni, he had

said—he would not quit the castle *he dared to call his*, nor willingly leave *another* murder on his conscience—hints, which might have no other origin than the passion of the moment: but Emily was now inclined to account for them more seriously, and she shuddered to think, that she was in the hands of a man, to whom it was even possible they could apply. At length, considering, that reflection could neither release her from her melancholy situation, or enable her to bear it with greater fortitude, she tried to divert her anxiety, and took down from her little library a volume of her favourite Ariosto; but his wild imagery and rich invention could not long enchant her attention; his spells did not reach her heart, and over her sleeping fancy they played, without awakening it.

She now put aside the book, and took her lute, for it was seldom that her sufferings refused to yield to the magic of sweet sounds; when they did so, she was oppressed by sorrow, that came from excess of tenderness

ness and regret ; and there were times, when music had increased such sorrow to a degree, that was scarcely endurable ; when, if it had not suddenly ceased, she might have lost her reason. Such was the time, when she mourned for her father, and heard the midnight strains, that floated by her window near the convent in Languedoc, on the night that followed his death.

She continued to play, till Annette brought dinner into her chamber, at which Emily was surprised, and enquired whose order she obeyed. “ My lady’s, ma’am-felle,” replied Annette : “ the Signor ordered her dinner to be carried to her own apartment, and so she has sent you yours. There have been sad doings between them, worse than ever, I think.”

Emily, not appearing to notice what she said, sat down to the little table, that was spread for her. But Annette was not to be silenced thus easily. While she waited, she told of the arrival of the men, whom
Emily

Emily had observed on the ramparts, and expressed much surprise at their strange appearance, as well as at the manner, in which they had been attended by Montoni's order. "Do they dine with the Signor, then?" said Emily.

"No, ma'amfelle, they dined long ago, in an apartment at the north end of the castle, but I know not when they are to go, for the Signor told old Carlo to see them provided with every thing necessary. They have been walking all about the castle, and asking questions of the workmen on the ramparts. I never saw such strange-looking men in my life; I am frightened whenever I see them."

Emily enquired, if she had heard of Count Morano, and whether he was likely to recover: but Annette only knew, that he was lodged in a cottage in the wood below, and that every body said he must die. Emily's countenance discovered her emotion.

"Dear ma'amfelle," said Annette, "to see how young ladies will disguise themselves,

felves, when they are in love ! I thought you hated the Count, or I am fure I would not have told you ; and I am fure you have caufe enough to hate him.”

“ I hope I hate nobody,” replied Emily, trying to fmile ; “ but certainly I do not love Count Morano. I fould be fhocked to hear of any perfon dying by violent means.”

“ Yes, ma’amfelle, but it is his own fault.”

Emily looked difpleafed ; and Annette, miftaking the caufe of her difpleafure, immediately began to excufe the Count, in her way. “ To be fure, it was very ungenteel behaviour,” faid fhe, “ to break into a lady’s room, and then, when he found his difcourfing was not agreeable to her, to refufe to go ; and then, when the gentleman of the caftle comes to defire him to walk about his bufinefs—to turn round, and draw his fword, and fwear he’ll run him through the body !—To be fure it was very ungenteel behaviour, but then he was difguifed in love, and fo did not know what he was about.”

“Enough of this,” said Emily, who now smiled without an effort; and Annette returned to a mention of the disagreement between Montoni, and her lady. “It is nothing new,” said she: “we saw and heard enough of this at Venice, though I never told you of it, ma’amfelle.”

“Well, Annette, it was very prudent of you not to mention it then: be as prudent now; the subject is an unpleasant one.”

“Ah dear, ma’amfelle!—to see now how considerate you can be about some folks, who care so little about you! I cannot bear to see you so deceived, and I must tell you. But it is all for your own good, and not to spite my lady, though, to speak truth, I have little reason to love her; but—”

“You are not speaking thus of my aunt, I hope, Annette?” said Emily, gravely.

“Yes, ma’amfelle, but I am, though; and if you knew as much as I do, you would not look so angry. I have often, and often, heard the Signor and her talking over your marriage with the Count, and she always
advised

advised him never to give up to your foolish whims, as she was pleased to call them, but to be resolute, and compel you to be obedient, whether you would, or no. And I am sure, my heart has ached a thousand times, and I have thought, when she was so unhappy herself, she might have felt a little for other people, and—”

“ I thank you for your pity, Annette,” said Emily, interrupting her: “ but my aunt was unhappy then, and that disturbed her temper perhaps, or I think—I am sure—— You may take away, Annette, I have done.”

“ Dear, ma’amfelle, you have eat nothing at all! Do try, and take a little bit more. Disturbed her temper truly! why, her temper is always disturbed, I think. And at Tholouse too I have heard my lady talking of you and Mons. Valancourt to Madame Merveille and Madame Vaïson, often and often, in a very ill-natured way, as I thought, telling them what a deal of trouble she had to keep you in order, and what a fatigue and distress it was to her, and that she believed

lieved you would run away with *Mons. Valancourt*, if she was not to watch you closely; and that you connived at his coming about the house at night, and—”

“ Good God !” exclaimed *Emily*, blushing deeply, “ it is surely impossible my aunt could thus have represented me !”

“ Indeed, ma’am, I say nothing more than the truth, and not all of that. But I thought, myself, she might have found something better to discourse about, than the faults of her own niece, even if you had been in fault, ma’amfelle; but I did not believe a word of what she said. But my lady does not care what she says against anybody, for that matter.”

“ However that may be, *Annette*,” interrupted *Emily*, recovering her composure, “ it does not become you to speak of the faults of my aunt to me. I know you have meant well, but—say no more.—I have quite dined.”

Annette blushed, looked down, and then began slowly to clear the table.

“ Is

“Is this, then, the reward of my ingenuousness?” said Emily, when she was alone; “the treatment I am to receive from a relation—an aunt—who ought to have been the guardian, not the slanderer of my reputation,—who, as a woman, ought to have respected the delicacy of female honour, and, as a relation, should have protected mine! But, to utter falsehoods on so nice a subject—to repay the openness, and, I may say with honest pride, the propriety of my conduct, with slanders—required a depravity of heart, such as I could scarcely have believed existed, such as I weep to find in a relation. O! what a contrast does her character present to that of my beloved father; while envy and low cunning form the chief traits of hers, his was distinguished by benevolence and philosophic wisdom! But now, let me only remember, if possible, that she is unfortunate.”

Emily threw her veil over her, and went down to walk upon the ramparts, the only walk, indeed, which was open to her, though

though she often wished, that she might be permitted to ramble among the woods below, and still more, that she might sometimes explore the sublime scenes of the surrounding country. But, as Montoni would not suffer her to pass the gates of the castle, she tried to be contented with the romantic views she beheld from the walls. The peasants, who had been employed on the fortifications, had left their work, and the ramparts were silent and solitary. Their lonely appearance, together with the gloom of a lowering sky, assisted the musings of her mind, and threw over it a kind of melancholy tranquillity, such as she often loved to indulge. She turned to observe a fine effect of the sun, as his rays, suddenly streaming from behind a heavy cloud, lighted up the west towers of the castle, while the rest of the edifice was in deep shade, except, that, through a lofty gothic arch, adjoining the tower, which led to another terrace, the beams darted in full splendour, and shewed the three strangers she had observed in the morning. Perceiving

ing

ing them, she started, and a momentary fear came over her, as she looked up the long rampart, and saw no other persons. While she hesitated, they approached. The gate at the end of the terrace, whither they were advancing, she knew, was always locked, and she could not depart by the opposite extremity, without meeting them; but, before she passed them, she hastily drew a thin veil over her face, which did, indeed, but ill conceal her beauty. They looked earnestly at her, and spoke to each other in bad Italian, of which she caught only a few words; but the fierceness of their countenances, now that she was near enough to discriminate them, struck her yet more than the wild singularity of their air and dress had formerly done. It was the countenance and figure of him, who walked between the other two, that chiefly seized her attention, which expressed a sullen haughtiness and a kind of dark watchful villany, that gave a thrill of horror to her heart. All this was so legibly written on his features, as to be seen by a

single glance, for she passed the group swiftly, and her timid eyes scarcely rested on them a moment. Having reached the terrace, she stopped, and perceived the strangers standing in the shadow of one of the turrets, gazing after her, and seemingly, by their action, in earnest conversation. She immediately left the rampart, and retired to her apartment.

In the evening, Montoni sat late, carousing with his guests in the cedar chamber. His recent triumph over Count Morano, or, perhaps, some other circumstance, contributed to elevate his spirits to an unusual height. He filled the goblet often, and gave a loose to merriment and talk. The gaiety of Cavigni, on the contrary, was somewhat clouded by anxiety. He kept a watchful eye upon Verezzi, whom, with the utmost difficulty, he had hitherto restrained from exasperating Montoni further against Morano, by a mention of his late taunting words.

One of the company exultingly recurred

to

to the event of the preceding evening. Verezzi's eyes sparkled. The mention of Morano led to that of Emily, of whom they were all profuse in the praise, except Montoni, who sat silent, and then interrupted the subject.

When the servants had withdrawn, Montoni and his friends entered into close conversation, which was sometimes checked by the irascible temper of Verezzi, but in which Montoni displayed his conscious superiority, by that decisive look and manner, which always accompanied the vigour of his thought, and to which most of his companions submitted, as to a power, that they had no right to question, though of each other's self-importance they were jealously scrupulous. Amidst this conversation, one of them imprudently introduced again the name of Morano ; and Verezzi, now more heated by wine, disregarded the expressive looks of Cavigni, and gave some dark hints of what had passed on the preceding night. These, however, Montoni did not appear to understand,

stand, for he continued silent in his chair, without discovering any emotion, while, the choler of Verezzi increasing with the apparent insensibility of Montoni, he at length told the suggestion of Morano, that this castle did not lawfully belong to him, and that he would not willingly leave another murder on his conscience.

“ Am I to be insulted at my own table, and by my own friends ? ” said Montoni, with a countenance pale in anger. “ Why are the words of that madman repeated to me ? ” Verezzi, who had expected to hear Montoni’s indignation poured forth against Morano, and answered by thanks to himself, looked with astonishment at Cavigni, who enjoyed his confusion. “ Can you be weak enough to credit the assertions of a madman ? ” rejoined Montoni, “ or, what is the same thing, a man possessed by the spirit of vengeance ? But he has succeeded too well ; you believe what he said.”

“ Signor,” said Verezzi, “ we believe only what we know.”—“ How ! ” interrupted

rupted Montoni, sternly: "produce your proof."

"We believe only what we know," repeated Verezzi, "and we know nothing of what Morano asserts." Montoni seemed to recover himself. "I am hasty, my friends," said he, "with respect to my honour; no man shall question it with impunity—you did not mean to question it. These foolish words are not worth your remembrance, or my resentment. Verezzi, here is to your first exploit."

"Success to your first exploit," re-echoed the whole company.

"Noble Signor," replied Verezzi, glad to find he had escaped Montoni's resentment, "with my good will, you shall build your ramparts of gold."

"Pass the goblet," cried Montoni. "We will drink to Signora St. Aubert," said Cavigni. "By your leave, we will first drink to the lady of the castle," said Bertolini.—Montoni was silent. "To the lady of the

castle," said his guests. He bowed his head.

"It much surprises me, Signor," said Bertolini, "that you have so long neglected this castle; it is a noble edifice."

"It suits our purpose," replied Montoni, "and *is* a noble edifice. You know not, it seems, by what mischance it came to me."

"It was a lucky mischance, be it what it may, Signor," replied Bertolini, smiling. "I would, that one so lucky had befallen me."

Montoni looked gravely at him. "If you will attend to what I say," he resumed, "you shall hear the story."

The countenances of Bertolini and Verizzi expressed something more than curiosity; Cavigni, who seemed to feel none, had probably heard the relation before.

"It is now near twenty years," said Montoni, "since this castle came into my possession. I inherit it by the female line. The lady, my predecessor, was only distantly related to me; I am the last of her family.

She was beautiful and rich; I wooed her; but her heart was fixed upon another, and she rejected me. It is probable, however, that she was herself rejected of the person, whoever he might be, on whom she bestowed her favour, for a deep and settled melancholy took possession of her; and I have reason to believe she put a period to her own life. I was not at the castle at the time; but, as there are some singular and mysterious circumstances attending that event, I shall repeat them."

"Repeat them!" said a voice.

Montoni was silent; the Guests looked at each other, to know who spoke; but they perceived, that each was making the same enquiry. Montoni, at length, recovering himself, "We are overheard," said he: "we will finish this subject another time. Pass the goblet."

The cavaliers looked round the wide chamber.

"Here is no person, but ourselves," said Verezzi: "pray, Signor, proceed."

Q 2

"Did

“ Did you hear any thing ? ” said Montoni.

“ We did, ” said Bertolini.

“ It could be only fancy, ” said Verezzi, looking round again. “ We see no person besides ourselves ; and the sound I thought I heard seemed within the room. Pray, Signor, go on. ”

Montoni paused a moment, and then proceeded in a lowered voice, while the cavaliers drew nearer to attend.

“ Ye are to know, Signors, that the Lady Laurentini had for some months shewn symptoms of a dejected mind, nay, of a disturbed imagination. Her mood was very unequal ; sometimes she was sunk in calm melancholy, and, at others, as I have been told, she betrayed all the symptoms of frantic madness. It was one night in the month of October, after she had recovered from one of those fits of excess, and had sunk again into her usual melancholy, that she retired alone to her chamber, and forbade all inter-
ruption. It was the chamber at the end of

the corridor, Signors, where we had the affray, last night. From that hour, she was seen no more."

"How! seen no more!" said Bertolini, "was not her body found in the chamber?"

"Were her remains never found?" cried the rest of the company all together.

"Never!" replied Montoni.

"What reasons were there to suppose she destroyed herself, then?" said Bertolini.

—"Aye, what reasons?" said Verezzi.—

"How happened it, that her remains were never found? Although she killed herself, she could not bury herself." Montoni looked indignantly at Verezzi, who began to apologize. "Your pardon, Signor," said he: "I did not consider, that the lady was your relative, when I spoke of her so lightly."

Montoni accepted the apology.

"But the Signor will oblige us with the reasons, which urged him to believe, that the lady committed suicide."

“ Those I will explain hereafter,” said Montoni: “ at present let me relate a most extraordinary circumstance. This conversation goes no further, Signors. Listen, then, to what I am going to say.”

“ Listen !” said a voice.

They were all again silent, and the countenance of Montoni changed. “ This is no illusion of the fancy,” said Cavigni, at length breaking the profound silence.—

“ No,” said Bertolini; “ I heard it myself, now. Yet here is no person in the room but ourselves !”

“ This is very extraordinary,” said Montoni, suddenly rising. “ This is not to be borne; here is some deception, some trick. I will know what it means.”

All the company rose from their chairs in confusion.

“ It is very odd !” said Bertolini. “ Here is really no stranger in the room. If it is a trick, Signor, you will do well to punish the author of it severely.”

“ A trick !

“ A trick ! what else can it be ? ” said Cavigni, affecting a laugh.

The servants were now summoned, and the chamber was searched, but no person was found. The surprise and consternation of the company increased. Montoni was discomposed. “ We will leave this room,” said he, “ and the subject of our conversation also ; it is too solemn.” His guests were equally ready to quit the apartment ; but the subject had roused their curiosity, and they entreated Montoni to withdraw to another chamber, and finish it ; no entreaties could, however, prevail with him. Notwithstanding his efforts to appear at ease, he was visibly and greatly disordered.

“ Why, Signor, you are not superstitious,” cried Verezzi, jeeringly ; “ you, who have so often laughed at the credulity of others ! ”

“ I am not superstitious,” replied Montoni, regarding him with stern displeasure, “ though I know how to despise the common-place sentences, which are frequently

uttered against superstition. I will enquire further into this affair." He then left the room; and his guests, separating for the night, retired to their respective apartments.

C H A P. VIII.

“ He wears the rose of youth upon his cheek.”

SHAKESPEARE.

WE now return to Valancourt, who, it may be remembered, remained at Tholouse, some time after the departure of Emily, restless and miserable. Each morrow, that approached, he designed should carry him from thence; yet to-morrow and to-morrow came, and still saw him lingering in the scene of his former happiness. He could not immediately tear himself from the spot, where he had been accustomed to converse with Emily, or from the objects they had viewed together, which appeared to him memorials of her affection, as well as a kind of surety for its faithfulness; and, next to the pain of bidding her adieu, was that of leaving the scenes, which so powerfully awakened her image. Sometimes he had

bribed a servant, who had been left in the care of Madame Montoni's chateau, to permit him to visit the gardens, and there he would wander, for hours together, rapt in a melancholy, not unpleasing. The terrace, and the pavilion at the end of it, where he had taken leave of Emily, on the eve of her departure from Tholouse, were his most favourite haunts. There, as he walked, or leaned from the window of the building, he would endeavour to recollect all she had said, on that night ; to catch the tones of her voice, as they faintly vibrated on his memory, and to remember the exact expression of her countenance, which sometimes came suddenly to his fancy, like a vision ; that beautiful countenance, which awakened, as by instantaneous magic, all the tenderness of his heart, and seemed to tell with irresistible eloquence—that he had lost her forever ! At these moments, his hurried steps would have discovered to a spectator the despair of his heart. The character of Montoni, such as he had received

ceived from hints, and such as his fears represented it, would rise to his view, together with all the dangers it seemed to threaten to Emily and to his love. He blamed himself, that he had not urged these more forcibly to her, while it might have been in his power to detain her, and that he had suffered an absurd and criminal delicacy, as he termed it, to conquer so soon the reasonable arguments he had opposed to this journey. Any evil, that might have attended their marriage, seemed so inferior to those, which now threatened their love, or even to the sufferings, that absence occasioned, that he wondered how he could have ceased to urge his suit, till he had convinced her of its propriety; and he would certainly now have followed her to Italy, if he could have been spared from his regiment for so long a journey. His regiment, indeed, soon reminded him, that he had other duties to attend, than those of love.

A short time after his arrival at his bro-

ther's house, he was summoned to join his brother officers, and he accompanied a battalion to Paris; where a scene of novelty and gaiety opened upon him, such as, till then, he had only a faint idea of. But gaiety disgusted, and company fatigued, his sick mind; and he became an object of unceasing raillery to his companions, from whom, whenever he could steal an opportunity, he escaped, to think of Emily. The scenes around him, however, and the company with whom he was obliged to mingle, engaged his attention, though they failed to amuse his fancy, and thus gradually weakened the habit of yielding to lamentation, till it appeared less a duty to his love to indulge it. Among his brother-officers were many, who added to the ordinary character of a French soldier's gaiety some of those fascinating qualities, which too frequently throw a veil over folly, and sometimes even soften the features of vice into smiles. To these men the reserved and thoughtful manners of Valan-

court }

court were a kind of tacit censure on their own, for which they rallied him when present, and plotted against him when absent; they gloried in the thought of reducing him to their own level, and, considering it to be a spirited frolic, determined to accomplish it.

Valancourt was a stranger to the gradual progress of scheme and intrigue, against which he could not be on his guard. He had not been accustomed to receive ridicule, and he could ill endure its sting; he resented it, and this only drew upon him a louder laugh. To escape from such scenes, he fled into solitude, and there the image of Emily met him, and revived the pangs of love and despair. He then sought to renew those tasteful studies, which had been the delight of his early years; but his mind had lost the tranquillity, which is necessary for their enjoyment. To forget himself and the grief and anxiety, which the idea of her recalled, he would quit his solitude, and again mingle in the crowd—glad of a
tem-

temporary relief, and rejoicing to snatch amusement for the moment.

Thus passed weeks after weeks, time gradually softening his sorrow, and habit strengthening his desire of amusement, till the scenes around him seemed to awaken into a new character, and Valancourt, to have fallen among them from the clouds.

His figure and address made him a welcome visitor, wherever he had been introduced, and he soon frequented the most gay and fashionable circles of Paris. Among these, was the assembly of the Countess Lacleur, a woman of eminent beauty and captivating manners. She had passed the spring of youth, but her wit prolonged the triumph of its reign, and they mutually assisted the fame of each other; for those, who were charmed by her loveliness, spoke with enthusiasm of her talents; and others, who admired her playful imagination, declared, that her personal graces were unrivalled. But her imagination was merely playful, and her wit, if such it could be called, was
brilliant,

brilliant, rather than just; it dazzled, and its fallacy escaped the detection of the moment; for the accents, in which she pronounced it, and the smile, that accompanied them, were a spell upon the judgment of the auditors. Her *petits soupers* were the most tasteful of any in Paris, and were frequented by many of the second class of literati. She was fond of music, was herself a scientific performer, and had frequently concerts at her house. Valancourt, who passionately loved music, and who sometimes assisted at these concerts, admired her execution, but remembered with a sigh the eloquent simplicity of Emily's songs and the natural expression of her manner, which waited not to be approved by the judgment, but found their way at once to the heart.

Madame *La Comtesse* had often deep play at her house, which she affected to restrain, but secretly encouraged; and it was well known among her friends, that the splendour of her establishment was chiefly supplied

plied from the profits of her tables. But her *petits soupers* were the most charming imaginable! Here were all the delicacies of the four quarters of the world, all the wit and the lighter efforts of genius, all the graces of conversation—the smiles of beauty, and the charms of music; and Valancourt passed his pleasantest, as well as most dangerous hours in these parties.

His brother, who remained with his family in Gascony, had contented himself with giving him letters of introduction to such of his relations, residing at Paris, as the latter was not already known to. All these were persons of some distinction; and, as neither the person, mind, or manners of Valancourt the younger threatened to disgrace their alliance, they received him with as much kindness as their nature, hardened by uninterrupted prosperity, would admit of; but their attentions did not extend to acts of real friendship; for they were too much occupied by their own pursuits, to feel any interest in his; and thus he was
set

set down in the midst of Paris, in the pride of youth, with an open, unsuspecting temper and ardent affections, without one friend, to warn him of the dangers, to which he was exposed. Emily, who, had she been present, would have saved him from these evils by awakening his heart, and engaging him in worthy pursuits, now only increased his danger;—it was to lose the grief, which the remembrance of her occasioned, that he first sought amusement; and for this end he pursued it, till habit made it an object of abstract interest.

There was also a Marchioness Champfort, a young widow, at whose assemblies he passed much of his time. She was handsome, still more artful, gay and fond of intrigue. The society, which she drew round her, was less elegant and more vicious, than that of the Countess Lacleur: but, as she had address enough to throw a veil, though but a slight one, over the worst parts of her character, she was still visited by many persons of what is called distinction. Valan-
court

court was introduced to her parties by two of his brother officers, whose late ridicule he had now forgiven so far, that he could sometimes join in the laugh, which a mention of his former manners would renew.

The gaiety of the most splendid court in Europe, the magnificence of the palaces, entertainments, and equipages, that surrounded him—all conspired to dazzle his imagination, and re-animate his spirits, and the example and maxims of his military associates to delude his mind. Emily's image, indeed, still lived there; but it was no longer the friend, the monitor, that saved him from himself, and to which he retired to weep the sweet, yet melancholy, tears of tenderness. When he had recourse to it, it assumed a countenance of mild reproach, that wrung his soul, and called forth tears of unmixed misery; his only escape from which was to forget the object of it, and he endeavoured, therefore, to think of Emily as seldom as he could.

Thus dangerously circumstanced was Valancourt,

lancourt, at the time, when Emily was suffering at Venice, from the persecuting addresses of Count Morano, and the unjust authority of Montoni; at which period we leave him.

C H A P. IX.

“ The image of a wicked, heinous fault
Lives in his eye ; that close aspect of his
Does shew the mood of a much-troubled breast.”

KING JOHN.

LEAVING the gay scenes of Paris, we return to those of the gloomy Apennine, where Emily's thoughts were still faithful to Valancourt. Looking to him as to her only hope, she recollected, with jealous exactness, every assurance and every proof she had witnessed of his affection ; read again and again the letters she had received from him ; weighed, with intense anxiety, the force of every word, that spoke of his attachment ; and dried her tears, as she trusted in his truth.

Montoni, meanwhile, had made strict enquiry, concerning the strange circumstance of his alarm, without obtaining information ; and was, at length, obliged to account for

it

it by the reasonable supposition, that it was a mischievous trick played off by one of his domestics. His disagreements with Madame Montoni, on the subject of her settlements, were now more frequent than ever; he even confined her entirely to her own apartment, and did not scruple to threaten her with much greater severity, should she persevere in a refusal.

Reason, had she consulted it, would now have perplexed her in the choice of a conduct to be adopted. It would have pointed out the danger of irritating by further opposition a man, such as Montoni had proved himself to be, and to whose power she had so entirely committed herself; and it would also have told her, of what extreme importance to her future comfort it was, to reserve for herself those possessions, which would enable her to live independently of Montoni, should she ever escape from his immediate controul. But she was directed by a more decisive guide than reason—the spirit of revenge, which urged her to oppose
violence

violence to violence, and obstinacy to obstinacy.

Wholly confined to the solitude of her apartment, she was now reduced to solicit the society she so lately rejected; for Emily was the only person, except Annette, with whom she was permitted to converse.

Generously anxious for her peace, Emily, therefore, tried to persuade, when she could not convince, and fought by every gentle means to induce her to forbear that asperity of reply, which so greatly irritated Montoni. The pride of her aunt did sometimes soften to the soothing voice of Emily, and there even were moments, when she regarded her affectionate attentions with goodwill.

The scenes of terrible contention, to which Emily was frequently compelled to be witness, exhausted her spirits more than any circumstances, that had occurred since her departure from Tholouse. The gentleness and goodness of her parents, together with the scenes of her early happiness, often stole

stole on her mind, like the visions of a higher world ; while the characters and circumstances, now passing beneath her eye, excited both terror and surprise. She could scarcely have imagined, that passions so fierce and so various, as those which Montoni exhibited, could have been concentrated in one individual ; yet what more surprised her, was, that, on great occasions, he could bend these passions, wild as they were, to the cause of his interest, and generally could disguise in his countenance their operation on his mind ; but she had seen him too often, when he had thought it unnecessary to conceal his nature, to be deceived on such occasions.

Her present life appeared like the dream of a distempered imagination, or like one of those frightful fictions, in which the wild genius of the poets sometimes delighted. Reflection brought only regret, and anticipation terror. How often did she wish to “ steal the lark’s wing, and mount the swiftest gale,” that Languedoc and repose might once more be hers !

Of Count Morano's health she made frequent enquiry; but Annette heard only vague reports of his danger, and that his surgeon had said he would never leave the cottage alive; while Emily could not but be shocked to think, that she, however innocently, might be the means of his death; and Annette, who did not fail to observe her emotion, interpreted it in her own way.

But a circumstance soon occurred, which entirely withdrew Annette's attention from this subject, and awakened the surprise and curiosity so natural to her. Coming one day to Emily's apartment, with a countenance full of importance, "What can all this mean, ma'amfelle?" said she. "Would I was once safe in Languedoc again, they should never catch me going on my travels any more! I must think it a fine thing, truly, to come abroad, and see foreign parts! I little thought I was coming to be caught up in an old castle, among such dreary mountains, with the chance of being murdered, or, what is as good, having my throat cut!" "What

“ What can all this mean, indeed, Annette ?” said Emily, in astonishment.

“ Aye, ma’amfelle, you may look surpris’d ; but you won’t believe it, perhaps, till they have murdered you, too. You would not believe about the ghost I told you of, though I shewed you the very place, where it us’d to appear!—You will believe nothing, ma’amfelle.”

“ Not till you speak more reasonably, Annette ; for Heaven’s sake, explain your meaning. You spoke of murder !”

“ Aye, ma’amfelle, they are coming to murder us all, perhaps ; but what signifies explaining?—you will not believe.”

Emily again desired her to relate what she had seen, or heard.

“ O, I have seen enough, ma’am, and heard too much, as Ludovico can prove. Poor soul ! they will murder him, too ! I little thought, when he sung those sweet verses under my lattice, at Venice !”—Emily looked impatient and displeas’d. “ Well, ma’amfelle, as I was saying, these prepara-

tions about the castle, and these strange-looking people, that are calling here every day, and the Signor's cruel usage of my lady, and his odd goings-on—all these, as I told Ludovico, can bode no good. And he bid me hold my tongue. So, says I, the Signor's strangely altered, Ludovico, in this gloomy castle, to what he was in France; there, all so gay! Nobody so gallant to my lady, then; and he could smile, too, upon a poor servant, sometimes, and jeer her, too, good-naturedly enough. I remember once, when he said to me, as I was going out of my lady's dressing-room—Annette, says he—”

“ Never mind what the Signor said,” interrupted Emily; “ but tell me, at once, the circumstance, which has thus alarmed you.”

“ Aye, ma'amfelle,” rejoined Annette, “ that is just what Ludovico said: says he, Never mind what the Signor says to you. So I told him what I thought about the Signor. He is so strangely altered, said I: for now he is so haughty, and so commanding,

ing,

ing, and so sharp with my lady ; and, if he meets one, he'll scarcely look at one, unless it be to frown. So much the better, says Ludovico, so much the better. And to tell you the truth, ma'amselle, I thought this was a very ill-natured speech of Ludovico : but I went on. And then, says I, he is always knitting his brows ; and if one speaks to him, he does not hear ; and then he sits up counfelling so, of a night, with the other Signors—there they are, till long past midnight, discoursing together ! Aye, but says Ludovico, you don't know what they are counfelling about. No, said I, but I can guess—it is about my young lady. Upon that, Ludovico burst out a-laughing, quite loud ; so he put me in a huff, for I did not like that either I, or you, ma'amselle, should be laughed at ; and I turned away quick, but he stopped me. ' Don't be affronted, Annette,' said he, ' but I cannot help laughing ;' and with that he laughed again. ' What !' says he, ' do you think the Signors sit up, night

after night, only to counsel about thy young lady! No, no, there is something more in the wind than that. And these repairs about the castle, and these preparations about the ramparts—they are not making about young ladies.’ Why surely, said I, the Signor, my master, is not going to make war? ‘Make war!’ said Ludovico, ‘what, upon the mountains and the woods? for here is no living soul to make war upon, that I see.’

“What are these preparations for, then?” said I; why surely nobody is coming to take away my master’s castle! ‘Then there are so many ill-looking fellows coming to the castle every day,’ says Ludovico, without answering my question, ‘and the Signor sees them all, and talks with them all, and they all stay in the neighbourhood! By holy St. Marco! some of them are the most cut-throat-looking dogs I ever set my eyes upon.’

“I asked Ludovico again, if he thought they were coming to take away my master’s castle;

castle; and he said, No, he did not think they were, but he did not know for certain. ‘ Then, yesterday,’ said he, but you must not tell this, ma’amfelle, ‘ yesterday, a party of these men came, and left all their horses in the castle stables, where, it seems, they are to stay, for the Signor ordered them all to be entertained with the best provender in the manger; but the men are, most of them, in the neighbouring cottages.’

“ So, ma’amfelle, I came to tell you all this, for I never heard any thing so strange in my life. But what can these ill-looking men be come about, if it is not to murder us? And the Signor knows this, or why should he be so civil to them? And why should he fortify the castle, and counsel so much with the other Signors, and be so thoughtful?”

“ Is this all you have to tell, Annette?” said Emily. “ Have you heard nothing else, that alarms you?”

“ Nothing else, ma’amfelle!” said Annette; “ why, is not this enough?” “ Quite

enough for my patience, Annette, but not quite enough to convince me we are all to be murdered, though I acknowledge here is sufficient food for curiosity. She forbore to speak her apprehensions, because she would not encourage Annette's wild terrors; but the present circumstances of the castle both surprised, and alarmed her. Annette, having told her tale, left the chamber, on the wing for new wonders.

In the evening, Emily had passed some melancholy hours with Madame Montoni, and was retiring to rest, when she was alarmed by a strange and loud knocking at her chamber door, and then a heavy weight fell against it, that almost burst it open. She called to know who was there, and receiving no answer, repeated the call; but a chilling silence followed. It occurred to her—for, at this moment, she could not reason on the probability of circumstances—that some one of the strangers, lately arrived at the castle, had discovered her apartment, and was come with such
intent,

intent, as their looks rendered too possible—to rob, perhaps to murder, her. The moment she admitted this possibility, terror supplied the place of conviction, and a kind of instinctive remembrance of her remote situation from the family heightened it to a degree, that almost overcame her senses. She looked at the door, which led to the stair-case, expecting to see it open, and listening, in fearful silence, for a return of the noise, till she began to think it had proceeded from this door, and a wish of escaping through the opposite one rushed upon her mind. She went to the gallery door, and then, fearing to open it, lest some person might be silently lurking for her without, she stopped, but with her eyes fixed in expectation upon the opposite door of the stair-case. As thus she stood, she heard a faint breathing near her, and became convinced, that some person was on the other side of the door, which was already locked. She sought for other fastening, but there was none.

While she yet listened, the breathing was distinctly heard, and her terror was not soothed, when, looking round her wide and lonely chamber, she again considered her remote situation. As she stood hesitating whether to call for assistance, the continuance of the stillness surprised her; and her spirits would have revived, had she not continued to hear the faint breathing, that convinced her, the person, whoever it was, had not quitted the door.

At length, worn out with anxiety, she determined to call loudly for assistance from her casement, and was advancing to it, when, whether the terror of her mind gave her ideal sounds, or that real ones did come, she thought footsteps were ascending the private stair-case; and, expecting to see its door unclose, she forgot all other cause of alarm, and retreated towards the corridor. Here she endeavoured to make her escape, but, on opening the door, was very near falling over a person, who lay on the floor without. She screamed, and would
have

have passed, but her trembling frame refused to support her; and the moment, in which she leaned against the wall of the gallery, allowed her leisure to observe the figure before her, and to recognise the features of Annette. Fear instantly yielded to surprise. She spoke in vain to the poor girl, who remained senseless on the floor, and then, losing all consciousness of her own weakness, hurried to her assistance.

When Annette recovered, she was helped by Emily into the chamber, but was still unable to speak, and looked round her, as if her eyes followed some person in the room. Emily tried to sooth her disturbed spirits, and forbore, at present, to ask her any questions; but the faculty of speech was never long withheld from Annette, and she explained, in broken sentences, and in her tedious way, the occasion of her disorder. She affirmed, and with a solemnity of conviction, that almost staggered the incredulity of Emily, that she had seen

an apparition, as she was passing to her bedroom, through the corridor.

“ I had heard strange stories of that chamber before,” said Annette : “ but as it was so near yours, ma’amselle, I would not tell them to you, because they would frighten you. The servants had told me, often and often, that it was haunted, and that was the reason why it was shut up : nay, for that matter, why the whole string of these rooms, here, are shut up. I quaked whenever I went by, and I must say, I did sometimes think I heard odd noises within it. But, as I said, as I was passing along the corridor, and not thinking a word about the matter, or even of the strange voice that the Signors heard the other night, all of a sudden comes a great light, and, looking behind me, there was a tall figure, (I saw it as plainly, ma’amselle, as I see you at this moment) a tall figure gliding along (Oh ! I cannot describe how !) into the room, that is always shut up, and nobody has the key
of

of it but the Signor, and the door shut directly.

“ Then it doubtless was the Signor,” said Emily.

“ O no, ma’amfelle, it could not be him, for I left him busy a-quarrelling in my lady’s dressing-room !”

“ You bring me strange tales, Annette,” said Emily : “ it was but this morning, that you would have terrified me with the apprehension of murder ; and now you would persuade me, you have seen a ghost ! These wonderful stories come too quickly.”

“ Nay, ma’amfelle, I will say no more, only, if I had not been frightened, I should not have fainted dead away, so. I ran as fast as I could, to get to your door ; but, what was worst of all, I could not call out ; then I thought something must be strangely the matter with me, and directly I dropt down.”

“ Was it the chamber where the black veil hangs ?” said Emily. “ O ! no, ma’amfelle, it was one nearer to this. What shall I do, to get to my room ? I would not go

out into the corridor again, for the whole world!" Emily, whose spirits had been severely shocked, and who, therefore, did not like the thought of passing the night alone, told her she might sleep where she was. "O, no, ma'amfelle," replied Annette, "I would not sleep in the room, now, for a thousand sequins!"

Wearied and disappointed, Emily first ridiculed, though she shared, her fears, and then tried to sooth them; but neither attempt succeeded, and the girl persisted in believing and affirming, that what she had seen was nothing human. It was not till some time after Emily had recovered her composure, that she recollected the steps she had heard on the stair-case—a remembrance, however, which made her insist that Annette should pass the night with her, and, with much difficulty, she, at length, prevailed, assisted by that part of the girl's fear, which concerned the corridor.

Early on the following morning, as Emily crossed the hall to the ramparts, she

heard a noisy bustle in the court-yard, and the clatter of horses' hoofs. Such unusual sounds excited her curiosity; and, instead of going to the ramparts, she went to an upper casement, from whence she saw, in the court below, a large party of horsemen, dressed in a singular, but uniform, habit, and completely, though variously, armed. They wore a kind of short jacket, composed of black and scarlet, and several of them had a cloak, of plain black, which, covering the person entirely, hung down to the stirrups. As one of these cloaks glanced aside, she saw, beneath, daggers, apparently of different sizes, tucked into the horseman's belt. She further observed, that these were carried, in the same manner, by many of the horsemen without cloaks, most of whom bore also pikes, or javelins. On their heads, were the small Italian caps, some of which were distinguished by black feathers. Whether these caps gave a fierce air to the countenance, or that the countenances they surmounted had naturally such
an

an appearance, Emily thought she had never, till then, seen an assemblage of faces so savage and terrific. While she gazed, she almost fancied herself surrounded by banditti ; and a vague thought glanced athwart her fancy—that Montoni was the captain of the group before her, and that this castle was to be the place of rendezvous. The strange and horrible supposition was but momentary, though her reason could supply none more probable, and though she discovered, among the band, the strangers she had formerly noticed with so much alarm, who were now distinguished by the black plume.

While she continued gazing, Cavigni, Verezzi, and Bertolini came forth from the hall, habited like the rest, except that they wore hats, with a mixed plume of black and scarlet, and that their arms differed from those of the rest of the party. As they mounted their horses, Emily was struck with the exulting joy, expressed on the visage of Verezzi, while Cavigni was gay, yet
with

with a shade of thought on his countenance; and, as he managed his horse with dexterity, his graceful and commanding figure, which exhibited the majesty of a hero, had never appeared to more advantage. Emily, as she observed him, thought he somewhat resembled Valancourt, in the spirit and dignity of his person; but she looked in vain for the noble, benevolent countenance—the soul's intelligence, which overspread the features of the latter.

As she was hoping, she scarcely knew why, that Montoni would accompany the party, he appeared at the hall door, but unaccoutred. Having carefully observed the horsemen, conversed awhile with the cavaliers, and bidden them farewell, the band wheeled round the court, and, led by Verizzi, issued forth under the portcullis; Montoni following to the portal, and gazing after them for some time. Emily then retired from the casement, and, now certain of being unmolested, went to walk on the ramparts, from whence she soon after saw
the

the party winding among the mountains to the west, appearing and disappearing between the woods, till distance confused their figures, consolidated their numbers, and only a dingy mass appeared moving along the heights.

Emily observed, that no workmen were on the ramparts, and that the repairs of the fortifications seemed to be completed. While she fauntered thoughtfully on, she heard distant footsteps, and, raising her eyes, saw several men lurking under the castle walls, who were evidently not workmen, but looked, as if they would have accorded well with the party, which was gone. Wondering where Annette had hid herself so long, who might have explained some of the late circumstances, and then considering that Madame Montoni was probably risen, she went to her dressing-room, where she mentioned what had occurred; but Madame Montoni either would not, or could not, give any explanation of the event. The Signor's reserve to his wife, on this subject, was

was probably nothing more than usual; yet, to Emily, it gave an air of mystery to the whole affair, that seemed to hint, there was danger, if not villany, in his schemes.

Annette presently came, and, as usual, was full of alarm; to her lady's eager enquiries of what she had heard among the servants, she replied:

“ Ah, Madam! nobody knows what it is all about, but old Carlo; he knows well enough, I dare say, but he is as close as his master. Some say the Signor is going out to frighten the enemy, as they call it: but where is the enemy? Then others say, he is going to take away somebody's castle: but I am sure he has room enough in his own, without taking other people's; and I am sure I should like it a great deal better, if there were more people to fill it.”

“ Ah! you will soon have your wish, I fear,” replied Madame Montoni.

“ No, madam, but such ill-looking fellows are not worth having. I mean such
gallant,

gallant, smart, merry fellows as Ludovico, who is always telling droll stories, to make one laugh. It was but yesterday, he told me such a *humourfome* tale! I can't help laughing at it now.—Says he—”

“ Well, we can dispense with the story,” said her lady. “ Ah!” continued Annette, “ he sees a great way, a great way further than other people! Now he sees into all the Signor's meaning, without knowing a word about the matter!”

“ How is that?” said Madame Montoni.

“ Why he says—but he made me promise not to tell, and I would not disoblige him for the world.”

“ What is it he made you promise not to tell?” said her lady, sternly. “ I insist upon knowing immediately—what is it he made you promise?”

“ O Madam,” cried Annette, “ I would not tell for the universe!” “ I insist upon your telling this instant,” said Madame Montoni. “ O dear madam! I would not tell for an hundred sequins! You would
not

not have me forswear myself, madam !” exclaimed Annette.

“ I will not wait another moment,” said Madame Montoni. Annette was silent.

“ The Signor shall be informed of this directly,” rejoined her mistress: “ he will make you discover all.”

“ It is Ludovico, who has discovered,” said Annette: “ but for mercy’s sake, madam, don’t tell the Signor, and you shall know all directly.” Madame Montoni said, that she would not.

“ Well then, madam, Ludovico says, that the Signor, my master, is—is—that is, he only thinks so, and any body, you know, madam, is free to think—that the Signor, my master, is—is—”

“ Is what ?” said her lady, impatiently.

“ That the Signor, my master, is going to be—a great robber—that is—he is going to rob on his own account ;—to be, (but I am sure I don’t understand what he means) to be a—captain of—robbers.”

“ Art thou in thy senses, Annette ?” said
Madame

Madame Montoni ; or is this a trick to deceive me ? Tell me, this instant, what Ludovico *did* say to thee ;—no equivocation ;—this instant.”

“ Nay, madam,” cried Annette, “ if this is all I am to get for having told the secret”—Her mistress thus continued to insist, and Annette to protest, till Montoni, himself, appeared, who bade the latter leave the room, and she withdrew, trembling for the fate of her story: Emily also was retiring, but her aunt desired she would stay ; and Montoni had so often made her a witness of their contention, that he no longer had scruples on that account.

“ I insist upon knowing this instant, Signor, what all this means :” said his wife—“ what are all these armed men, whom they tell me of, gone out about ?” Montoni answered her only with a look of scorn ; and Emily whispered something to her. “ It does not signify,” said her aunt : “ I will know ; and I will know, too, what the castle has been fortified for.”

“ Come,

“Come, come,” said Montoni, “other business brought me here. I must be trifled with no longer. I have immediate occasion for what I demand—those estates must be given up, without further contention ; or I may find a way——”

“They never shall be given up,” interrupted Madame Montoni : “they never shall enable you to carry on your wild schemes ;—but what are these ? I will know. Do you expect the castle to be attacked ? Do you expect enemies ? Am I to be shut up here, to be killed in a siege ?”

“Sign the writings,” said Montoni, “and you shall know more.”

“What enemy can be coming ?” continued his wife. “Have you entered into the service of the state ? Am I to be blocked up here to die ?”

“That may possibly happen,” said Montoni, “unless you yield to my demand : for, come what may, you shall not quit the castle till then.” Madame Montoni burst into

into loud lamentation, which she as suddenly checked, considering, that her husband's assertions might be only artifices, employed to extort her consent. She hinted this suspicion, and, in the next moment, told him also, that his designs were not so honourable as to serve the state, and that she believed he had only commenced a captain of banditti, to join the enemies of Venice, in plundering and laying waste the surrounding country.

Montoni looked at her for a moment with a steady and stern countenance; while Emily trembled, and his wife, for once, thought she had said too much. “You shall be removed, this night,” said he, “to the east turret: there, perhaps, you may understand the danger of offending a man, who has an unlimited power over you.”

Emily now fell at his feet, and, with tears of terror, supplicated for her aunt, who sat, trembling with fear, and indignation; now ready to pour forth execrations,
and

and now to join the intercessions of Emily. Montoni, however, soon interrupted these entreaties with an horrible oath; and, as he burst from Emily, leaving his cloak in her hand, she fell to the floor, with a force, that occasioned her a severe blow on the forehead. But he quitted the room, without attempting to raise her, whose attention was called from herself, by a deep groan from Madame Montoni, who continued otherwise unmoved in her chair, and had not fainted. Emily, hastening to her assistance, saw her eyes rolling, and her features convulsed.

Having spoken to her, without receiving an answer, she brought water, and supported her head, while she held it to her lips; but the increasing convulsions soon compelled Emily to call for assistance. On her way through the hall, in search of Annette, she met Montoni, whom she told what had happened, and conjured to return and comfort her aunt; but he turned silently away, with a look of indifference, and went out
upon

upon the ramparts. At length she found old Carlo and Annette, and they hastened to the dressing-room, where Madame Montoni had fallen on the floor, and was lying in strong convulsions. Having lifted her into the adjoining room, and laid her on the bed, the force of her disorder still made all their strength necessary to hold her, while Annette trembled and sobbed, and old Carlo looked silently and piteously on, as his feeble hands grasped those of his mistress, till, turning his eyes upon Emily, he exclaimed, "God God! Signora, what is the matter?"

Emily looked calmly at him, and saw his enquiring eyes fixed on her: and Annette, looking up, screamed loudly; for Emily's face was stained with blood, which continued to fall slowly from her forehead: but her attention had been so entirely occupied by the scene before her, that she had felt no pain from the wound. She now held an handkerchief to her face, and, notwithstanding her faintness, continued to
watch

watch Madame Montoni, the violence of whose convulsions was abating, till at length they ceased, and left her in a kind of stupor.

“ My aunt must remain quiet,” said Emily. “ Go, good Carlo ; if we should want your assistance, I will send for you. In the mean time, if you have an opportunity, speak kindly of your mistress to your master.”

“ Alas !” said Carlo, “ I have seen too much ! I have little influence with the Signor. But do, dear young lady, take some care of yourself ; that is an ugly wound, and you look sadly.”

“ Thank you, my friend, for your consideration,” said Emily, smiling kindly : “ the wound is trifling, it came by a fall.”

Carlo shook his head, and left the room ; and Emily, with Annette, continued to watch by her aunt. “ Did my lady tell the Signor what Ludovico said, ma’am-felle ?” asked Annette in a whisper ; but Emily quieted her fears on the subject.

“ I thought what this quarrelling would come to,” continued Annette: “ I suppose the Signor has been beating my lady.”

“ No, no, Annette, you are totally mistaken, nothing extraordinary has happened.”

“ Why, extraordinary things happen here so often, ma’amfelle, that there is nothing in them. Here is another legion of those ill-looking fellows, come to the castle, this morning.”

“ Hush! Annette, you will disturb my aunt; we will talk of that by and bye.”

They continued watching silently, till Madame Montoni uttered a low sigh, when Emily took her hand, and spoke soothingly to her; but the former gazed with unconscious eyes, and it was long before she knew her niece. Her first words then enquired for Montoni; to which Emily replied by an entreaty, that she would compose her spirits, and consent to be kept quiet, adding, that, if she wished any message to be conveyed to him, she would herself

self deliver it. "No," said her aunt faintly, "no—I have nothing new to tell him. Does he persist in saying I shall be removed from my chamber?"

Emily replied, that he had not spoken, on the subject, since Madame Montoni heard him; and then she tried to divert her attention to some other topic; but her aunt seemed to be inattentive to what she said, and lost in secret thoughts. Emily, having brought her some refreshment, now left her to the care of Annette, and went in search of Montoni, whom she found on a remote part of the rampart, conversing among a group of the men described by Annette. They stood round him with fierce, yet subjugated, looks, while he, speaking earnestly, and pointing to the walls, did not perceive Emily, who remained at some distance, waiting till he should be at leisure, and observing involuntarily the appearance of one man, more savage than his fellows, who stood resting on his pike, and looking, over the shoulders of a comrade,

at Montoni, to whom he listened with uncommon earnestness. This man was apparently of low condition; yet his looks appeared not to acknowledge the superiority of Montoni, as did those of his companions; and sometimes they even assumed an air of authority, which the decisive manner of the Signor could not repress. Some few words of Montoni then passed in the wind; and, as the men were separating, she heard him say, "This evening, then, begin the watch at sun-set."

"At sun-set, Signor," replied one or two of them, and walked away; while Emily approached Montoni, who appeared desirous of avoiding her: but, though she observed this, she had courage to proceed. She endeavoured to intercede once more for her aunt, represented to him her sufferings, and urged the danger of exposing her to a cold apartment in her present state. "She suffers by her own folly," said Montoni, "and is not to be pitied;—she knows how she may avoid these sufferings in future—if she

is removed to the turret, it will be her own fault. Let her be obedient, and sign the writings you heard of, and I will think no more of it."

When Emily ventured still to plead, he sternly silenced and rebuked her for interfering in his domestic affairs, but, at length, dismissed her with this concession—That he would not remove Madame Montoni, on the ensuing night, but allow her till the next to consider, whether she would resign her settlements, or be imprisoned in the east turret of the castle, "where she shall find," he added, "a punishment she may not expect."

Emily then hastened to inform her aunt of this short respite and of the alternative, that awaited her, to which the latter made no reply, but appeared thoughtful, while Emily, in consideration of her extreme languor, wished to sooth her mind by leading it to less interesting topics: and, though these efforts were unsuccessful, and Madame Montoni became peevish, her resolution, on the con-

tended point, seemed somewhat to relax, and Emily recommended, as her only means of safety, that she should submit to Montoni's demand. "You know not what you advise," said her aunt. "Do you understand, that these estates will descend to you at my death, if I persist in a refusal?"

"I was ignorant of that circumstance, madam," replied Emily, "but the knowledge of it cannot withhold me from advising you to adopt the conduct, which not only your peace, but, I fear, your safety requires, and I entreat, that you will not suffer a consideration comparatively so trifling, to make you hesitate a moment in resigning them."

"Are you sincere, niece?" "Is it possible you can doubt it, madam?" Her aunt appeared to be affected. "You are not unworthy of these estates, niece," said she: "I would wish to keep them for your sake—you shew a virtue I did not expect."

"How have I deserved this reproof, madam?" said Emily sorrowfully.

"Re-

“ Reproof !” replied Madame Montoni :
 “ I meant to praise your virtue.”

“ Alas ! here is no exertion of virtue,”
 rejoined Emily, “ for here is no temptation
 to be overcome.”

“ Yet Monsieur Valancourt”——said her
 aunt. “ O madam !” interrupted Emily,
 anticipating what she would have said, “ do
 not let me glance on that subject : do not
 let my mind be stained with a wish so shock-
 ingly self-interested.” She immediately
 changed the topic, and continued with Ma-
 dame Montoni, till she withdrew to her
 apartment for the night.

At that hour, the castle was perfectly
 still, and every inhabitant of it, except her-
 self, seemed to have retired to rest. As she
 passed along the wide and lonely galleries,
 dusky and silent, she felt forlorn and appre-
 hensive of—she scarcely knew what ; but
 when, entering the corridor, she recollected
 the incident of the preceding night, a dread
 seized her, lest a subject of alarm, similar to
 that, which had befallen Annette, should oc-

cur to her, and which, whether real, or ideal, would, she felt, have an almost equal effect upon her weakened spirits. The chamber, to which Annette had alluded, she did not exactly know, but understood it to be one of those she must pass in the way to her own; and, sending a fearful look forward into the gloom, she stepped lightly and cautiously along, till, coming to a door, from whence issued a low sound, she hesitated and paused; and, during the delay of that moment, her fears so much increased, that she had no power to move from the spot. Believing, that she heard a human voice within, she was somewhat revived; but, in the next moment, the door was opened, and a person, whom she conceived to be Montoni, appeared, who instantly started back, and closed it, though not before she had seen, by the light that burned in the chamber, another person, sitting in a melancholy attitude by the fire. Her terror vanished, but her astonishment only began, which was now roused by the mysterious
secrecy

secrecy of Montoni's manner, and by the discovery of a person, whom he thus visited at midnight, in an apartment, which had long been shut up, and of which such extraordinary reports were circulated.

While she thus continued hesitating, strongly prompted to watch Montoni's motions, yet fearing to irritate him by appearing to notice them, the door was again opened cautiously, and as instantly closed as before. She then stepped softly to her chamber, which was the next but one to this, but, having put down her lamp, returned to an obscure corner of the corridor, to observe the proceedings of this half-seen person, and to ascertain, whether it was indeed Montoni.

Having waited in silent expectation for a few minutes, with her eyes fixed on the door, it was again opened, and the same person appeared, whom she now knew to be Montoni. He looked cautiously round, without perceiving her, then, stepping forward, closed the door, and left the corridor. Soon after,

Emily heard the door fastened on the inside, and she withdrew to her chamber, wondering at what she had witnessed.

It was now twelve o'clock. As she closed her casement, she heard footsteps on the terrace below, and saw imperfectly, through the gloom, several persons advancing, who passed under the casement. She then heard the clink of arms, and, in the next moment, the watch-word; when, recollecting the command she had overheard from Montoni, and the hour of the night, she understood, that these men were, for the first time, relieving guard in the castle. Having listened till all was again still, she retired to sleep.

C H A P. X.

“ And shall no lay of death
With pleasing murmur sooth
Her parted soul?
Shall no tear wet her grave?”

SAYERS.

ON the following morning, Emily went early to the apartment of Madame Montoni, who had slept well, and was much recovered. Her spirits also had returned with her health, and her resolution to oppose Montoni's demands revived, though it yet struggled with her fears, which Emily, who trembled for the consequence of further opposition, endeavoured to confirm.

Her aunt, as has been already shewn, had a disposition, which delighted in contradiction, and which taught her, when unpleasant circumstances were offered to her understanding, not to enquire into their truth,

S. 6

but

but to seek for arguments, by which she might make them appear false. Long habit had so entirely confirmed this natural propensity, that she was not conscious of possessing it. Emily's remonstrances and representations, therefore, roused her pride, instead of alarming, or convincing her judgment, and she still relied upon the discovery of some means, by which she might yet avoid submitting to the demand of her husband. Considering, that, if she could once escape from his castle, she might defy his power, and, obtaining a decisive separation, live in comfort on the estates, that yet remained for her, she mentioned this to her niece, who accorded with her in the wish, but differed from her, as to the probability of its completion. She represented the impossibility of passing the gates, secured and guarded as they were, and the extreme danger of committing her design to the discretion of a servant, who might either purposely betray, or accidentally disclose it.—Montoni's vengeance would also disdain restraint,

straint, if her intention was detected: and, though Emily wished, as fervently as she could do, to regain her freedom, and return to France, she consulted only Madame Montoni's safety, and persevered in advising her to relinquish her settlement, without braving further outrage.

The struggle of contrary emotions, however, continued to rage in her aunt's bosom, and she still brooded over the chance of effecting an escape. While she thus sat, Montoni entered the room, and, without noticing his wife's indisposition, said, that he came to remind her of the impolicy of trifling with him, and that he gave her only till the evening to determine, whether she would consent to his demand, or compel him, by a refusal, to remove her to the east turret. He added, that a party of cavaliers would dine with him, that day, and that he expected she would sit at the head of the table, where Emily, also, must be present. Madame Montoni was now on the point of uttering an absolute refusal, but, suddenly
con-

considering, that her liberty, during this entertainment, though circumscribed, might favour her further plans, she acquiesced, with seeming reluctance, and Montoni, soon after, left the apartment. His command struck Emily with surprise and apprehension, who shrunk from the thought of being exposed to the gaze of strangers, such as her fancy represented these to be, and the words of Count Morano, now again recollected, did not sooth her fears.

When she withdrew to prepare for dinner, she dressed herself with even more simplicity than usual, that she might escape observation—a policy, which did not avail her, for, as she re-passed to her aunt's apartment, she was met by Montoni, who censured what he called her prudish appearance, and insisted, that she would wear the most splendid dress she had, even that, which had been prepared for her intended nuptials with Count Morano, and which, it now appeared, her aunt had carefully brought with her from Venice. This was made, not in
the

the Venetian, but, in the Neapolitan fashion, so as to set off the shape and figure, to the utmost advantage. In it, her beautiful chestnut tresses were negligently bound up in pearls, and suffered to fall back again on her neck. The simplicity of a better taste, than Madame Montoni's, was conspicuous in this dress, splendid as it was, and Emily's unaffected beauty never had appeared more captivatingly. She had now only to hope, that Montoni's order was prompted, not by any extraordinary design, but by an ostentation of displaying his family, richly attired, to the eyes of strangers; yet nothing less than his absolute command could have prevailed with her to wear a dress, that had been designed for such an offensive purpose, much less to have worn it on this occasion. As she descended to dinner, the emotion of her mind threw a faint blush over her countenance, and heightened its interesting expression; for timidity had made her linger in her apartment, till the utmost moment, and, when she entered the hall, in which a kind
of

●f state dinner was spread, Montoni and his guests were already seated at the table. She was then going to place herself by her aunt ; but Montoni waved his hand, and two of the cavaliers rose, and seated her between them.

The eldest of these was a tall man, with strong Italian features, an aquiline nose, and dark penetrating eyes, that flashed with fire, when his mind was agitated, and, even in its state of rest, retained somewhat of the wildness of the passions. His visage was long and narrow, and his complexion of a sickly yellow.

The other, who appeared to be about forty, had features of a different cast, yet Italian, and his look was slow, subtle and penetrating ; his eyes, of a dark grey, were small, and hollow ; his complexion was a sun-burnt brown, and the contour of his face, though inclined to oval, was irregular and ill-formed.

Eight other guests sat round the table, who were all dressed in an uniform, and had
all

all an expression, more or less, of wild fierceness, of subtle design, or of licentious passions. As Emily timidly surveyed them, she remembered the scene of the preceding morning, and again almost fancied herself surrounded by banditti; then, looking back to the tranquillity of her early life, she felt scarcely less astonishment, than grief, at her present situation. The scene, in which they sat, assisted the illusion; it was an antient hall, gloomy from the style of its architecture, from its great extent, and because almost the only light it received was from one large gothic window, and from a pair of folding doors, which, being open, admitted likewise a view of the west rampart, with the wild mountains of the Apennine beyond.

The middle compartment of this hall rose into a vaulted roof, enriched with fretwork, and supported, on three sides, by pillars of marble; beyond these, long colonades retired in gloomy grandeur, till their extent was lost in twilight. The
lightest

lightest footsteps of the servants, as they advanced through these, were returned in whispering echoes, and their figures, seen at a distance imperfectly through the dusk, frequently awakened Emily's imagination. She looked alternately at Montoni, at his guests and on the surrounding scene; and then, remembering her dear native province, her pleasant home and the simplicity and goodness of the friends, whom she had lost, grief and surprise again occupied her mind.

When her thoughts could return from these considerations, she fancied she observed an air of authority towards his guests, such as she had never before seen him assume, though he had always been distinguished by an haughty carriage; there was something also in the manners of the strangers, that seemed perfectly, though not servilely, to acknowledge his superiority.

During dinner, the conversation was chiefly on war and politics. They talked with energy of the state of Venice, its dangers,

gers,

gers, the character of the reigning Doge and of the chief senators; and then spoke of the state of Rome. When the repast was over, they rose, and, each filling his goblet with wine from the gilded ewer, that stood beside him, drank "Success to our exploits!" Montoni was lifting his goblet to his lips to drink this toast, when suddenly the wine hissed, rose to the brim, and, as he held the glass from him, it burst into a thousand pieces.

To him, who constantly used that sort of Venice glass, which had the quality of breaking, upon receiving poisoned liquor, a suspicion, that some of his guests had endeavoured to betray him, instantly occurred, and he ordered all the gates to be closed, drew his sword, and, looking round on them, who stood in silent amazement, exclaimed, "Here is a traitor among us; let those, that are innocent, assist in discovering the guilty."

Indignation flashed from the eyes of the cavaliers, who all drew their swords; and
 Madame

Madame Montoni, terrified at what might ensue, was hastening from the hall, when her husband commanded her to stay; but his further words could not now be distinguished, for the voice of every person rose together. His order, that all the servants should appear, was at length obeyed, and they declared their ignorance of any deceit—a protestation which could not be believed; for it was evident, that, as Montoni's liquor, and his only, had been poisoned, a deliberate design had been formed against his life, which could not have been carried so far towards its accomplishment, without the connivance of the servant, who had the care of the wine ewers.

This man, with another, whose face betrayed either the consciousness of guilt, or the fear of punishment, Montoni ordered to be chained instantly, and confined in a strong room, which had formerly been used as a prison. Thither, likewise, he would have sent all his guests, had he not foreseen the consequence of so bold and unjustifiable

a pro-

a proceeding. As to those, therefore, he contented himself with swearing, that no man should pass the gates, till this extraordinary affair had been investigated, and then sternly bade his wife retire to her apartment, whither he suffered Emily to attend her.

In about half an hour, he followed to the dressing-room; and Emily observed, with horror, his dark countenance and quivering lip, and heard him denounce vengeance on her aunt.

“It will avail you nothing,” said he to his wife, “to deny the fact; I have proof of your guilt. Your only chance of mercy rests on a full confession;—there is nothing to hope from fullness, or falsehood; your accomplice has confessed all.”

Emily’s fainting spirits were roused by astonishment, as she heard her aunt accused of a crime so atrocious, and she could not, for a moment, admit the possibility of her guilt. Meanwhile Madame Montoni’s agitation did not permit her to reply; alternately

nately her complexion varied from livid paleness to a crimson flush; and she trembled,—but, whether with fear, or with indignation, it were difficult to decide.

“Spare your words,” said Montoni, seeing her about to speak, “your countenance makes full confession of your crime.—You shall be instantly removed to the east turret.”

“This accusation,” said Madame Montoni, speaking with difficulty, “is used only as an excuse for your cruelty; I disdain to reply to it. You do not believe me guilty.”

“Signor!” said Emily solemnly, “this dreadful charge, I would answer with my life, is false. Nay, Signor,” she added, observing the severity of his countenance, “this is no moment for restraint, on my part; I do not scruple to tell you, that you are deceived—most wickedly deceived, by the suggestion of some person, who aims at the ruin of my aunt:—it is impossible, that you could yourself have imagined a crime so hideous.”

Montoni,

Montoni, his lips trembling more than before, replied only, "If you value your own safety," addressing Emily, "you will be silent. I shall know how to interpret your remonstrances, should you persevere in them."

Emily raised her eyes calmly to heaven. "Here is, indeed, then, nothing to hope!" said she.

"Peace!" cried Montoni, "or you shall find there is something to fear."

He turned to his wife, who had now recovered her spirits, and who vehemently and wildly remonstrated upon this mysterious suspicion: but Montoni's rage heightened with her indignation, and Emily, dreading the event of it, threw herself between them, and clasped his knees in silence, looking up in his face with an expression, that might have softened the heart of a fiend. Whether his was hardened by a conviction of Madame Montoni's guilt, or that a bare suspicion of it made him eager to exercise vengeance, he was totally and alike

alike infensible to the distress of his wife, and to the pleading looks of Emily, whom he made no attempt to raise, but was vehemently menacing both, when he was called out of the room by some person at the door. As he shut the door, Emily heard him turn the lock and take out the key; so that Madame Montoni and herself were now prisoners; and she saw that his designs became more and more terrible. Her endeavours to explain his motives for this circumstance were almost as ineffectual as those to sooth the distress of her aunt, whose innocence she could not doubt; but she, at length, accounted for Montoni's readiness to suspect his wife by his own consciousness of cruelty towards her, and for the sudden violence of his present conduct against both, before even his suspicions could be completely formed, by his general eagerness to effect suddenly whatever he was led to desire and his carelessness of justice, or humanity, in accomplishing it.

Madame Montoni, after some time, again
looked

looked round, in search of a possibility of escape from the castle, and conversed with Emily on the subject, who was now willing to encounter any hazard, though she forbore to encourage a hope in her aunt, which she herself did not admit. How strongly the edifice was secured, and how vigilantly guarded, she knew too well ; and trembled to commit their safety to the caprice of the servant, whose assistance they must solicit. Old Carlo was compassionate, but he seemed to be too much in his master's interest to be trusted by them ; Annette could of herself do little, and Emily knew Ludovico only from her report. At present, however, these considerations were useless, Madame Montoni and her niece being shut up from all intercourse, even with the persons, whom there might be these reasons to reject.

In the hall, confusion and tumult still reigned. Emily, as she listened anxiously to the murmur, that sounded along the

gallery, sometimes fancied she heard the clashing of swords, and, when she considered the nature of the provocation, given by Montoni, and his impetuosity, it appeared probable, that nothing less than arms would terminate the contention. Madame Montoni, having exhausted all her expressions of indignation, and Emily, hers of comfort, they remained silent, in that kind of breathless stillness, which, in nature, often succeeds to the uproar of conflicting elements; a stillness, like the morning, that dawns upon the ruins of an earthquake.

An uncertain kind of terror pervaded Emily's mind; the circumstances of the past hour still came dimly and confusedly to her memory; and her thoughts were various and rapid, though without tumult.

From this state of waking visions she was recalled by a knocking at the chamber-door, and, enquiring who was there, heard the whispering voice of Annette.

“ Dear

“ Dear madam, let me come in, I have a great deal to say,” said the poor girl.

“ The door is locked,” answered her lady.

“ Yes, ma’am, but do pray open it.”

“ The Signor has the key,” said Madame Montoni.

“ O blessed Virgin ! what will become of us ?” exclaimed Annette.

“ Assist us to escape,” said her mistress.
“ Where is Ludovico ?”

“ Below in the hall, ma’am, amongst them all, fighting with the best of them !”

“ Fighting ! Who are fighting ?” cried Madame Montoni.

“ Why the Signor, ma’am, and all the Signors, and a great many more.”

“ Is any person much hurt ?” said Emily, in a tremulous voice. “ Hurt ! Yes, ma’am-felle,—there they lie bleeding, and the swords are clashing, and—O holy saints ! Do let me in, ma’am, they are coming this way—I shall be murdered !”

“Fly!” cried Emily, “fly! we cannot open the door.”

Annette repeated, that they were coming, and in the same moment fled.

“Be calm, madam,” said Emily, turning to her aunt, “I entreat you be calm, I am not frightened—not frightened in the least, do not you be alarmed.”

“You can scarcely support yourself,” replied her aunt; “Merciful God! what is it they mean to do with us?”

“They come, perhaps, to liberate us,” said Emily, “Signor Montoni perhaps is—is conquered.”

The belief of his death gave her spirits a sudden shock, and she grew faint as she saw him in imagination, expiring at her feet.

“They are coming!” cried Madame Montoni—“I hear their steps—they are at the door!”

Emily turned her languid eyes to the door, but terror deprived her of utterance. The key sounded in the lock; the door opened,

opened, and Montoni appeared, followed by three ruffian-like men. "Execute your orders," said he, turning to them, and pointing to his wife, who shrieked, but was immediately carried from the room; while Emily sunk, senseless, on a couch, by which she had endeavoured to support herself. When she recovered, she was alone, and recollected only, that Madame Montoni had been there, together with some unconnected particulars of the preceding transaction, which were, however, sufficient to renew all her terror. She looked wildly round the apartment, as if in search of some means of intelligence, concerning her aunt, while neither her own danger, or an idea of escaping from the room, immediately occurred.

When her recollection was more complete, she raised herself and went, but with only a faint hope, to examine whether the door was unfastened. It was so, and she then stepped timidly out into the gallery, but paused there, uncertain which way she

should proceed. Her first wish was to gather some information, as to her aunt, and she, at length, turned her steps to go to the lesser hall, where Annette and the other servants usually waited.

Every where, as she passed, she heard, from a distance, the uproar of contention, and the figures and faces, which she met, hurrying along the passages, struck her mind with dismay. Emily might now have appeared, like an angel of light, encompassed by fiends. At length, she reached the lesser hall, which was silent and deserted, but, panting for breath, she sat down to recover herself. The total stillness of this place was as awful as the tumult, from which she had escaped: but she had now time to recall her scattered thoughts, to remember her personal danger, and to consider of some means of safety. She perceived, that it was useless to seek Madame Montoni, through the wide extent and intricacies of the castle, now, too, when every avenue seemed to be beset by ruffians; in this hall she could not
 resolve

resolve to stay, for she knew not how soon it might become their place of rendezvous; and, though she wished to go to her chamber, she dreaded again to encounter them on the way.

Thus she sat, trembling and hesitating, when a distant murmur broke on the silence, and grew louder and louder, till she distinguished voices and steps approaching. She then rose to go, but the sounds came along the only passage, by which she could depart, and she was compelled to await in the hall, the arrival of the persons, whose steps she heard. As these advanced, she distinguished groans, and then saw a man borne slowly along by four others. Her spirits faltered at the sight, and she leaned against the wall for support. The bearers, meanwhile, entered the hall, and, being too busily occupied to detain, or even notice Emily, she attempted to leave it, but her strength failed, and she again sat down on the bench. A damp chillness came over her; her sight became confused; she knew

not what had passed, or where she was, yet the groans of the wounded person still vibrated on her heart. In a few moments, the tide of life seemed again to flow; she began to breathe more freely, and her senses revived. She had not fainted, nor had ever totally lost her consciousness, but had contrived to support herself on the bench; still without courage to turn her eyes upon the unfortunate object, which remained near her, and about whom the men were yet too much engaged to attend to her.

When her strength returned, she rose, and was suffered to leave the hall, though her anxiety, having produced some vain enquiries, concerning Madame Montoni, had thus made a discovery of herself. Towards her chamber she now hastened, as fast as her steps would bear her, for she still perceived, upon her passage, the sounds of confusion at a distance, and she endeavoured, by taking her way through some obscure rooms, to avoid encountering the persons, whose looks had terrified her before,

fore, as well as those parts of the castle, where the tumult might still rage.

At length, she reached her chamber, and, having secured the door of the corridor, felt herself, for a moment, in safety. A profound stillness reigned in this remote apartment, which not even the faint murmur of the most distant sounds now reached. She sat down, near one of the casements, and, as she gazed on the mountain-view beyond, the deep repose of its beauty struck her with all the force of contrast, and she could scarcely believe herself so near a scene of savage discord. The contending elements seemed to have retired from their natural spheres, and to have collected themselves into the minds of men, for there alone the tempest now reigned.

Emily tried to tranquillize her spirits, but anxiety made her constantly listen for some sound, and often look out upon the ramparts, where all, however, was lonely and still. As a sense of her own immediate danger had decreased, her apprehension con-

cerning Madame Montoni heightened, who, she remembered, had been fiercely threatened with confinement in the east turret, and it was possible, that her husband had satisfied his present vengeance with this punishment. She, therefore, determined, when night should return, and the inhabitants of the castle should be asleep, to explore the way to the turret, which, as the direction it stood in was mentioned, appeared not very difficult to be done. She knew, indeed, that although her aunt might be there, she could afford her no effectual assistance, but it might give her some comfort even to know, that she was discovered, and to hear the sound of her niece's voice; for herself, any certainty, concerning Madame Montoni's fate, appeared more tolerable, than this exhausting suspense.

Meanwhile, Annette did not appear, and Emily was surprised, and somewhat alarmed for her, whom, in the confusion of the late scene, various accidents might have befallen, and it was improbable, that she would

have failed to come to her apartment, unless something unfortunate had happened.

Thus the hours passed in solitude, in silence, and in anxious conjecturing. Being not once disturbed by a message, or a sound, it appeared, that Montoni had wholly forgotten her, and it gave her some comfort to find, that she could be so unnoticed. She endeavoured to withdraw her thoughts from the anxiety, that preyed upon them, but they refused controul; she could neither read, or draw, and the tones of her lute were so utterly discordant with the present state of her feelings, that she could not endure them for a moment.

The sun, at length, set behind the western mountains; his fiery beams faded from the clouds, and then a dun melancholy purple drew over them, and gradually involved the features of the country below. Soon after, the sentinels passed on the rampart to commence the watch.

Twilight had now spread its gloom over every object; the dismal obscurity of her

chamber recalled fearful thoughts, but she remembered, that to procure a light she must pass through a great extent of the castle, and, above all, through the halls, where she had already experienced so much horror. Darkness, indeed, in the present state of her spirits, made silence and solitude terrible to her; it would also prevent the possibility of her finding her way to the turret, and condemn her to remain in suspense, concerning the fate of her aunt; yet she dared not to venture forth for a lamp.

Continuing at the casement, that she might catch the last lingering gleam of evening, a thousand vague images of fear floated on her fancy. "What if some of these ruffians," said she, "should find out the private stair-case, and in the darkness of night steal into my chamber!" Then, recollecting the mysterious inhabitant of the neighbouring apartment, her terror changed its object. "He is not a prisoner," said she, "though he remains in one chamber,
for

for Montoni did not fasten the door, when he left it; the unknown person himself did this; it is certain, therefore, he can come out when he pleases."

She paused, for, notwithstanding the terrors of darkness, she considered it to be very improbable, whoever he was, that he could have any interest in intruding upon her retirement; and again the subject of her emotion changed, when, remembering her nearness to the chamber, where the veil had formerly disclosed a dreadful spectacle, she doubted whether some passage might not communicate between it and the insecure door of the stair-case.

It was now entirely dark, and she left the casement. As she sat with her eyes fixed on the hearth, she thought she perceived there a spark of light; it twinkled and disappeared, and then again was visible. At length, with much care, she fanned the embers of a wood fire, that had been lighted in the morning, into flame, and, having communicated it to a lamp, which always stood

stood in her room, felt a satisfaction not to be conceived, without a review of her situation. Her first care was to guard the door of the stair-case, for which purpose she placed against it all the furniture she could move, and she was thus employed, for some time, at the end of which she had another instance how much more oppressive misfortune is to the idle, than to the busy; for, having then leisure to think over all the circumstances of her present afflictions, she imagined a thousand evils for futurity, and these real and ideal subjects of distress alike wounded her mind.

Thus heavily moved the hours till midnight, when she counted the fullen notes of the great clock, as they rolled along the rampart, unmingled with any sound, except the distant foot-fall of a sentinel, who came to relieve guard. She now thought she might venture towards the turret, and, having gently opened the chamber door to examine the corridor, and to listen if any person was stirring in the castle, found all
around

around in perfect stillness. Yet no sooner had she left the room, than she perceived a light flash on the walls of the corridor, and, without waiting to see by whom it was carried, she shrunk back, and closed her door. No one approaching, she conjectured, that it was Montoni going to pay his midnight visit to her unknown neighbour, and she determined to wait, till he should have retired to his own apartment.

When the chimes had tolled another half hour, she once more opened the door, and, perceiving that no person was in the corridor, hastily crossed into a passage, that led along the south side of the castle towards the stair-case, whence she believed she could easily find her way to the turret. Often pausing on her way, listening apprehensively to the murmurs of the wind, and looking fearfully onward into the gloom of the long passages, she, at length, reached the stair-case; but there her perplexity began. Two passages appeared, of which she knew not how to prefer one, and was compelled,

pelled, at last, to decide by chance, rather than by circumstances. That she entered, opened first into a wide gallery, along which she passed lightly and swiftly; for the lonely aspect of the place awed her, and she started at the echo of her own steps.

On a sudden, she thought she heard a voice, and, not distinguishing from whence it came, feared equally to proceed, or to return. For some moments, she stood in an attitude of listening expectation, shrinking almost from herself and scarcely daring to look round her. The voice came again, but, though it was now near her, terror did not allow her to judge exactly whence it proceeded. She thought, however, that it was the voice of complaint, and her belief was soon confirmed by a low moaning sound, that seemed to proceed from one of the chambers, opening into the gallery. It instantly occurred to her, that Madame Montoni might be there confined, and she advanced to the door to speak, but was checked by considering, that she was, perhaps, going to com-
mit

mit herself to a stranger, who might discover her to Montoni; for, though this person, whoever it was, seemed to be in affliction, it did not follow, that he was a prisoner.

While these thoughts passed over her mind, and left her still in hesitation, the voice spoke again, and, calling "Ludovico," she then perceived it to be that of Annette; on which, no longer hesitating, she went in joy to answer her.

"Ludovico!" cried Annette, sobbing—
"Ludovico!"

"It is I," said Emily, trying to open the door. "How came you here? Who shut you up?"

"Ludovico!" repeated Annette—"O Ludovico!"

"It is not Ludovico, it is I—Mademoiselle Emily."

Annette ceased sobbing, and was silent.

"If you can open the door, let me in," said Emily, "here is no person to hurt you."

"Ludo-

“ Ludovico!—O, Ludovico!” cried Annette.

Emily now lost her patience, and, her fear of being overheard increasing, she was even nearly about to leave the door, when she considered, that Annette might, possibly, know something of the situation of Madame Montoni, or direct her to the turret. At length, she obtained a reply, though little satisfactory, to her questions, for Annette knew nothing of Madame Montoni, and only conjured Emily to tell her what was become of Ludovico. Of him she had no information to give, and she again asked who had shut Annette up.

“ Ludovico,” said the poor girl, “ Ludovico shut me up. When I ran away from the dressing-room door to-day, I went I scarcely knew where, for safety; and, in this gallery, here, I met Ludovico, who hurried me into this chamber, and locked me up to keep me out of harm, as he said. But he was in such a hurry himself, he hardly spoke ten words, but he told me he would

would come, and let me out, when all was quiet, and he took away the key with him. Now all these hours are passed, and I have neither seen, or heard a word of him ; they have murdered him—I know they have !”

Emily suddenly remembered the wounded person, whom she had seen borne into the servants' hall, and she scarcely doubted, that he was Ludovico, but she concealed the circumstance from Annette, and endeavoured to comfort her. Then, impatient to learn something of her aunt, she again enquired the way to the turret.

“ O ! you are not going, ma'amselle,” said Annette, “ for Heaven's sake, do not go, and leave me here by myself.”

“ Nay, Annette, you do not think I can wait in the gallery all night,” replied Emily. “ Direct me to the turret ; in the morning I will endeavour to release you.”

“ O holy Mary !” exclaimed Annette, “ am I to stay here by myself all night ! I shall be frightened out of my senses, and I shall die of hunger ; I have had nothing to eat since dinner !”

Emily could scarcely forbear smiling at the heterogeneous distresses of Annette, though she sincerely pitied them, and said what she could to sooth her. At length, she obtained something like a direction to the east turret, and quitted the door, from whence, after many intricacies and perplexities, she reached the steep and winding stairs of the turret, at the foot of which she stopped to rest, and to re-animate her courage with a sense of her duty. As she surveyed this dismal place, she perceived a door on the opposite side of the stair-case, and, anxious to know whether it would lead her to Madame Montoni, she tried to undraw the bolts, which fastened it. A fresher air came to her face, as she unclosed the door, which opened upon the east rampart, and the sudden current had nearly extinguished her light, which she now removed to a distance; and again, looking out upon the obscure terrace, she perceived only the faint outline of the walls and of some towers, while, above, heavy clouds, borne along the wind, seemed to mingle with the stars,

stars, and wrap the night in thicker darkness. As she gazed, now willing to defer the moment of certainty, from which she expected only confirmation of evil, a distant footstep reminded her, that she might be observed by the men on watch, and, hastily closing the door, she took her lamp, and passed up the stair-case. Trembling came upon her, as she ascended through the gloom. To her melancholy fancy this seemed to be a place of death, and the chilling silence, that reigned, confirmed its character. Her spirits faltered. "Perhaps," said she, "I am come hither only to learn a dreadful truth, or to witness some horrible spectacle; I feel that my senses would not survive such an addition of horror."

The image of her aunt murdered—murdered, perhaps, by the hand of Montoni, rose to her mind; she trembled, gasped for breath—repented that she had dared to venture hither, and checked her steps. But, after she had paused a few minutes, the consciousness

ousness of her duty returned, and she went on. Still all was silent. At length a track of blood, upon a stair, caught her eye; and instantly she perceived, that the wall and several other steps were stained. She paused, again struggled to support herself, and the lamp almost fell from her trembling hand. Still no sound was heard, no living being seemed to inhabit the turret; a thousand times she wished herself again in her chamber; dreaded to enquire farther—dreaded to encounter some horrible spectacle, and yet could not resolve, now that she was so near the termination of her efforts, to desist from them. Having again recollected courage to proceed, after ascending about half way up the turret, she came to another door, but here again she stopped in hesitation; listened for sounds within, and then, summoning all her resolution, unclosed it, and entered a chamber, which, as her lamp shot its feeble rays through the darkness, seemed to exhibit only dew-stained and deserted walls. As she stood examining it, in fearful
expec-

expectation of discovering the remains of her unfortunate aunt, she perceived something lying in an obscure corner of the room, and, struck with an horrible conviction, she became, for an instant, motionless and nearly insensible. Then, with a kind of desperate resolution, she hurried towards the object that excited her terror, when, perceiving the clothes of some person, on the floor, she caught hold of them, and found in her grasp the old uniform of a soldier, beneath which appeared a heap of pikes and other arms. Scarcely daring to trust her sight, she continued, for some moments, to gaze on the object of her late alarm, and then left the chamber, so much comforted and occupied by the conviction, that her aunt was not there, that she was going to descend the turret, without enquiring farther; when, on turning to do so, she observed upon some steps on the second flight an appearance of blood, and remembering, that there was yet another chamber to be explored, she again followed the windings

windings of the ascent. Still, as she ascended, the track of blood glared upon the stairs.

It led her to the door of a landing-place, that terminated them, but she was unable to follow it farther. Now that she was so near the sought-for certainty, she dreaded to know it, even more than before, and had not fortitude sufficient to speak, or to attempt opening the door.

Having listened, in vain, for some sound, that might confirm, or destroy her fears, she, at length, laid her hand on the lock, and, finding it fastened, called on Madame Montoni; but only a chilling silence ensued.

“She is dead!” she cried,—“murdered!—her blood is on the stairs!”

Emily grew very faint; could support herself no longer, and had scarcely presence of mind to set down the lamp, and place herself on a step.

When her recollection returned, she spoke again at the door, and again attempted to

open it, and, having lingered for some time, without receiving any answer, or hearing a sound, she descended the turret, and, with all the swiftness her feebleness would permit, sought her own apartment.

As she turned into the corridor, the door of a chamber opened, from whence Montoni came forth; but Emily, more terrified than ever to behold him, shrunk back into the passage soon enough to escape being noticed, and heard him close the door, which she had perceived was the same she formerly observed. Having here listened to his departing steps, till their faint sound was lost in distance, she ventured to her apartment, and, securing it once again, retired to her bed, leaving the lamp burning on the hearth. But sleep was fled from her harassed mind, to which images of horror alone occurred. She endeavoured to think it possible, that Madame Montoni had not been taken to the turret; but, when she recollected the former menaces of her husband and the terrible spirit of vengeance, which he had

displayed on a late occasion; when she remembered his general character, the looks of the men, who had forced Madame Montoni from her apartment, and the written traces on the stairs of the turret—she could not doubt, that her aunt had been carried thither, and could scarcely hope, that she had not been carried to be murdered.

The grey of morning had long dawned through her casements, before Emily closed her eyes in sleep; when wearied nature, at length, yielded her a respite from suffering.

C H A P. XI.

“ Who rears the bloody hand ? ”

SAYER.

EMILY remained in her chamber, on the following morning, without receiving any notice from Montoni, or seeing a human being, except the armed men, who sometimes passed on the terrace below. Having tasted no food since the dinner of the preceding day, extreme faintness made her feel the necessity of quitting the asylum of her apartment to obtain refreshment, and she was also very anxious to procure liberty for Annette. Willing, however, to defer venturing forth, as long as possible, and considering, whether she should apply to Montoni, or to the compassion of some other person, her excessive anxiety concern-

ing her aunt, at length, overcame her abhorrence of his presence, and she determined to go to him, and to entreat, that he would suffer her to see Madame Montoni.

Meanwhile, it was too certain, from the absence of Annette, that some accident had befallen Ludovico, and that she was still in confinement; Emily, therefore, resolved also to visit the chamber, where she had spoken to her, on the preceding night, and, if the poor girl was yet there, to inform Montoni of her situation.

It was near noon, before she ventured from her apartment, and went first to the south gallery, whither she passed without meeting a single person, or hearing a sound, except, now and then, the echo of a distant footstep.

It was unnecessary to call Annette, whose lamentations were audible upon the first approach to the gallery, and who, bewailing her own and Ludovico's fate, told Emily, that she should certainly be starved

to death, if she was not let out immediately. Emily replied, that she was going to beg her release of Montoni; but the terrors of hunger now yielded to those of the Signor, and, when Emily left her, she was loudly entreating, that her place of refuge might be concealed from him.

As Emily drew near the great hall, the sounds she heard and the people she met in the passages renewed her alarm. The latter, however, were peaceable, and did not interrupt her, though they looked earnestly at her, as she passed, and sometimes spoke. On crossing the hall towards the cedar room, where Montoni usually sat, she perceived, on the pavement, fragments of swords, some tattered garments stained with blood, and almost expected to have seen among them a dead body; but from such a spectacle she was, at present, spared. As she approached the room, the sound of several voices issued from within, and a dread of appearing before many strangers, as well as of irritating Montoni by such an in-

trusion, made her pause and falter from her purpose. She looked up through the long arcades of the hall, in search of a servant, who might bear a message, but no one appeared, and the urgency of what she had to request made her still linger near the door. The voices within were not in contention, though she distinguished those of several of the guests of the preceding day; but still her resolution failed, whenever she would have tapped at the door, and she had determined to walk in the hall, till some person should appear, who might call Montoni from the room, when, as she turned from the door, it was suddenly opened by himself. Emily trembled, and was confused, while he almost started with surprise, and all the terrors of his countenance unfolded themselves. She forgot all she would have said, and neither enquired for her aunt, or entreated for Annette, but stood silent and embarrassed.

After closing the door he reproved her for a meanness, of which she had not been guilty,
and

and sternly questioned her what she had overheard; an accusation, which revived her recollection so far, that she assured him she had not come thither with an intention to listen to his conversation, but to entreat his compassion for her aunt, and for Annette. Montoni seemed to doubt this assertion, for he regarded her with a scrutinizing look; and the doubt evidently arose from no trifling interest. Emily then further explained herself, and concluded with entreating him to inform her, where her aunt was placed, and to permit, that she might visit her; but he looked upon her only with a malignant smile, which instantaneously confirmed her worst fears for her aunt, and, at that moment, she had not courage to renew her entreaties.

“For Annette,” said he,—“if you go to Carlo, he will release the girl; the foolish fellow, who shut her up, died yesterday.” Emily shuddered.—“But my aunt, Signor”—said she, “O tell me of my aunt!”

“ She is taken care of,” replied Montoni hastily, “ I have no time to answer idle questions.”

He would have passed on, but Emily, in a voice of agony, that could not be wholly resisted, conjured him to tell her, where Madame Montoni was ; while he paused, and she anxiously watched his countenance, a trumpet sounded, and, in the next moment, she heard the heavy gates of the portal open, and then the clattering of horses' hoofs in the court, with the confusion of many voices. She stood for a moment hesitating whether she should follow Montoni, who, at the sound of the trumpet, had passed through the hall, and, turning her eyes whence it came, she saw through the door, that opened beyond a long perspective of arches into the courts, a party of horsemen, whom she judged, as well as the distance and her embarrassment would allow, to be the same she had seen depart, a few days before. But she staid not to scrutinize, for, when the trumpet sounded again,

again, the chevaliers rushed out of the cedar room, and men came running into the hall from every quarter of the castle. Emily once more hurried for shelter to her own apartment. Thither she was still pursued by images of horror. She re-considered Montoni's manner and words, when he had spoken of his wife, and they served only to confirm her most terrible suspicions. Tears refused any longer to relieve her distress, and she had sat for a considerable time absorbed in thought, when a knocking at the chamber door aroused her, on opening which she found old Carlo.

“ Dear young lady,” said he, “ I have been so flurried, I never once thought of you till just now. I have brought you some fruit and wine, and I am sure you must stand in need of them by this time.”

“ Thank you, Carlo,” said Emily, “ this is very good of you. Did the Signor remind you of me ?”

“ No, Signora,” replied Carlo, “ his

Excellenza has business enough on his hands." Emily then renewed her enquiries, concerning Madame Montoni, but Carlo had been employed at the other end of the castle, during the time, that she was removed, and he had heard nothing since, concerning her.

While he spoke, Emily looked steadily at him, for she scarcely knew whether he was really ignorant, or concealed his knowledge of the truth from a fear of offending his master. To several questions, concerning the contentions of yesterday, he gave very limited answers; but told, that the disputes were now amicably settled, and that the Signor believed himself to have been mistaken in his suspicions of his guests. "The fighting was about that, Signora," said Carlo; "but I trust I shall never see such another day in this castle, though strange things are about to be done."

On her enquiring his meaning, "Ah, Signora!" added he, "it is not for me to betray secrets, or tell all I think, but time will tell."

She then desired him to release Annette, and, having described the chamber in which the poor girl was confined, he promised to obey her immediately, and was departing, when she remembered to ask who were the persons just arrived. Her late conjecture was right ; it was Verezzi, with his party.

Her spirits were somewhat soothed by this short conversation with Carlo ; for, in her present circumstances, it afforded some comfort to hear the accents of compassion, and to meet the look of sympathy.

An hour passed before Annette appeared, who then came weeping and sobbing. “ O Ludovico—Ludovico !” cried she.

“ My poor Annette !” said Emily, and made her sit down.

“ Who could have foreseen this, ma’am-felle ? O miserable, wretched, day—that ever I should live to see it !” and she continued to moan and lament, till Emily thought it necessary to check her excess of grief. “ We are continually losing

“ dear friends by death,” said she, with a sigh, that came from her heart. “ We must submit to the will of Heaven—our tears, alas ! cannot recall the dead !”

Annette took the handkerchief from her face.

“ You will meet Ludovico in a better world, I hope,” added Emily.

“ Yes—yes,—ma’amfelle,” sobbed Annette, “ but I hope I shall meet him again in this—though he is so wounded !”

“ Wounded !” exclaimed Emily, “ does he live ?”

“ Yes, ma’am, but—but he has a terrible wound, and could not come to let me out. They thought him dead, at first, and he has not been rightly himself, till within this hour.”

“ Well, Annette, I rejoice to hear he lives.”

“ Lives ! Holy Saints ! why he will not die, surely !”

Emily said she hoped not, but this expression of hope Annette thought implied
fear,

fear, and her own increased in proportion, as Emily endeavoured to encourage her. To enquiries, concerning Madame Montoni, she could give no satisfactory answers.

“ I quite forgot to ask among the servants, ma’amfelle,” said she, “ for I could think of nobody but poor Ludovico.”

Annette’s grief was now somewhat assuaged, and Emily sent her to make enquiries, concerning her lady, of whom, however, she could obtain no intelligence, some of the people she spoke with being really ignorant of her fate, and others having probably received orders to conceal it.

This day passed with Emily in continued grief and anxiety for her aunt; but she was unmolested by any notice from Montoni; and, now that Annette was liberated, she obtained food, without exposing herself to danger, or impertinence.

Two following days passed in the same manner, unmarked by any occurrence, during

during which she obtained no information of Madame Montoni. On the evening of the second, having dismissed Annette, and retired to bed, her mind became haunted by the most dismal images, such as her long anxiety, concerning her aunt, suggested; and, unable to forget herself, for a moment, or to vanquish the phantoms, that tormented her, she rose from her bed, and went to one of the casements of her chamber, to breathe a freer air.

All without was silent and dark, unless that could be called light, which was only the faint glimmer of the stars, shewing imperfectly the outline of the mountains, the western towers of the castle and the ramparts below, where a solitary sentinel was pacing. What an image of repose did this scene present! The fierce and terrible passions, too, which so often agitated the inhabitants of this edifice, seemed now hushed in sleep;—those mysterious workings, that rouse the elements of man's nature into tempest—were calm. Emily's
heart

heart was not so; but her sufferings, though deep, partook of the gentle character of her mind. Hers was a silent anguish, weeping, yet enduring; not the wild energy of passion, inflaming imagination, bearing down the barriers of reason and living in a world of its own.

The air refreshed her, and she continued at the casement, looking on the shadowy scene, over which the planets burned with a clear light, amid the deep blue æther, as they silently moved in their destined course. She remembered how often she had gazed on them with her dear father, how often he had pointed out their way in the heavens, and explained their laws; and these reflections led to others, which, in an almost equal degree, awakened her grief and astonishment.

They brought a retrospect of all the strange and mournful events, which had occurred since she lived in peace with her parents. And to Emily, who had been so tenderly

tenderly educated, so tenderly loved, who once knew only goodness and happiness—to her, the late events and her present situation—in a foreign land—in a remote castle—surrounded by vice and violence—seemed more like the visions of a disordered imagination, than the circumstances of truth. She wept to think of what her parents would have suffered, could they have foreseen the events of her future life.

While she raised her streaming eyes to heaven, she observed the same planet, which she had seen in Languedoc, on the night, preceding her father's death, rise above the eastern towers of the castle, while she remembered the conversation, which had passed, concerning the probable state of departed souls; remembered, also, the solemn music she had heard, and to which the tenderness of her spirits had, in spite of her reason, given a superstitious meaning. At these recollections she wept again, and continued musing, when suddenly the notes of sweet music passed on
the

the air. A superstitious dread stole over her; she stood listening, for some moments, in trembling expectation, and then endeavoured to recollect her thoughts, and to reason herself into composure; but human reason cannot establish her laws on subjects, lost in the obscurity of imagination, any more than the eye can ascertain the form of objects, that only glimmer through the dimness of night.

Her surprise, on hearing such soothing and delicious sounds, was, at least, justifiable; for it was long—very long, since she had listened to any thing like melody. The fierce trumpet and the shrill fife were the only instruments she had heard, since her arrival, at Udolpho.

When her mind was somewhat more composed, she tried to ascertain from what quarter the sounds proceeded, and thought they came from below; but whether from a room of the castle, or from the terrace, she could not with certainty judge. Fear and surprise now yielded to the enchantment

ment of a strain, that floated on the silent night, with the most soft and melancholy sweetness. Suddenly, it seemed removed to a distance, trembled faintly, and then entirely ceased.

She continued to listen, sunk in that pleasing repose, which soft music leaves on the mind—but it came no more. Upon this strange circumstance her thoughts were long engaged, for strange it certainly was to hear music at midnight, when every inhabitant of the castle had long since retired to rest, and in a place, where nothing like harmony had been heard before, probably, for many years. Long-suffering had made her spirits peculiarly sensible to terror, and liable to be affected by the illusions of superstition.—It now seemed to her, as if her dead father had spoken to her in that strain, to inspire her with comfort and confidence, on the subject, which had then occupied her mind. Yet reason told her, that this was a wild conjecture, and she was inclined to dismiss it; but, with

with the inconsistency so natural, when imagination guides the thoughts, she then wavered towards a belief as wild. She remembered the singular event, connected with the castle, which had given it into the possession of its present owner; and, when she considered the mysterious manner, in which its late possessor had disappeared, and that she had never since been heard of, her mind was impressed with an high degree of solemn awe; so that, though there appeared no clue to connect that event with the late music, she was inclined fancifully to think they had some relation to each other. At this conjecture, a sudden chillness ran through her frame; she looked fearfully upon the duskiness of her chamber, and the dead silence, that prevailed there, heightened to her fancy its gloomy aspect.

At length, she left the casement, but her steps faltered, as she approached the bed, and she stopped and looked round. The single lamp, that burned in her spacious

cious

scious chamber, was expiring; for a moment, she shrunk from the darkness beyond; and then, ashamed of the weakness, which, however, she could not wholly conquer, went forward to the bed, where her mind did not soon know the foothings of sleep. She still mused on the late occurrence, and looked with anxiety to the next night, when, at the same hour, she determined to watch whether the music returned. "If those sounds were human," said she, "I shall probably hear them again."

C H A P. XII.

“ Then, oh, you blessed ministers above,
Keep me in patience ; and, in ripen'd time,
Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up
In countenance.”

SHAKESPEARE.

ANNETTE came almost breathless to Emily's apartment in the morning. “ O ma'amfelle !” said she, in broken sentences, “ what news I have to tell ! I have found out who the prisoner is—but he was no prisoner, neither ;—he that was shut up in the chamber I told you of. I must think him a ghost, forsooth !”

“ Who was the prisoner ?” enquired Emily, while her thoughts glanced back to the circumstance of the preceding night.

“ You mistake, ma'am,” said Annette ; “ he was not a prisoner, after all.”

“ Who is the person, then ?”

“ Holy Saints !” rejoined Annette ; “ How I was surpris'd ! I met him just
now,

now, on the rampart below, there. I never was so surpris'd in my life! Ah! ma'amfelle! this is a strange place! I should never have done wondering, if I was to live here an hundred years. But, as I was saying, I met him just now on the rampart, and I was thinking of nobody less than of him."

"This trifling is insupportable," said Emily; "prythee, Annette, do not torture my patience any longer."

"Nay, ma'amfelle, guesfs—guesfs who it was; it was somebody you know very well."

"I cannot guesfs," said Emily impatiently.

"Nay, ma'amfelle, I'll tell you something to guesfs by—A tall Signor, with a longish face, who walks so stately, and used to wear such a high feather in his hat; and used often to look down upon the ground, when people spoke to him; and to look at people from under his eye-brows, as it were, all so dark and frowning.

ing. You have seen him, often and often, at Venice, ma'am. Then he was so intimate with the Signor, too. And, now I think of it, I wonder what he could be afraid of in this lonely old castle, that he should shut himself up for. But he is come abroad now, for I met him on the rampart just this minute. I trembled when I saw him, for I always was afraid of him, somehow; but I determined I would not let him see it; so I went up to him, and made him a low curtesy, 'You are welcome to the castle, Signor Orfino,' said I."

"O, it was Signor Orfino, then!" said Emily.

"Yes, ma'amfelle, Signor Orfino, himself, who caused that Venetian gentleman to be killed, and has been popping about from place to place, ever since, as I hear."

"Good God!" exclaimed Emily, recovering from the shock of this intelligence; "and is *he* come to Udolpho! He does well to endeavour to conceal himself."

"Yes,

“ Yes, ma’amfelle, but if that was all, this desolate place would conceal him, without his shutting himself up in one room. Who would think of coming to look for him here? I am sure I should as soon think of going to look for any body in the other world.”

“ There is some truth in that,” said Emily, who would now have concluded it was Orfino’s music, which she had heard, on the preceding night, had she not known, that he had neither taste, or skill in the art. But, though she was unwilling to add to the number of Annette’s surprises, by mentioning the subject of her own, she enquired, whether any person in the castle played on a musical instrument?

“ O yes, ma’amfelle! there is Benedetto plays the great drum to admiration; and then, there is Launcelot the trumpeter; nay, for that matter, Ludovico himself can play on the trumpet;—but he is ill now. I remember once”——

Emily interrupted her; “ Have you
heard

heard no other music since you came to the castle—none last night?”

“ Why, did *you* hear any last night, ma’amfelle ?”

Emily evaded this question, by repeating her own.

“ Why, no, ma’am,” replied Annette ; “ I never heard any music here, I must say, but the drums and the trumpet ; and, as for last night, I did nothing but dream I saw my late lady’s ghost.”

“ Your *late lady’s*,” said Emily in a tremulous voice ; “ you have heard more, then. Tell me—tell me all, Annette, I entreat ; tell me the worst at once.”

“ Nay, ma’amfelle, you know the worst already.”

“ I know nothing,” said Emily.

“ Yes, you do, ma’amfelle ; you know, that nobody knows any thing about her ; and it is plain, therefore, she is gone, the way of the first lady of the castle—nobody ever knew any thing about her.”

Emily leaned her head upon her hand,

and was, for some time, silent ; then, telling Annette she wished to be alone, the latter left the room.

The remark of Annette had revived Emily's terrible suspicion, concerning the fate of Madame Montoni ; and she resolved to make another effort to obtain certainty on this subject, by applying to Montoni once more.

When Annette returned, a few hours after, she told Emily, that the porter of the castle wished very much to speak with her, for that he had something of importance to say ; her spirits had, however, of late been so subject to alarm, that any new circumstance excited it ; and this message from the porter, when her first surprise was over, made her look round for some lurking danger, the more suspiciously, perhaps, because she had frequently remarked the unpleasant air and countenance of this man. She now hesitated, whether to speak with him, doubting even, that this request was only a pretext to draw her into some
danger ;

danger ; but a little reflection shewed her the improbability of this, and she blushed at her weak fears.

“ I will speak to him, Annette,” said she ; “ desire him to come to the corridor immediately.”

Annette departed, and soon after returned.

“ Barnardine, ma’amfelle,” said she, “ dare not come to the corridor, lest he should be discovered, it is so far from his post ; and he dare not even leave the gates for a moment now ; but, if you will come to him at the portal, through some round-about passages he told me of, without crossing the courts, he has that to tell, which will surprize you. But you must not come through the courts, lest the Signor should see you.”

Emily, neither approving these “ round-about passages,” nor the other part of the request, now positively refused to go. “ Tell him,” said she, “ if he has any thing of consequence to impart, I will

hear him in the corridor, whenever he has an opportunity of coming thither."

Annette went to deliver this message, and was absent a considerable time. When she returned, "It won't do, ma'amfelle," said she. "Barnardine has been considering all this time what can be done, for it is as much as his place is worth to leave his post now. But, if you will come to the east rampart in the dusk of the evening, he can, perhaps, steal away, and tell you all he has to say."

Emily was surprised and alarmed, at the secrecy which this man seemed to think so necessary, and hesitated whether to meet him, till, considering, that he might mean to warn her of some serious danger, she resolved to go.

"Soon after sun-set," said she, "I will be at the end of the east rampart. But then the watch will be set," she added, recollecting herself, "and how can Barnardine pass unobserved?"

"That is just what I said to him, ma'am,

ma'am, and he answered me, that he had the key of the gate, at the end of the rampart, that leads towards the courts, and could let himself through that way; and as for the sentinels, there were none at this end of the terrace, because the place is guarded enough by the high walls of the castle, and the east turret; and he said those at the other end were too far off to see him, if it was pretty duskyish."

"Well," said Emily, "I must hear what he has to tell; and, therefore, desire you will go with me to the terrace, this evening."

"He desired it might be pretty duskyish, ma'amfelle," repeated Annette, "because of the watch."

Emily paused, and then said she would be on the terrace, an hour after sun-set;—"and tell Barnardine," she added, "to be punctual to the time; for that I, also, may be observed by Signor Montoni. Where is the Signor? I would speak with him."

"He is in the cedar chamber, ma'am,

counselling with the other Signors. He is going to give them a sort of a treat to-day, to make up for what passed at the last, I suppose; the people are all very busy in the kitchen."

Emily now enquired, if Montoni expected any new guests? and Annette believed that he did not. "Poor Ludovico!" added she, "he would be as merry as the best of them, if he was well; but he may recover yet. Count Morano was wounded as bad, as he, and he is got well again, and is gone back to Venice."

"Is he so?" said Emily, "when did you hear this?"

"I heard it, last night, ma'amfelle, but I forgot to tell it."

Emily asked some further questions, and then, desiring Annette would observe and inform her, when Montoni was alone, the girl went to deliver her message to Barnardine.

Montoni was, however, so much engaged, during the whole day, that Emily had
had

had no opportunity of seeking a release from her terrible suspense, concerning her aunt. Annette was employed in watching his steps, and in attending upon Ludovico, whom she, assisted by Caterina, nursed with the utmost care; and Emily was, of course, left much alone. Her thoughts dwelt often on the message of the porter, and were employed in conjecturing the subject, that occasioned it, which she sometimes imagined concerned the fate of Madame Montoni; at others, that it related to some personal danger, which threatened herself. The cautious secrecy which Barnardine observed in his conduct, inclined her to believe the latter.

As the hour of appointment drew near, her impatience increased. At length, the sun set; she heard the passing steps of the sentinels going to their posts; and waited only for Annette to accompany her to the terrace, who, soon after, came, and they descended together. When Emily expressed apprehensions of meeting Montoni,

or some of his guests, "O, there is no fear of that, ma'amfelle," said Annette, "they are all set in to feasting yet, and that Barnardine knows."

They reached the first terrace, where the sentinels demanded who passed; and Emily, having answered, walked on to the east rampart, at the entrance of which they were again stopped; and, having again replied, were permitted to proceed. But Emily did not like to expose herself to the discretion of these men, at such an hour; and, impatient to withdraw from the situation, she stepped hastily on in search of Barnardine. He was not yet come. She leaned pensively on the wall of the rampart, and waited for him. The gloom of twilight sat deep on the surrounding objects, blending in soft confusion the valley, the mountains, and the woods, whose tall heads, stirred by the evening breeze, gave the only sounds, that stole on silence, except a faint, faint chorus of distant voices, that arose from within the castle.

“ What

“ What voices are those ? ” said Emily, as she fearfully listened.

“ It is only the Signor and his guests, carousing, ” replied Annette.

“ Good God ! ” thought Emily, “ can this man’s heart be so gay, when he has made another being so wretched ; if, indeed, my aunt is yet suffered to feel her wretchedness ? O ! whatever are my own sufferings, may my heart never, never be hardened against those of others ! ”

She looked up, with a sensation of horror, to the east turret, near which she then stood ; a light glimmered through the grates of the lower chamber, but those of the upper one were dark. Presently, she perceived a person moving with a lamp across the lower room ; but this circumstance revived no hope, concerning Madame Montoni, whom she had vainly sought in that apartment, which had appeared to contain only soldiers’ accoutrements. Emily, however, determined to attempt the outer door of the turret, as soon as Barnardine should with-

draw ; and, if it was unfastened, to make another effort to discover her aunt.

The moments passed, but still Barnardine did not appear ; and Emily, becoming uneasy, hesitated whether to wait any longer. She would have sent Annette to the portal to hasten him, but feared to be left alone, for it was now almost dark, and a melancholy streak of red, that still lingered in the west, was the only vestige of departed day. The strong interest, however, which Barnardine's message had awakened, overcame other apprehensions, and still detained her.

While she was conjecturing with Annette what could thus occasion his absence, they heard a key turn in the lock of the gate near them, and presently saw a man advancing. It was Barnardine, of whom Emily hastily enquired what he had to communicate, and desired, that he would tell her quickly, " for I am chilled with this evening air," said she.

" You must dismiss your maid, lady,"
said

said the man in a voice, the deep tone of which shocked her, " what I have to tell is to you only."

Emily, after some hesitation, desired Annette to withdraw to a little distance. " Now, my friend, what would you say ?"

He was silent a moment, as if considering, and then said,——

" That which would cost me my place, at least, if it came to the Signor's ears. You must promise, lady, that nothing shall ever make you tell a syllable of the matter ; I have been trusted in this affair, and, if it was known, that I betrayed my trust, my life, perhaps, might answer it. But I was concerned for you, lady, and I resolved to tell you." He paused.——

Emily thanked him, assured him that he might repose on her discretion, and entreated him to dispatch.

" Annette told us in the hall how unhappy you was about Signora Mon-

toni, and how much you wished to know what was become of her."

"Most true," said Emily eagerly, "and you can inform me. I conjure you tell me the worst, without hesitation." She rested her trembling arm upon the wall.

"I can tell you," said Barnardine, and paused.—

Emily had no power to enforce her entreaties.

"I *can* tell you," resumed Barnardine, —"but"——

"But what?" exclaimed Emily, recovering her resolution.

"Here I am, ma'amfelle," said Annette, who, having heard the eager tone, in which Emily pronounced these words, came running towards her.

"Retire!" said Barnardine, sternly; "you are not wanted;" and, as Emily said nothing, Annette obeyed.

"I *can* tell you," repeated the porter, —"but I know not how—you was afflicted before."——

“ I am prepared for the worst, my friend,” said Emily, in a firm and solemn voice. “ I can support any certainty better than this suspense.”

“ Well, Signora, if that is the case, you shall hear.—You know, I suppose, that the Signor and his lady used sometimes to disagree. It is none of my concerns to enquire what it was about, but I believe you know it was so.”

“ Well,” said Emily, “ proceed.”

“ The Signor, it seems, had lately been very wrath against her. I saw all, and heard all,—a great deal more than people thought for ; but it was none of my business, so I said nothing. A few days ago, the Signor sent for me. ‘ Barnardine,’ says he, ‘ you are—an honest man, I think I can trust you.’ I assured his *Excellenza* that he could. ‘ Then,’ says he, as near as I can remember, ‘ I have an affair in hand, which I want you to assist me in.’—Then he told me what I was to do ; but
that

that I shall say nothing about—it concerned only the Signora.”

“ O Heavens !” exclaimed Emily—
“ what have you done ?”

Barnardine hesitated, and was silent.

“ What fiend could tempt him, or you, to such an act !” cried Emily, chilled with horror, and scarcely able to support her fainting spirits.

“ It was a fiend,” said Barnardine in a gloomy tone of voice. They were now both silent ;—Emily had not courage to enquire further, and Barnardine seemed to shrink from telling more. At length he said, “ It is of no use to think of the past ; the Signor was cruel enough, but he would be obeyed. What signified my refusing ? He would have found others, who had no scruples.”

“ You have murdered her, then !” said Emily, in a hollow and inward voice—
“ I am talking with a murderer !” Barnardine stood silent ; while Emily turned from him, and attempted to leave the place.

“ Stay, lady !” said he, “ You deserve to think so still—since you can believe me capable of such a deed.”

“ If you are innocent, tell me quickly,” said Emily, in faint accents, “ for I feel I shall not be able to hear you long.”

“ I will tell you no more,” said he, and walked away. Emily had just strength enough to bid him stay, and then to call Annette, on whose arm she leaned, and they walked slowly up the rampart, till they heard steps behind them. It was Barnardine again.

“ Send away the girl,” said he, “ and I will tell you more.”

“ She must not go,” said Emily ; “ what you have to say, she may hear.”

“ May she so, lady ?” said he. “ You shall know no more, then ;” and he was going, though slowly, when Emily’s anxiety, overcoming the resentment and fear, which the man’s behaviour had roused, she desired him to stay, and bade Annette retire.

“ The

“ The Signora is alive,” said he, “ for me. She is my prisoner, though; his *Excellenza* has shut her up in the chamber over the great gates of the court, and I have the charge of her. I was going to have told you, you might see her—but now——”

Emily, relieved from an unutterable load of anguish by this speech, had now only to ask Barnardine’s forgiveness, and to conjure, that he would let her visit her aunt.

He complied with less reluctance, than she expected, and told her, that, if she would repair, on the following night, when the Signor was retired to rest, to the postern-gate of the castle, she should, perhaps, see Madame Montoni.

Amid all the thankfulness, which Emily felt for this concession, she thought she observed a malicious triumph in his manner, when he pronounced the last words; but, in the next moment, she dismissed the thought, and, having again thanked him,

him, commended her aunt to his pity, and assured him, that she would herself reward him, and would be punctual to her appointment; she bade him good night, and retired, unobserved, to her chamber. It was a considerable time, before the tumult of joy, which Barnardine's unexpected intelligence had occasioned, allowed Emily to think with clearness, or to be conscious of the real dangers, that still surrounded Madame Montoni and herself. When this agitation subsided, she perceived, that her aunt was yet the prisoner of a man, to whose vengeance, or avarice, she might fall a sacrifice; and, when she further considered the savage aspect of the person, who was appointed to guard Madame Montoni, her doom appeared to be already sealed, for the countenance of Barnardine seemed to bear the stamp of a murderer; and, when she had looked upon it, she felt inclined to believe, that there was no deed, however black, which he might not be prevailed upon to execute. These reflections

reflections brought to her remembrance the tone of voice, in which he had promised to grant her request to see his prisoner; and she mused upon it long in uneasiness and doubt. Sometimes, she even hesitated, whether to trust herself with him at the lonely hour he had appointed; and once, and only once, it struck her, that Madame Montoni might be already murdered, and that this ruffian was appointed to decoy herself to some secret place, where her life also was to be sacrificed to the avarice of Montoni, who then would claim securely the contested estates in Languedoc. The consideration of the enormity of such guilt did, at length, relieve her from the belief of its probability, but not from all the doubts and fears, which a recollection of Barnardine's manner had occasioned. From these subjects, her thoughts, at length, passed to others; and, as the evening advanced, she remembered, with somewhat more than surprise, the music she had heard, on the preceding night, and now awaited

awaited its return, with more than curiosity.

She distinguished, till a late hour, the distant carousals of Montoni and his companions—the loud contest, the dissolute laugh and the choral song, that made the halls re-echo. At length, she heard the heavy gates of the castle shut for the night, and those sounds instantly sunk into a silence, which was disturbed only by the whispering steps of persons, passing through the galleries to their remote rooms. Emily now judging it to be about the time, when she had heard the music, on the preceding night, dismissed Annette, and gently opened the casement to watch for its return. The planet she had so particularly noticed, at the recurrence of the music, was not yet risen; but, with superstitious weakness, she kept her eyes fixed on that part of the hemisphere, where it would rise, almost expecting, that, when it appeared, the sounds would return. At length, it came, serenely bright, over the eastern towers of
the

the castle. Her heart trembled, when she perceived it, and she had scarcely courage to remain at the casement, lest the returning music should confirm her terror; and subdue the little strength she yet retained. The clock soon after struck one, and, knowing this to be about the time, when the sounds had occurred, she sat down in a chair, near the casement, and endeavoured to compose her spirits; but the anxiety of expectation yet disturbed them. Every thing, however, remained still; she heard only the solitary step of a sentinel, and the lulling murmur of the woods below, and she again leaned from the casement, and again looked, as if for intelligence, to the planet, which was now risen high above the towers.

Emily continued to listen, but no music came. "Those were surely no mortal sounds!" said she, recollecting their entrancing melody. "No inhabitant of this castle could utter such; and, where is the feeling, that could modulate such exquisite
expres-

expression ? We all know, that it has been affirmed celestial sounds have sometimes been heard on earth. Father Pierre and father Antoine declared, that they had sometimes heard them in the stillness of night, when they alone were waking to offer their orisons to heaven. Nay, my dear father himself, once said, that, soon after my mother's death, as he lay watchful in grief, sounds of uncommon sweetness called him from his bed ; and, on opening his window, he heard lofty music pass along the midnight air. It soothed him, he said ; he looked up with confidence to heaven, and resigned her to his God."

Emily paused to weep at this recollection. " Perhaps," resumed she, " perhaps, those strains I heard were sent to comfort, —to encourage me ! Never shall I forget those I heard, at this hour, in Languedoc ! Perhaps, my father watches over me, at this moment !" She wept again in tender-

tenderness. Thus passed the hour in watchfulness and solemn thought ; but no sounds returned ; and, after remaining at the casement, till the light tint of dawn began to edge the mountain-tops and steal upon the night-shade, she concluded, that they would not return, and retired reluctantly to repose.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

