

CHAPTER IV

When the Brothers met once more at headquarters, their eyes exchanged a mutual agreement, to banish from their private hours all discourse of the past or future.

It was not in the tumult of warlike preparation, that either of them could indulge the softness of fond regret: they were now to pour forth the full tide of their mingled spirits towards one object alone, the salvation of their country: and by fixing their sight steadily on that mighty end, they hoped to render themselves unconscious of minute yet tenderer interests.

The close of the last brilliant campaign had left Austria in possession of all Italy; except only the small city of Genoa, which besieged and famishing, was likely to fall soon before her arms. This was an event considered almost certain and then a new campaign in Switzerland, as obstinate but more fortunate than the termination of the last, was predicted and desired.

To drive the unprincipled Republicans from that enslaved country, and force them back from the shore of the Rhine, was the scheme of the approaching war. France on her part, sought to deceive the Allies, by feints and declarations; and concentrating all her strength at Dijon, under the plausible title of an army of reserve, she threatened from that central point, as from an eminence, at once Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

It was the misery of the Austrian cabinet, to regard with distrust, and to treat with ingratitude its ablest leader: Prince Charles was now removed from his command, and General Kray took his place.

Hasty in all his conclusions, this intrepid officer was ill calculated to cope with an antagonist like Moreau; who equalled him in bravery and experimental knowledge, and excelled him in judgment: he was perpetually deceived by his adversary's demonstrations, or perplexed by his own conjectures; while Moreau estimated the Hungarian General's talents, and acted upon the result.

A consummate general frequently gains as much by an accurate calculation of his enemy's folly, as he does from the full exercise of his own resources: by foreseeing his opponent's blunders, and preparing to turn them to the best account, he uses a species of thrift, allowable in military affairs, which provides for its own advantage, out of another's profusion.

A general may indeed risk something by an enterprise which depends for its success, solely on the oversight of his enemy; but if he has studied the character of his opponent, the odds are all in his favour.

Moreau had not reckoned too confidently, upon the rash decision of General Kray: completely deceived by a masterly feint, the latter hastened to rally all his

troops round him at Donaueschingen; and expecting a grand attack on that point, suffered Moreau to cross the Rhine, unmolested at Basle.

The whole force of the French army, now meeting from different quarters on the Lake of Constance, menaced the Imperialists: Donaueschingen was abandoned; they retired hastily towards Engen, near which the Prince of Lorraine maintained a good position.

But the Imperialist's fought under every disadvantage. They were fewer in number than the French; and were perplexed with a preconceived idea of the enemy's having different plans: they were in fact, like men who have all their lesson to learn, and could therefore, only oppose sudden resoluteness, to well digested movements.

In the continued battle (as it may be termed), which lasted from the third of May, till the sixth, the Hungarian Brothers nobly distinguished themselves. To the ardour inspired by their just cause was added, the laudable motive of honouring each other, by obtaining the applause of their gallant associates.

The regiment which Charles commanded, had the honour of receiving the first shock of the enemy's cavalry: General Moreau, in person, led them forward to the charge; which, though renewed again and again, was repulsed with dreadful slaughter.

In defiance of superior numbers, and the loss of that support which General Kray might have derived from the army of Prince John (now vanquished at Stockach) he maintained his ground during an obstinate attack, in which the French loss greatly exceeded that of the Imperialists. On the morning of the fifth, he fell back upon the Danube ; but ere he could cross it, another bloody engagement took place.

While making a few rapid dispositions for defence, Charles thought with anguish of that object dearer to him than his life, for whose safety he began to tremble at the probable march of the victors. It seemed to him as if they were already at the gates of Munich. He breathed a hasty prayer for his country, while he thought only of his wife; and strung to tenfold courage, by apprehension for her, charged hotly through the ranks of the foe.

At that fortunate moment, when the French troops stood aghast at such bold conduct; a body of Bavarians (to whom Leopoldstat had previously given orders) by a well concerted manoeuvre, succeeded in turning the enemy's flank; the cavalry then wheeling round, charged back through its scattered battalions; and the fate of the day had quickly decided for the Imperialists, had not Count Leopoldstat in the very ardour of returning a third time to the charge, received a musket ball in his side. He fell from his horse, and the enemy instantly closing round him, stabbed his senseless body with innumerable bayonets.

Where then was Demetrius? — The next moment, his sabre was flashing amongst them, like the lightning of Heaven.

Throwing himself from his horse, and calling on his companions to join him, he defended the person of his brother with a fierce violence which rendered him insensible of affliction.

Nothing now was to be seen but confusion and carnage: to recover the body of their leader, seemed the sole aim of this tremendous conflict.

Part of the squadrons hastily dismounted, and part beating under their horses, hoofs the soldiers cut down by their sabres, lost all remembrance of general orders. The sound of pistols fired on the very hearts of men, was mixed with execrations and dying groans: the sight of bayonets mingling on the same points the blood of many breasts was increased in horror by the last struggles of multitudes, perishing beneath the weight and convulsions of their wounded horses.

In that earthly Hell, Demetrius almost maddened: he fought with a ferocity inspired by the pitiless scene; and when, successful at last, his brave squadron remained masters of their bleeding prize, he started at his own heart, which rather spurred him on to vengeance, than yielded to grief.

As he raised Leopoldstat's body from the ground, the trepidation with which he did it, awoke the slumbering life, Charles opened his eyes, fixed them on the face of his brother with an expression which acted on the soul of Demetrius like a holy spirit passing visibly before him; again his eyes closed, and Demetrius bursting into a passion of lamentation, clasped him in his arms without power to rise.

"I live, I live, my brother!" Charles faintly breathed, "Forward!" He fainted as he spoke; and Demetrius eagerly glancing round the field, beheld the enemy retreating in disorder before the German troops.

He was now free to remain with Charles; and animated into the hope of saving that brother for whom he would gladly have shed every drop of his own blood, he hastily formed a sort of litter out of the arm's and pelisses of the soldiers, and bore him upon it to the hospital tent.

Long ere they reached the place, every hope had vanished. The rapidly-changing Demetrius, felt nothing but despair while he gazed intently on the motionless features of his brother. That beloved face so still, so pale, so visibly imprinted with death, lying in the midst of blood, gushing out of countless wounds; the dreadful silence which surrounded the bier on which he was borne; the dismayed countenances of the soldiers; all tended to impress Demetrius with a conviction, that the gallant spirit was dislodged forever.

At that agonizing moment, how light and unreal, appeared the grief he had indulged for Zaire! Her death he contemplated with pity and anguish; her death he had lamented with frantic tenderness: but that of Charles! — his heart withered within him at the fearful image. To live on, bereft of such a brother,

was impossible: to die, when his life should be pronounced beyond recall, seemed then the law of his being. At this idea, he stood suddenly composed in look and manner: but the spirit of grief, which thus retreated from the surface, only retired to gather strength for the moment in which it was to swell and overwhelm him.

While the surgeons were examining the wounds of Leopolstat (whom excess of pain frequently revived, and as often rendered insensible again), Demetrius stood with his arms folded, and his eyes riveted upon his brother. One of the surgeons lifted up the clustering hair; it was steeped in blood, and completely dyed the hand that touched it. Demetrius started at the sight; a sudden shivering seized him when he had last noted these clotted ringlets, they had been fondly sported with, by the fingers of Adelaide, when Charles, fatigued with military duty, was momentarily slumbering on her shoulder. He averted his eyes; and the tears he was unable to shed over his own suffering, gushed forth in pity to another.

After three days, the report of the surgeons was not such as to balance the hopes and fears of those around Count Leopolstat: apprehension preponderated. His wounds were many and dangerous: and his recovery was said to depend on a variety of circumstances in temperament and situation, which it seemed demanding a miracle to expect.

The loss of such an officer, at a period so critical, when even the Capital of Austria was menaced, was extremely distressing to the Commander in Chief; Leopolstat's counsel in camp, had so often decided him in difficult conjunctures; and his conduct in the field so often completed that counsel, that he came to the resolution of removing him to a distance, with the utmost concern.

The army were now crossing the Danube; and though it was the brave Kray's intention to dispute every inch of ground he might be forced to abandon, he foresaw that Ulm would inevitably be his resting place.

To Ulm, therefore, while it was possible to move slowly, he directed Count Leopolstat should be carried; and in consideration of Demetrius, appointed his troop to form the escort.

At the first intimation of this, Demetrius felt like a young and enthusiastic soldier; he was alarmed at the possibility of odium, by thus avoiding a share in the danger and disasters of his companions: but this phantom of fastidious honour vanished before fraternal love.

"Shall I desert thee, brother of my soul" he softly exclaimed, as he sat watching his unquiet sleep; "shall I leave thee to perish, for the sake of a mere breath? — My country can be as well served by any other arm as mine: I have nothing entrusted to me, therefore have no duty to betray. If I save thee, I preserve her best champion to Germany; and what censure then, can, or ought to wound me!"

Charles awoke in the midst of these reflections: and as if he read in his brother's looks all that was passing in his bosom, tenderly squeezed his hand: Demetrius vehemently kissed both the hands of Charles in return.

To his various and eager questions, the latter could only reply by signs; for loss of blood, and subsequent bodily pangs, had exhausted all his strength. A sudden brightness shone on his features, when Demetrius, presenting a letter, told him a courier had just brought it from Adelaide: — Charles averted his face as he received it, and motioned to be left alone: his brother obeyed.

On the return of Demetrius, it was resolved to apprise the young Countess, in part, of her husband's situation: for Leopoldstat rather chose to bear the knowledge of her suffering now, than by keeping her in ignorance, doom her to more frightful agonies hereafter. His heart bled as he anticipated the sight of her, who lived but in him, and who could not behold him thus, without presaging the worst: yet, to prepare her by a gradual, view of his decline, and to leave her the consolation of having soothed his last moments, were motives which far outweighed his own cowardice at the prospect of witnessing her grief.

Having heard and approved the letter, which his agitated brother's tears blotted as he wrote, he ordered it to be immediately dispatched; and then prepared for his removal.

Every accommodation that respect and affection could devise, in the midst of a retreating army, was procured for Count Leopoldstat: the soldiers saluted the litter as it passed, with tears on their rough cheeks: and the General, looking after it a long time, turned away with a heavy sigh, repeating in a mixed tone of regret and admiration, "My gallant countryman!"

Though proceeding with slowness, and watched by a skilful surgeon, Leopoldstat seemed to have reached Ulm, only to die; his impatient wife joined him on the road, and now, for the first time in her life, found herself assailed by a calamity, against which she had no longer any reasoning powers to oppose.

While she supported him in her arms, to ease the pain of long continuance in one attitude; or watched his slumbers; or administered the opiates that were to bestow them, anxiety for him, drove away every thought of herself: but the instant she left him (which was only when his wounds were dressing) despair seized her; and as she fancied his bodily pangs, her suffering threatened to end in frenzy.

Of her father or Demetrius, she could think no more; even though they were both before her, heartstruck for her and for themselves. She neither heard their lamentations nor their entreaties; but absorbed in the future, abandoned her whole soul to one darling object.

At this period, the attentive sympathy of Colonel Wurtzburg (who was among the troops in the garrison) excited the gratitude of Demetrius. He frequently

watched whole nights in the house, when Leopold was thought in immediate danger; avowing himself too warmly interested, for rest or peace of mind.

By those silent attentions, which, exerted for the benefit of others, without noise or ostentation, affect the heart so much, he contrived to impress every individual with a sense of obligation. What their excess of grief would have overlooked, his less afflicted spirit might be permitted to remember: and all that he did for Charles, or Adelaide, or her father, was found so necessary to their comfort, that Demetrius chid himself for not anticipating the very services for which he was thankful.

The consolations of a female friend were denied to the unhappy Countess; Princess Constantia being removed to Vienna; whither her uncle had hastened on the first news of the French successes.

Of Constantia, Demetrius did not allow himself to think: although her image like an angelic vision, often floated through his fancy, calming for a while the tempest of wildly raised apprehension. He knew her to be in safety; and therefore to indulge in soft dreams about her, while death and danger menaced objects equally dear, would have been almost sacrilege.

The Imperialists retreating before a vast army flushed with success, and eager for plunder, were rapidly falling back upon Ulm. Defeat had followed defeat: though the loss of the enemy was uniformly greater than that of the Austrians.

But the German lines once thinned, were slowly repaired; while all, whom rapine or fanatic liberty inspired, crowded to fill up those of the French.

Italy was nearly reconquered; Switzerland their own; the Grisons within their grasp: from the Mediterranean sea, to the river of the Rhine, one enormous army covered the several countries which lie between them.

Destruction seemed to wait only the nod of a lawless Republican, to overwhelm the very seat of Empire.

These fatal circumstances retarded the possible recovery of Charles, who felt as if at each fresh disaster,

“String after string, was severed from his heart.”

By a courier who brought advices of a battle at Memmingen, Leopold received a note from the Commander in Chief, desiring him to remove instantly to the capital, as both armies were now on their march towards Ulm, where it was likely an obstinate engagement would soon take place.

The brave Charles disdained thus to fly before an advancing foe, even though weakened by pain and sickness: and, indeed, he was not in a condition to bear either a sudden or a quick removal. He besought his wife to seek Vienna

immediately, while he awaited the arrival of the troops, or proceeded with less precipitation: but Adelaide refused to leave him.

The Imperial army entered Ulm soon after; and from their entrenched camp before the city, kept the French awhile in check.

Neither of the adverse Generals thought the period advantageous for attack; and during this accidental suspension of arms, Leopoldstat's wound assumed a less alarming aspect. He was now able to undertake the fatigues of another journey. Accompanied by his wife and her father, he set out for Vienna, leaving Demetrius behind him in garrison.

Bereft at once of so many dear objects, and still trembling for the ultimate safety of his brother, the heart of Demetrius habitually turned towards Colonel Wurtzburg.

The kindness with which that officer met his renewed friendship, and the zealous alacrity with which he used to seek out minor comforts for Count Leopoldstat, conveyed a severe reproach to Demetrius. He blushed to recollect his former coldness, though Wurtzburg seemed to have forgotten it: and he strove to repair his fault by testimonies of gratitude,

The Colonel's delicate conduct, increased this glow of gratitude into the fullest esteem. He evidently avoided opportunities of extorting the secret thoughts of his friend; always turned the conversation when it pointed to peculiar subjects; and never stayed with Demetrius at those times, in which the swelling breast of the latter, overflowed either with tenderness or passion.

As material objects appear less at a distance, than such as are near, so the past conduct of men, loses its enormity, when opposed to a present appearance of excellence. Beguiled by his own generous nature, our young Hussar sometimes searched his memory in vain, for rational grounds for his former ill-will to Wurtzburg: but nothing amounting to conviction, was registered there. He therefore gave a loose to cordiality; and imperceptibly wearing away the self-imposed distance of the Colonel, soon showed (without intending absolutely to confide in him) all that the Colonel wanted to know of his situation.

It was long ere Wurtzburg could disengage himself from the perplexity in which young Leopoldstat's character was formed to bewilder him. He could not comprehend how it was possible for Demetrius to burst into a sudden passion of grief when any circumstance recalled Madame de Fontainville; yet every day, every hour, be cherishing the idea of Princess Constantia, or be unconsciously recurring to her, in all his discourses.

When an exclusive preference was over, the Colonel (sensible to none but the coarsest attachments) believed that every sentiment of tenderness, must perish with it: he knew nothing of those nice shades of affection, pity, and admiration which complete the fine colouring of a truly tender heart. — Observation

however forced him to admit the existence of such a phenomenon, though it did not help him in the least towards comprehending it.

Carefully noting each of these apparent inconsistencies, he kept a regular journal of what he thus discovered; while Demetrius often wrote in his praise to Forsheim, who was now with the army of Bohemia.

A small division of troops being required by an Austrian General some leagues from the camp, Wurtzburg's regiment was ordered on the service. He left Demetrius with many demonstrations of regret; at the same time transferring to him a French servant, whom Demetrius had occasionally employed about his brother's sickbed, in consequence of the fellow's cleverness, and the Colonel's earnest recommendation.

A succession of disastrous actions between the two armies followed this period. The Imperialists, routed in every engagement, vainly lavished their blood on the plains of Blindheim, and at the bridge of Gremheim. Fate frowned from the broad banner of France: and the Genius of Austria seemed to have withdrawn in wrath from an army, which, under the command of its virtuous Prince, she had once led on to victory.

The broken troops having hastily abandoned their camp at Ulm, had proceeded to Ingolstadt: from whence they beheld with dismay, the Republicans spreading like consuming fire, over all Swabia, Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Trier.

The country of the Grisons was lost, the troops in Tyrol were hemmed in by detachments from the French army of Italy, as well as by part of that which laid waste the Frontiers; a powerful force was already on its march to Franconia; and Moreau, animated with these signal advantages, no longer feigned an intention of advancing to Vienna.

Whether any unknown causes, sufficient to justify his advice as a military man, prevailed with Bonaparte (then First Consul, and General in Italy) to press Moreau's relinquishment of this brilliant prize; or whether a base envy prompted him to wither those laurels which the hand of another grasped, to decorate their country is uncertain. The motives will ever remain concealed; but the fact is positive.

At the head of victorious troops, supported on all sides by successful confederates, with only a few dispirited forces to hang on his rear, invited by disloyalty and riot to Vienna itself, General Moreau was enjoined by Bonaparte to grant an armistice, now sued for by Austria.

How is this to be accounted for?

The First Consul was never suspected of sacrificing ambition to humanity; no voice of human suffering, had ever yet, stopped him in the career of military reward: (witness the dreadful bridge of Lodi! Witness the plains of Jaffa! Witness the scene in which his own sick soldiers perished by poison!) he was not of that

cautious spirit which avoids the very possibility of disappointment: No! He breasted difficulties with ardour; and rather sought to wrest distinction, by conquering against probabilities, than to receive tempered commendation, by answering the expectations of his countrymen.

The whole campaign of Italy, had been to him, a brilliant series of astonishing success: but “his star must have turned pale” had that of Moreau continued to shine. It was no part of the Corsican’s policy, to sacrifice his own aggrandisement, to that of the country he served: Moreau must be obscured: and Moreau, was. — The armistice was agreed upon, in the month of July; when all operations in Germany ceased till the beginning of September.

CHAPTER V

Impatient to see that beloved brother, whose perfect safety, affection could not credit, unless absolutely witnessed, Demetrius obtained a month's leave of absence, and hastened to Vienna.

Count Leopolstat was at the house of his faithful friend, Baron Ingersdorf, who was now a widower.

Disgusted with the court intrigues which had already displaced Prince Charles, and was striving to exclude from the military councils, all sincere lovers of their country, the Baron had resigned his office, and retired from public life, to a villa in the beautiful suburbs of the capital.

There, in the society of his brother, and that of his accomplished nephew, he enjoyed every pleasure dear to a rational and elegant mind.

Leopolstat was not yet able to support himself, except on a couch; where, raised on cushions, he lay calm and uncomplaining.

Though he could no longer amuse or employ himself, but was dependent on those he loved for every comfort and relief, he repaid their assiduities, by the everlasting sunshine of patient sweetness.

The music of his Adelaide's voice, still thrilled him with delight; and while her balmy breath rested upon the cheek she fondly printed with a kiss, he ceased to languish for the unconfined air of heaven, which so often appears to an invalid, as if it must "bring healing on its wings."

More than ever endeared by his sufferings, and yet further exalted by the manner in which they were borne, Charles distinctly saw, that his wife's affection increased with time. That dotting love, which glories in its object, spoke forever from her eyes; and a sense of danger past, gave birth to a gratitude too genuine for any fears to alloy.

Adelaide had been so miserable, that she was now nearly happy; her Charles was recovering, her Charles was eternally in her sight, and she had every day fresh reason to bless the event, which kept him far from the armies.

In the joyfulness of her looks, and those of her uncle and father, Demetrius, on reaching Vienna, read all he wished. Though he found his brother stretched powerless on a sofa, what seemed the body's weakness to him, when he beheld again, as it were, the soul of his brother? Thought and emotion once more glowed through the features of Charles, and at their late parting, the very principle of life itself, appeared extinct.

These brave brothers who had undauntedly fronted the shock of armies together, were now not ashamed of yielding some tears to the feelings of this

moment. They rested silently in each other's arms, till their disburdened hearts grew calm.

A narrative of the military incidents which had occurred since they met, was soon demanded by Leopoldstat. Demetrius gave it eloquently: too eloquently; for at his vivid descriptions, and bitter censures, the hectic on his brother's cheek, quivered like an unsteady flame.

Their discourse was interrupted by the entrance of the Baron and Adelaide, of whom, after some hesitation, Demetrius enquired about Constantia. His eyes being cast down, prevented him from observing the change this question made in his sister: she replied in a low voice, "Constantia is in Vienna; but as I have much to tell you, and dare not agitate Charles with it, you must inquire no further, till we are alone."

For the first time of her life, the tender Adelaide, through an excess of love, spared him who would have suffered the least. These hasty words plunged Demetrius into the most frightful conjecturings: from the moment they were uttered, he became silent; and, watching an opportunity to have his fears terminated, abruptly followed Adelaide out of the room, when she left it to procure some fruit for her husband.

On seeing Demetrius, she made her father take charge of the fruit ; and led the way into the garden. There, traversing a walk where the most beautiful shrubs bloomed and breathed unnoticed, they discoursed of Constantia. — How was Demetrius appalled to find, that his Princess lived in a species of imprisonment! Adelaide knew little of her situation; yet that little, was enough to rend the heart of a lover.

The substance of what he collected was, that soon after the arrival of Marshal Ingersdorf and his daughter, the Prince of Nuremberg had nearly prohibited all intercourse between the friends: but finding his prohibition scarcely attended to, he hurried his family to Vienna; accompanied by the eldest son of the Elector of —.

This Prince had for some time sought the hand of Constantia; and it was now evident that ambitious views for his niece, had combined with ill will towards Demetrius, in the mind of this haughty uncle.

During the period which elapsed since her own arrival in the capital, Adelaide had heard but once of her friend ; and that was from the lips of Nuremberg's wife.

They met accidentally at the Countess of Reusmark's. While some other ladies were going through the clamorous ceremonies of precedence and leave-taking, the Princess hastily approached Adelaide: "I shall gladden poor Constantia," she said timidly, "by relating all I have heard you repeat of Count Leopoldstat's amended health. Do me the justice of believing, dear Countess, that I am completely innocent of this oppression. The Prince is warm in his wishes

for what he thinks her future good; and suffers himself to use some harshness now, in the hope of meriting her thanks hereafter: but indeed I fear he will carry this severity too far: her health sinks under it.”

The voice of the Princess faltered as she spoke, and she stopped; evidently afflicted at having thus rescued her own character at the expense of her husband's. Adelaide just had time to implore her interference with the Prince, and to commission her with an ardent message to Constantia, when some persons who were of the Princess's party joined them: they then separated.

Though she refrained from paining her Lord, with this information, Adelaide could not sleep, till she had made an effort to see her friend. For this purpose (as she would not subject the wife of Count Leopolstat to insult, by attempting a clandestine interview) she wrote to the Prince of Nuremberg, simply stating her uneasiness, at a report of Constantia's being ill; and requesting to be admitted to her, either alone, or in his presence.

The answer she received was couched in these terms:

NOTE.

The Prince of Nuremberg regrets that circumstances should constrain him to refuse any request of the Countess Leopolstat's: he is happy to contradict every report of his niece the Princess Constantia's ill-health; but must decline for her the honour of a visit, which, by reviving the remembrance of a person whom it is her duty to forget, would inevitably strengthen her in the resolution of avoiding a Prince whom it is her duty to accept.

The Prince of Nuremberg does himself the honour of offering congratulations upon the recent safety of Count Leopolstat; and at the same time, of assuring the Countess that he would never deny any request of her's, without the extremest reluctance.

Vienna. July.

With this cold and cautious billet ended all the information of Adelaide. Since then, she had heard no more of Constantia, except that she was still completely secluded.

Demetrius made few remarks on this: he silently pressed his sister's hand; leaving his thanks to his looks. They then rejoined Charles, with whom Demetrius stayed till the hour of rest; when hastily excusing himself from the family supper, he left the house.

Various modes of seeking an interview with Constantia, conceived and rejected in the same moment, agitated the thoughts of Demetrius, as instead of going to his lodgings, he hurried along the suburbs. Had he been pressing on to the immediate execution of some plan for seeing her, he could not have felt more impatient: while indeed, nothing but a chaos of schemes, wishes, and apprehensions was before him.

Ere he dared attempt anything for her enlargement, it was incumbent on him to learn how far he was concerned in her refusal of her titled lover: till he had sought a renewal of those vows she once breathed, and gained a knowledge of her future intentions, all his zeal and passion, must be buried in his own bosom. He now execrated himself for having shunned an interview at Munich; and trembled at the probability of having lost her heart by such apparent inconsistency.

In the midst of these reflections, he came in sight of the place which contained her.

The spacious Palace glittering in a bright moonlight, with its magnificent gardens, and stately terraces, towered above the Danube, whose swift waters flashing under the eye, poured through a scene of brilliant enchantment. Numberless villas embowered among trees, were seen scattered in gay confusion along its banks; and through every grove and every glade, the warm breath of aromatic summer, softly steamed from earth to heaven.

Demetrius now approached one of the side entrances; at that moment a man vaulted over a low part of the garden wall, and alighted close beside him.

He was somewhat surprised to find in this man, his servant Pierre.

After a few equivocations, the fellow confessed he had been visiting the gardener's daughter, to whom, on account of an old quarrel with her brother, he could not venture to go publicly: that besides love for her, he was prompted by regard for his master, of whose attachment to Princess Constantia, he had heard in the kitchen at Baron Ingersdorf's, from one, who had it from an Italian servant of the Princess's: that officious, perhaps, in his zeal, he had ventured to ask many questions of his sweetheart, through whom, he hinted the probability of conveying a letter or a message.

At this moment Demetrius was incapable of pausing upon any proposal which held out such a prospect. The fellow could have no motive for ensnaring him; he had served him faithfully some time; and had testified so affectionate an anxiety during the sickness of Charles, that he readily pardoned a little freedom in his endeavours to serve. He now put a few questions to Pierre, whose answers determined him to hazard something.

The Prince of Nuremberg was gone two leagues off on business, which might detain him some days: no one but his Princess was left to guard Constantia, who, though still restricted to the Palace gardens, was indulged by her, in all the liberty she dared grant. Constantia was then alone, in these very gardens; Pierre had seen her himself.

He now offered to return and conduct his master to her: since Demetrius was unwilling to put the woman he loved into the power of her domestic, he refused to admit Pierre's sweetheart, into their council. A few lines written with pencil on the leaf of a pocketbook, were given to Pierre: each leapt the garden wall at

the same moment; and hastily struck into a walk shaded by elms, so thick that they excluded every twinkling star. They followed this track till it brought them to a grotto; which suddenly emerging amid the light, displayed a broad glade, where the trees receding in magnificent groups, left a vast expanse, which terminated at a side portico of the Palace.

Demetrius rushed into the grotto; and Pierre turned into another path.

The tender moon, shedding a mellow lustre through an opening in the roof of this calm retreat, quivered among the spars and crystals of which it was formed; but no sound, no breath even of the faintest night breeze, stirred the long tresses of a willow which streamed above.

There was something in this stillness and beauty, oppressive to the agitated heart of Demetrius: he advanced to the entrance; all there, was as still and lovely. The moveless trees, the soundless water, the dark vistas and steady lustre of the moon, all seemed to his wild fancy, fraught with expectation: he scarcely breathed: but fear had no share in this emotion.

Too much absorbed in solicitude for Constantia's reception of him, he had not room for any suspicion of Pierre's fidelity.

Lovers hope all things, and dread all things: wilder than the starts of a lunatic, were the apprehensions which now tormented Demetrius: the remembrance of Zaire mixed itself with them; but for the first time since her death, he strove to banish it.

Hasty steps as of a man advancing along the walk into which Pierre had struck, were now distinctly heard. Rootbound with expectation, Demetrius listened to catch the echo of a softer tread: but whether it were lost in the other sound he knew not, for he heard nothing more. His heart began to sink, when Constantia herself flew into the grotto.

One glance of her endearing eyes, banished both fear and regret: every event that had occurred since he used to see her at Felieri, fled from their eloquent brightness. Time, suffering, were annihilated; and the full conviction of being beloved, of still tenderly loving, spoke to his renovated soul.

Constantia did not check the transport with which he pressed her in his arms: she participated too much in that joy, which was produced by an affection as pure as her own innocence. For a long time neither of them spoke; but at length Demetrius recovering recollection of the past, said fearfully, "Dare I still call you *my* Constantia?"

The Princess did not hesitate to confess the steadiness of her attachment, though a crimson blush glowed on her averted face. At such a period as this, she would have deemed useless reserve, both foolish and cruel.

“I know not,” she replied, “whether in my desire to save you even the smallest uneasiness, I may not be sacrificing the propriety of my sex; but my heart impels me to assure you — almost unasked that you see Constantia at this moment, what she was at Felieri; that, however fate or inclination might have disposed of *you*, *she* would never have altered; and that it remains with yourself, to sanction to appropriate. —”

She could not proceed; burning blushes spread over her whole countenance, and the quick pulsation of her heart, impeded her further utterance. Snatched repeatedly to the breast of her impassioned lover, whose ardent gratitude scarcely found words to express itself, Constantia heard with astonishment and trepidation, his proposal for immediate flight.

At this moment of delirious ecstasy, Demetrius thought only of securing the beloved creature, who had endured for him, every species of outrage; of bearing her far from such oppression, and dedicating the whole of his coming life, to the sweet task of eternal gratitude. When she showed him the madness of his scheme (by reverting to the power which her uncle would have of reclaiming her, and rousing the law against him), Demetrius urged another plan. He offered to conduct her to some remote convent, from which she might claim the protection of her other relations, and obtain legal redress, until the period in which her uncle’s guardianship must end.

Constantia’s eyes glistened with tears at his generous ardour: She gazed on him, in a trance of tender admiration, while she rapidly revolved the dangers to which he would thus expose himself. Her rank, her fortune, her father’s will, and her uncle’s influence, would all unite to make the life of her lover, answer for his temerity. For his sake therefore, she steadily declined it, though he fell at her feet, and implored her, even with tears, to consent.

Constantia trembled and wept too: but there was a sad foreboding at her heart, which strengthened her resolution.

Continued harshness and restraint, bursts of violence, threats, invectives against her lover’s character, or menaces against his safety, had long worn on her spirits, and gradually sapped the foundations of life. Cut off from every consolation; and wilfully kept in anxiety for Demetrius, by seeing only those papers which detailed the horrors and not the particulars of every battle, her health had imperceptibly given way: she was now the shadow of herself; and except at this period when tumultuous agitation kindled a flame on her cheeks, and new strung her nerves, no tint of colour animated her features; no elasticity gave spring to her unsteady steps.

Demetrius, whose admiring eyes saw rapture sparkling in her’s, who beheld no change in her beautiful person but what appeared the natural effect of an unquiet mind, was far from divining the gloomy presentiment which suddenly altered her manner.

When she had silenced all his arguments for her flight, she felt as if in doing so, she had signed their eternal separation. After that night, they might never behold each other; she might not live long enough to see another meeting. At these thoughts, she burst into a passion of tears; again and again she pressed his hand wildly to her heart; and the convulsive sobs which shook her whole frame, choked the fond lamentation that struggled to her lips.

Alarmed, distressed, astonished beyond measure, Demetrius vainly besought her to impart the cause of this strange emotion. Constantia only replied by fresh tears: at that instant the palace clock struck twelve; it electrified the Princess: she started up, hastily exclaiming, "We must part now."

"O not yet, not yet, my Constantia;" exclaimed Demetrius, retaining the hand with which she had clasped his, "leave me not, till you have told me that I may come here again. Tomorrow night at the same hour — your uncle will still be absent. — All that I wished said to you, I have left unsaid. — Tomorrow, dearest, sweetest Constantia, tell me you will be here?"

The Princess promised ; and exchanging a hasty embrace, vanished from his sight.

Demetrius stood like a disenchanted man. The bright vision was gone; and for a while he scarcely knew whether to believe it had indeed been. Pierre's entrance brought back his senses.

He gratefully grasped his hand. "I am indebted to you for more than life," he said, "and I will never forget it. But for heaven's sake remember, Pierre, that the least indiscretion would ruin Princess Constantia forever. Henceforth, do not whisper this night's adventure, even to your own thoughts. I fear nothing but accidental imprudence in you, for I am confident you would never wilfully betray me."

The cheeks of Pierre glowed: he replied with all the vehemence of his nation, heaping vow upon vow, and protestation upon protestation. His master shook him again by the hand; and then turning away soon reached the place from which they jumped into the road.

The whole of the next day, was spent by Demetrius in an impatient longing for night; yet he forced his mind into exertion, for the sake of his brother.

Select parties were admitted of an evening to the room where Count Leopold was confined: his benevolent spirit delighted in the sight of diffused pleasure: he could even join in the playfulness of gay discourse; and though unable to increase the concert himself, was gratified by hearing music from others.

The Countess of Reusmark was the only person this evening, who added to the domestic circle. Demetrius quitted it early, and bidding Pierre attend him, hurried towards the palace.

How different was the scene, from what it appeared when last he saw it! Achill, tempestuous night, blackened and agitated every object. The enormous trees, bending to their very roots before the wind, cast gigantic shadows, as they waved across the front of the edifice. The moon herself, seemed pale with fear, as the clouds driving over her face, were sometimes rent asunder, and scattered by the storm. One continued roar of trees and water pealed around Demetrius: He trembled for the safety of Constantia, when he beheld large branches torn off by the furious blast, and falling on every side of him.

Pierre was sheltered in a root house, at some little distance; but he, stood forth under the inclement sky, praying that his Princess might have abandoned the attempt.

Just as he had completely satisfied himself that she would not come, he turned at the murmur of a breathless voice, and beheld her near him, sinking with fatigue and apprehension.

“I have been so frightened!” she gasped out, while he led her into the grotto, “it is a long way round, from the house; and the noise of the trees on every side — the dreadful darkness — I thought I should never have lived to reach you.” A deep sigh broke forth with the last words, and her head sunk on the shoulder of her lover.

The moon now momentarily gleaming into the grotto, showed Demetrius her pallid face: he spoke to her, but she was insensible. Exhausted by toil and terror, oppressed with a conviction of her own decay, she had fainted.

His alarm at this circumstance, was heightened by the consciousness of their distance from any succour. He could only chafe her cold hands, and press his warm cheek to hers, as if hoping that might communicate something of its own life.

She revived shortly after: yet the claylike colour of her once vivid complexion, still remained: her hands trembled, her lips quivered, her respiration was quick and interrupted, and when she attempted speech, she was obliged to stop frequently, for want of breath.

Demetrius gazed on her, with an air of distraction.

“Is this but fatigue, or fear, my Constantia?” he exclaimed, “Or some new suffering occasioned by your uncle? Or is it, what my fond heart will break to have confirmed, — is it illness?”

Tears swam in the Princess’s eyes, as she answered him.

“I am not so well as I used to be,” she sighed out, “but you know I never was very strong; and such a separation from you, together with anxieties and discomforts, have rather injured my health; however, I promise to live for your sake.” She stopped, then added in a suffocated tone, “if Heaven permit me!”

“If Heaven permit you!” repeated Demetrius, clasping her hands with agony in his; “O Constantia! Am I a second time to suffer —” He broke off abruptly; and suddenly releasing her, walked to the end of the grotto.

At sight of her lover’s anguish, Constantia reproached herself for yielding to a despondency which accidental circumstances had thus deepened. She approached Demetrius, and sought to compose him. He turned wildly round, and passionately upbraided her for concealing her altered health from her friends.

“What could I do?” asked Constantia, “how was I to have informed them? You forget that I have long been denied the privilege of seeing or writing to any one.”

“Was there no creature in that hateful house, who was accessible to bribery or entreaty? Surely some servant might have been found —”.

Constantia gently interrupted him: “I have always held such conduct in abhorrence. Not even for you, my Demetrius, would I try to corrupt the fidelity of another. Not that I consider myself bound to keep terms with my uncle (for every stratagem, I can invent to see or correspond with you, I shall seize without scruple) but a principle of right, teaches me not to procure my own gratification at the expense of an inferior’s integrity.”

Demetrius gave her a look, expressive of that admiration, which for awhile had displaced his grief. Constantia seized the calm moment, and taking up a casket which fell from her hand when she fainted, held it out to him.

“This little casket, she said, with a languid smile, contains the means of future happiness, I trust for both of us. Listen to me Demetrius. After we parted last night, I spent many hours in revolving our conversation, and considering the best method for ending the cruel oppression that undermines my health. The result of these reflections, has been a determination to appeal publicly against the tyranny of my uncle.

“I have written a candid, and, I hope, moderate narrative of the undue methods by which he endeavours to influence my will: I have stated my own willingness to remain obedient to him in all reasonable things, even to that of foregoing any intercourse with you, till his guardianship should expire; and I have addressed this to a near relation of our’s, the Canoness of —, whom I entreat to take such legal steps as may transfer this power to herself; being ready to seclude myself in a convent under her protection, till I am of age.

“This narrative, with copies of my dear father’s and grandmamma’s wills, are inclosed in the casket I now give you. — It rests with you, my Demetrius, to have it delivered safely. If you can confide in your servant, let him set off with it, immediately, to — in Bohemia, where the Canoness now is. I trust the course of justice, is not interrupted in Franconia; once released from the misery of perpetual persecution, I think, health would soon return to me: and then, to

wait only eighteen months, for bliss and my Demetrius, would not be insupportable.”

Unable to reply, Demetrius kissed her hands fervently. A long silence ensued: after which they conversed on the probable event of this new enterprise. It seemed to Demetrius, like a prospect of paradise: his sanguine soul rushed forwards to meet its completion, with a joy so certain, that it painted his countenance with fresh bloom.

His health, his youth, his beauty, still flourished in the sight of Constantia, while her's were fast wasting into nought: She could have wept with bitter regret, had not regard for his feelings, repelled her tears.

It was settled, that Pierre should be dispatched to the Canoness, early the next morning; and that Demetrius might as he saw fit, impart the business to his brother and Adelaide. Constantia being only anxious to preserve them from her uncle's insult.

She instructed her lover to deposit the Canoness's answer in the hollow of an old tree, which, though near that part of the wall by which he entered the grounds, was so overgrown by other trees, and a quantity of ivy, that it was not likely to be observed by others. Here the letter, covered with moss and leaves and stones, might lie till she had next an opportunity of visiting the gardens, and replacing it by one from herself.

With this night, their meetings were to end: for the Prince of Nuremberg was expected the ensuing day. When they might meet again, Demetrius knew not: and he would therefore have prolonged her stay, beyond discretion, had it not been for the threatening appearance of the night, which now foreboded heavy rain.

The moon and stars were completely obscured; the wind only rushed through the trees, in unfrequent blasts; and the sides of the grotto, became moist and cold.

After combating much opposition from the timid Princess, he at length obtained permission to accompany her as far as the entrance of a high, green terrace behind the palace, where opened an apartment, of which her indulgent aunt had given her the key.

Demetrius threw the military cloak he wore, around the slender form of his beloved; and half wafting her forward with his arm, speeded her trembling steps, and quieted her fears.

They were both, too anxious, and too hurried for conversation. Sometimes Demetrius pressed her momentarily against his breast, as they flew along; sometimes a sigh bursting from both their hearts at the same instant, seemed to mingle their very beings.

They proceeded in utter darkness, under fast falling drops of rain; till quitting the shade, the solitary terrace, with only one dim light burning in the lower chamber, stretched darkly before them. They stopped; and Constantia throwing herself back into the arms of her lover, renewed her prayers for his safety, and the completion of their mutual wishes. She then tore herself from his embrace; and Demetrius turned sorrowfully back.

In all probability, Pierre had been solacing himself with the society of the gardener's daughter; for he displayed not the least discontent at his master's long absence; though the place he sheltered in, was not high enough to admit any thing taller than a spade.

Demetrius found him contentedly sitting among bags of flower-seeds, and bundles of dried herbs : He started up at the sound of his voice, and expressed the utmost pleasure at seeing him safe again.

"You must be in my chamber tomorrow morning, by daybreak." said Demetrius, when they reached his lodgings. "I have business that you must do for me, in Bohemia. I confide in you implicitly, you see Pierre. Remember discretion. — Goodnight. —"

Pierre promised, and they entered the house.

The morning was just dawning, when the active Pierre, presented himself, ready habited for his journey: Demetrius then gave him a sealed packet, directing him to deliver it into no hands but those of the Canoness; to wait her answer, and when he had got that, to return with the utmost speed.

He waited the reappearance of Pierre, before he ventured to agitate Charles and Adelaide, with the detail of his own rashness, and Princess Constantia's sufferings. When this expected messenger arrived, he brought a billet from the Canoness, which (as Demetrius was to open), at once dissipated every fear. It contained these lines. —

TO PRINCESS CONSTANTIA OF NUREMBERG.

MY DEAR CHILD !

I have received your distressing appeal against the treatment of your guardian; and I hope you will find, by my future conduct in the affair, that you have not applied to an unfeeling relation. I do not sanction family feuds: but still less do I approve of an abuse of power: so, if on further perusal, and consideration of what you have written, and after thorough investigation, I find no reason to alter my present resolution, you may speedily expect legal redress.

Of the young Count in question, and the propriety of your persisting to marry him, when you come of age, we will talk when I see you: I shall only try to persuade; your uncle it seems, has threatened. Farewell my dear child, I commend you to the keeping of all the saints, and am your affectionate kinswoman

ULRICA.

With this precious pledge of success in his hand, Demetrius hastened to Baron Ingersdorf's, where he confided to his brother and to Adelaide, the important secret.

They heard him, with very different feelings from those which crimsoned his cheek, and made his pulses beat: joy, sat on his smooth brow; solicitude and distrust contracted theirs. It was not till Demetrius had repeated every circumstance, and coloured the attachment of Pierre, in the warmest manner, that Leopolstat admitted a belief of his honesty: however, the second meeting with Constantia, having passed off safely, and a letter from her relation being then before them, were the strongest arguments in his favour.

Charles besought Demetrius to confide nothing to his servant, which necessity did not demand; lamenting that the attachment between his brother and the Princess, prevented his standing forth as her champion, in a cause which had claims upon every man of honour. Where there were such splendid inducements for selfishness to seek its own aggrandisement, by vindicating her freedom of choice, he knew that few spirits would believe them actuated by nobler motives. He therefore exhorted Demetrius, to avoid any precipitate measure dictated by the mere passion of love.

When her brother went out, to deposit the letter in the appointed place, Adelaide renewed the discourse: She trembled at the possibility of treachery in an affair which involved, not merely the happiness, but perhaps the life of her dearest Constantia; to end this doubt, she suggested a plan which Leopolstat sanctioned by the fullest approval.

It was a letter to Count Forsheim; whose vicinity to the Canoness's abode, would enable him to learn from her own lips, whether a packet from her young relation had really been delivered into her hands. If his inquiry should be answered in the affirmative, Adelaide allowed they might then dismiss every fear of Pierre's fidelity, and look with confidence to the release of their friend.

"I shall say nothing of this, to Demetrius;" said the Countess, as she wrote the letter for her husband, "he would be indignant at my suspicions of this poor servant. But I don't suspect him, because he is poor and ignorant, 'tis because he is a Frenchman."

"Equally liberal, and unprejudiced, my Adelaide!" observed the Count, smiling, "Trust me, many a gallant and virtuous man, marches even under the banner of Bonaparte."

"Now, are not you, illiberal, in this unqualified expression?" his wife archly asked.

"Surely not:" was his reply, "for we can form a judgment of an individual, from the tenor of his conduct; that which we pass on multitudes, of whom we only know that they were born in such a particular country, must be contemptibly erroneous." Pleased to be convinced by her husband, Adelaide,

like all other good wives, acknowledged the superiority of the reason by which she was silenced; and Charles, more than ever enamoured of her gentleness, almost thought imperfections lovely, when they thus afforded opportunities for the display of affection.

Demetrius, meanwhile, was watching an opportunity to place a letter from himself, and that of the Canoness, in the hollow tree. It was some time ere he found the road quite solitary: He then vaulted over the wall, deposited his packet; wafted a thousand sighs, kisses, and blessings, to the prison of his Constantia, and hastened back to Baron Ingersdorf's.