

CHAPTER VI

From the hour in which she last saw Demetrius, Princess Constantia was suffering both from illness and affliction.

The inclement night under which she went to meet her lover, had pierced her delicate frame: After reaching home, she sunk on her bed, scarcely sensible to anything but a chill like death, which had not entirely left her limbs, when her aunt came to see her in the morning.

This kind, but weak woman, had always testified such compassion for Constantia, that it evidently depended solely on the latter, to insure her active friendship: yet Constantia would not use a single artifice, nor urge one complaint, to betray her aunt into actions, which she knew her character well enough to be convinced, would afterwards awaken repentance.

The Princess of Nuremberg lamented her husband's injustice and violence; and continued to love him. Constantia, in her place, would have made the cause of innocence, her own, and would have given the man she once adored, only the alternative of losing her heart, or of abandoning his oppression.

But she did not expect this, from the Princess. Her pliant softness might be won to sanction the meetings of the lovers, or to forward letters to Adelaide; but in exciting her to this, Constantia saw she would be tasking a feeble spirit, beyond its strength: as every assistance thus rendered, would lie on the conscience of the Princess like so many sins.

This conviction of her aunt's weakness, did not lessen the gratitude of Constantia. How warmly had her affectionate heart registered the silent tears she had shed for her sake, when some alarming paragraph about the army, had been cruelly read aloud by the Prince! — how often had this pitying woman stolen at midnight from the side of her husband, to bring those restoratives to Constantia, which her decaying state demanded, but, which the worthless Nuremberg prohibited! — All these things, were remembered by one, in whom, gratitude was only secondary to love!

The Princess now sat by Constantia's bed, while she took her slight breakfast; and then afterwards, descended with her into the music room, where she strove to beguile away her indisposition, by the charms of harmony.

When the day was far advanced, Nuremberg returned alone; and then his stormy brow, announced a coming whirlwind.

He fixed his eyes upon his niece, with a look that withered her very heart. She turned pale; almost fancying she saw in that look, his knowledge of her appeal to the Canoness.

Contrary, to his usual custom he never addressed her; spoke little to his wife, and that in a bitter spirit; angrily repulsed his child when it attempted to caress

him; and on seeing it creep towards Constantia, fiercely plucked it back, exclaiming in a voice like a clap of thunder, "Have I not commanded you to avoid her, as you would poison?"

The pretty babe ran sobbing, and cast itself into its mother's arms; who, with a tone of sorrowful reproach, merely ventured to pronounce her husband's name. — Constantia trembled, and grew paler still.

The Prince then rang for refreshments: found fault with everything that was brought; cursed the weather, the house, and the situation; quarrelled in short with every object that met his sight, or came into his thoughts; and acted all the extravagancies of a madman, without deigning to give his terrified wife, the least intimation of what had happened to discompose him.

After exhausting his rage upon contemptible subjects, he suddenly struck into political prophecy; painting the state of the empire, in colours which made his hearers shudder. He detailed the scheme of the remaining part of the campaign; and having exaggerated the French troops, and the horror of combating them amongst the Alps, informed his wife, that Count Leopold's hussars, were ordered on that service. "Every one," he exclaimed, with malicious triumph, "every one looks upon these fellows as already in their graves. Of course, they must all be cut in pieces: even that young lady's redoubtable hero; unless he be a second Achilles, invulnerable every way but in the heel. However, I fear even so, he he might share the fate of his companions; as I am much mistaken if he would not *turn on his heel*, from the enemy."

At this brutal sarcasm, Constantia started from her seat: indignation lent her just enough strength to totter out of the room: when she reached another apartment, she sunk breathless upon the ground.

Never before, did she so sensibly feel the alteration which decayed health had made in her very soul: a benumbing power, seemed to have congealed those quick tides of generous resentment and glowing zeal, that once flowed at the smallest impulse. She felt blighted in every part of her; and scarcely thought it possible for health and liberty, to revive the capability of happiness.

Of Demetrius, she now thought with grief. Abandoned to despair, she believed herself lost for ever; and as her eyes accidentally fell on her own image in a mirror, she averted them with a thrill of acute regret. That beauty which she never prized till it had been praised by Demetrius, that beauty which she wished preserved only to delight him, was gone, most likely never to return: and the spirit which formerly gave it its brightest charm, was completely annihilated.

Weeping and disconsolate, she seated herself in a window, from which she gazed upon that part of the garden, where she had so lately been with her lover: she gazed with piercing pain; for her thoughts were full of the belief that they should meet no more in this world, Sad ideas floated successively through her

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mind, in the language of love and melancholy, till they formed themselves into the following stanzas. —

TO DEMETRIUS.

WHILE from my cheek, health's redd'ning glow retreats,
And youth's bright light, deserts my dark'ning eyes;
While scarce a pulse beneath that pressure beats,
Which pitying tenderness so oft applies;

While cheerful thought expires, and hope decays,
And all things wither in my heart, save thee;
How can I wish to blight thy summer days,
By linking thine, to my sad destiny?

Is it for me, (faint, spiritless, and cold,)
To cling destroying, on thy opening years;
With dead'ning force their shooting powers enfold,
And drench each ardent bloom, in killing tears?

Is it for me, to pay thy gen'rous love
With a chang'd person, and ac hanging mind;
Seeking alone, a selfish joy to prove,
While vows eternal, should thy honour bind?

Perish the thought! — and let this cherish'd fire
That even now burns quenchless in my breast;
This passion true, this fond, this pure desire,
Sink with my wasting frame to endless rest

Gone, are the rosy smiles that won thy heart;
The sparkling glance, the gay delighted air;
Sorrow and sickness both, have said, depart!
To all that made me in thy fancy, fair:

Then, since no blessing I have left to give,
Since youth, and health, and hope, before me fly;
For thee, no longer will I ask to live; —
But, ah! For thee, thee only, do I die. —

Her whole soul was absorbed in the awful idea, suggested by the last line, when the Princess of Nuremberg entered the apartment. “Had you not better retire to rest?” she said softly: “Amadeus has been playing, I find, and bad luck has embittered his temper more than usual. Forgive him, my dearest girl; he means well; but he does not know the nature of women: he believes we are only to be conquered by authority. Lean on my arm — I will lead you up stairs, and though I dare not stay with you, the good Josepha shall watch by you, till you sleep. —”

Constantia's swimming eyes, gratefully lifted for a moment from the ground, thanked her aunt: she took her arm with a sigh; and slowly advancing from one landing of the staircase to another, at length reached her own chamber.

No refreshing slumber settled on the heavy eyelids of Constantia: her rest was broken with feverish starts, acute pangs, and all those mixed torments of

burning heat and chilling rigours, which precede a violent disorder. Multitudes of hideous spectres seemed gliding through the gloom of her apartment; and sometimes she started from a profound sleep, at the fancied sound of supernatural whisperings.

In the morning, Josepha (an old domestic who had not left her all night) roused the family physician: He found the young Princess delirious, and her fever increasing every hour.

From the moment this intelligence was communicated to the wife of Nuremberg, she refused to abandon Constantia, in what she deemed her last agonies; though her barbarous husband, muttered horrible triumphings, and loaded her with every term of contempt. She watched in the sick chamber, day and night, for seven days, when the fever turned favourably; and the Prince received a letter, which forcing him to quit home again, left his wife and niece to themselves.

Unconscious of her danger, whose safety was as precious to him as his own honour, Demetrius spent four of these seven days, in waiting for the Canoness's letter; on the fifth, he concealed it in the appointed place, and for three successive mornings vainly visited the spot, to receive the promised answer. Disappointed and apprehensive, he commissioned Pierre to discover the probable reason of this circumstance; and Pierre soon returned with the afflicting account of Constantia's illness.

The first shock of this intelligence, awhile bereft Demetrius of every faculty: but no sooner did thought and passion return, than he resolved to brave everything, and attempt seeing her.

Pierre respectfully and warmly remonstrated against such rashness: but finding his master resolute, he suggested a plausible method of accomplishing his wish. It was to repair in the dark of the evening, disguised as a courier, who brought something of import from the Prince of Nuremberg: so to obtain admittance to the Princess; whose permission for seeing Constantia, he might then implore; or at least obtain from her a true statement of his beloved's situation.

This plan (Pierre urged) could be attended with no other risk than that of the Princess refusing to hear his petition: while a bold attempt at entrance, might subject him to insult, perhaps outrage, from the domestics of the Palace. Nay, it would not bring him a step nearer the object desired, as he could not even then, see Constantia, unless permitted by her aunt.

This prompt and feasible scheme was no sooner heard than embraced by Demetrius: he resolved to make an essay that very evening, when his absence would not be noticed, as Charles was going to leave the confinement of a sofa for the first time, and receive a few friends, who had not hitherto been admitted to his presence. So wild a project, Demetrius well knew, would not receive his

sanction: therefore he resolved to conceal it, till success should have absolved him of rashness.

Dinner was over, and the happy family at Baron Ingersdorf's gathering round their desert, when they were delightfully surprised by the entrance of Count Forsheim and his young wife. Demetrius started up with a glow of pleasant réollections, to salute the still gay Lorenza; while Adelaide rose smilingly, to welcome this new acquaintance; and Leopoldstat embraced Forsheim with a brother's kindness.

"We have lately changed our quarters," said Forsheim in answer to a question of Marshal Ingersdorf's, "and being on the very confines of Austria, I could not resist a desire to see Leopoldstat's recovery with my own eyes: besides, this dear little fool (whom I have the honour to present to you all, as my agreeable torment for life) was so impatient to behold the whole circle, that I had no rest, till I obtained leave to depart."

"Have you not got my letter?" asked Charles.

"I have not had any letter these ten days," replied his friend, "if you wrote to our last cantonments, it is probably journeying after me."

Adelaide and her husband exchanged a glance of extreme disappointment; but spoke not.

The conversation then took that turn which always happens, when long absent friends appear suddenly, and meet in happiness. The circle was too large, and every person in it, too much animated, for a calm or tender tone: the more joyous spirits, gave the strongest impulse; and those that singly would have been serious, became soon, as tumultuously exhilarated as Forsheim himself.

In the midst of their gaiety, Demetrius apologized for the necessity he was under of keeping an appointment which he could not evade; but expressed a warm hope of finding the party still together, when he should certainly return to supper.

No one noticed that he spoke with agitation, except Charles, who was struck with his manner, and beckoned him to approach. His thoughts were startled at the suspicion of another duel between his brother and Nuremberg.

"Why are you so agitated, Demetrius," he whispered, and anxiously pressed his hand, "for Heaven's sake tell me, whether the Prince of Nuremberg has discovered."

"He knows nothing about me," hastily answered Demetrius, "I am not going to meet him: he is far off — surely Charles there is nothing wonderful in having an appointment? And mine, believe me, is not one to alarm anybody."

“You are sure of it ? “

“Certain,” and the sunny smile which for a moment brightened the face of Demetrius, composed his brother: he shook his hand affectionately, and released him.

Demetrius hastened into the garden, at the end of which, Pierre was in readiness, with the courier’s dress.

“Tis like to be a dreadful night” said the man, as he thrust his master’s fine hair under a huge leather cap.

“No matter,” replied Demetrius, “I care very little what sort of a night it proves, if I may but see my Constantia — and find her indeed safe —” his full heart stopped the speech.

The quick flashes of lightning that now vibrated every instant through the trees; and the distant thunder which began to mutter low and deep among the clouds, rather appalled Pierre: he expressed some apprehension for the horse his master was to ride, which he had tied to a tree at some distance from the garden gates; and indeed the poor fellow was so eager to get out of danger himself, that he scarcely gave Demetrius time to adjust half his novel accoutrements.

The night was sultry, and so still, that except the repeated peals of thunder, no sound was heard to drown the voices of Pierre and his master: they were therefore, forced to speak in whispers; and to open the iron gates, with extreme precaution. A broad sheet of lightning quivered on their surface, when Demetrius impatiently threw them open, and rushed into the road. He looked back towards the house; thought of the affectionate circle he had left there; and breathing a prayer for success and his Constantia, took the road to her uncle’s palace.

CHAPTER VII

“Is not my brother come yet?” asked Leopolstat the next morning, when, leaning on the arm of his wife, he entered the breakfast parlour.

Count Forsheim answered in the negative, gaily adding, “Since he seems resolved to spoil our breakfast as he did our supper, by making it wait for him, we must enter into a resolution not to forgive the truant trick he played us last night. Unless the gallant gentleman can make a very good excuse for himself, I think the dignity and charms of these fair ladies, have been grossly insulted.”

“The charms of some lady, as fair as ours,” observed the Baron, “may have tempted him to forego our supper.”

“It’s more likely,” interrupted the Marshal, “that the provoking puppy has caught an atrocious cold, and is at this time writhing in bed. He must have been out, in all that storm of thunder and lightning, and rain, and so I’ll post off to his lodgings, and see after him.”

As the Marshal took up his hat, Charles thanked him with a bow and a smile; and the two Countesses laughingly bade him bear their eternal enmity to Demetrius, for having thrown such a stigma on their joint attractions.

“I fear there is something deucedly inhuman in this Austrian air,” exclaimed Forsheim, “for I protest to you all, that not even the woeful supposition uttered by the Marshal as he vanished just now, has been able to damp the ardour with which I contemplate my breakfast. Are you hungry good folks, or are ye not? I profess myself famishing; and therefore, mean to fall upon the bread and ham, this very moment, and for these very reasons : —

“If my friend Demetrius is only idle and insolent I should be a great fool to stay my appetite for such a coxcomb: if he is sickish, we shall all be so miserable upon it, that I know none of us will dare to ask for anything to eat. I really cannot grieve on an empty stomach: if I don’t replenish myself with food, I have no strength to groan; and if I don’t drink, I can shed no tears.”

“But you can harangue pretty stoutly,” interrupted his wife, “and so fast and so fluently too, that it is the mutual interest of the Countess and me, to silence you with your breakfast immediately. If we don’t do so, your noisy tongue will have wearied everybody’s attention, before we can claim our female privilege, and use ours .”

The table was now quickly surrounded and the liveliness which every one assumed to drive away the uneasiness visible in the face of Leopolstat, soon awakened his sportive wit, and made the time of the Marshal’s absence, pass less anxiously.

The Baron and Count Forsheim were in the midst of a whimsical dispute, when the latter was told that a person wanted to speak with him in the anteroom : he obeyed the summons. What was his surprise to behold, Marshal Ingersdorf with a face as pale as death, and scarcely able to speak from agitation!

Forsheim stood aghast. "What has happened?" he exclaimed, in a low voice.

"He has never been at home!" exclaimed the Marshal, "they know nothing of him."

"Who do you mean? the people at his lodgings?"

"Yes! They have not seen him since yesterday, when he was there to dress for dinner. Heaven only knows whither he can have gone, or what has become of him!" —

Solicitous to quiet the alarm in which he now partook largely himself, Forsheim rather inconsiderately suggested, that he might have supped with a party of wild young men, drank too much wine, and been betrayed into a momentary forgetfulness of everybody else, by the allurements of some pretty opera girl: that if this party were held at one of the company's villas it might be a mile or two off; and so his late appearance was natural.

At mention of an opera girl, the Marshal roughly snatched his hand out of Forsheim's, angrily saying, "No Sir! This headstrong boy was once the victim, of passion; but I'd stake my life, he would never submit to be the slave of sense. —"

Forsheim's frank avowal that he really spoke what he was far from believing himself, reconciled the Marshal: in the midst of their discourse, Charles appeared.

His anxious, eager countenance, instantly caught the infectious paleness of theirs: at that moment, Forsheim almost wished the earth would open and swallow him, for his late unseasonable buffoonery; but he hastened to atone for it, by calming his friend's worst fears.

"I must see these people myself:" said Charles after Forsheim ceased, "you know I cannot go to them; they must be sent for — will you, my dear fellow, hasten to the Prince of Nuremberg's, and learn whether the Prince be there; whether in short, it be possible. that a duel with him —" he stopped, overcome for an instant, then resumed hastily, "did you see his servant, Sir? — surely *he* could tell where his master went last night."

"His servant is missing too. —" replied the Marshal. At this intelligence Leopoldstat, struck with the most horrible suspicion, was transfixed to the spot: the Marshal eyeing him, shook off a tear, and said in a tremulous voice, "I could almost wish, I had never burned my fingers with touching any of you! — I

thought that I had worked out my own happiness, and that of a dozen other folks besides, and I'm like to find the very reverse. I tell you Forsheim, this Demetrius has caused us all more heartaches, than ever he'll be worth ducats. I wish I had him here, only for five minutes! — If the puppy *does* show his face again, mind, I'll not look at it. He may come when he likes, and go when he likes, for I'll never notice one of his actions. His brother in such a state too! — I'll never forgive him — if he's above ground, I'll never forgive him.—”

Marshal Ingersdorf left the room as he concluded, in order to send for the persons Leopoldstat wished to question. Both Charles and Forsheim remained silent.

Their continued absence could not but excite some uneasiness in the ladies and Baron Ingersdorf: Adelaide ventured to seek them; and soon afterwards, the cause of all this mystery, spread dismay throughout the house.

The persons inhabiting the place where Demetrius had apartments, now appeared. They merely repeated Marshal Ingersdorf's first account; except that they remembered seeing Pierre come in at night, with two other men, and go up to his master's room, where they stayed only a few minutes, and went out again all together.

The Marshal had himself been again to the lodgings; had opened all the drawers and bureaus, but finding every thing safe, and not a single paper that could lead to information, concluded Pierre was innocent of what they suspected — a robbery.

“Charles! My dear Charles!” cried Adelaide approaching him, as he sat speechless with grief and perplexity, “we alarm ourselves too much, perhaps; is it not possible that Constantia and he, may last night, have been so imprudent as to fly together? —”

Her husband started: joy flashed over his face: “O my dear Adelaide,” he cried, “I would purchase that conviction, I believe, at the price of half my dearest hopes. —”

She blushed, as he pressed her to his bosom, while she softly whispered, “Is it me, or your child, you would resign? —”

“Not you, dearest angel of my life!” Charles replied, “nor yet — O neither — neither. —”

Count Forsheim who had been some time absent, now reentered; alas! He was destined to destroy their momentary hope. The Prince of Nuremberg was at — on state business: the Princess hearing Count Forsheim's errand, ventured to admit him; and had herself not only told him this, but assured him Constantia was just pronounced out of danger from a brain fever.

Here ended this feeble ground for consolation. Forsheim, the Baron, and the Marshal, were again dispersed in search of information: one was charged with scrutinising all parts of Vienna for the suspected Pierre; the other was to procure advertisements, to be circulated in every direction; the last, was to make a tour through the places of public entertainment, which had been open the night before; through all the coffee houses where he might have been seen, or where some person might be found, who could give account of him.

Charles, meanwhile, employed himself and his wife, in writing notes to different young men, whom they had heard Demetrius mention: hoping to obtain, through some one of these various channels, a key to the mystery.

The day closed without a single discovery. No one had seen Demetrius, since the moment in which he left the room at Baron Ingersdorf's; and Pierre's very few associates, proved their complete ignorance of his concealment. Officers of justice were now in search of this man and to his capture and confession, Leopoldstat secretly looked for all that he should ever hear again of his beloved brother.

There was no sorrow on earth, strong enough to conquer Charles's consideration for those around him. He stifled every expression of grief, or impatience; and it was only by his continual though suffocated sighs, that Adelaide found during the night, that he never slept.

Unable himself to walk, or even to bear the quick motion of a carriage, Leopoldstat was obliged to delegate his duty to others. Again his active friends commenced new inquiries; again returned unsuccessful: letters, messages, visitors, came every hour to the gate of the house, but each came to profess the same ill fortune.

Count Forsheim was at length forced to abandon his share in a task which he performed with a brother's zeal: the truce was just terminating; every officer was recalled to his regiment, and he could no longer remain from his. He departed, leaving Lorenza as a companion for Adelaide, whose spirits failed under the sight of her husband's distress, and the pressure of her own.

During a week's hopeless search, the thoughts of Count Leopoldstat often reverted to Colonel Wurtzburg: it is true, that he had received from this gentleman, a very strong and amazed denial of his having the slightest knowledge of Demetrius, or his concerns; but still, an instinctive suspicion haunted him like spectre, and like a spectre vanished when he would have scrutinised it.

How, or why Wurtzburg should have a share in his brother's disappearance, he could not form an idea: — Wurtzburg was with his regiment near Ingolstadt; — Wurtzburg had of late (at least when they met in Ulm) been friendly, but not forward: why, then, did he suspect the poor man? — He could not answer the question; yet for all that, suspicion itself, was not silenced.

Pierre, unluckily, had been once the Colonel's servant; and the association of ideas which this circumstance naturally produced, together with Wurtzburg's dubious conduct at Bolzano, prevented Charles from being thoroughly just.

While uncertain of his brother's fate, his own inaction appeared to him like a crime: yet what could he do, where turn, with any shadow of hope? — Without he could be present at the same time, in every part of the globe at once, he could not be sure that he was not journeying from the very country that contained the object he sought; and without he had some assurance that Wurtzburg or the Prince of Nuremberg, were concerned in the affair, he had not a single claim upon them, for a decisive answer to the questions his soul burned to urge.

Nothing but the discovery of Pierre was likely to unravel the mystery: and for his detection, he now exerted every power of money and of influence.

A fortnight had elapsed, when Baron Ingersdorf (having previously assured himself that Adelaide was in her dressingroom) entered the apartment of Charles. The deepest concern was, settled on his amiable countenance; his hands shook, as he took one of Leopold's within his, and strenuously pressed it. "My dear Nephew," he said, "I trust you are prepared for something very like a confirmation of our worst fears! I have just now come from a spot nearly a league off, where a country man has discovered —". He faltered; the fixed eyes of Charles alone urged him to proceed — "has discovered," he resumed, "the clothes of your brother. They were concealed among the bushes of a thicket; but after diligent search, we conclude, that as the river runs near — his body —".

Charles suddenly broke from the Baron's grasp, with all the force of his former strength: he spoke not; but his eyes shot forth a wild and lurid fire, as he flew with frightful haste towards the door of another apartment.

"Follow me not!" — he wildly exclaimed, pushing away the Baron who would: have entered with him; "Leave me! — Leave me to my own heart — and Heaven!"

So saying, he closed the door with precipitation, and appeared no more for the remainder of the day.

The good Baron, alarmed at the effect which this despair might have upon Adelaide, instantly devised a method of getting her to leave home: he dispatched a letter to Madame Reusmark, with instructions for her conduct; and then went himself to his niece, with that lady's urgent request to see her immediately. Having said that the Count was engaged with people on business, he got her to leave the house without seeing him; and certain that Madame de Reusmark would detain her by civil force, until the evening, he returned to wait the moment of his nephew's reappearance.

By the time Count Leopold had sufficiently mastered that mighty grief, which almost crushed the very centre of life, he quitted his solitude, and joined

a melancholy conference, now held between Baron Ingersdorf, and the Field Marshal.

Adelaide's situation, rendered it nearly criminal to shock her with so dreadful a discovery : and as it had always been the Count's wish to have his child born under his own paternal roof, it was agreed that preparations for their immediate journey to Hungary, should be commenced. — His wounds not yet healed, and his debilitated health prevented the possibility of his sharing in the future campaign; and as he had unlimited leave of absence from the Commander in Chief, it had long been his intention to try his native air for some months.

Marshal Ingersdorf voluntarily resigned the gratification of accompanying his son and daughter: promising to devote every thought and every hour, to the attempt of discovering that wretch Pierre, who was now considered by them all, as the murderer of his master.

The atrociousness of Pierre's crime, astonished, and sometimes staggered their conviction, when they reflected upon the small inducements he had to commit it. Except the miniature of Constantia, encircled with diamonds, which Demetrius wore constantly next his heart; and a very small sum of money in his purse; he carried nothing about with him, to tempt any but a hardened villain, to the act of murder. Yet, what other motive could engage Pierre to destroy the gentlest and most generous of masters? If he were only the instrument of another's vengeance (as Charles firmly believed), the clue to a discovery was lost.

Forsheim no sooner entered Bohemia, than he repaired to —, where to his utter disappointment, he found the Canoness had just breathed her last. After her death (which was sudden), no person appeared to have met with the appeal of Constantia, amongst her papers; and no person came forward, as if entrusted with the secret. Whether the letter in reply, therefore, had or had not been her production, was now left in doubt for ever.

At this period, the safety of his wife was the first consideration with Leopold: he secretly covenanted with himself to wait till there was no longer any cause for solicitude; meanwhile, to use every means afforded by nature and by art, for his own restoration, and then to revisit Austria, with the full determination of keeping a never closing eye upon all the actions of Wurtzburg and the Prince of Nuremberg.

“My spirit shall not sleep, till I have discovered thy fate!” he repeated to himself while he thought of Demetrius,— “Never, my brother, shall it cease to hover over the objects of its suspicion, till Heaven permits me to blast them with ample retribution!”

When Adelaide returned from her visit to Madame Reusmark, she heard with surprise, but not dissatisfaction, her husband's intention of setting out for Leopold the second day after the present. There was nothing precious to her in Vienna, except Constantia, whom she had several times vainly attempted to

see. To all her solicitations the Prince of Nuremberg had civilly replied, "his niece was too ill for company."

She now wrote to him again; and the next morning received a freezing permission.

The spirits of Adelaide, were at present ill-suited to the trial she anticipated: frequently after her carriage was announced, did she rise to go to it, and as often did she sink again upon her chair, weeping and trembling. Constantia had always been inexpressibly dear, for her own sake, and how much more so now, for that of Demetrius! — Charles dreaded the consequence of such a meeting, but forbore to express his fears, lest his wife should yield up the sacred duties of humanity and friendship, to her fondness for him. When her agitation subsided, he led her to the carriage, in which they were then slowly conveyed to the Palace of Nuremberg.

The Prince received Count Leopoldstat; the Princess, led his Countess to Constantia. For some time after the ladies left them, both gentlemen were silent; at last the Prince said coldly,

"I find, Sir, you are still unsuccessful in your search after your brother. I wish the young Count had not made it my interest to rejoice in a circumstance, which otherwise my esteem for you, would have taught me to lament."

"I know of nothing, Prince!" replied Charles, severely eyeing him, "that can excuse any man for rejoicing in the probable murder of another. — Surely, no act of my brother's, privileges even the Prince of Nuremberg, to boast of so monstrous a joy? —"

The Prince turned pale with the violence of that gathering passion, which he had not courage to show.

"You must allow the Prince of Nuremberg," he said, "to have some regard to propriety. As the brother of Count Leopoldstat, I should always have treated Count Demetrius with just consideration; but when he preposterously elevated himself to *my* level — when he persisted in retaining the affections of Princess Constantia —".

"And *did* he persist?" Charles eagerly demanded: "When your Highness last saw him, was it not to resign those proud hopes! — Has he since that moment attempted to see or to correspond with the Princess? —"

The penetrating eyes of Leopoldstat, levelled full at the Prince, perhaps put the latter, too soon upon his guard, for evidently checking a fierce reply, he answered peevishly,

"No, I suppose he has not: but the Princess obstinately persists in her attachment, though she knows I have other views for her future establishment."

“After this confession,” observed Charles, you will pardon me, Prince, when I frankly tell you, that I consider your conduct unjust; and must insist on your recalling the expression, which produced this unpleasant discussion. Recollect, you wished my brother *had not given you reason to rejoice in his calamitous fate*: you have now acknowledged his innocence; you are therefore bound, as a man of honour, to unsay whatever would make that innocence doubtful.”

Nuremberg instead of replying, walked up and down the room in great agitation. Charles calmly, but in a tone of determination, enforced his demand: his suspicions of the Prince, gathered strength every instant; and he hoped to push this advantage, till the Prince’s ungoverned temper might discover that knowledge of the young Count’s clandestine visits, which would furnish him with grounds for further examination. —

“I shall be loath to demand publicly,” resumed Leopoldstat, “what your Highness seems willing to withhold in private: but this recantation must be made; yes, Sir! It must: or I stand disgraced to my brother’s memory, and my own conscience, for ever.”

“Count, you take an unfair advantage of me:” returned Nuremberg, quivering as he spoke, “you are cool; my feelings are too keenly engaged, for me to weigh the precise extent of every word’s meaning. However, I must repeat, that although I might speak too forcibly of your brother, I am justified in asserting that it is unnatural to think he never found means to see or write to Constantia, without my knowledge. Her obstinate constancy, is a proof of it —”.

“As damning a proof,” Charles sternly exclaimed, “as the mortal animosity of the Prince of Nuremberg is, of his being the murderer of Demetrius —”.

For the first time, the Prince without changing colour, furiously dared the full blaze of Leopoldstat’s eyes: he stood steadily opposite to him for an instant, then said “Explain yourself, Sir.”

Amazed but not confounded by this unexpected sign of innocence, Charles answered, “I do not accuse you, Prince; I accuse no one, till furnished with proofs: — but I simply place the one accusation, against the other; to make you sensible, that if I were inclined to judge of your probable conduct, from your avowed motives (as you have done by my brother), my soul would not merely accuse, but condemn you.”

Nuremberg was completely silenced; though his spirit inwardly breathed curses on the man into whose power he was thus betrayed by his own madness. He could no longer refuse the apology which Leopoldstat required: he made it with an ill grace, adding, “After this humiliating necessity, you cannot be surprised, Count, to learn, that from this morning, I desire we may remain strangers; and that while Princess Constantia continues under my guardianship, I hope the Countess of Leopoldstat will never force me to the ungracious task of refusing a Lady’s request.” He did not wait for any other

reply than a dignified bend of the head, which Charles made him, as he darted out of the apartment.

Possessed with all the furies, he hurried to a room near that of Constantia's, where the loud sound of his voice, soon induced his Princess, to part the two friends. — Adelaide then rejoined her Lord, and they left the Palace.

Far from having to comfort, Adelaide herself had been comforted. Constantia seemed inspired with a conviction of Demetrius's being still alive; and placed so strong a dependance on this fond imagination, that Adelaide insensibly became a convert to it. Several detached speeches of her uncle's, authorised her in suspecting his knowledge of her meetings with Demetrius; nay, he had once dropped an expression which strongly indicated a suspicion at least, of her application to the Canoness: he had been the first to tell her, that her lover was missing; and had uniformly tried to persuade her, that his own rash hand had shortened his life.

The very admission of that friend whose visits he had hitherto refused, was another ground for believing he knew that Demetrius was removed from the chance of injuring him: for concealed, not killed, Constantia thought him. Her uncle's disposition might lead him to great enormities; to the violation of law, of personal freedom, of all those ties which bind men of common honesty together; but she was incapable of supposing him so abandoned of humanity and the dread of future punishment, as to become a deliberate murderer.

She conceived that Pierre had betrayed his master's confidence; was accessory to his disappearance; and that most likely on the offer of a great reward, would one day discover the place in which Demetrius was then immured.

Actuated by these ideas, she charged Adelaide to have new advertisements sent to every popular paper throughout Europe, addressed to this Pierre, offering him an enormous recompense to discover the persons concerned.

Her heart smote her, as she spoke, for she could not forget that Nuremberg (who would be eternally disgraced, were he found accessory to the plot) was her uncle; but the liberty, nay, the life of her blameless Demetrius was at stake, as well as her own earthly peace, and that of Adelaide and Charles: and she gained courage therefore, to offer some of her own wealth for the prosecution of this renewed attempt.

The sudden death of her Bohemian relation, banished the hope of obtaining an immediate release from the tyranny of her uncle; but now, she felt as if that oppression could no longer injure either her health or her spirits. This new and mighty anxiety, by giving a strong impulse to her mind, had renovated her frame; — she thought no more of herself; she remembered only Demetrius; she felt as if she ought not to die, while his fate was unknown, or his wrongs unrevenged.

Pale, wasted, feeble as she seemed, from the effects of her late illness, yet Adelaide saw with delight, life roused up in all her looks: it was not the consuming blaze of feverish energy, but the steady, increasing gift of mortal strength.

Animated with a new motive for living, Constantia resolutely refused to indulge herself in lamentation when Adelaide left her: but she was sad; and sat lost in reflection, when the door of her apartment was thrown open by the Prince.

Standing on the threshold, and beholding her for the first time since her illness, he eyed her altered figure, with a mixture of vexation and malice. "Your exchequer of beauty," he said, insultingly, "will soon be exhausted, child, if you draw on it thus prodigally. Since neither affection nor authority can reason you out of destroying yourself, go to your glass, and take counsel there: if you have but the vanity of your damned sex, that will have more effect upon you, than a hundred ghostly lectures."

Constantia turned away without speaking. Irritated at her silence, the Prince continued, "I tell you, girl, you can't afford this waste of good looks: in the season of your greatest abundance, there was none to spare; and now that you have sighed, and groaned, and scolded, and fainted away, the rosy-coloured blood that used to make those features of yours tolerable, believe me they are reduced to very commonplace features indeed.

"As to the figure, on which I know you prided yourself, — your neck, your arms, your finely rounded shape, — it's all vanished: gone for ever, my poor damsel! And if it were not for the beauties that still exist in your Venetian estates, verily believe, no man on earth would take you off my hands."

A momentary flush of resentment on the cheek of Constantia, convinced the Prince that her rosy-coloured blood was not quite gone; she gave him a look of disdain, saying, "Yes, Sir! There is *one* man; and he, thank heaven, is the only one to whom I would give this person, changed as it is."

"You'd make him a devilish handsome present, upon my soul!" exclaimed her uncle; tears gushed from Constantia's eyes, but she concealed them, by averting her head. He continued: "and who may this *moderate* Gentleman be? — I pray."

"Count Demetrius of Leopoldstat."

The Prince now burst into a brutal fit of laughter, during which, Constantia hastily endeavoured to pass him. "Stay, stay, child!" he cried, forcibly pushing her from the door, "I cannot let you go yet — you are positively very diverting. — So, you would make a present of yourself to a dead man! — Why truly, in your present shadowy state, the idea's not amiss; and I think you would be an admirable match for him."

“Dost thou hear him, just heaven!” Constantia wildly exclaimed, shuddering, and closing her eyes, as if unable to look upon such a monster.

Nuremberg now changed his tone: his countenance blackened; and roughly seizing her arm, he said (in a voice like distant thunder) “Wretch! If thou could'st guess all that I know of thy infernal machinations! — I owe thee no pity — no mercy — and thou shalt find none.”

He flung her from him, with a violence, which threw her against the wall; but heedless of the act, he remained in her apartment, traversing it with hasty strides. Stung to the quick, by the concession forced from him by Count Leopoldstat, he now found one defenceless creature, on whom to pour the vials of wrath. Stopping near her again, he abruptly exclaimed, “You have seen your friend, Madame Leopoldstat, I can tell you, for the last time. None bearing that name, shall ever again pollute my house with their presence.”

“Your commands are law in your own house, certainly, Sir,” answered Constantia, “of course I shall never again expect to see her here; but when I am my own mistress — in my own house —”.

The Prince interrupted her “So, you look forward to that event, after all! I thought what your burning passion would come to! — You, that were dying for this Hungarian Paris, when he was alive, can now live on — aye, and live merrily too — when he is dead! — For my part, I expected to hear of your turning nun at least.”

“Your Highness was mistaken then,” replied Constantia — “No, Sir ; do not suppose I will ever voluntarily quit the world, while there remains a single hope of finding *him* in it. — Do with me what you please; but I warn you, that a day of retribution will arrive: as you deal with me now, shall you be requited at my hands hereafter. — You dare not, — I believe you would not violently kill me, yet you have not scrupled to use a coward's method for ridding me of life: you have daily insulted, afflicted, and imprisoned me; you have destroyed my youth and my health; you may still do more; but I tell you, there is an *invincible something* in this heart of mine, which will survive all your injuries. Beware of placing yourself too much in my power, lest when I have the means to ruin your unsuspected character, the memory of these outrages should supply me with the inclination.”

The Prince now stood as if blinded by lightning; his senses were locked up in amazement at so unexpected a threat: — Constantia seized the moment, and flying past him, got into her waiting maid's room, fastened the door, and cast herself on a couch, completely exhausted

The very next morning Nuremberg ordered his family to prepare for an immediate journey : soon after, they were all on their way to Venice, where Constantia had a superb mansion, over which the Prince, as her guardian, could rule with as absolute authority as in his own.