

CHAPTER VI

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

JULIUS CÆSAR

Daylight dispelled from Emily's mind the glooms of superstition, but not those of apprehension. The Count Morano was the first image that occurred to her waking thoughts, and then came a train of anticipated evils, which she could neither conquer, nor avoid. She rose, and, to relieve her mind from the busy ideas, that tormented it, compelled herself to notice external objects. From her casement she looked out upon the wild grandeur of the scene, closed nearly on all sides by alpine steeps, whose tops, peeping over each other, faded from the eye in misty hues, while the promontories below were dark with woods, that swept down to their base, and stretched along the narrow valleys. The rich pomp of these woods was particularly delightful to Emily; and she viewed with astonishment the fortifications of the castle spreading along a vast extent of rock, and now partly in decay, the grandeur of the ramparts below, and the towers and battlements and various features of the fabric above. From these her sight wandered over the cliffs and woods into the valley, along which foamed a broad and rapid stream, seen falling among the crags of an opposite mountain, now flashing in the sunbeams, and now shadowed by over-arching pines, till it was entirely concealed by their thick foliage. Again it burst from beneath this darkness in one broad sheet of foam, and fell thundering into the vale. Nearer, towards the west, opened the mountain vista, which Emily had viewed with such sublime emotion, on her approach to the castle: a thin dusky vapour, that rose from the valley, overspread its features with a sweet obscurity. As this ascended and caught the sunbeams, it kindled into a crimson tint, and touched with exquisite beauty the woods and cliffs, over which it passed to the summit of the mountains; then, as the veil drew up, it was delightful to watch the gleaming objects, that progressively disclosed themselves in the valley — the green turf — dark woods — little rocky recesses — a few peasants' huts — the foaming stream — a herd of cattle, and various images of pastoral beauty. Then, the pine forests brightened, and then the broad breast of the mountains, till, at length, the mist settled round their summit, touching them with a ruddy glow. The features of the vista now appeared distinctly, and the broad deep shadows, that fell from the lower cliffs, gave strong effect to the streaming splendour above; while the mountains, gradually sinking in the perspective, appeared to shelve into the Adriatic sea, for such Emily imagined to be the gleam of bluish light that terminated the view.

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

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

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

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

Her satirical discourse was, however, interrupted by the entrance of Montoni, and her countenance immediately assumed a mingled expression of fear and resentment, while he seated himself at the breakfast table, as if unconscious of there being any person but himself in the room.

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

"I have no time to attend to these idle whims" said Montoni, "that chamber was prepared for you, and you must rest contented with it. It is not probable,

that any person would take the trouble of going to that remote staircase, for the purpose of fastening a door. If it was not fastened, when you entered the chamber, the wind, perhaps, shook the door and made the bolts slide. But I know not why I should undertake to account for so trifling an occurrence.”

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

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

Carlo soon after entered with some fruit:

“Your *Excellenza* is tired after your long ramble,” said he, as he set the fruit upon the table; “but you have more to see after breakfast. There is a place in the vaulted passage leading to —”

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

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

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

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

“Come, come” said Montoni, impatiently “enough of this. Leave the room, but be in waiting. I shall want you presently.”

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

When Madame Montoni retired to her dressing room, Emily endeavoured to amuse herself by a view of the castle. Through a folding door she passed from the great hall to the ramparts, which extended along the brow of the precipice, round three sides of the edifice; the fourth was guarded by the high walls of the courts, and by the gateway, through which she had passed, on the preceding evening. The grandeur of the broad ramparts, and the changing scenery they overlooked, excited her high admiration; for the extent of the terraces allowed the features of the country to be seen in such various points of view, that they appeared to form new landscapes. She often paused to examine the gothic magnificence of Udolpho, its proud irregularity, its lofty towers and battlements, its high-arched casements, and its slender watchtowers, perched upon the corners of turrets. Then she would lean on the wall of the terrace, and, shuddering, measure with her eye the precipice below, till the dark summits of the woods arrested it. Wherever she turned, appeared mountain tops, forests of pine and narrow glens, opening among the Apennines and retiring from the sight into inaccessible regions.

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

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

When she thought that they had passed the hall, she ventured again to the door, and proceeded, unobserved, to her room, where she remained, agitated with apprehensions, and listening to every distant sound. At length, hearing voices on the rampart, she hastened to her window, and observed Montoni, with Signor Cavigni, walking below, conversing earnestly, and often stopping and turning towards each other, at which time their discourse seemed to be uncommonly interesting.

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

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

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

“Nay, ma’am, do guess once.”

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

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

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

“Who, I! — the Count! No, ma’amselle, I did not say so.”

“He is *not* come then?” said Emily eagerly.

“No, ma’amselle.”

“You are sure of it?”

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

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

“O yes, quite sure of that, ma’amselle. Why, I was looking out through the grate in the north turret, when the carriages drove into the courtyard, and I never expected to see such a goodly sight in this dismal old castle! But here are masters and servants, too, enough to make the place ring again. O! I was ready to leap through the rusty old bars for joy! — O! Who would ever have thought of seeing a christian face in this huge dreary house? I could have kissed the very horses that brought them.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“O, but, ma’amselle, I forgot to ask — how did you sleep in this dreary old chamber last night?”

— “As well as usual.”

— “Did you hear no noises?”

— “None.”

— “Nor see anything?”

— “Nothing.”

— “Well, that is surprising!”

— “Not in the least: and now tell me, why you ask these questions.”

“O, ma’amselle! I would not tell you for the world, nor all I have heard about this chamber, either; it would frighten you so.”

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

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

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

Annette turned pale, and said not a word.

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

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

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

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

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

Montoni having refused Emily another chamber, she determined to bear with patience the evil she could not remove, and, in order to make the room as comfortable as possible, unpacked her books, her sweet delight in happier days, and her soothing resource in the hours of moderate sorrow: but there were hours when even these failed of their effect; when the genius, the taste, the enthusiasm of the sublimest writers were felt no longer.

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

“How can I suffer myself to be deluded by hope” said she “and, because Count Morano is not yet arrived, feel a momentary happiness? Alas! what is it to me, whether he is here today, or tomorrow, if he comes at all? — and that he will come — it were weakness to doubt.”

To withdraw her thoughts, however, from the subject of her misfortunes, she attempted to read, but her attention wandered from the page, and, at length, she threw aside the book, and determined to explore the adjoining chambers of the castle. Her imagination was pleased with the view of ancient grandeur, and an emotion of melancholy awe awakened all its powers, as she walked through rooms, obscure and desolate, where no footsteps had passed probably for many years, and remembered the strange history of the former possessor of the edifice. This brought to her recollection the veiled picture, which had attracted her curiosity, on the preceding night, and she resolved to examine it. As she passed through the chambers, that led to this, she found herself somewhat agitated; its connection with the late lady of the castle, and the conversation of Annette, together with the circumstance of the veil, throwing a mystery over the

subject, that excited a faint degree of terror. But a terror of this nature, as it occupies and expands the mind, and elevates it to high expectation, is purely sublime, and leads us, by a kind of fascination, to seek even the object, from which we appear to shrink.

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

When she recovered her recollection, the remembrance of what she had seen had nearly deprived her of it a second time. She had scarcely strength to remove from the room, and regain her own; and, when arrived there, wanted courage to remain alone. Horror occupied her mind, and excluded, for a time, all sense of past, and dread of future misfortune: she seated herself near the casement, because from thence she heard voices, though distant, on the terrace, and might see people pass, and these, trifling as they were, were reviving circumstances. When her spirits had recovered their tone, she considered, whether she should mention what she had seen to Madame Montoni, and various and important motives urged her to do so, among which the least was the hope of the relief, which an overburdened mind finds in speaking of the subject of its interest. But she was aware of the terrible consequences, which such a communication might lead to; and, dreading the indiscretion of her aunt, at length, endeavoured to arm herself with resolution to observe a profound silence on the subject. Montoni and Verezzi soon after passed under the casement, speaking cheerfully, and their voices revived her. Presently the Signors Bertolini and Cavigni joined the party on the terrace, and Emily, supposing that Madame Montoni was then alone, went to seek her; for the solitude of her chamber, and its proximity to that where she had received so severe a shock, again affected her spirit.

She found her aunt in her dressing room, preparing for dinner. Emily's pale and affrighted countenance alarmed even Madame Montoni; but she had sufficient strength of mind to be silent on the subject, that still made her shudder, and which was ready to burst from her lips. In her aunt's apartment she remained till they both descended to dinner. There she met the gentlemen lately arrived, who had a kind of busy seriousness in their looks, which was somewhat unusual with them, while their thoughts seemed too much occupied by some deep interest, to suffer them to bestow much attention either on Emily or Madame Montoni. They spoke little, and Montoni less. Emily, as she now looked on him, shuddered. The horror of the chamber rushed on her mind. Several times the colour faded from her cheeks, and she feared, that illness would betray her emotions, and compel her to leave the room; but the strength of her resolution remedied the weakness of her frame; she obliged herself to converse, and even tried to look cheerful.

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

It was a comfortless and silent meal. The gloom of the castle seemed to have spread its contagion even over the gay countenance of Cavigni, and with this gloom was mingled a fierceness such as she had seldom seen him indicate. Count Morano was not named, and what conversation there was, turned chiefly upon the wars which at that time agitated the Italian states, the strength of the Venetian armies, and the characters of their generals.

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

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

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

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

solace, and she struggled hard to retain them. A few tears of agony started to her eyes, which she turned aside to conceal.

While she afterwards leaned on the wall of the rampart, some peasants, at a little distance, were seen examining a breach, before which lay a heap of stones, as if to repair it, and a rusty old cannon, that appeared to have fallen from its station above. Madame Montoni stopped to speak to the men, and enquired what they were going to do. "To repair the fortifications, your ladyship" said one of them; a labour which she was somewhat surprised, that Montoni should think necessary, particularly since he had never spoken of the castle, as of a place, at which he meant to reside for any considerable time; but she passed on towards a lofty arch, that led from the south to the east rampart, and which adjoined the castle, on one side, while, on the other, it supported a small watchtower, that entirely commanded the deep valley below. As she approached this arch, she saw, beyond it, winding along the woody descent of a distant mountain, a long troop of horse and foot, whom she knew to be soldiers, only by the glitter of their pikes and other arms, for the distance did not allow her to discover the colour of their liveries. As she gazed, the vanguard issued from the woods into the valley, but the train still continued to pour over the remote summit of the mountain, in endless succession; while, in the front, the military uniform became distinguishable, and the commanders, riding first, and seeming, by their gestures, to direct the march of those that followed, at length, approached very near to the castle.

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

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

"Tell Madam Montoni I am engaged," said he.

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

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

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

The cavaliers supped by themselves, and Madame Montoni remained in her apartment, whither Emily went, before she retired to her own. She found her aunt weeping, and in much agitation. The tenderness of Emily was naturally so soothing, that it seldom failed to give comfort to the drooping heart: but Madame Montoni's was torn, and the softest accents of Emily's voice were lost upon it. With her usual delicacy, she did not appear to observe her aunt's distress, but it gave an involuntary gentleness to her manners, and an air of solicitude to her countenance, which Madame Montoni was vexed to perceive, who seemed to feel the pity of her niece to be an insult to her pride, and dismissed her as soon as she properly could. Emily did not venture to mention again the reluctance she felt to her gloomy chamber, but she requested that Annette might be permitted to remain with her till she retired to rest; and the request was somewhat reluctantly granted. Annette, however, was now with the servants, and Emily withdrew alone.

With light and hasty steps she passed through the long galleries, while the feeble glimmer of the lamp she carried only showed the gloom around her, and the passing air threatened to extinguish it. The lonely silence, that reigned in this part of the castle, awed her; now and then, indeed, she heard a faint peal of laughter rise from a remote part of the edifice, where the servants were assembled, but it was soon lost, and a kind of breathless stillness remained. As she passed the suite of rooms which she had visited in the morning, her eyes glanced fearfully on the door, and she almost fancied she heard murmuring sounds within, but she paused not a moment to enquire.

Having reached her own apartment, where no blazing wood on the hearth dissipated the gloom, she sat down with a book, to enliven her attention, till Annette should come, and a fire could be kindled. She continued to read till her light was nearly expired, but Annette did not appear, and the solitude and obscurity of her chamber again affected her spirits, the more, because of its nearness to the scene of horror, that she had witnessed in the morning. Gloomy and fantastic images came to her mind. She looked fearfully towards the door of the staircase, and then, examining whether it was still fastened, found that it was so. Unable to conquer the uneasiness she felt at the prospect of sleeping again in this remote and insecure apartment, which some person seemed to have entered during the preceding night, her impatience to see Annette, whom she had bidden to enquire concerning this circumstance, became extremely painful. She wished also to question her, as to the object, which had excited so much horror in her own mind, and which Annette on the preceding evening had appeared to be in part acquainted with, though her words were very remote from the truth, and it appeared plainly to Emily, that the girl had been purposely misled by a false report: above all she was surprised, that the door of the chamber, which contained it, should be left unguarded. Such an instance of negligence almost surpassed belief. But her light was now expiring; the faint flashes it threw upon the walls called up all the terrors of fancy, and she rose to find her way to the habitable part of the castle, before it was quite extinguished. As she opened the chamber door, she heard remote voices, and, soon after, saw a light issue upon the further end of the corridor, which Annette and another servant approached. "I am glad you are come," said Emily: "what has detained you so long? Pray light me a fire immediately."

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

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

Caterina soon returned with the wood, and then, when the cheerful blaze once more animated the room, and this servant had withdrawn, Emily asked Annette, whether she had made the enquiry she bade her. "Yes, ma'amselle" said Annette "but not a soul knows anything about the matter: and old Carlo — I watched him well, for they say he knows strange things — old Carlo looked so as I don't know how to tell, and he asked me again and again, if I was sure the door was ever unfastened. Lord, says I — am I sure I am alive? And as for me, ma'am, I am all astounded, as one may say, and would no more sleep in this chamber, than I would on the great cannon at the end of the east rampart."

"And what objection have you to that cannon, more than to any of the rest?" said Emily smiling: "the best would be rather a hard bed."

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

“Well! my good Annette, the people who tell such stories, are happy in having you for an auditor, for I perceive you believe them all.”

“Dear ma’amselle! I will show you the very cannon; you can see it from these windows!”

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

“What! Not if I show you the very cannon! Dear ma’am, you will believe nothing.”

“Nothing probably upon this subject, but what I see,” said Emily.

—“Well, ma’am, but you shall see it, if you will only step this way to the casement.” — Emily could not forbear laughing, and Annette looked surprised. Perceiving her extreme aptitude to credit the marvellous, Emily forbore to mention the subject she had intended, lest it should overcome her with idle terrors, and she began to speak on a lively topic — the regattas of Venice.

“Aye, ma’amselle, those rowing matches” said Annette “and the fine moonlight nights, are all, that are worth seeing in Venice. To be sure the moon is brighter than any I ever saw; and then to hear such sweet music, too, as Ludovico has often and often sung under the lattice by the west portico! Ma’amselle, it was Ludovico, that told me about that picture, which you wanted so to look at last night, and —”

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

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

“You never saw it, then?” said Emily.

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

Emily, endeavouring to conceal the emotion this circumstance occasioned, enquired at what hour she went to the chamber, and found, that it was soon after herself had been there. She also asked further questions, and the answers convinced her, that Annette, and probably her informer, were ignorant of the terrible truth, though in Annette’s account something very like the truth, now and then, mingled with the falsehood. Emily now began to fear, that her visit to the chamber had been observed, since the door had been closed, so immediately

after her departure; and dreaded lest this should draw upon her the vengeance of Montoni. Her anxiety, also, was excited to know whence, and for what purpose, the delusive report, which had been imposed upon Annette, had originated, since Montoni could only have wished for silence and secrecy; but she felt, that the subject was too terrible for this lonely hour, and she compelled herself to leave it, to converse with Annette, whose chat, simple as it was, she preferred to the stillness of total solitude.

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

“What, at this time of night, ma’am!” said Annette: “No, my dear lady. But, for that matter, it is a strange time of night for anybody to come!”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Yes, ma’am, I saw him alight, for I went from hence to the grate in the north turret, that overlooks the inner courtyard, you know. There I saw the Count’s carriage, and the Count in it, waiting at the great door — for the porter was just gone to bed — with several men on horseback all by the light of the torches they carried.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

As she returned towards her chamber, Emily began to fear, that she might again lose herself in the intricacies of the castle, and again be shocked by some mysterious spectacle; and, though she was already perplexed by the numerous turnings, she feared to open one of the many doors that offered. While she stepped thoughtfully along, she fancied, that she heard a low moaning at no great distance, and, having paused a moment, she heard it again and distinctly.

Several doors appeared on the right hand of the passage. She advanced, and listened. When she came to the second, she heard a voice, apparently in complaint, within, to which she continued to listen, afraid to open the door, and unwilling to leave it. Convulsive sobs followed, and then the piercing accents of an agonizing spirit burst forth. Emily stood appalled, and looked through the gloom, that surrounded her, in fearful expectation. The lamentations continued. Pity now began to subdue terror; it was possible she might administer comfort to the sufferer, at least, by expressing sympathy, and she laid her hand on the door. While she hesitated she thought she knew this voice, disguised as it was by tones of grief. Having, therefore, set down the lamp in the passage, she gently opened the door, within which all was dark, except that from an inner apartment a partial light appeared; and she stepped softly on. Before she reached it, the appearance of Madame Montoni, leaning on her Dressing table, weeping, and with a handkerchief held to her eyes, struck her, and she paused.

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

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

“And now, ma'amselle,” added she, “I am so sleepy! — I am sure, if you were so sleepy, you would not desire me to sit up with you.”

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

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

“I dare say it will be very long, ma’amselle” said Annette.

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

“O no, ma’am, they were alone together.”

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

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

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

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

Emily took no further notice of the subject, and, after some struggle with imaginary fears, her good nature prevailed over them so far, that she dismissed Annette for the night. She then sat, musing upon her own circumstances and those of Madame Montoni, till her eye rested on the miniature picture, which she had found, after her father’s death, among the papers he had enjoined her to destroy. It was open upon the table, before her, among some loose drawings, having, with them, been taken out of a little box by Emily, some hours before. The sight of it called up many interesting reflections, but the melancholy sweetness of the countenance soothed the emotions, which these had occasioned. It was the same style of countenance as that of her late father, and, while she gazed on it with fondness on this account, she even fancied a resemblance in the features. But this tranquillity was suddenly interrupted, when she recollected the words in the manuscript, that had been found with this picture, and which had formerly occasioned her so much doubt and horror. At length, she roused herself from the deep reverie, into which this remembrance had thrown her; but, when she rose to undress, the silence and solitude, to which she was left, at this midnight hour, for not even a distant sound was now heard, conspired with the impression the subject she had been considering had given to her mind, to appall her. Annette’s hints, too, concerning this chamber, simple as they were, had not failed to affect her, since they followed a circumstance of peculiar horror, which she herself had witnessed, and since the scene of this was a chamber nearly adjoining her own.

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

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

From the disturbed slumber, into which she then sunk, she was soon awakened by a noise, which seemed to arise within her chamber; but the silence, that prevailed, as she fearfully listened, inclined her to believe, that she had been alarmed by such sounds as sometimes occur in dreams, and she laid her head again upon the pillow.

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

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

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

She gazed at him for a moment in speechless affright, while he, throwing himself on his knee at the bedside, besought her to fear nothing, and, having thrown down his sword, would have taken her hand, when the faculties, that terror had suspended, suddenly returned, and she sprung from the bed, in the

dress, which surely a kind of prophetic apprehension had prevented her, on this night, from throwing aside.

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

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

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

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

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

“Hear me, Emily” resumed Morano “hear me! I love, and am in despair — yes — in despair. How can I gaze upon you, and know, that it is, perhaps, for the last time, without suffering all the frenzy of despair? But it shall not be so; you shall be mine, in spite of Montoni and all his villany.”

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

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

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

“You can never hope anything from his pity” said Morano “he has used me infamously, and my vengeance shall pursue him. And for you, Emily, for you, he has new plans more profitable than the last, no doubt.” The gleam of hope, which the Count’s former speech had revived, was now nearly extinguished by the latter; and, while Emily’s countenance betrayed the emotions of her mind, he endeavoured to take advantage of the discovery.

“I lose time” said he: “I came not to exclaim against Montoni; I came to solicit, to plead — to Emily; to tell her all I suffer, to entreat her to save me from despair, and herself from destruction. Emily! The schemes of Montoni are insearchable, but, I warn you, they are terrible; he has no principle, when interest, or ambition leads. Can I love you, and abandon you to his power? Fly, then, fly from this gloomy prison, with a lover, who adores you! I have bribed a servant

of the castle to open the gates, and, before tomorrow's dawn, you shall be far on the way to Venice."

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

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

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

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

"Nor do I hesitate," said Emily.

"Let us go, then" said Morano, eagerly kissing her hand, and rising "my carriage waits, below the castle walls."

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

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

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

“I have now neither the time, nor the means of adducing proof” replied the Count.

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

“But you trifle with my patience and my distress” continued Morano. “Is a marriage with a man, who adores you, so very terrible in your eyes, that you would prefer to it all the misery, to which Montoni may condemn you in this remote prison? Some wretch must have stolen those affections, which ought to be mine, or you would not thus obstinately persist in refusing an offer, that would place you beyond the reach of oppression.” Morano walked about the room, with quick steps, and a disturbed air.

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

“Yes, let him come” cried Morano furiously “and brave *my* resentment! Let him dare to face once more the man he has so courageously injured; danger shall teach him morality, and vengeance justice — let him come, and receive my sword in his heart!”

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

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

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

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

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

“Unjust revenge!” cried the Count, resuming the abrupt tones of passion. “Who, that looks upon that face, can imagine a punishment adequate to the injury he would have done me? Yes, I will leave the castle; but it shall not be alone. I have trifled too long. Since my prayers and my sufferings cannot prevail, force shall. I have people in waiting, who shall convey you to my carriage. Your voice will bring no succour; it cannot be heard from this remote part of the castle; submit, therefore, in silence, to go with me.”

This was an unnecessary injunction, at present; for Emily was too certain, that her call would avail her nothing; and terror had so entirely disordered her thoughts, that she knew not how to plead to Morano, but sat, mute and trembling, in her chair, till he advanced to lift her from it, when she suddenly raised herself, and, with a repulsive gesture, and a countenance of forced serenity, said “Count Morano! I am now in your power; but you will observe, that this is not the conduct which can win the esteem you appear so solicitous to obtain, and that you are preparing for yourself a load of remorse, in the miseries of a friendless orphan, which can never leave you. Do you believe your heart to be, indeed, so hardened, that you can look without emotion on the suffering, to which you would condemn me? —”

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

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

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

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

He was interrupted by the loud barking of the dog.

“Stay, Count Morano,” said Emily, terrified by his words, and by the fury expressed in his eyes, “I will save you from this error. — Of all men, Signor

Montoni is not your rival; though, if I find all other means of saving myself vain, I will try whether my voice may not arouse his servants to my succour."

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

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

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

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

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

"Coward!" cried Montoni, bursting from the people who held him, and rushing on the Count, when they both retreated into the corridor, where the fight continued so desperately, that none of the spectators dared approach them, Montoni swearing, that the first who interfered, should fall by his sword.

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

his life. Morano, sinking under the anguish of his wound, had scarcely replied by a gesture, and by a few words, feebly articulated, that he would not — when he fainted; and Montoni was then going to have plunged the sword into his breast, as he lay senseless, but his arm was arrested by Cavigni. To the interruption he yielded without much difficulty, but his complexion changed almost to blackness, as he looked upon his fallen adversary, and ordered, that he should be carried instantly from the castle.

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

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

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

"I have deserved this" said he "but not from Montoni. It is from you, Emily, that I have deserved punishment, yet I receive only pity!" He paused, for he had spoken with difficulty. After a moment, he proceeded. "I must resign you, but not to Montoni. Forgive me the sufferings I have already occasioned you! But for *that* villain — his infamy shall not go unpunished. Carry me from this place," said he to his servants. "I am in no condition to travel: you must, therefore, take me to the nearest cottage, for I will not pass the night under his roof, although I may expire on the way from it."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"And only for my recovery?" said Morano, with a sigh. "For your general welfare," added Emily.

"Perhaps I ought to be contented with this" he resumed; "I certainly have not deserved more; but I would ask you, Emily, sometimes to think of me, and, forgetting my offence, to remember only the passion which occasioned it. I would ask, alas! Impossibilities: I would ask you to love me! At this moment, when I am about to part with you, and that, perhaps, for ever, I am scarcely myself. Emily — may you never know the torture of a passion like mine! What do I say? O, that, for me, you might be sensible of such a passion!"

Emily looked impatient to be gone. "I entreat you, Count, to consult your own safety" said she "and linger here no longer. I tremble for the consequences of

Signor Verezzi's passion, and of Montoni's resentment, should he learn that you are still here."

Morano's face was overspread with a momentary crimson, his eyes sparkled, but he seemed endeavouring to conquer his emotion, and replied in a calm voice "Since you are interested for my safety, I will regard it, and be gone. But, before I go, let me again hear you say, that you wish me well," said he, fixing on her an earnest and mournful look.

Emily repeated her assurances. He took her hand, which she scarcely attempted to withdraw, and put it to his lips. "Farewell, Count Morano!" said Emily; and she turned to go, when a second message arrived from Montoni, and she again conjured Morano, as he valued his life, to quit the castle immediately. He regarded her in silence, with a look of fixed despair. But she had no time to enforce her compassionate entreaties, and, not daring to disobey the second command of Montoni, she left the corridor, to attend him.

He was in the cedar parlour, that adjoined the great hall, laid upon a couch, and suffering a degree of anguish from his wound, which few persons could have disguised, as he did. His countenance, which was stern, but calm, expressed the dark passion of revenge, but no symptom of pain; bodily pain, indeed, he had always despised, and had yielded only to the strong and terrible energies of the soul. He was attended by old Carlo and by Signor Bertolini, but Madame Montoni was not with him.

Emily trembled, as she approached and received his severe rebuke, for not having obeyed his first summons; and perceived, also, that he attributed her stay in the corridor to a motive, that had not even occurred to her artless mind.

"This is an instance of female caprice," said he, "which I ought to have foreseen. Count Morano, whose suit you obstinately rejected, so long as it was countenanced by me, you favour, it seems, since you find I have dismissed him."

Emily looked astonished. "I do not comprehend you, sir" said she "You certainly do not mean to imply, that the design of the Count to visit the double-chamber, was founded upon any approbation of mine."

"To that I reply nothing," said Montoni; "but it must certainly be a more than common interest, that made you plead so warmly in his cause, and that could detain you thus long in his presence, contrary to my express order—in the presence of a man, whom you have hitherto, on all occasions, most scrupulously shunned!"

"I fear, sir, it was a more than common interest, that detained me" said Emily calmly; "for of late I have been inclined to think, that of compassion is an uncommon one. But how could I, could *you*, sir, witness Count Morano's deplorable condition, and not wish to relieve it?"

“You add hypocrisy to caprice” said Montoni, frowning “and an attempt at satire, to both; but, before you undertake to regulate the morals of other persons, you should learn and practise the virtues, which are indispensable to a woman — sincerity, uniformity of conduct and obedience.”

Emily, who had always endeavoured to regulate her conduct by the nicest laws, and whose mind was finely sensible, not only of what is just in morals, but of whatever is beautiful in the female character, was shocked by these words; yet, in the next moment, her heart swelled with the consciousness of having deserved praise, instead of censure, and she was proudly silent. Montoni, acquainted with the delicacy of her mind, knew how keenly she would feel his rebuke; but he was a stranger to the luxury of conscious worth, and, therefore, did not foresee the energy of that sentiment, which now repelled his satire. Turning to a servant who had lately entered the room, he asked whether Morano had quitted the castle. The man answered, that his servants were then removing him, on a couch, to a neighbouring cottage. Montoni seemed somewhat appeased, on hearing this; and, when Ludovico appeared, a few moments after, and said, that Morano was gone, he told Emily she might retire to her apartment.

She withdrew willingly from his presence; but the thought of passing the remainder of the night in a chamber, which the door from the staircase made liable to the intrusion of any person, now alarmed her more than ever, and she determined to call at Madame Montoni’s room, and request, that Annette might be permitted to be with her.

On reaching the great gallery, she heard voices seemingly in dispute, and, her spirits now apt to take alarm, she paused, but soon distinguished some words of Cavigni and Verezzi, and went towards them, in the hope of conciliating their difference. They were alone. Verezzi’s face was still flushed with rage; and, as the first object of it was now removed from him, he appeared willing to transfer his resentment to Cavigni, who seemed to be expostulating, rather than disputing, with him.

Verezzi was protesting, that he would instantly inform Montoni of the insult, which Morano had thrown out against him, and above all, that, wherein he had accused him of murder.

“There is no answering,” said Cavigni, “for the words of a man in a passion; little serious regard ought to be paid to them. If you persist in your resolution, the consequences may be fatal to both. We have now more serious interests to pursue, than those of a petty revenge.”

Emily joined her entreaties to Cavigni’s arguments, and they, at length, prevailed so far, as that Verezzi consented to retire, without seeing Montoni.

On calling at her aunt’s apartment, she found it fastened. In a few minutes, however, it was opened by Madame Montoni herself.

It may be remembered, that it was by a door leading into the bedroom from a back passage, that Emily had secretly entered a few hours preceding. She now conjectured, by the calmness of Madame Montoni's air, that she was not apprised of the accident, which had befallen her husband, and was beginning to inform her of it, in the tenderest manner she could, when her aunt interrupted her, by saying, she was acquainted with the whole affair.

Emily knew indeed, that she had little reason to love Montoni, but could scarcely have believed her capable of such perfect apathy, as she now discovered towards him; having obtained permission, however, for Annette to sleep in her chamber, she went thither immediately.

A track of blood appeared along the corridor, leading to it; and on the spot, where the Count and Montoni had fought, the whole floor was stained. Emily shuddered, and leaned on Annette, as she passed. When she reached her apartment, she instantly determined, since the door of the staircase had been left open, and that Annette was now with her, to explore whither it led — a circumstance now materially connected with her own safety. Annette accordingly, half curious and half afraid, proposed to descend the stairs; but, on approaching the door, they perceived, that it was already fastened without, and their care was then directed to the securing it on the inside also, by placing against it as much of the heavy furniture of the room, as they could lift. Emily then retired to bed, and Annette continued on a chair by the hearth, where some feeble embers remained.