

CHAPTER VII

Was nought around but images of rest,
 Sleep-soothing groves and quiet lawns between,
 And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kept,
 From poppies breath'd, and banks of pleasant green,
 Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
 Meantime unnumbered glittering streamlets play'd,
 And hurled everywhere their water's sheen,
 That, as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
 Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

THOMSON

When Emily, in the morning, opened her casement, she was surprised to observe the beauties, that surrounded it. The cottage was nearly embowered in the woods, which were chiefly of chesnut intermixed with some cypress, larch and sycamore. Beneath the dark and spreading branches appeared to the north and to the east the woody Apennines, rising in majestic amphitheatre, not black with pines, as she had been accustomed to see them, but their loftiest summits crowned with ancient forests of chesnut, oak, and oriental plane, now animated with the rich tints of autumn, and which swept downward to the valley uninterruptedly, except where some bold rocky promontory looked out from among the foliage, and caught the passing gleam. Vineyards stretched along the feet of the mountains, where the elegant villas of the Tuscan nobility frequently adorned the scene, and overlooked slopes clothed with groves of olive, mulberry, orange and lemon. The plain, to which these declined, was coloured with the riches of cultivation, whose mingled hues were mellowed into harmony by an Italian sun. Vines, their purple clusters blushing between the russet foliage, hung in luxuriant festoons from the branches of standard fig and cherry trees, while pastures of verdure, such as Emily had seldom seen in Italy, enriched the banks of a stream that, after descending from the mountains, wound along the landscape, which it reflected, to a bay of the sea. There, far in the west, the waters, fading into the sky, assumed a tint of the faintest purple, and the line of separation between them was, now and then, discernible only by the progress of a sail, brightened with the sunbeam, along the horizon. The cottage, which was shaded by the woods from the intenser rays of the sun, and was open only to his evening light, was covered entirely with vines, fig trees and jessamine, whose flowers surpassed in size and fragrance any that Emily had seen. These and ripening clusters of grapes hung round her little casement. The turf, that grew under the woods, was inlaid with a variety of wild flowers and perfumed herbs, and, on the opposite margin of the stream, whose current diffused freshness beneath the shades, rose a grove of lemon and orange trees. This, though nearly opposite to Emily's window, did not interrupt her prospect, but rather heightened, by its dark verdure, the effect of the perspective; and to her this spot was a bower of sweets, whose charms communicated imperceptibly to her mind somewhat of their own serenity.

She was soon summoned to breakfast, by the peasant's daughter, a girl about seventeen, of a pleasant countenance, which, Emily was glad to observe, seemed animated with the pure affections of nature, though the others, that surrounded her, expressed, more or less, the worst qualities — cruelty, ferocity, cunning and duplicity; of the latter style of countenance, especially, were those of the peasant and his wife. Maddelina spoke little, but what she said was in a soft voice, and with an air of modesty and complacency, that interested Emily, who breakfasted at a separate table with Dorina, while Ugo and Bertrand were taking a repast of Tuscany bacon and wine with their host, near the cottage door; when they had finished which, Ugo, rising hastily, enquired for his mule, and Emily learned that he was to return to Udolpho, while Bertrand remained at the cottage; a circumstance, which, though it did not surprise, distressed her.

When Ugo was departed, Emily proposed to walk in the neighbouring woods; but, on being told, that she must not quit the cottage, without having Bertrand for her attendant, she withdrew to her own room. There, as her eyes settled on the towering Apennines, she recollected the terrific scenery they had exhibited and the horrors she had suffered, on the preceding night, particularly at the moment when Bertrand had betrayed himself to be an assassin; and these remembrances awakened a train of images, which, since they abstracted her from a consideration of her own situation, she pursued for some time, and then arranged in the following lines; pleased to have discovered any innocent means, by which she could beguile an hour of misfortune.

THE PILGRIM

Slow o'er the Apennine, with bleeding feet,
A patient Pilgrim wound his lonely way,
To deck the Lady of Loretto's seat
With all the little wealth his zeal could pay.
From mountain-tops cold died the evening ray,
And, stretch'd in twilight, slept the vale below;
And now the last, last purple streaks of day
Along the melancholy West fade slow.
High o'er his head, the restless pines complain,
As on their summit rolls the breeze of night;
Beneath, the hoarse stream chides the rocks in vain:
The Pilgrim pauses on the dizzy height.
Then to the vale his cautious step he press'd,
For there a hermit's cross was dimly seen,
Cresting the rock, and there his limbs might rest,
Cheer'd in the good man's cave, by faggot's sheen,
On leafy beds, nor guile his sleep molest.
Unhappy Luke! he trusts a treacherous clue!
Behind the cliff the lurking robber stood;
No friendly moon his giant shadow threw
Athwart the road, to save the Pilgrim's blood;
On as he went a vesper-hymn he sang,

The hymn, that nightly sooth'd him to repose.
 Fierce on his harmless prey the ruffian sprang!
 The Pilgrim bleeds to death, his eye-lids close.
 Yet his meek spirit knew no vengeful care,
 But, dying, for his murd'rer breath'd — a sainted pray'r!

Preferring the solitude of her room to the company of the persons below stairs, Emily dined above, and Maddelina was suffered to attend her, from whose simple conversation she learned, that the peasant and his wife were old inhabitants of this cottage, which had been purchased for them by Montoni, in reward of some service, rendered him, many years before, by Marco, to whom Carlo, the steward at the castle, was nearly related. “So many years ago, Signora,” added Maddelina, “that I know nothing about it; but my father did the Signor a great good, for my mother has often said to him, this cottage was the least he ought to have had.”

To the mention of this circumstance Emily listened with a painful interest, since it appeared to give a frightful colour to the character of Marco, whose service, thus rewarded by Montoni, she could scarcely doubt have been criminal; and, if so, had too much reason to believe, that she had been committed into his hands for some desperate purpose. “Did you ever hear how many years it is” said Emily, who was considering of Signora Laurentini’s disappearance from Udolpho, “since your father performed the services you spoke of?”

“It was a little before he came to live at the cottage, Signora” replied Maddelina “and that is about eighteen years ago.”

This was near the period, when Signora Laurentini had been said to disappear, and it occurred to Emily, that Marco had assisted in that mysterious affair, and, perhaps, had been employed in a murder! This horrible suggestion fixed her in such profound reverie, that Maddelina quitted the room, unperceived by her, and she remained unconscious of all around her, for a considerable time. Tears, at length, came to her relief, after indulging which, her spirits becoming calmer, she ceased to tremble at a view of evils, that might never arrive; and had sufficient resolution to endeavour to withdraw her thoughts from the contemplation of her own interests. Remembering the few books, which even in the hurry of her departure from Udolpho she had put into her little package, she sat down with one of them at her pleasant casement, whence her eyes often wandered from the page to the landscape, whose beauty gradually soothed her mind into gentle melancholy.

Here, she remained alone, till evening, and saw the sun descend the western sky, throw all his pomp of light and shadow upon the mountains, and gleam upon the distant ocean and the stealing sails, as he sunk amidst the waves. Then, at the musing hour of twilight, her softened thoughts returned to Valancourt; she again recollected every circumstance, connected with the midnight music, and all that might assist her conjecture, concerning his imprisonment at the castle, and, becoming confirmed in the supposition, that

it was his voice she had heard there, she looked back to that gloomy abode with emotions of grief and momentary regret.

Refreshed by the cool and fragrant air, and her spirits soothed to a state of gentle melancholy by the still murmur of the brook below and of the woods around, she lingered at her casement long after the sun had set, watching the valley sinking into obscurity, till only the grand outline of the surrounding mountains, shadowed upon the horizon, remained visible. But a clear moonlight, that succeeded, gave to the landscape, what time gives to the scenes of past life, when it softens all their harsher features, and throws over the whole the mellowing shade of distant contemplation. The scenes of La Vallée, in the early morn of her life, when she was protected and beloved by parents equally loved, appeared in Emily's memory tenderly beautiful, like the prospect before her, and awakened mournful comparisons. Unwilling to encounter the coarse behaviour of the peasant's wife, she remained supperless in her room, while she wept again over her forlorn and perilous situation, a review of which entirely overcame the small remains of her fortitude, and, reducing her to temporary despondence, she wished to be released from the heavy load of life, that had so long oppressed her, and prayed to Heaven to take her, in its mercy, to her parents.

Wearied with weeping, she, at length, lay down on her mattress, and sunk to sleep, but was soon awakened by a knocking at her chamber door, and, starting up in terror, she heard a voice calling her. The image of Bertrand, with a stiletto in his hand, appeared to her alarmed fancy, and she neither opened the door nor answered, but listened in profound silence, till, the voice repeating her name in the same low tone, she demanded who called. "It is I, Signora" replied the voice, which she now distinguished to be Maddelina's "pray open the door. Don't be frightened, it is I."

"And what brings you here so late, Maddelina?" said Emily, as she let her in.

"Hush! Signora, for heaven's sake hush! — if we are overheard I shall never be forgiven. My father and mother and Bertrand are all gone to bed," continued Maddelina, as she gently shut the door, and crept forward, "and I have brought you some supper, for you had none, you know, Signora, below stairs. Here are some grapes and figs and half a cup of wine." Emily thanked her, but expressed apprehension lest this kindness should draw upon her the resentment of Dorina, when she perceived the fruit was gone. "Take it back, therefore, Maddelina" added Emily, "I shall suffer much less from the want of it, than I should do, if this act of good nature was to subject you to your mother's displeasure."

"O Signora! there is no danger of that" replied Maddelina "my mother cannot miss the fruit, for I saved it from my own supper. You will make me very unhappy, if you refuse to take it, Signora." Emily was so much affected by this instance of the good girl's generosity, that she remained for some time unable to reply, and Maddelina watched her in silence, till, mistaking the cause of her emotion, she said, "Do not weep so, Signora! My mother, to be sure, is a little

cross, sometimes, but then it is soon over — so don't take it so much to heart. She often scolds me, too, but then I have learned to bear it, and, when she has done, if I can but steal out into the woods, and play upon my sticcado, I forget it all directly."

Emily, smiling through her tears, told Maddelina, that she was a good girl, and then accepted her offering. She wished anxiously to know, whether Bertrand and Dorina had spoken of Montoni, or of his designs, concerning herself, in the presence of Maddelina, but disdained to tempt the innocent girl to a conduct so mean, as that of betraying the private conversations of her parents. When she was departing, Emily requested, that she would come to her room as often as she dared, without offending her mother, and Maddelina, after promising that she would do so, stole softly back again to her own chamber.

Thus several days passed, during which Emily remained in her own room, Maddelina attending her only at her repast, whose gentle countenance and manners soothed her more than any circumstance she had known for many months. Of her pleasant embowered chamber she now became fond, and began to experience in it those feelings of security, which we naturally attach to home. In this interval also, her mind, having been undisturbed by any new circumstance of disgust, or alarm, recovered its tone sufficiently to permit her the enjoyment of her books, among which she found some unfinished sketches of landscapes, several blank sheets of paper, with her drawing instruments, and she was thus enabled to amuse herself with selecting some of the lovely features of the prospect, that her window commanded, and combining them in scenes, to which her tasteful fancy gave a last grace. In these little sketches she generally placed interesting groups, characteristic of the scenery they animated, and often contrived to tell, with perspicuity, some simple and affecting story, when, as a tear fell over the pictured griefs, which her imagination drew, she would forget, for a moment, her real sufferings. Thus innocently she beguiled the heavy hours of misfortune, and, with meek patience, awaited the events of futurity.

A beautiful evening, that had succeeded to a sultry day, at length induced Emily to walk, though she knew that Bertrand must attend her, and, with Maddelina for her companion, she left the cottage, followed by Bertrand, who allowed her to choose her own way. The hour was cool and silent, and she could not look upon the country around her without delight. How lovely, too, appeared the brilliant blue that coloured all the upper region of the air, and, thence fading downward, was lost in the saffron glow of the horizon! Nor less so were the varied shades and warm colouring of the Apennines, as the evening sun threw his slanting rays athwart their broken surface. Emily followed the course of the stream, under the shades, that overhung its grassy margin. On the opposite banks, the pastures were animated with herds of cattle of a beautiful cream-colour; and, beyond, were groves of lemon and orange, with fruit glowing on the branches, frequent almost as the leaves, which partly concealed it. She pursued her way towards the sea, which reflected the warm glow of sunset, while the cliffs, that rose over its edge, were tinted with the last rays. The valley was terminated on the right by a lofty promontory, whose summit, impending over

the waves, was crowned with a ruined tower, now serving for the purpose of a beacon, whose shattered battlements and the extended wings of some sea fowl, that circled near it, were still illumined by the upward beams of the sun, though his disk was now sunk beneath the horizon; while the lower part of the ruin, the cliff on which it stood and the waves at its foot, were shaded with the first tints of twilight.

Having reached this headland, Emily gazed with solemn pleasure on the cliffs, that extended on either hand along the sequestered shores, some crowned with groves of pine, and others exhibiting only barren precipices of greyish marble, except where the crags were tufted with myrtle and other aromatic shrubs. The sea slept in a perfect calm; its waves, dying in murmurs on the shores, flowed with the gentlest undulation, while its clear surface reflected in softened beauty the vermeil tints of the west. Emily, as she looked upon the ocean, thought of France and of past times, and she wished, Oh! how ardently, and vainly — wished! That its waves would bear her to her distant native home!

“Ah! that vessel” said she “that vessel, which glides along so stately, with its tall sails reflected in the water is, perhaps, bound for France! Happy — happy bark!” She continued to gaze upon it, with warm emotion, till the grey of twilight obscured the distance, and veiled it from her view. The melancholy sound of the waves at her feet assisted the tenderness, that occasioned her tears, and this was the only sound, that broke upon the hour, till, having followed the windings of the beach, for some time, a chorus of voices passed her on the air. She paused a moment, wishing to hear more, yet fearing to be seen, and, for the first time, looked back to Bertrand, as her protector, who was following, at a short distance, in company with some other person. Reassured by this circumstance, she advanced towards the sounds, which seemed to arise from behind a high promontory, that projected athwart the beach. There was now a sudden pause in the music, and then one female voice was heard to sing in a kind of chant. Emily quickened her steps, and, winding round the rock, saw, within the sweeping bay, beyond, which was hung with woods from the borders of the beach to the very summit of the cliffs, two groups of peasants, one seated beneath the shades, and the other standing on the edge of the sea, round the girl, who was singing, and who held in her hand a chaplet of flowers, which she seemed about to drop into the waves.

Emily, listening with surprise and attention, distinguished the following invocation delivered in the pure and elegant tongue of Tuscany, and accompanied by a few pastoral instruments.

TO A SEA-NYMPH

O nymph! who loves to float on the green wave,
When Neptune sleeps beneath the moonlight hour,
Lull'd by the music's melancholy pow'r,
O nymph, arise from out thy pearly cave!

For Hesper beams amid the twilight shade,

And soon shall Cynthia tremble o'er the tide,
Gleam on these cliffs, that bound the ocean's pride,
And lonely silence all the air pervade.

Then, let thy tender voice at distance swell,
And steal along this solitary shore,
Sink on the breeze, till dying—heard no more —
Thou wak'st the sudden magic of thy shell.

While the long coast in echo sweet replies,
Thy soothing strains the pensive heart beguile,
And bid the visions of the future smile,
O nymph! from out thy pearly cave — arise!

(Chorus) — *Arise!*
(Semi-chorus) — *Arise!*

The last words being repeated by the surrounding group, the garland of flowers was thrown into the waves, and the chorus, sinking gradually into a chant, died away in silence.

“What can this mean, Maddelina?” said Emily, awakening from the pleasing trance, into which the music had lulled her.

“This is the eve of a festival, Signora” replied Maddelina; “and the peasants then amuse themselves with all kinds of sports.”

“But they talked of a sea nymph” said Emily: “how came these good people to think of a sea nymph?”

“O, Signora” rejoined Maddelina, mistaking the reason of Emily's surprise, “nobody *believes* in such things, but our old songs tell of them, and, when we are at our sports, we sometimes sing to them, and throw garlands into the sea.”

Emily had been early taught to venerate Florence as the seat of literature and of the fine arts; but, that its taste for classic story should descend to the peasants of the country, occasioned her both surprise and admiration. The Arcadian air of the girls next attracted her attention. Their dress was a very short full petticoat of light green, with a bodice of white silk; the sleeves loose, and tied up at the shoulders with ribbons and bunches of flowers. Their hair, falling in ringlets on their necks, was also ornamented with flowers, and with a small straw hat, which, set rather backward and on one side of the head, gave an expression of gaiety and smartness to the whole figure. When the song had concluded, several of these girls approached Emily, and, inviting her to sit down among them, offered her, and Maddelina, whom they knew, grapes and figs.

Emily accepted their courtesy, much pleased with the gentleness and grace of their manners, which appeared to be perfectly natural to them; and when Bertrand, soon after, approached, and was hastily drawing her away, a peasant,

holding up a flask, invited him to drink; a temptation, which Bertrand was seldom very valiant in resisting.

“Let the young lady join in the dance, my friend” said the peasant, “while we empty this flask. They are going to begin directly. Strike up! My lads, strike up your tambourines and merry flutes!”

They sounded gaily; and the younger peasants formed themselves into a circle, which Emily would readily have joined, had her spirits been in unison with their mirth. Maddelina, however, tripped it lightly, and Emily, as she looked on the happy group, lost the sense of her misfortunes in that of a benevolent pleasure. But the pensive melancholy of her mind returned, as she sat rather apart from the company, listening to the mellow music, which the breeze softened as it bore it away, and watching the moon, stealing its tremulous light over the waves and on the woody summits of the cliffs, that wound along these Tuscan shores.

Meanwhile, Bertrand was so well pleased with his first flask, that he very willingly commenced the attack on a second, and it was late before Emily, not without some apprehension, returned to the cottage.

After this evening, she frequently walked with Maddelina, but was never unattended by Bertrand; and her mind became by degrees as tranquil as the circumstances of her situation would permit. The quiet, in which she was suffered to live, encouraged her to hope, that she was not sent hither with an evil design; and, had it not appeared probable, that Valancourt was at this time an inhabitant of Udolpho, she would have wished to remain at the cottage, till an opportunity should offer of returning to her native country. But, concerning Montoni’s motive for sending her into Tuscany, she was more than ever perplexed, nor could she believe that any consideration for her safety had influenced him on this occasion.

She had been some time at the cottage, before she recollected, that, in the hurry of leaving Udolpho, she had forgotten the papers committed to her by her late aunt, relative to the Languedoc estates; but, though this remembrance occasioned her much uneasiness, she had some hope, that, in the obscure place, where they were deposited, they would escape the detection of Montoni.

CHAPTER VIII

My tongue hath but a heavier tale to say.
 I play the torturer, by small and small,
 To lengthen out the worst that must be spoken.

RICHARD II

We now return, for a moment, to Venice, where Count Morano was suffering under an accumulation of misfortunes. Soon after his arrival in that city, he had been arrested by order of the Senate, and, without knowing of what he was suspected, was conveyed to a place of confinement, whither the most strenuous enquiries of his friends had been unable to trace him. Who the enemy was, that had occasioned him this calamity, he had not been able to guess, unless, indeed, it was Montoni, on whom his suspicions rested, and not only with much apparent probability, but with justice.

In the affair of the poisoned cup, Montoni had suspected Morano; but, being unable to obtain the degree of proof, which was necessary to convict him of a guilty intention, he had recourse to means of other revenge, than he could hope to obtain by prosecution. He employed a person, in whom he believed he might confide, to drop a letter of accusation into the *Denunzie secrete*, or lions' mouths, which are fixed in a gallery of the Doge's palace, as receptacles for anonymous information, concerning persons, who may be disaffected towards the state. As, on these occasions, the accuser is not confronted with the accused, a man may falsely impeach his enemy, and accomplish an unjust revenge, without fear of punishment, or detection. That Montoni should have recourse to these diabolical means of ruining a person, whom he suspected of having attempted his life, is not in the least surprising. In the letter, which he had employed as the instrument of his revenge, he accused Morano of designs against the state, which he attempted to prove, with all the plausible simplicity of which he was master; and the Senate, with whom a suspicion was, at that time, almost equal to a proof, arrested the Count, in consequence of this accusation; and, without even hinting to him his crime, threw him into one of those secret prisons, which were the terror of the Venetians, and in which persons often languished, and sometimes died, without being discovered by their friends.

Morano had incurred the personal resentment of many members of the state; his habits of life had rendered him obnoxious to some; and his ambition, and the bold rivalship, which he discovered, on several public occasions — to others; and it was not to be expected, that mercy would soften the rigour of a law, which was to be dispensed from the hands of his enemies.

Montoni, meantime, was beset by dangers of another kind. His castle was besieged by troops, who seemed willing to dare everything, and to suffer patiently any hardships in pursuit of victory. The strength of the fortress, however, withstood their attack, and this, with the vigorous defence of the

garrison and the scarcity of provision on these wild mountains, soon compelled the assailants to raise the siege.

When Udolpho was once more left to the quiet possession of Montoni, he dispatched Ugo into Tuscany for Emily, whom he had sent from considerations of her personal safety, to a place of greater security, than a castle, which was, at that time, liable to be overrun by his enemies. Tranquillity being once more restored to Udolpho, he was impatient to secure her again under his roof, and had commissioned Ugo to assist Bertrand in guarding her back to the castle. Thus compelled to return, Emily bade the kind Maddelina farewell, with regret, and, after about a fortnight's stay in Tuscany, where she had experienced an interval of quiet, which was absolutely necessary to sustain her long harassed spirits, began once more to ascend the Apennines, from whose heights she gave a long and sorrowful look to the beautiful country, that extended at their feet, and to the distant Mediterranean, whose waves she had so often wished would bear her back to France. The distress she felt, on her return towards the place of her former sufferings, was, however, softened by a conjecture, that Valancourt was there, and she found some degree of comfort in the thought of being near him, notwithstanding the consideration, that he was probably a prisoner.

It was noon when she had left the cottage, and the evening was closed, long before she came within the neighbourhood of Udolpho. There was a moon, but it shone only at intervals, for the night was cloudy, and, lighted by the torch, which Ugo carried, the travellers paced silently along, Emily musing on her situation, and Bertrand and Ugo anticipating the comforts of a flask of wine and a good fire, for they had perceived for some time the difference between the warm climate of the lowlands of Tuscany and the nipping air of these upper regions. Emily was, at length, roused from her reverie by the far-off sound of the castle clock, to which she listened not without some degree of awe, as it rolled away on the breeze. Another and another note succeeded, and died in sullen murmur among the mountains:— to her mournful imagination it seemed a knell measuring out some fateful period for her.

“Aye, there is the old clock” said Bertrand “there he is still; the cannon have not silenced him!”

“No” answered Ugo “he crowed as loud as the best of them in the midst of it all. There he was roaring out in the hottest fire I have seen this many a day! I said that some of them would have a hit at the old fellow, but he escaped, and the tower too.”

The road winding round the base of a mountain, they now came within view of the castle, which was shown in the perspective of the valley by a gleam of moonshine, and then vanished in shade; while even a transient view of it had awakened the poignancy of Emily's feelings. Its massy and gloomy walls gave her terrible ideas of imprisonment and suffering: yet, as she advanced, some degree of hope mingled with her terror; for, though this was certainly the residence of Montoni, it was possibly, also, that of Valancourt, and she could

not approach a place, where he might be, without experiencing somewhat of the joy of hope.

They continued to wind along the valley, and, soon after, she saw again the old walls and moonlit towers, rising over the woods: the strong rays enabled her, also, to perceive the ravages, which the siege had made — with the broken walls, and shattered battlements, for they were now at the foot of the steep, on which Udolpho stood. Massy fragments had rolled down among the woods, through which the travellers now began to ascend, and there mingled with the loose earth, and pieces of rock they had brought with them. The woods, too, had suffered much from the batteries above, for here the enemy had endeavoured to screen themselves from the fire of the ramparts. Many noble trees were levelled with the ground, and others, to a wide extent, were entirely stripped of their upper branches. “We had better dismount” said Ugo “and lead the mules up the hill, or we shall get into some of the holes, which the balls have left. Here are plenty of them. Give me the torch” continued Ugo, after they had dismounted “and take care you don’t stumble over anything, that lies in your way, for the ground is not yet cleared of the enemy.”

“How!” exclaimed Emily “are any of the enemy here, then?”

“Nay, I don’t know for that, now,” he replied, “but when I came away I saw one or two of them lying under the trees.”

As they proceeded, the torch threw a gloomy light upon the ground, and far among the recesses of the woods, and Emily feared to look forward, lest some object of horror should meet her eye. The path was often strewn with broken heads of arrows, and with shattered remains of armour, such as at that period was mingled with the lighter dress of the soldiers. “Bring the light hither” said Bertrand “I have stumbled over something, that rattles loud enough.” Ugo holding up the torch, they perceived a steel breastplate on the ground, which Bertrand raised, and they saw, that it was pierced through, and that the lining was entirely covered with blood; but upon Emily’s earnest entreaties that they would proceed, Bertrand, uttering some joke upon the unfortunate person, to whom it had belonged, threw it hard upon the ground, and they passed on.

At every step she took, Emily feared to see some vestige of death. Coming soon after to an opening in the woods, Bertrand stopped to survey the ground, which was encumbered with massy trunks and branches of the trees, that had so lately adorned it, and seemed to have been a spot particularly fatal to the besiegers; for it was evident from the destruction of the trees, that here the hottest fire of the garrison had been directed. As Ugo held again forth the torch, steel glittered between the fallen trees; the ground beneath was covered with broken arms, and with the torn vestments of soldiers, whose mangled forms Emily almost expected to see; and she again entreated her companions to proceed, who were, however, too intent in their examination, to regard her, and she turned her eyes from this desolated scene to the castle above, where she observed lights gliding along the ramparts. Presently, the castle clock struck twelve, and then a trumpet sounded, of which Emily enquired the occasion.

“O! They are only changing watch” replied Ugo.

“I do not remember this trumpet” said Emily “it is a new custom.”

“It is only an old one revived, lady; we always use it in time of war. We have sounded it, at midnight, ever since the place was besieged.”

“Hark!” said Emily, as the trumpet sounded again; and, in the next moment, she heard a faint clash of arms, and then the watchword passed along the terrace above, and was answered from a distant part of the castle; after which all was again still. She complained of cold, and begged to go on.

“Presently, lady” said Bertrand, turning over some broken arms with the pike he usually carried. “What have we here?”

“Hark!” cried Emily “What noise was that?”

“What noise was it?” said Ugo, starting up and listening.

“Hush!” repeated Emily. “It surely came from the ramparts above”: and, on looking up, they perceived a light moving along the walls, while, in the next instant, the breeze swelling, the voice sounded louder than before.

“Who goes yonder?” cried a sentinel of the castle. “Speak or it will be worse for you.”

Bertrand uttered a shout of joy. “Hah! My brave comrade, is it you?” said he, and he blew a shrill whistle, which signal was answered by another from the soldier on watch; and the party, then passing forward, soon after emerged from the woods upon the broken road, that led immediately to the castle gates, and Emily saw, with renewed terror, the whole of that stupendous structure.

“Alas!” said she to herself, “I am going again into my prison!”

“Here has been warm work, by St. Marco!” cried Bertrand, waving a torch over the ground; “the balls have torn up the earth here with a vengeance.”

“Aye” replied Ugo “they were fired from that redoubt, yonder, and rare execution they did. The enemy made a furious attack upon the great gates; but they might have guessed they could never carry it there; for, besides the cannon from the walls, our archers, on the two round towers, showered down upon them at such a rate, that, by holy Peter! There was no standing it. I never saw a better sight in my life; I laughed, till my sides ached, to see how the knaves scampered. Bertrand, my good fellow, thou shouldst have been among them; I warrant thou wouldst have won the race!”

“Hah! you are at your old tricks again” said Bertrand in a surly tone. “It is well for thee thou art so near the castle; thou knowest I have killed my man

before now." Ugo replied only by a laugh, and then gave some further account of the siege, to which as Emily listened, she was struck by the strong contrast of the present scene with that which had so lately been acted here.

The mingled uproar of cannon, drums, and trumpets, the groans of the conquered, and the shouts of the conquerors were now sunk into a silence so profound, that it seemed as if death had triumphed alike over the vanquished and the victor. The shattered condition of one of the towers of the great gates by no means confirmed the *valiant* account just given by Ugo of the scampering party, who, it was evident, had not only made a stand, but had done much mischief before they took to flight; for this tower appeared, as far as Emily could judge by the dim moonlight that fell upon it, to be laid open, and the battlements were nearly demolished. While she gazed, a light glimmered through one of the lower loopholes, and disappeared; but, in the next moment, she perceived through the broken wall, a soldier, with a lamp, ascending the narrow staircase, that wound within the tower, and, remembering that it was the same she had passed up, on the night, when Barnardine had deluded her with a promise of seeing Madame Montoni, fancy gave her somewhat of the terror she had then suffered. She was now very near the gates, over which the soldier having opened the door of the portal-chamber, the lamp he carried gave her a dusky view of that terrible apartment, and she almost sunk under the recollected horrors of the moment, when she had drawn aside the curtain, and discovered the object it was meant to conceal.

"Perhaps," said she to herself, "it is now used for a similar purpose; perhaps, that soldier goes, at this dead hour, to watch over the corpse of his friend!" The little remains of her fortitude now gave way to the united force of remembered and anticipated horrors, for the melancholy fate of Madame Montoni appeared to foretell her own. She considered, that, though the Languedoc estates, if she relinquished them, would satisfy Montoni's avarice, they might not appease his vengeance, which was seldom pacified but by a terrible sacrifice; and she even thought, that, were she to resign them, the fear of justice might urge him either to detain her a prisoner, or to take away her life.

They were now arrived at the gates, where Bertrand, observing the light glimmer through a small casement of the portal-chamber, called aloud; and the soldier, looking out, demanded who was there. "Here, I have brought you a prisoner" said Ugo "open the gate, and let us in."

"Tell me first who it is, that demands entrance" replied the soldier.

"What! my old comrade" cried Ugo "don't you know me? not know Ugo? I have brought home a prisoner here, bound hand and foot — a fellow, who has been drinking Tuscany wine, while we here have been fighting."

"You will not rest till you meet with your match" said Bertrand sullenly. "Hah! my comrade, is it you?" said the soldier — "I'll be with you directly."

Emily presently heard his steps descending the stairs within, and then the heavy chain fall, and the bolts undraw of a small postern door, which he opened to admit the party. He held the lamp low, to show the step of the gate, and she found herself once more beneath the gloomy arch, and heard the door close, that seemed to shut her from the world for ever. In the next moment, she was in the first court of the castle, where she surveyed the spacious and solitary area, with a kind of calm despair; while the dead hour of the night, the gothic gloom of the surrounding buildings, and the hollow and imperfect echoes, which they returned, as Ugo and the soldier conversed together, assisted to increase the melancholy forebodings of her heart. Passing on to the second court, a distant sound broke feebly on the silence, and gradually swelling louder, as they advanced, Emily distinguished voices of revelry and laughter, but they were to her far other than sounds of joy. “Why, you have got some Tuscan wine among you, *here*” said Bertrand “if one may judge by the uproar that is going forward. Ugo has taken a larger share of that than of fighting, I’ll be sworn. Who is carousing at this late hour?”

“His *Excellenza* and the Signors” replied the soldier: “it is a sign you are a stranger at the castle, or you would not need to ask the question. They are brave spirits, that do without sleep — they generally pass the night in good cheer; would that we, who keep the watch, had a little of it! It is cold work, pacing the ramparts so many hours of the night, if one has no good liquor to warm one’s heart.”

“Courage, my lad, courage ought to warm your heart” said Ugo.

“Courage!” replied the soldier sharply, with a menacing air, which Ugo perceiving, prevented his saying more, by returning to the subject of the carousal. “This is a new custom” said he; “when I left the castle, the Signors used to sit up counselling.”

“Aye, and for that matter, carousing too” replied the soldier “but, since the siege, they have done nothing but make merry: and if I was they, I would settle accounts with myself, for all my hard fighting, the same way.”

They had now crossed the second court, and reached the hall door, when the soldier, bidding them good night, hastened back to his post; and, while they waited for admittance, Emily considered how she might avoid seeing Montoni, and retire unnoticed to her former apartment, for she shrunk from the thought of encountering either him, or any of his party, at this hour. The uproar within the castle was now so loud, that, though Ugo knocked repeatedly at the hall door, he was not heard by any of the servants, a circumstance, which increased Emily’s alarm, while it allowed her time to deliberate on the means of retiring unobserved; for, though she might, perhaps, pass up the great staircase unseen, it was impossible she could find the way to her chamber, without a light, the difficulty of procuring which, and the danger of wandering about the castle, without one, immediately struck her. Bertrand had only a torch, and she knew, that the servants never brought a taper to the door, for the hall was sufficiently lighted by the large tripod lamp, which hung in the vaulted roof;

and, while she should wait till Annette could bring a taper, Montoni, or some of his companions, might discover her.

The door was now opened by Carlo; and Emily, having requested him to send Annette immediately with a light to the great gallery, where she determined to await her, passed on with hasty steps towards the staircase; while Bertrand and Ugo, with the torch, followed old Carlo to the servants' hall, impatient for supper and the warm blaze of a wood fire. Emily, lighted only by the feeble rays, which the lamp above threw between the arches of this extensive hall, endeavoured to find her way to the staircase, now hid in obscurity; while the shouts of merriment, that burst from a remote apartment, served, by heightening her terror, to increase her perplexity, and she expected, every instant, to see the door of that room open, and Montoni and his companions issue forth. Having, at length, reached the staircase, and found her way to the top, she seated herself on the last stair, to await the arrival of Annette; for the profound darkness of the gallery deterred her from proceeding farther, and, while she listened for her footstep, she heard only distant sounds of revelry, which rose in sullen echoes from among the arcades below. Once she thought she heard a low sound from the dark gallery behind her; and, turning her eyes, fancied she saw something luminous move in it; and, since she could not, at this moment, subdue the weakness that caused her fears, she quitted her seat, and crept softly down a few stairs lower.

Annette not yet appearing, Emily now concluded, that she was gone to bed, and that nobody chose to call her up; and the prospect, that presented itself, of passing the night in darkness, in this place, or in some other equally forlorn (for she knew it would be impracticable to find her way through the intricacies of the galleries to her chamber), drew tears of mingled terror and despondency from her eyes.

While thus she sat, she fancied she heard again an odd sound from the gallery, and she listened, scarcely daring to breathe, but the increasing voices below overcame every other sound. Soon after, she heard Montoni and his companions burst into the hall, who spoke, as if they were much intoxicated, and seemed to be advancing towards the staircase. She now remembered, that they must come this way to their chambers, and, forgetting all the terrors of the gallery, hurried towards it with an intention of secreting herself in some of the passages, that opened beyond, and of endeavouring, when the Signors were retired, to find her way to her own room, or to that of Annette, which was in a remote part of the castle.

With extended arms, she crept along the gallery, still hearing the voices of persons below, who seemed to stop in conversation at the foot of the staircase, and then pausing for a moment to listen, half fearful of going further into the darkness of the gallery, where she still imagined, from the noise she had heard, that some person was lurking, "They are already informed of my arrival" said she "and Montoni is coming himself to seek me! In the present state of his mind, his purpose must be desperate." Then, recollecting the scene, that had passed in the corridor, on the night preceding her departure from the castle, "O

Valancourt!" said she, "I must then resign you for ever. To brave any longer the injustice of Montoni, would not be fortitude, but rashness."

Still the voices below did not draw nearer, but they became louder, and she distinguished those of Verezzi and Bertolini above the rest, while the few words she caught made her listen more anxiously for others. The conversation seemed to concern herself; and, having ventured to step a few paces nearer to the staircase, she discovered, that they were disputing about her, each seeming to claim some former promise of Montoni, who appeared, at first, inclined to appease and to persuade them to return to their wine, but afterwards to be weary of the dispute, and, saying that he left them to settle it as they could, was returning with the rest of the party to the apartment he had just quitted. Verezzi then stopped him. "Where is she? Signor" said he, in a voice of impatience: "tell us where she is."

"I have already told you that I do not know," replied Montoni, who seemed to be somewhat overcome with wine; "but she is most probably gone to her apartment." Verezzi and Bertolini now desisted from their enquiries, and sprang to the staircase together, while Emily, who, during this discourse, had trembled so excessively, that she had with difficulty supported herself, seemed inspired with new strength, the moment she heard the sound of their steps, and ran along the gallery, dark as it was, with the fleetness of a fawn. But, long before she reached its extremity, the light, which Verezzi carried, flashed upon the walls; both appeared, and, instantly perceiving Emily, pursued her. At this moment, Bertolini, whose steps, though swift, were not steady, and whose impatience overcame what little caution he had hitherto used, stumbled, and fell at his length. The lamp fell with him, and was presently expiring on the floor; but Verezzi, regardless of saving it, seized the advantage this accident gave him over his rival, and followed Emily, to whom, however, the light had shown one of the passages that branched from the gallery, and she instantly turned into it. Verezzi could just discern the way she had taken, and this he pursued; but the sound of her steps soon sunk in distance, while he, less acquainted with the passage, was obliged to proceed through the dark, with caution, lest he should fall down a flight of steps, such as in this extensive old castle frequently terminated an avenue. This passage at length brought Emily to the corridor, into which her own chamber opened, and, not hearing any footstep, she paused to take breath, and consider what was the safest design to be adopted. She had followed this passage, merely because it was the first that appeared, and now that she had reached the end of it, was as perplexed as before. Whither to go, or how further to find her way in the dark, she knew not; she was aware only that she must not seek her apartment, for there she would certainly be sought, and her danger increased every instant, while she remained near it. Her spirits and her breath, however, were so much exhausted, that she was compelled to rest, for a few minutes, at the end of the passage, and still she heard no steps approaching. As thus she stood, light glimmered under an opposite door of the gallery, and, from its situation, she knew, that it was the door of that mysterious chamber, where she had made a discovery so shocking, that she never remembered it but with the utmost horror. That there should be light in this chamber, and at this hour, excited her strong surprise, and she felt

a momentary terror concerning it, which did not permit her to look again, for her spirits were now in such a state of weakness, that she almost expected to see the door slowly open, and some horrible object appear at it. Still she listened for a step along the passage, and looked up it, where, not a ray of light appearing, she concluded, that Verezzi had gone back for the lamp; and, believing that he would shortly be there, she again considered which way she should go, or rather which way she could find in the dark.

A faint ray still glimmered under the opposite door, but so great, and, perhaps, so just was her horror of that chamber, that she would not again have tempted its secrets, though she had been certain of obtaining the light so important to her safety. She was still breathing with difficulty, and resting at the end of the passage, when she heard a rustling sound, and then a low voice, so very near her, that it seemed close to her ear; but she had presence of mind to check her emotions, and to remain quite still; in the next moment, she perceived it to be the voice of Verezzi, who did not appear to know, that she was there, but to have spoken to himself. "The air is fresher here" said he: "this should be the corridor." Perhaps, he was one of those heroes, whose courage can defy an enemy better than darkness, and he tried to rally his spirits with the sound of his own voice. However this might be, he turned to the right, and proceeded, with the same stealing steps, towards Emily's apartment, apparently forgetting, that, in darkness, she could easily elude his search, even in her chamber; and, like an intoxicated person, he followed pertinaciously the one idea, that had possessed his imagination.

The moment she heard his steps steal away, she left her station and moved softly to the other end of the corridor, determined to trust again to chance, and to quit it by the first avenue she could find; but, before she could effect this, light broke upon the walls of the gallery, and, looking back, she saw Verezzi crossing it towards her chamber. She now glided into a passage, that opened on the left, without, as she thought, being perceived; but, in the next instant, another light, glimmering at the further end of this passage, threw her into new terror. While she stopped and hesitated which way to go, the pause allowed her to perceive, that it was Annette, who advanced, and she hurried to meet her: but her imprudence again alarmed Emily, on perceiving whom, she burst into a scream of joy, and it was some minutes, before she could be prevailed with to be silent, or to release her mistress from the ardent clasp, in which she held her. When, at length, Emily made Annette comprehend her danger, they hurried towards Annette's room, which was in a distant part of the castle. No apprehensions, however, could yet silence the latter. "Oh dear ma'amselle" said she as they passed along "what a terrified time have I had of it! Oh! I thought I should have died a hundred times! I never thought I should live to see you again! and I never was so glad to see anybody in my whole life, as I am to see you now."

"Hark!" cried Emily "we are pursued; that was the echo of steps!"

“No, ma’amselle” said Annette, “it was only the echo of a door shutting; sound runs along these vaulted passages so, that one is continually deceived by it; if one does but speak, or cough, it makes a noise as loud as a cannon.”

“Then there is the greater necessity for us to be silent” said Emily: “pr’ythee say no more, till we reach your chamber.”

Here, at length, they arrived, without interruption, and, Annette having fastened the door, Emily sat down on her little bed, to recover breath and composure. To her enquiry, whether Valancourt was among the prisoners in the castle, Annette replied, that she had not been able to hear, but that she knew there were several persons confined. She then proceeded, in her tedious way, to give an account of the siege, or rather a detail of her terrors and various sufferings, during the attack. “But,” added she, “when I heard the shouts of victory from the ramparts, I thought we were all taken, and gave myself up for lost, instead of which, *we* had driven the enemy away. I went then to the north gallery, and saw a great many of them scampering away among the mountains; but the rampart walls were all in ruins, as one may say, and there was a dismal sight to see down among the woods below, where the poor fellows were lying in heaps, but were carried off presently by their comrades. While the siege was going on, the Signor was here, and there, and everywhere, at the same time, as Ludovico told me, for he would not let me see anything hardly, and locked me up, as he has often done before, in a room in the middle of the castle, and used to bring me food, and come and talk with me as often as he could; and I must say, if it had not been for Ludovico, I should have died outright.”

“Well, Annette” said Emily “and how have affairs gone on, since the siege?”

“O! Sad hurly burly doings, ma’amselle” replied Annette; “the Signors have done nothing but sit and drink and game, ever since. They sit up, all night, and play among themselves, for all those riches and fine things, they brought in, some time since, when they used to go out a-robbing, or as good, for days together; and then they have dreadful quarrels about who loses, and who wins. That fierce Signor Verezzi is always losing, as they tell me, and Signor Orsino wins from him, and this makes him very wroth, and they have had several hard set-to’s about it. Then, all those fine ladies are at the castle still; and I declare I am frightened, whenever I meet any of them in the passages —”

“Surely, Annette” said Emily starting “I heard a noise: listen.”

After a long pause “No, ma’amselle” said Annette “it was only the wind in the gallery; I often hear it, when it shakes the old doors, at the other end. But won’t you go to bed, ma’amselle? you surely will not sit up starving, all night.”

Emily now laid herself down on the mattress, and desired Annette to leave the lamp burning on the hearth; having done which, the latter placed herself beside Emily, who, however, was not suffered to sleep, for she again thought she heard a noise from the passage; and Annette was again trying to convince her, that it was only the wind, when footsteps were distinctly heard near the

door. Annette was now starting from the bed, but Emily prevailed with her to remain there, and listened with her in a state of terrible expectation. The steps still loitered at the door, when presently an attempt was made on the lock, and, in the next instant, a voice called. "For heaven's sake, Annette, do not answer," said Emily softly "remain quite still; but I fear we must extinguish the lamp, or its glare will betray us."

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Annette, forgetting her discretion, "I would not be in darkness now for the whole world." While she spoke, the voice became louder than before, and repeated Annette's name; "Blessed Virgin!" cried she suddenly, "it is only Ludovico." She rose to open the door, but Emily prevented her, till they should be more certain, that it was he alone; with whom Annette, at length, talked for some time, and learned, that he was come to enquire after herself, whom he had let out of her room to go to Emily, and that he was now returned to lock her in again. Emily, fearful of being overheard, if they conversed any longer through the door, consented that it should be opened, and a young man appeared, whose open countenance confirmed the favourable opinion of him, which his care of Annette had already prompted her to form. She entreated his protection, should Verezzi make this requisite; and Ludovico offered to pass the night in an old chamber, adjoining, that opened from the gallery, and, on the first alarm, to come to their defence.

Emily was much soothed by this proposal; and Ludovico, having lighted his lamp, went to his station, while she, once more, endeavoured to repose on her mattress. But a variety of interests pressed upon her attention, and prevented sleep. She thought much on what Annette had told her of the dissolute manners of Montoni and his associates, and more of his present conduct towards herself, and of the danger, from which she had just escaped. From the view of her present situation she shrunk, as from a new picture of terror. She saw herself in a castle, inhabited by vice and violence, seated beyond the reach of law or justice, and in the power of a man, whose perseverance was equal to every occasion, and in whom passions, of which revenge was not the weakest, entirely supplied the place of principles. She was compelled, once more, to acknowledge, that it would be folly, and not fortitude, any longer to dare his power; and, resigning all hopes of future happiness with Valancourt, she determined, that, on the following morning, she would compromise with Montoni, and give up her estates, on condition, that he would permit her immediate return to France. Such considerations kept her waking for many hours; but, the night passed, without further alarm from Verezzi.

On the next morning, Emily had a long conversation with Ludovico, in which she heard circumstances concerning the castle, and received hints of the designs of Montoni, that considerably increased her alarms. On expressing her surprise, that Ludovico, who seemed to be so sensible of the evils of his situation, should continue in it, he informed her, that it was not his intention to do so, and she then ventured to ask him, if he would assist her to escape from the castle. Ludovico assured her of his readiness to attempt this, but strongly represented the difficulty of the enterprise, and the certain destruction which must ensue, should Montoni overtake them, before they had passed the

mountains; he, however, promised to be watchful of every circumstance, that might contribute to the success of the attempt, and to think upon some plan of departure.

Emily now confided to him the name of Valancourt, and begged he would enquire for such a person among the prisoners in the castle; for the faint hope, which this conversation awakened, made her now recede from her resolution of an immediate compromise with Montoni. She determined, if possible, to delay this, till she heard further from Ludovico, and, if his designs were found to be impracticable, to resign the estates at once. Her thoughts were on this subject, when Montoni, who was now recovered from the intoxication of the preceding night, sent for her, and she immediately obeyed the summons. He was alone. "I find" said he "that you were not in your chamber, last night; where were you?" Emily related to him some circumstances of her alarm, and entreated his protection from a repetition of them. "You know the terms of my protection" said he; "if you really value this, you will secure it." His open declaration, that he would only conditionally protect her, while she remained a prisoner in the castle, showed Emily the necessity of an immediate compliance with his terms; but she first demanded, whether he would permit her immediately to depart, if she gave up her claim to the contested estates. In a very solemn manner he then assured her, that he would, and immediately laid before her a paper, which was to transfer the right of those estates to himself.

She was, for a considerable time, unable to sign it, and her heart was torn with contending interests, for she was about to resign the happiness of all her future years — the hope, which had sustained her in so many hours of adversity.

After hearing from Montoni a recapitulation of the conditions of her compliance, and a remonstrance, that his time was valuable, she put her hand to the paper; when she had done which, she fell back in her chair, but soon recovered, and desired, that he would give orders for her departure, and that he would allow Annette to accompany her. Montoni smiled. "It was necessary to deceive you" said he — "there was no other way of making you act reasonably; you shall go, but it must not be at present. I must first secure these estates by possession: when that is done, you may return to France if you will."

The deliberate villany, with which he violated the solemn engagement he had just entered into, shocked Emily as much, as the certainty, that she had made a fruitless sacrifice, and must still remain his prisoner. She had no words to express what she felt, and knew, that it would have been useless, if she had. As she looked piteously at Montoni, he turned away, and at the same time desired she would withdraw to her apartment; but, unable to leave the room, she sat down in a chair near the door, and sighed heavily. She had neither words nor tears.

"Why will you indulge this childish grief?" said he. "Endeavour to strengthen your mind, to bear patiently what cannot now be avoided; you have no real evil

to lament; be patient, and you will be sent back to France. At present retire to your apartment.”

“I dare not go, sir” said she “where I shall be liable to the intrusion of Signor Verezzi.”

“Have I not promised to protect you?” said Montoni.

“You have promised, sir” — replied Emily, after some hesitation.

“And is not my promise sufficient?” added he sternly.

“You will recollect your former promise, Signor” said Emily, trembling, “and may determine for me, whether I ought to rely upon this.”

“Will you provoke me to declare to you, that I will not protect you then?” said Montoni in a tone of haughty displeasure. “If that will satisfy you, I will do it immediately. Withdraw to your chamber, before I retract my promise; you have nothing to fear there.” Emily left the room, and moved slowly into the hall, where the fear of meeting Verezzi, or Bertolini, made her quicken her steps, though she could scarcely support herself; and soon after she reached once more her own apartment. Having looked fearfully round her, to examine if any person was there, and having searched every part of it, she fastened the door, and sat down by one of the casements. Here, while she looked out for some hope to support her fainting spirits, which had been so long harassed and oppressed, that, if she had not now struggled much against misfortune, they would have left her, perhaps, for ever, she endeavoured to believe, that Montoni did really intend to permit her return to France as soon as he had secured her property, and that he would, in the mean time, protect her from insult; but her chief hope rested with Ludovico, who, she doubted not, would be zealous in her cause, though he seemed almost to despair of success in it. One circumstance, however, she had to rejoice in. Her prudence, or rather her fears, had saved her from mentioning the name of Valancourt to Montoni, which she was several times on the point of doing, before she signed the paper, and of stipulating for his release, if he should be really a prisoner in the castle. Had she done this, Montoni’s jealous fears would now probably have loaded Valancourt with new severities, and have suggested the advantage of holding him a captive for life.

Thus passed the melancholy day, as she had before passed many in this same chamber. When night drew on, she would have withdrawn herself to Annette’s bed, had not a particular interest inclined her to remain in this chamber, in spite of her fears; for, when the castle should be still, and the customary hour arrived, she determined to watch for the music, which she had formerly heard. Though its sounds might not enable her positively to determine, whether Valancourt was there, they would perhaps strengthen her opinion that he was, and impart the comfort, so necessary to her present support. But, on the other hand, if all should be silent! She hardly dared to suffer her thoughts to glance that way, but waited, with impatient expectation, the approaching hour.

The night was stormy; the battlements of the castle appeared to rock in the wind, and, at intervals, long groans seemed to pass on the air, such as those, which often deceive the melancholy mind, in tempests, and amidst scenes of desolation. Emily heard, as formerly, the sentinels pass along the terrace to their posts, and, looking out from her casement, observed, that the watch was doubled; a precaution, which appeared necessary enough, when she threw her eyes on the walls, and saw their shattered condition. The well known sounds of the soldiers' march, and of their distant voices, which passed her in the wind, and were lost again, recalled to her memory the melancholy sensation she had suffered, when she formerly heard the same sounds; and occasioned almost involuntary comparisons between her present, and her late situation. But this was no subject for congratulations, and she wisely checked the course of her thoughts, while, as the hour was not yet come, in which she had been accustomed to hear the music, she closed the casement, and endeavoured to await it in patience. The door of the staircase she tried to secure, as usual, with some of the furniture of the room; but this expedient her fears now represented to her to be very inadequate to the power and perseverance of Verezzi; and she often looked at a large and heavy chest, that stood in the chamber, with wishes that she and Annette had strength enough to move it. While she blamed the long stay of this girl, who was still with Ludovico and some other of the servants, she trimmed her wood fire, to make the room appear less desolate, and sat down beside it with a book, which her eyes perused, while her thoughts wandered to Valancourt, and her own misfortunes. As she sat thus, she thought, in a pause of the wind, she distinguished music, and went to the casement to listen, but the loud swell of the gust overcame every other sound. When the wind sunk again, she heard distinctly, in the deep pause that succeeded, the sweet strings of a lute; but again the rising tempest bore away the notes, and again was succeeded by a solemn pause. Emily, trembling with hope and fear, opened her casement to listen, and to try whether her own voice could be heard by the musician; for to endure any longer this state of torturing suspense concerning Valancourt, seemed to be utterly impossible. There was a kind of breathless stillness in the chambers, that permitted her to distinguish from below the tender notes of the very lute she had formerly heard, and with it, a plaintive voice, made sweeter by the low rustling sound, that now began to creep along the wood-tops, till it was lost in the rising wind. Their tall heads then began to wave, while, through a forest of pine, on the left, the wind, groaning heavily, rolled onward over the woods below, bending them almost to their roots; and, as the long-resounding gale swept away, other woods, on the right, seemed to answer the "loud lament"; then, others, further still, softened it into a murmur, that died into silence. Emily listened, with mingled awe and expectation, hope and fear; and again the melting sweetness of the lute was heard, and the same solemn breathing voice. Convinced that these came from an apartment underneath, she leaned far out of her window, that she might discover whether any light was there; but the casements below, as well as those above, were sunk so deep in the thick walls of the castle, that she could not see them, or even the faint ray, that probably glimmered through their bars. She then ventured to call; but the wind bore her voice to the other end of the terrace, and then the music was heard as before, in the pause of the gust. Suddenly,

she thought she heard a noise in her chamber, and she drew herself within the casement; but, in a moment after, distinguishing Annette's voice at the door, she concluded it was her she had heard before, and she let her in. "Move softly, Annette, to the casement" said she "and listen with me; the music is returned."

They were silent till, the measure changing, Annette exclaimed "Holy Virgin! I know that song well; it is a French song, one of the favourite songs of my dear country." This was the ballad Emily had heard on a former night, though not the one she had first listened to from the fishing house in Gascony. "O! it is a Frenchman, that sings" said Annette: "it must be Monsieur Valancourt."

"Hark! Annette, do not speak so loud" said Emily "we may be overheard." "What! by the Chevalier?" said Annette.

"No," replied Emily mournfully, "but by somebody, who may report us to the Signor. What reason have you to think it is Monsieur Valancourt, who sings? But hark! Now the voice swells louder! Do you recollect those tones? I fear to trust my own judgment."

"I never happened to hear the Chevalier sing, Mademoiselle," replied Annette, who, as Emily was disappointed to perceive, had no stronger reason for concluding this to be Valancourt, than that the musician must be a Frenchman. Soon after, she heard the song of the fishing house, and distinguished her own name, which was repeated so distinctly, that Annette had heard it also. She trembled, sunk into a chair by the window, and Annette called aloud "Monsieur Valancourt! Monsieur Valancourt!" while Emily endeavoured to check her, but she repeated the call more loudly than before, and the lute and the voice suddenly stopped. Emily listened, for some time, in a state of intolerable suspense; but, no answer being returned. "It does not signify, Mademoiselle" said Annette; "it is the Chevalier, and I will speak to him."

"No, Annette" said Emily "I think I will speak myself; if it is he, he will know my voice, and speak again." "Who is it," said she "that sings at this late hour?"

A long silence ensued, and, having repeated the question, she perceived some faint accents, mingling in the blast, that swept by; but the sounds were so distant, and passed so suddenly, that she could scarcely hear them, much less distinguish the words they uttered, or recognise the voice. After another pause, Emily called again; and again they heard a voice, but as faintly as before; and they perceived, that there were other circumstances, besides the strength, and direction of the wind, to content with; for the great depth, at which the casements were fixed in the castle walls, contributed, still more than the distance, to prevent articulated sounds from being understood, though general ones were easily heard. Emily, however, ventured to believe, from the circumstance of her voice alone having been answered, that the stranger was Valancourt, as well as that he knew her, and she gave herself up to speechless joy. Annette, however, was not speechless. She renewed her calls, but received no answer; and Emily, fearing, that a further attempt, which certainly was, as present, highly dangerous, might expose them to the guards of the castle, while

it could not perhaps terminate her suspense, insisted on Annette's dropping the enquiry for this night; though she determined herself to question Ludovico, on the subject, in the morning, more urgently than she had yet done. She was now enabled to say, that the stranger, whom she had formerly heard, was still in the castle, and to direct Ludovico to that part of it, in which he was confined.

Emily, attended by Annette, continued at the casement, for some time, but all remained still; they heard neither lute nor voice again, and Emily was now as much oppressed by anxious joy, as she lately was by a sense of her misfortunes. With hasty steps she paced the room, now half calling on Valancourt's name, then suddenly stopping, and now going to the casement and listening, where, however, she heard nothing but the solemn waving of the woods. Sometimes her impatience to speak to Ludovico prompted her to send Annette to call him; but a sense of the impropriety of this at midnight restrained her. Annette, meanwhile, as impatient as her mistress, went as often to the casement to listen, and returned almost as much disappointed. She, at length, mentioned Signor Verezzi, and her fear, lest he should enter the chamber by the staircase, door. "But the night is now almost past, Mademoiselle" said she recollecting herself; "there is the morning light, beginning to peep over those mountains yonder in the east."

Emily had forgotten, till this moment, that such a person existed as Verezzi, and all the danger that had appeared to threaten her; but the mention of his name renewed her alarm, and she remembered the old chest, that she had wished to place against the door, which she now, with Annette, attempted to move, but it was so heavy, that they could not lift it from the floor. "What is in this great old chest, Mademoiselle" said Annette "that makes it so weighty?" Emily having replied, that she found it in the chamber, when she first came to the castle, and had never examined it. — "Then I will, ma'amselle," said Annette, and she tried to lift the lid; but this was held by a lock, for which she had no key, and which, indeed, appeared, from its peculiar construction, to open with a spring. The morning now glimmered through the casements, and the wind had sunk into a calm. Emily looked out upon the dusky woods, and on the twilight mountains, just stealing in the eye, and saw the whole scene, after the storm, lying in profound stillness, the woods motionless, and the clouds above, through which the dawn trembled, scarcely appearing to move along the heavens. One soldier was pacing the terrace beneath, with measured steps; and two, more distant, were sunk asleep on the walls, wearied with the night's watch. Having inhaled, for a while, the pure spirit of the air, and of vegetation, which the late rains had called forth; and having listened, once more, for a note of music, she now closed the casement, and retired to rest.