

*Ex Libris Royal 1827*  
MILESIA N CHIEF.

A ROMANCE.

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BY

THE AUTHOR OF MONTARIO,

AND

THE WILD IRISH BOY.

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1819.



# THE MILESIAN.

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## CHAP. I.

Two such I saw—their port was more than human  
as they stood,

I took it for a fairy vision, and as I past I worshipt.

MILTON—*Comus*.

WHEN Desmond quitted Dublin, his first intention was to join his regiment, but finding their quarters were in the neighbourhood of the castle, and believing Wandesford still to be there, he bent his proud spirit to the necessity of apologizing to his colonel for his absence, before he appeared among his brother officers.

It was evening when he reached the castle; its heavy mass of shade, strongly defined on the blue twilight of a summer sky, seemed like a part of the rock it towered on: as he gazed on it with many emotions, he observed on an angle of the rock where it rose perpendicularly from the ocean a figure of the most delicate texture standing alone, and its solitude, combined with its ærial slightness, made it scarcely appear human.

“Ah!” whispered Desmond, “if that should be Endymion.”

It was indeed that unhappy girl, the victim of her mother’s selfish ambition, who, pining with a passion for which she had no name, had laboured under a partial derangement of reason since Desmond’s absence from the castle, - and was permitted to wander about the rocks alone in the evening, as the only relief of which her malady seemed susceptible.

At the sight of Desmond, uttering a

shriek of joy, she darted towards him, nor did she perceive in the twilight the altered figure of Desmond; his fevered cheek, and the agitation of his manner when he attempted to address her.

The innocence of Endymion, her ignorance even of her sex, her unconsciousness of every thing but her attachment to him, seemed the bitterest of unuttered reproaches to his early experience in vice and passion.

"Ah, Desmond," she cried, "where have you been? I have wandered every night on these rocks to meet you. They told me you were gone, but I could not believe them: I was sure I should meet you at last. Where have you been? You look as if you came to me from another world."

"From another world indeed," said Desmond, sighing; "I wish not to remember where I have been."

“And are you come to be present at this marriage?” said Endymion.

“What marriage?”

“The marriage of your father and my mother: it is to take place to-night they tell me.”

“My father and your mother!” repeated Desmond, turning pale with horror; “impossible! it cannot be.”

“Oh, yes, they are to be married to-night.”

“Not if I can prevent their union,” cried Desmond, rushing from her.

“Good heaven, what do you tell me? and in what an hour am I come!” he continued.

His dread of this union overpowering every thing, he hurried into the castle.

Endymion, whose state of mind was rapidly verging to a confusion of the real and visionary, now doubted, from the suddenness of his departure, whether it was him she had seen, and sitting down

on a fragment of the rock, she exhausted her fancy in vain attempts to recall the vision that had appeared to her.

Desmond in the mean time was traversing the castle in search of his father. As he passed through the gallery a door suddenly opened, and Lady Montclare, her mourning weeds exchanged for bridal white, and her fine figure sparkling with jewels, appeared at it.

She started at his sight, but a moment after advanced and extended her hand to him.

Desmond indignantly retreated.

"Desmond," she cried, in the softest tones of insinuation; "Desmond, do you not know me?"

"Never, I hope, as my father's wife," said Desmond, his heart swelling with grief and rage at her confidence.

"What do you mean by those words, Desmond?" said Lady Montclare, smothering her resentment.

“Oh, Lady Montclare, do not drive me to extremity, do not force me to utter what has never yet passed my lips.”

She turned haughtily from him.

“Have mercy on me,” he cried, in a subdued voice; “I supplicate your mercy for my father; you know too well there are circumstances which must revolt the heart of a son against his father forming such a connexion.”

She turned suddenly on him as he followed her.

“Desmond, have mercy on yourself: if you provoke my resentment, you may tremble at its consequences.”

She then broke from him, and Desmond, too much agitated to follow her, leaned for support against the door, exhausting conjecture on the cause of this extraordinary union.

This artful woman, who had disguised Endymion as a boy to recover her rank and consequence, was now determined to preserve it by any sacrifice.

She had lived in dread of detection ever since her arrival in Ireland, as both Wandesford and the O'Morvens had claims on the property in default of male issue. It was this had made her so anxious for the union of Armida with the former; it was this had quickened her suspicions in discovering the attachment of Desmond and Endymion, and still retaining some confidence in her own attractions, and believing that passions once inflamed are easily impressed with a new object, she wrote the anonymous note to Desmond, which he believed to be from Endymion, and in the interview which it produced she exhausted every wile of seduction, in vain hoping to make the slave of her passions the confidant of her secret.

Desmond escaped from her snares, and the next day quitted the neighbourhood; Wandesford and Armida too were re-

moved, she cared not where, provided it was to a sufficient distance from her.

She had now but one more to deal with, the weak and sordid father of Connal and Desmond. She repaired her charms, renewed her arts, and at length succeeded in inducing him to marry her; by this step she believed she had completely secured her safety, even if he should discover the secret, as it would then become his interest to preserve it.

It grew dark, and Desmond was still leaning, almost unconsciously, where Lady Montclare had left him, when he was startled from his reverie by the sound of his father's voice, who was approaching with the priest.

Desmond advanced, trembling and scarce knowing how to address him.

O'Morven seemed overcome with confusion at the sight of his son: he expressed his joy at seeing him, wondered

where he had been, and what had brought him to the castle, without waiting an answer.

“To witness an extraordinary event,” said Desmond, with a feeling he could not repress: “will you allow me, sir, to speak with you one moment in private?”

“Father Morosini may be a witness of whatever you ought to say,” said O’Morven.

“Is he your son, sir?” said Desmond, with increasing anguish; “is it necessary he should witness the first conference of a father and child who have not met for almost a year?”

O’Morven then sullenly walked aside with him, and Desmond, closing the door on the officious priest, advanced to his father.

“Father, am I too late to prevent this fatal marriage?”

“What do you mean?” said O’Morven.

“I cannot tell you,” said Desmond, almost choaked with emotion; “but be assured that it is no common cause that could agitate me thus: if this union were for your happiness or honour, I would not thus kneel to you to prevent it.”

“I cannot comprehend you,” said his father: “Lady Montclare is a woman entirely above my expectations; she is a woman of rank—she is——”

“She is,” interrupted Desmond, “oh! I know too well what she is.”

“Desmond,” said his father, affecting resentment, that he might escape from him, “if you conduct yourself with respect to Lady Montclare and me you are welcome to the castle, if not——”

“You need not propose the alternative, sir,” said Desmond, proudly, “I shall neither be a witness of your marriage or an intruder on your happiness.”

The room in which they were opened on the rocky terrace that commanded the sea, and Desmond rushed out on it, almost wishing himself in the waves that beat below.

Endymion was still seated on the rock where he had left her, and his heart thrilled with agony while he thought that this strange union boded some evil to this ill-fated victim of another's evil and falsehood; yet as he approached he was involuntarily soothed by the contemplation of her beauty, the dark luxuriance of her hair, the touching colour of her face, and her air, neither masculine or feminine, that seemed not to belong to mortal beauty.

“Are you not afraid of the chill air on these rocks, Endymion?” said he, hanging over her: “that cheek is too delicate for our rough winds; yet I think you have lost something of your Italian paleness since I saw you.”

Endymion put her hand to her cheek, and Desmond gazed on the delicacy of both, so unsuitable to the dress she had been compelled to assume.

“ I am glad,” said she, “ that any thing has diminished the unfortunate fragility of my appearance, which I fear makes me still more the object of your hatred.”

“ My hatred !” cried Desmond : “ oh, heavens ! can I appear to hate you ?”

Endymion with strong emotion pointed to the castle from which his arrival had excluded the O'Morvens.

“ Ah !” thought Desmond, “ how little does she know that a single word of mine could overthrow those claims, of whose falsehood she is unconscious.”

“ I have excluded your brother and you from that castle,” said Endymion, with a sigh that seemed to torture her slight frame ; “ yet that castle, aye, the whole world, would I give to be that brother you love so well.”

Every nerve in Desmond's frame trembled with delight to hear her thus unconsciously avow her passion; and he had scarce resolution left to feel the danger of this interview, and, repressing what he was about to say, turned towards the castle.

Endymion followed him, and twining her arm in his, complained of weariness.

"I was not so feeble in Italy," said she; "I was as light as a bird, but now at times the very air seems to oppress me."

"Do you wish to be in Italy again, then?" said Desmond.

"In Italy!" repeated Endymion: "oh! that the sea had swallowed me when I quitted its shores: oh! that you had suffered me to perish the first night of our meeting, or saved me to see you once, and die."

Desmond, terrified at this burst of frenzied passion, implored her to be calm,

and as he spoke, involuntarily his arms were folded round her.

“ If you wish me to be calm,” said Endymion, struggling faintly to break from him, while her dissolving eyes belied her struggles ; “ if you wish me to be calm, release me from your arms, for while your voice, your touch, is so near me, I am wild.”

“ I will release you,” said Desmond, dejectedly : “ I will be gone, if you wish me ; only tell me what I shall do to make you tranquil.”

“ To make me tranquil !” a flash of real madness darted from her eye : “ oh, snatch me to your heart ! Hold me to it one moment, but one moment, and the next plunge me into those waters that are rolling at your feet.”

As she spoke, she flew from him, conscious she had said something she ought not, though scarce remembering it.

Desmond, bewildered and tormented,

continued to wander on the rocks, till wearied he threw himself on them to think of the sounds he had heard trembling on the midnight wave on his passage to England—those sounds so sweet and mournful, that they seemed to announce the future influence of Endymion on his destiny.

The night he first heard them all was calm, smooth, and bright, like his mind before he beheld her. Now the evening had grown dark and gloomy, the cold rain fell round him, the rising wind hissed sadly on the bleak rocks, and the sounds he heard were like the knell of those wild wishes he hardly dared to frame.

Suddenly, far different sounds struck on his ear: it was the servants of the castle rejoicing at the marriage, and the revelry of the domestics was a strange omen, contrasted with the despair of the son.

“Ah!” said Desmond, “there can

be but one motive for this union. They intend to defraud or to injure Endymion: they fear the secret will be betrayed by her simplicity, and they are taking means to secure it that bode no good to her. Perhaps my presence may be some protection to her: I may defend her from their schemes, or assist her to escape from them."

And easily reconciled to any thought that flattered him with the hope of remaining near her, he returned to the castle, determined to watch the artful mother of Endymion at the price both of his pride and his feelings, but resolved not to witness the disastrous gaiety of the night. He lingered in the passage till one of the servants passing shewed him to his former apartment.

He retired, but not to rest: his sleep was disturbed by dreams, some of which made an impression on his imagination so strong, that he could scarcely believe the

scenery was not real. He dreamed he was in an apartment of the castle where Endymion was lying asleep : he had an indefinite sensation, so common in sleep, that he was compelled to watch her slumbers. Suddenly Lady Montclare entered : she was followed by his father, who was wrapped in a shroud, and whose face exhibited the livid appearance of death. They approached the bed where she lay, and Desmond gazed with horror on his father, whose dead and wasted hands held a taper, and who appeared to follow Lady Montclare as a subservient spirit does the steps of an enchantress.

They hung over Endymion for some time, and then Lady Montclare, suddenly drawing a dagger, attempted to plunge it into her heart. Desmond springing forward to save her, received the blow in his own, and at that moment the floor opening beneath his feet, disclosed a vault into which the arms of Connal ex-

tended to draw him, and as he gazed giddily down on the horrible depth, he observed Armida lying on a corse below.

He shivered and awoke: the storm of the night had passed away: the moon shone faintly through the heavy casement. Desmond sat up and tried to shake off the impression of his dream; but in vain: the cold drops trembled on his forehead still, and struggling in vain with feelings which he condemned, but could not resist, he rose and walked up and down the room; but every step he took in the place where he received the impressions seemed to confirm them, and ashamed, though unable to overcome them, he quitted the room and wandered through the passages of the castle. The lights that burned in them were not yet extinguished, and Desmond thought as he entered that he beheld a white figure gliding before him for a moment: the steps gave no sound; there was no echo,

and at first he believed his senses, confused by visionary terror, had deceived him, till a faint moan, issuing through a door in the passage, convinced him that something living was near him. He followed the sound, which grew more audible every moment, and found it conducted him to the chapel. He entered: a single light burning on the ground faintly shewed the altar: the window of stained glass, emblazoned with the figures of the Virgin and Saint Patrick, and in the lower compartments with the arms of the O'Morvens; and the vessel for holy water that stood at the narrow entrance of the sacristy: all the rest was dark, except a partial gleam that fell on the dusky canopy of the seat where the O'Morvens received the rites of their church, when possessors of the castle.

Desmond paused, and the recollection that here the sex of Endymion had been discovered by the old harper, in the con-

ference between Lady Montclare and her priest, struck on his imagination as if this place was doomed to be favourable to his hopeless passion.

As he advanced he beheld a figure in white clinging to the rails of the altar, and so absorbed in devotion, that not a movement betrayed its consciousness of his approach, and but for a faint sound, between a groan and a prayer, that it uttered from time to time, it appeared like a part of the altar it hung on. Desmond was already beside it, before the figure, raising her head, discovered the features of Endymion, pale and wild with superstition, grief, and passion. Desmond gazed on her with pity and horror: her lips were white, and her limbs shivered with cold.

“ Good heaven ! Endymion, what has brought you here—alone, at night, and uttering these groans.”

Endymion did not answer, but waved

him away with a stern expression in her countenance. Desmond, believing this was insanity, still urged his inquiries, till Endymion, with terror in her looks, said:—

“I was doing penance.”

“Penance!” cried Desmond, snatching her from the cold pavement in his arms. “What crime have you committed? What can you have to atone for?”

“Ah!” said Endymion, reclining on him, yet trying to avert her eyes from his gloomy face; “are not my sensations at this moment a crime?”

“And who has imposed this on you?” cried Desmond. “What monster has made you kneel almost naked on these hard stones at midnight?”

“It was Father Morosini.”

“And for what?”

“For thinking of you.”

“For thinking of me?”

“Yes. I cannot pray, I cannot do penance, without incurring it again for my wanderings: if I close my eyes to shut out external objects, it is you I see: if I kiss the picture of the Virgin, it is your lip I seem to press. I sometimes try to pour out my heart on the objects of devotion, and to think I love the crucifix, while I press it to my heart, but it is only because the pressure reminds me of the night you once held me to your’s. Ah, Desmond! how shall I murmur at the penance, when the very crime is a pleasure?”

“And do you then love me, Endymion, love me so fondly? Confess it then to me alone, my little trembling darling, and your penance shall be gentler. Don’t tell that rigid priest; he will make it a crime, merely for the sake of punishing it.”

“I told him only that I might have the pleasure of uttering your name: no

“none else would listen to me. They told me it was impossible I could love you; but if it be not love, there is no name for the sensation I feel for you. I am sick and wretched when you are present: I am like an insect in the sun, dying of too much brightness, yet when you are gone, I only live on the thought when I shall see you again. When you approach me, the same trembling, the same sickness of the heart oppresses me; I have no wishes, no thoughts, no words to express them; I gaze on you till I am entranced. Feel, Desmond, how my heart is throbbing.”

“No, no, Endymion, it would only bring another penance. Stand there, and I will lean on the other side of the altar: we cannot be too far from each other while you tell me how you love me.”

“Ah! let me lean on you at least, and hide my cheek in your breast: I never can tell you how I love you, while your eyes are fixed on me: love and devotion both require the shade.”

“ No, not a step nearer, or I am gone ; speak, and I will listen for ever : I may be mad, but I will not be guilty. Do you love me as you did, Endymion, that night we were in the cave together ? ”

“ Oh ! yes, more, but I fear you more : you used to drive me from you, and tell me it was a crime for us to love each other ; but since last night you are no longer afraid to approach or speak to me. There is a different expression in your eyes when you look at me : your voice has more softness in it, and you caught me in your arms as closely as the night you saved my life, and imagined I was a woman. Ah ! Desmond, come no nearer me, I feel the fears you have taught me : your words bind me like a spell, though I know there is no danger in being near you. ”

“ ’Tis you have come nearer, Endymion : you know not your danger. I feel the railing tremble under your hand : is it the cold that makes you tremble ? ”

“Cold ! oh, no, I am burning.”

“And so am I. And must we waste away, thus gazing on each other, till life is exhausted, without hope, without possibility of relief?—die in each others sight, die of each others looks? Oh ! what penance can Morosini inflict like this !”

“Oh ! that he would impose no other,” said the impassioned Endymion ; “that we could linger here for ever, forgetting how suns set and rose, till we forgot every thing but each other. How often have I wished that you were a statue, that I might sit at your feet, and gaze on you till I grew cold as stone myself. Do you remember the story of the Italian, who fell in love with a statue, and viewed it in despair till she died. Ah ! let such a death be mine, for what is life compared to it? But, alas ! I am not a woman, and it would be a shame for a boy to die of love.”

“Then it would be a shame for a man,” said Desmond, no longer repressing his burning tears, “yet I believe that shame must be mine.”

“Hush! hush!” said Endymion, in a voice of fear, “I hear Father Morosini coming.”

“What does he come for at this hour?” said Desmond.

“To see if I am performing the penance he enjoined.”

“And how long does he stay?”

“Oh! he often stays hours with me.”

“Alone, at night?”

“Yes.”

“And you so slightly clad?”

“Yes, that is part of the penance.”

“Ah, the monster! it is he that deserves it. Endymion, I will not quit the spot till you promise to tell me what Morosini says to you.”

“Oh! he sometimes talks so strangely I do not understand him, nor do I re-

member any thing of it but when he speaks of you: but you need not fear him, for he often looks as kindly on me as you do, though then I love him least."

Desmond, alarmed and incensed, yet unable to explain himself to Endymion, was obliged to retire, for Morosini was just approaching: he concealed himself behind the door of the chapel, in hopes of hearing their conference; and the imperfect sounds tortured his suspicious impatience, till afraid of breaking in on them if he continued to listen any longer, he forced himself away.

He had just fallen into a slumber that was soothing him with the image of Endymion, when a noise at his door awoke him: he listened, and heard a sigh so deep, that it seemed like a last effort for respiration. No answer was made to his inquiry who was there; the sigh was repeated, and at length he heard his name

pronounced by the voice of Endymion. He rose, but did not open his door.

“Endymion, is it possible you are there?”

“Yes, I have been lying on the ground at your door this hour.”

“Oh! retire to your room, and try to rest.”

“I cannot sleep, and this is the only rest I wish for.”

“Retire, I conjure you,” said Desmond, in a voice that announced the last effort of resolution: “what can have brought you here?”

“Only to be near you. Ah, Desmond! had you ever loved, you would have known the delight of pressing the ground the steps your lover had trod.”

“I know it! I know it! and those who love and fear as I do would rather embrace the ground than the object.”

“Ah, Desmond! you feed me on poison: torture and delight are mingled in

my heart. Why do you speak with such tenderness to me, and yet talk nothing but of danger and fear? If I am guilty, why do you say you love me; and if I am not, why may I not approach you?"

"I do not know why," said the racked Desmond; "neither heaven or nature forbid it, and if you stay there I shall not be able to forbid it longer."

"Oh! open the door for one moment: let me but lean my head one moment on your breast, my burning eyes would close so sweetly, and I would dream the dreams of heaven there."

"Impossible! impossible! your thoughts are innocent, but to listen to them makes me guilty."

"Ah!" said Endymion, sadly, "I have been the child of mystery from my birth, and every one round me deals only in mystery: to-night you held me to your heart, and now you banish me: your tones are softer than they were, yet they

fill me with more alarm than when they were sterner. Ah! rather than torture me with this wayward fondness, bid me begone and die."

"Never!" cried Desmond; and forgetting all constraint, he threw open the door, and sunk on the ground beside her.

"Desmond!" she cried, starting at his altered looks, though she could not understand their expression, "Desmond! the wildness of your eyes terrifies me: I feel there is danger, though I cannot comprehend it. How your hand burns! how you tremble! Are you afraid?"

"I am, I am," said the panting Desmond.

"And what is it we fear? I have seen you sit beside your brother; I have seen you lean on his arm; I have seen your hand locked in his."

"Yes, yes, you have, and would it were locked in his now, instead of your's."

“ And why can you not caress me like a brother ? ”

“ Because a woman cannot be my brother,” said Desmond, distractedly.

At these words Endymion started from his arms, and with a scream of horror flew towards her own apartment; and Desmond, terrified at the consequences of his own imprudence, pursuing her, kneeled at her door, and supplicated in his turn for admission in vain.

No answer was given, but as he leaned against the door that was but slightly closed, it gave way, and by the lights that still burned within, he beheld Endymion, pale and breathless, stretched on the floor. He rushed in, raised her in his arms, bore her to a seat, and looked round for something to revive her, dreading either to leave her, or call for assistance.

On the table near which he had placed her stood a crucifix, with a prayer-book

and rosary, and Desmond thought with horror of the disturbance he had caused in this young, unconscious heart, that had sought to subdue its struggles by religion. When she first opened her eyes, she gazed round her without perceiving him, as he stood trembling at a distance; but the moment she beheld him she hid her face in the folds of her loose dress, and waved him to be gone.

“I will go from you for ever if you will,” said Desmond: “but have I offended beyond forgiveness by the discovery that we may love without a crime?”

Endymion, still silent, repeated the motion of her hand with impatience.

“Oh! tell me,” said Desmond, with anguish, “tell me the meaning of this mysterious silence. What have I done? Speak to me, even if you bid me quit you for ever.”

Endymion made an ineffectual effort to

answer him. At length she said in a choaked and hollow voice :

“ It is not love, but death that fills my thoughts now : you have pronounced my doom.”

“ I pronounced your doom !”

“ Yes, I have heard my mother say to Morosini, when she did not think I heard them, ‘ Should she ever learn she is a woman, she must live no longer.’”

Desmond listened speechless with horror.

“ I knew not what she meant,” continued the unfortunate girl, after a long pause : “ I do not even understand what you have told me, but the horror I feel at my heart tells me I shall not survive this night.”

“ Yes, you shall, angel ! victim !” cried Desmond, wild with grief and passion ; “ you shall live, in spite of their wickedness : their crimes have driven us almost to madness, but they dare not menace you with death.”

But Endymion no longer listened to him: the eloquence of tenderness, the energy of hope with which he tried to sooth or to inspire her were in vain: the impression was not to be effaced: and kneeling before her crucifix, she implored him with such solemnity not to disturb her in the last offices of religion, that Desmond was silenced.

His blood ran cold when he saw the whiteness of her moving but silent lips, the trembling of her locked hands, and the breathless and supernatural abstraction with which she listened to his supplicating agony, and he was forced to leave her, dreading that even this impression, visionary as it was, might verify itself in the dissolution of her weak and agitated frame.

It was late in the following day when Desmond joined the family. He recalled the events of the preceding night, and after some internal debate determined to

mix with them, and if possible discover the intentions of Lady Montclare towards her daughter.

There were no guests at the castle: nothing announced the festivity of a recent marriage; and Desmond would have found the silence and gloom around him congenial to his feelings, but he was disgusted by the overstrained courtesy of Lady Montclare; and alarmed by the obvious dejection of his father since his arrival at the castle, his mind had been so agitated, that he never made an inquiry after the absent members of the family.

Connal he believed to be still in Dublin, and Armida and Wandesford in England. The servants from respect, and his father from indifference, never mentioned either their names or situations, and thus he remained in the castle, as in Dublin, utterly ignorant of the events that had taken place in his absence.

Wearied by the hollow kindness of his hostess, he quitted the castle, and wandered on the rocks till night, in vain revolving the danger that threatened Endymion from unknown machinations.

She had not appeared all day, and he began at length to be infected with the terrors under which he had seen her sinking the preceding night, when he was startled by a figure flying towards him, with the speed of wind—it was Endymion. She rushed into his arms, and hung panting there, unable to hear his repeated inquiries into the cause of her agitation.

“Save me! save me!” she cried at length, and repeated these words in a voice hoarse with horror, till convulsed she could repeat them no longer.

“Endymion, my life! my soul! what is it you fear? I will save you. What shall I save you from? Speak to me.”

“Oh, from my mother! from Moro-

sini: she has just determined to send me from the castle under his protection—I heard her this moment.”

“His protection!”

“Oh, it is not death I dread, but for worlds I would not be in the power of Morosini after last night.”

“In his power! I will perish before I see you in his power. Fear nothing, Endymion, you are safe, if a human arm can defend you.”

“Ah! nothing can defend me: I know what they mean to do with me. Ah! Desmond, save me from them, or kill me this moment: I would rather die even by your hands than fall into his.”

“What is it you fear? What is it they menace?” cried Desmond: “shall I go into the castle, and confront that villain with your false mother? Shall I avow my knowledge of their guilty secret, and force them to act openly and justly by us?”

“Ah, if you leave me here,” cried

Endymion, clinging to him with terror, "I shall perish, and if I go to the castle they will tear me from you."

"Where, where shall I shelter you?" cried Desmond, clasping her in his arms: "there is not a more desolate being on earth than I am. Oh! that I could tear open this heart and hide you in it."

"And is this your love," cried Endymion, wringing her hands in despair; "and will you give me up to Morosini?"

Her utter ignorance made her believe that the means of existence were as easy beyond the walls of the castle as within it.

Desmond, carried beyond himself by this appeal, caught her in his arms, and hurried along the terrace.

"Where are you taking me?" said Endymion, who was now terrified at every movement.

"I know not where," said Desmond: "any where from those monsters."

"Ah! stop!" cried Endymion, over-

come by the speed with which she was hurried along.

Desmond, tremblingly obedient to every word she uttered, paused when he reached the foot of the rock, and seating her on it, knelt at her feet.

“ Ah ! Desmond,” she cried, “ this humiliation terrifies me, while I know I am in your power. Do what you will with me, I am helpless and ignorant.”

“ Beyond the shadow of those walls I have not a relation on earth.”

“ Oh, that you had left me in ignorance of my real situation. As a man I should have trusted my life to you ; but as a woman I tremble in solitude with you.”

Desmond, still kneeling at her feet, soothed her with the humblest language of respectful devotion.

As she viewed the scenery round her—the infinite sky, the bright worlds that glittered in it, the endless expansion of

ethereal space that conveyed at once to the soul the idea of its dignity and its creator, she said mentally :—

“ It is impossible that a heart capable of love can admit a guilty thought in such a night as this.”

The emergency gave her a resolution of which her natural character was destitute, and she extended her hand to Desmond with an action that would have disarmed treachery itself of dissimulation, and taught confidence even to a hostile savage.

Desmond accepted the precious pledge with the purity of devotion.

At that moment the house of St. Austin, the uncle of Rosine, occurred to his recollection, as affording the only asylum to which he could conduct Endymion with safety.

Rosine and her uncle had sat up late that night : the misfortunes of Connal and Armida had been the subject of their

thoughts, and they had sat together till each was almost afraid of mentioning to the other the ominous apprehensions with which their minds were filled for the issue of their disastrous fortunes and passions.

On a sudden a loud knocking was heard at the door.

St. Austin, dreading the approach of the rebels, had started up, when Desmond entered, with Endymion, pale, exhausted, and almost fainting in his arms.

Resigning her to the care of Rosine, he desired a short conference with St. Austin.

As well as his distraction would suffer him to articulate, he described the situation and the danger of Endymion, exposed to the arts of her mother, and the unhallowed passion of Morosini.

“And where do you mean to place her?” said St. Austin, who had long

suspected the secret of Endymion's sex.

"Unite me to her this night," said Desmond, "and I shall then have a legal right to protect her from danger, and from insult."

"You have anticipated my wish," said St. Austin: "I have already thought of a retreat for you; but I did not dare to mention it till I understood your intention towards this persecuted victim, whom the vices of those who should have protected her have driven for shelter into the arms of a stranger."

Desmond, though he blushed with indignation at the name of Endymion being united with suspicion of wrong from him, suppressed his feelings, and again implored St. Austin to give him a legal right to afford that protection which her natural relatives had denied her.

St. Austin, aware of the danger to which those two persons, so young and so

passionate, were exposed, thus driven into each other's arms and into solitude, consented to unite them, though he foresaw many evils from such an abrupt and premature marriage.

They then returned to the room where the females were.

The supplications of Desmond, and the advice of St. Austin, soon subdued the timid Endymion, and trembling and blushing at the name of a state of whose duties and claims she was as ignorant as a child, she gave her hand to Desmond, still in her masculine dress; and their midnight union was witnessed only by Rosine and her uncle.

As Rosine gazed on the animated fondness of Desmond, and the shrinking and timid softness of Endymion, as she saw their youthful figures bend to receive the benediction that pronounced them united, and the soft and brilliant light of passion that trembled over their

expression, chastened for a moment by the sentiment of devotion, and the solemnity of an indissoluble engagement, she thought with anguish on the different fate of Connal and Armida, compared to whom Desmond and his young bride already seemed to have reached security and happiness.

The next morning St. Austin disclosed to Desmond the retreat which he designed.

About a mile from his house, the bank of the river that flowed past it was hollowed into a rocky recess, where the thick foliage of the trees and shrubs that hung over it completely concealed a cottage placed in its very bosom.

It had been inhabited by a hermit, whose simplicity and piety often induced St. Austin to visit him. Fond of his solitude, and not ostentatious of his sanctity, he was little known by the country-people, and but for St. Austin would

often have wanted food in his solitary retreat.

He had expired about a week before, and was interred near his retreat, which had remained untenanted since: and here St. Austin counselled Desmond to retire with Endymion, till the intentions of Lady Montclare were discovered.

With food it was easy for St. Austin to supply them; and there was no danger of discovery while he and Rosine alone were conscious of their retreat.

Here they remained buried in passion and solitude,

“The world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

Their beautiful figures were sometimes seen by twilight on the rock that overshadowed their habitation, for they never ventured out by day.

The neighbouring fishermen believed them blessed spirits hovering over the hermit's grave, and crossed themselves as they rowed their boats near his retreat.

The prospect of a new and dear companion in their solitude, though it increased their solicitude, did not diminish their happiness, and their young, impassioned, romantic spirits felt no privations at this fairy residence, so inaccessible to the inhabitants of the world.

## CHAP. VI.

WHEN Connal returned to the isles he was struck with grief and horror at the state in which he found his followers.

He had left them a few brave men, generously penitent for their crime, and anxious to merit the mercy of government: he found them, on his return, a numerous and ferocious band, mutinous to their leader, hostile to government, and formidable to the country.

The daring spirit of Brunnan during his absence had led them into every excess of violence.

The discipline that Connal had established was destroyed: instead of confining themselves to the islands, they had spread themselves along the shore, exer-

cising every outrage and aggression on the inhabitants; and, from the indiscriminate admission of every vagabond and profligate into the ranks, their numbers had increased beyond all power of control, and the spirit of humanity and honour, that Connal had tried to inspire them with, was utterly extinguished. It was in vain that he attempted to restrain their excesses, and restore the discipline they had thrown off: in vain he punished with rigour every act of unnecessary violence, and urged on them the madness of thus exasperating government, when their safety was yet suspended on its mercy. His courage, his vigilance, and his resolution, were in vain opposed to the inflamed passions and unruly habits of a rabble mad for rapine, and intoxicated with the success which had hitherto attended their incursions.

But this success was to be of short duration: troops were collecting in every

part of the country to march against them, and Wandesford, who had been recruiting his regiment during the summer, was to command the forces.

Trembling for the fate of Armida, and hopeless of his own, Connal was compelled to exert all his resolution to conceal from her the danger he could not but see. He in vain looked round his desperate band for one firm and faithful arm to whom he might entrust her in the hour of danger; and, no longer looking to life for hope, he almost limited his agonized prayers to her safety alone. One day that the rebels had surprised a detachment that was marching along the coast, the conduct by which Connal had extricated them from the perilous defile where they were exposed to the fire of the musketry, and the courage with which he had braved it till the last man had quitted the glen, extorted a shout of acclamation from the most mutinous of the

band, and they swore they would follow such a leader while they retained life.

Connal seized this moment, while bleeding with wounds he bore for them, to implore their mercy for the few survivors, who had flown for shelter to a bog at some distance, and stood there in expectation of their fate.

The rebels, in the impulse of the moment, promised they would not molest them; but Connal had scarcely reached his tent, when, by the horrid yell that struck his ear, he knew the work of blood was begun.

He rushed out with his wounds unbound, and beheld these few unfortunate men pursued over the heath by the rebels with every instrument of destruction their fury could seize.

Connal called, he commanded, he adjured them to spare a few unarmed and wounded wretches: he would have in-

terposed his own breast to defend them ; but their pursuers were between them and him.

Sick with horror at the sight, and faint with his neglected wounds, he threw himself on the ground, and cursed the hour he became their leader.

At that moment the yell was renewed.

Starting up, he beheld at some distance a young officer, flying like the wind, and thirteen or fourteen rebels, like wolves after their prey, pursuing him with pikes and scythes, not so much to kill as to mangle and tear.

Frantic at their barbarity, Connal seized a musket from one of the men near him, and loading it, fired among them.

They turned, believing that the fugitives had rallied on them ; but the officer, after staggering a few steps further, fell.

Connal instantly flew to his assistance.

As he passed the heath like lightning, the old harper, who was sitting on the ground, and who knew his step, called to him to save the unfortunate young man.

“He cried to me to shoot him as he flew past,” said he: “it was not death he feared, but to be torn to pieces alive with the claws of those cannibals.

“Oh! there will be a curse on such doings, and on all concerned in them.”

Connal did not wait to hear him: in a moment he was kneeling on the ground beside the victim.

His clothes had been almost torn off in his flight; his bare bosom was streaming with blood; his long, light hair steeped in it, stained the ground on which it fell scattered and soiled. His arm was over his face: Connal removed it.

Speechless and frozen at the sight, he

remained gazing on it, while the sufferer lay bleeding almost to death.

He had no words, no tears; but he gazed fearfully round the men, who by this time surrounded him, as if to discover who had done this deed.

At last he murmured—"The stranger said we might meet in the field, and is it thus we have met at last: oh! Desmond! Desmond! my brother! my brother!"

A burst of agony shook his frame, and he fell prostrate on the bloody breast of Desmond.

The rebels, with a murmur of compassion, raised the brothers, and bore them both senseless to Connal's tent.

One of them, who had attained some knowledge of surgery, examined Desmond's wounds: none of them were mortal, though, from the loss of blood, he long continued senseless, and even when he revived, was unable to speak.

The moment Connal's senses returned, he flew to his brother's bed, and feeling an unconquerable horror at seeing him in the hands of his murderers, had him removed, exhausted as he was, to the retreat where he had concealed Armida.

He walked beside him as they bore him along, bathing with tears the damp hand that could no longer return the pressure of his; and at that moment his sufferings might, before a tribunal of inquisitors, be allowed to have expiated his offences.

That night, when he reached Armida's cottage, accustomed as she was lately to see him exhausted by fatigue and emotion, the agitation and horror of his countenance struck her, and she felt, for the first time, that passion itself was unequal in resources of relief to the vicissitudes of a life so various and so agitated.

He had neither the step of a hero nor

the gaze of a lover as he entered the cottage.

Seating himself at a distance, he drew his thick hair over his eyes, and clasped his hands over his forehead, while Armida with anguish saw the tears bursting through them.

All her influence, powerful as it was, failed to reconcile him to himself this melancholy night.

“What have I done!” he cried in despondency: “I have murdered my brother!—I have dragged the first of women to exile and misery!—I have dealt ruin and shame around me: the very earth is sick of my weight, and I linger on it only to meet some punishment that will make its inhabitants tremble.”

Armida, scarce recovered from her recent terrors, exerted all her powers to sooth his tortured sensibility: she adjured him not to confound crimes with misfortunes, and reminded him of the hu-

manity with which he had atoned for the use of unlawful power, and conciliated even his enemies.

“ Ah ! ” said Connal, “ I thought myself moderate before I possessed power ; but who can trust his heart ? — and is it not the heart that heaven regards and punishes for its wanderings ? ”

“ Did I never feel the swell of pride while marching at the head of hundreds devoted to my will ? Did I never, in the thought of obtaining a victory, forget the sacrifice of lives it must cost ? Did I never in the moment of triumph forget how father wept for child, and brother for brother, as I do now ? ”

Armida struggled in vain to support the sinking spirits that had so often sustained her's.

“ Ah ! no, ” said Connal in unutterable anguish, “ my fate is approaching : neither patience nor courage, submission to suffer, or energy to dare (and I have

not wanted them), nor even you—you, my guardian angel, with all your excellencies, can save me now!--I am a lost man, and all that cling to me must fall with me. I am a falling rock; and the very flowers that twined themselves in my ungenial soil must be crushed in my uprooting."

"Ah! my love," cried Armida, "it is in your hour of distress that I proudly claim my right to suffer with you: the former energies of my mind are concentrated into one powerful sentiment, to which life or death now appear equal. It is not in the summer of life, when every object is green and verdant, that passion loves to gaze on its object; ah! no; it is when life is chequered with misfortune, like the discoloured foliage of autumn, that the traveller loves to linger in its shade, though its leaves are falling around him, and its dissolution murmurs in every wind that shakes them."

Connal, subdued by her tenderness, forgot the sentiment of grief that inspired and mingled with it, and while he knelt at her feet, and held her soft hand to his throbbing forehead and bosom, their pulsation became calmer, and in her presence he almost ceased to believe himself guilty, for he felt he was no longer unhappy.

Desmond's recovery was slow, and his safety was ascertained long before his reason was restored.

Connal, who had watched him every day while he remained in a state of insensibility, hid himself from his sight from the moment he could recognize objects. He could not bear to appear before him in his present degradation, and he felt the superiority of Desmond's situation, stretched on the bed of death, where honourable wounds had laid him, to his own at the head of a rebel host.

As the time for his departure at length approached, Connal, though resolved to

remain unknown to him, could not forbear to sooth the yearnings of his heart by the sound of his brother's voice.

Desmond was conducted at night to the shores of the isle, and desired to remain there till his guides returned.

There was neither moon nor star. Desmond leaned against the rock, and heard the surges break at his feet; but he could distinguish no object, nor conjecture for what purpose he had been brought there.

Suddenly a tall figure, closely muffled, stood beside him.

"Young man," said he, in a disguised voice, "you are now recovered: a boat is on the shore to conduct you from these isles.

"I trust you have not wanted care during your abode with us."

"I thank you," said Desmond; "but I am determined not to quit this till I have seen my brother."

“Impossible !” said the stranger ; “ your brother could not encounter your sight.”

“ I know him better than you,” said Desmond ; “ I know my sight would do him good. Though the fiercest of his men were about him, he would give me one look, and the thoughts of his youth would visit his heart again.”

“ Perhaps he dreads your sight,” said the stranger : “ he fears your reproaches.”

“ He fears nothing,” said Desmond : “ he never feared. Who shall reproach him ? His offence was involuntary : —Connal must be the sufferer, but Wandesford was the criminal.”

“ We will leave his public character—he is not of your opinion, perhaps,” said the stranger : “ but can you forgive your own injuries and sufferings ?—Can you forget it was the crime of your brother that brought you almost to the grave :

with the fangs of his banditti yet reeking from your flesh, can you forgive him?"

"For one of that banditti you speak strangely," said Desmond.

"I am indeed one of them," said the stranger, "and must be involved in their punishment, but I have kept aloof from their crimes."

"I would you were all as sure of heaven's forgiveness as of mine," said Desmond. "How can I feel I am near those shores without a heart burning with affection? There is not a stone on them that is not a memorial of his more than fraternal, his parental love and care for me; and the sea that beats on them shall wash them away before their traces leave my heart."

"And if you should see this unhappy man," said the stranger, "are you sure that no stirring of resentment, no opposition of sentiments, no anger at his fall, would disturb your meeting?"

“ Prove me,” said Desmond; “ try me this moment: bring me to his presence.”

“ You are in it already.—Desmond, Desmond, the life of a rebel will not afford such another moment as this.”

When their emotion had subsided, Connal conducted him to Armida; and anxious if possible to detain him a little longer in their retreat, he went out in quest of the old harper.

“ Cormac,” said he, “ are the men apprised that my brother is in Wandesford’s regiment? Do you think he would be safe in remaining here a day?”

The old man confessed there were loud murmurs against Connal for preserving the life of one of Wandesford’s officers, against whom their resentment was implacable.

“ And what did you say when you heard them?” said Connal.

Cormac repeated the common topics by which he had tried to appease

and excite their compassion for Desmond.

“Ah!” said Connal, impatiently, “you do not speak as if you were pleading for a brother: his safety must not be trusted with you.”

He then returned, anxious and disturbed, to the cottage.

Armida when she first beheld Desmond blushed: the dejection of misfortune and habitual danger had struggled with but not subdued the proud consciousness that once marked her expression: even yet she seemed not “less than arch-angel ruined;” but Desmond, when he saw her, wept.

They passed all that night in melancholy conference, and Desmond’s story alternately awoke the wonder and grief of Connal and Armida, who were alike unsuspecting of the sex of Endymion, or the iniquitous art of her mother.

“We lived in paradise,” said Desmond,

describing their hermit retreat; "but soon a fiend broke into it.

"One lovely summer's evening, we had lingered late on the bank of the river, watching the birds dipping into the bright wave. Ines (for she had assumed the name by which she remembered being called in infancy) compared them, as their white wings gleamed in the sun, to spirits on their dismissal from the body, hovering over the water of life in Elysium.

"Long security had left us without fear, and she sung for me one of those songs which I heard on our passage from Italy before I saw her, and never forgot the impression they conveyed—that it was a woman or an angel that sung.

"It was growing dark, when we saw a boat approaching: Ines grew pale, and, falling into my arms, said she saw the figure of Morosini in it.

"I looked intently; but it was too

dark to distinguish: the boat drew near the bank at some distance, and was concealed from our view by the trees that hung over the river. I carried Ines to the cottage, and secured it as well as I could: I had no arms, and I dared not quit her to go to St. Austin for assistance. Overpowered with terror, she lay down; I continued to sit up: there was not the slightest noise, not a breeze past the casement; and the river, how still and calm it was that night. It was long past midnight, when as I was sitting beside Ines, who had fallen asleep, I observed the light of the moon as it shone in at the window was obscured: I looked up, and the face of a man appeared through it. What were my feelings at that moment! I could not leave Ines even for a moment to discover our danger: but I was not long left doubtful of it. The door was burst open, and Morosini with two others rushed in: I heard him say:—

“ Bind him if he resists, while I carry her away.”

“ In mere despair I struggled with them, and had got one of them to the ground, when Ines, who awoke with the noise, and saw Morosini by the light of the moon, frantic at his sight, rushed out of the cottage : he pursued her. I had by this time overcome the other ruffian, and followed her too : in frenzy she flew up the rock ; she saw him close behind her : she plunged into the river and perished : before my eyes she sunk, and with her my unborn babe.”

He stopt, and for a long time no sound was heard but his convulsive sobs, and the audible grief of Armida and Connal. At length raising his head, and fixing his eyes on his brother, he said with desperate calmness :—

“ Yes, I lost her, and I came here to meet my death from your hand, Connal.”

Connal, unable to answer him, waved his hand for him to cease.

"I have no recollection of what followed that moment," said Desmond: "I believe I was deranged: to St. Austin I owe my life: had he known to what he was restoring me, in humanity he would have let me perish. No trace of her ever was discovered. The body of Morosini, who must have perished in the attempt to save her, was afterwards found: perhaps he repented when he saw his victim struggling in the waters. A demon might have wept to see it, so young, so helpless, so beautiful, so innocent! Ines! Ines! how hard and cold is your bed for so soft a form, so fond a soul! Ines, my heart is as chill since it lost you as the waters where you lie, and your image rests there as your corse does below the cold dark current. I would I were with you, Ines, without a crime, for often I feel as if even that would not deter me from

following you. I would have pined away, gazing on the water that flowed over her, till by accident I heard what the deep solitude we lived in had concealed from me."

Again he stopt: Connal hid his face: he knew his meaning well.

"The first moment I heard it," cried Desmond, with a flash of his native impetuosity, "I thought I could have stabbed you to the heart: the shock, the overthrow of all my proud thoughts, my devoted veneration, my ambitious affection for you, was too much for me, I flew to join the regiment, and Wandersford, I believe, was gratified by the thought of seeing us armed against each other, for instead of bringing me before a court-martial for my desertion of duty, he employed me in the detachment among whom I suffered.—But I felt while marching I was a coward; I dreaded not death, but the sight of you, Connal.

I think that had I met you in the field I should have fallen like a child before you, but the wound that pierced me would have been inflicted not by your hand but by your look."

Connal, who saw and trembled at the effect of this language on Armida, beckoned his brother to follow him; and they quitted the cottage together. They wandered on the shore for some time in silence. Connal's heart was too full for words: at length he seemed to dismiss with one heavy sigh the weight that hung on it.

"Desmond," said he, "heaven has sent you for my relief, in an hour when all other relief seems to be denied me. In this hour of solitude I may confess what my lips never yet confessed to man—My fears;—the lenity, or the contempt of government will spare us no longer: in a few hours perhaps I must lead a desperate band to their last struggle:

victory is almost hopeless, and even victory must be at length succeeded by defeat. We are too few to subdue a country; we are too numerous to escape from it: neither resistance nor submission can avail us: we may fall slowly, we may fall bravely, but fall we must: yet at this hour, urged to extremity as I am, beyond all resolution to cope with, almost beyond patience, there is but one chord of my heart that is sensible to fear: you know the name that awakes it; I cannot utter it: save her, Desmond; lead her from this scene of blood; place her in safety; and I think I can then kneel down and thank heaven with an unburthened heart, though its last drop was to flow the next moment."

Desmond listened, but his heart, chilled and withered by calamity, had no room for that glowing sympathy, that trembling ardour of benevolence that was its fruit in more genial hours. He promised

to conduct Armida from the approaching conflict, but he declared his resolution to return and perish, if they were to perish, with his brother. Connal's heart swelled with agony; he would have spoken, but his voice was choaked; and turning his head aside, he wiped away the tears that love, grief, and remorse, made alternately sweet and bitter.

“Connal,” said Desmond, “more than the eloquence of man is in those tears, but their eloquence is in vain: what have I to do with life: happiness is gone with her who gave it, and honour is not for the brother of a rebel. Were I even restored to what I was, what would it avail: my notions of right and wrong are lost; the principles you taught me your own example has defeated: the world seems changed since I heard that Connal was a rebel. I can neither do good nor receive it from any one: no one loves me, nor do I delight to love.

Drive me not from your brave side, Connal; this wasted frame may be thrown before you in fight, and receive some ball that was aimed at you: this is all the use I can be now, and if this be denied me, I care not if I run on the pike of one of your band before your sight; it will give that relief to a wretch which a brother refuses."

A melancholy struggle of generous feeling followed between these unfortunate young men, but Desmond, obstinate in despair and vehement in affection, persisted and prevailed. They then separated, Desmond to prepare Armida for Connal's determination, and Connal to discover if the enemy was approaching, whose arrival he never expected to survive.

He rowed to the isle nearest the shore: as the morning was breaking, he found it full of tumult and alarm: the reports of the approaching forces were hourly

strengthened: the ferocious courage that had supported the band failed on the approach of real danger. About noon the rebel out-posts on the shore were driven in, and they could see their friends flying in all directions. Connal, though they were in no immediate danger, then thought it high time to move to their relief; and the shore, obscured by the smoke of the musketry, favouring their expedition, they embarked to save if possible the fugitives whose temerity had prevented their seeking shelter in the isles before the arrival of the military: but the shore, covered with soldiers, defied their approach, and the wretched rebels, driven at the point of the bayonet, were struggling for life in the waves. Connal in vain encouraged his men to row forward and save their perishing companions: they shrunk back, till he and two more leaping into the largest boat, under a heavy fire, advanced with daunt-

less humanity and snatched some of the drowning wretches from destruction. A few were then incited by their example, and during the whole of that dreadful day Connal toiled among the foremost, through waves dyed with blood and strewn with corpses, till the soldiers, weary of unresisted slaughter, retired from the shore. In the evening, some who had concealed themselves among the rocks escaped to the isles, where the next day they purposed to invade them, and exterminate their inhabitants.

Connal, unable to snatch a moment's repose, passed the night in making preparation for the last resistance, dismissed Desmond to Armida's retreat, which in this hour, that demanded all the energies of his heart, he dared not visit himself, and two hours after midnight retired to his tent alone. During this last interval of solitude, he attempted to commit his thoughts to writing.

*The thoughts of Connal the night before  
the engagement.*

“In two hours the day that must decide my fate will break: the eternal revolutions of heaven continue undisturbed by the destinies of man, and the sun that will light the world the day before it is destroyed will perhaps rise as bright as the preceding. What am I, and those who must fall with me, compared with the generations that have flowed away: as we approach death, we are lost in the idea of the divine immensity, and our own existence, proud as we are, ceases to have importance in our eyes. Why should not I suffer, when the good have suffered; why should I not fall, when the brave have fallen: we are insects struggling in the flood of time; it passes on, and our struggles do not even create a dimple in its tide. Does this

calmness intimate to us supreme indifference or supreme complacency."

\* \* \* \* \*

"This is the hour that searches the heart of man, that makes him dread he will discover in it some hidden evil, the cause of all his sufferings.

"I have erred, and a few hours will decide whether I have erred beyond forgiveness: of human mercy I have neither hope or wish: I have erred from passion, not from principle, but am I not therefore more culpable. I have no leisure to examine my heart now; I have too many cares, and too much distraction: my mind is not as the mind of man ought to be when arming for its last conflict: there is a terror at the very bottom of my soul I dread to penetrate or disturb.—Had I never loved, had I never beheld the first of her species, my destiny would have been undivided, and the concentrated forces of my mind

would have produced something great even in error, and extorted reverence from mankind amid their censure.

“ But I loved as never man loved, and the thought of her makes me feel a coward at my heart. Armida, what would my enemies think of the rebel leader could they behold these tears.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Great sufferings give us a kind of confidence in the protection of heaven : I have undergone so much, that I feel as if I had a title to demand immunity for her at least—yet often I dread that sufferings are not inflicted for nothing, and that where there is so much misery there must be some guilt.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ For the dominion of the world I would not live over again my life for the last ten months, or witness again the scenes I have witnessed.

“ Had I known but the smallest part

of the consequences that have attended my desperate attempt I would have submitted to any thing my enemies could have inflicted ; I would have plunged into the ruins of my burning dwelling to escape them. I have suffered more than the horrors of warfare : I have none of its pride or pomp to sooth or stun me : I have seen the passions of men contending without that art which modern war teaches, to disguise their ferocity : I have lived daily with the men I led : I have seen the soldier's sufferings without the soldier's pride : I have witnessed misery in its naked, revolting, heart-sickening hideousness : I have seen their famine, their weakness, their fears—ah ! their cowardice ; the cowardice of want, ignorance, and sufferings, of frames wasted by hunger ; of hearts broken by despair : I have seen all this, and been compelled to smile on the wretches, and lead them on, for I was a chief of rebels."

\* \* \* \* \*

“ It would cure the ambition of the destroyers of their species to witness what I have been conversant with. Amid what sights has this day passed ! Beings, my fellow-creatures, flesh and blood like myself, parched and weltering in the wind, whose keenness blows spears and arrows into their raw and open wounds ; others so gashed and mangled, that of humanity not even the form remained, but through the memberless stump an horrid feeling of animation, making life more terrible than death.

“ I saw some, who, as I hung over them to discover a trace by which they might be known, grasped the hand with which I touched them with a force that nothing but force could shake off.

“ There must have been many in the remoter parts of the field ; there are many now while I write, who retain life enough to hear the croaking of the ravens that flutter nearer and nearer them every mo-

ment, and who perhaps will at last be dispatched by the fiends of some human beast of prey, who prowls about the field to tread out the last sparks of life, and strip the carcase, while its startings and heavings make their practised hands shudder to touch it."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The morning is breaking; I see the glimmerings of day! on whom will it set? Armida, my last thoughts hang on you. The soul that retains its passions on the verge of dissolution must be immortal, and we shall meet again. Before the sun goes down pride will be low, and courage cold; but love that can warm the soul as its last struggle approaches will not desert it even when the struggle is past.

"I tremble now, but the extreme of danger is congenial to my spirit; and when I see my enemies, I shall be insensible of fear. There is but one heart in

the world that can understand and feel my last sentiment.

“O’Morven trembled as he armed for his last conflict, and he would not have resigned that fear for the pride of courage and victory,”

\* \* \* \* \*

The morning was grey and misty, and the heavy vapours that hung over the shore and the isles, mixing with the smoke of artillery, soon concealed every object under a volume of darkness.

Armida, though she rejected the thought of leaving Connal with a decision that left no room for importunity or argument, had consented to take shelter in the isle that he had collected the largest body of the insurgents in, and conceived the least accessible from the shore.

Here, in a rude cottage, between two rocks, whose reverberation rendered the sound of the engagement more tremendous, with but one female attendant, she

passed the whole of that dreadful day. No messenger arrived, no report reached them; at times, unable to bear the oppression of her heart, she quitted the cottage, and ascending the rock, tried to gaze round her.

All was mist and gloom; no object could be seen but the rolling volumes of smoke, sometimes broken by a sudden flash: no sound could be heard but the roar of artillery, ceaseless, deep, and deafening. She had passed the night without sleep, and the day without food, and the stupor that now invaded all her faculties seemed like the approach of peace.

Sinking on the ground, and hiding her face with her hands, she resigned the attempt even to think any further, and the prayers that would have burst from her heart she had no longer strength to utter.

Evening approached: a bright autumnal moon broke through the vapours that

had shrouded the isles all day, and this light, by restoring her wandering senses, awoke her sufferings: she viewed it, and wished for darkness again.

It was now night, and nothing had broke the fearful silence all day, when steps were heard on the rock, and four of the rebels were seen by the light of the moon running towards the cottage, with their pikes dyed in blood up to the hand. Armida started from the ground, but she could not speak: their tale was soon told: the king's troops had effected a landing in the isle about noon, though desperately opposed by the rebels, and had, after a dreadful slaughter, nearly reached the centre of it.

The engagement still continued among detached parties, for the ground was too much broken, and the rebels an enemy too wild and tumultuous to be dealt with after the rules of a regular engagement; and Connal, who was still fighting on

foot among the foremost of his men, had dispatched four of them, whom he could ill spare, to conduct Armida from her retreat to one more remote from that where the troops were forcing their way. Armida and her attendant followed them: the narrow path, the trembling precipices, the broken light, and the distant roar of the conflict, had no terrors for her now; once, shuddering at a yell of more than common horror, that broke from the bottom of a glen before the rock they were ascending, she paused—the men demanded the reason of the delay; she pointed to her heart, but could give no answer.

They reached the opposite shore of the isle: here stood the ruins which Armida remembered she had visited with Connal soon after their first meeting; she knew it well, but her parched and burning eyes had not now a tear to give to memory or to passion.

They entered the ruins, and the men pointed out to her the vaults to which she

might retire for safety, in the event of the military approaching. She listened, and then exerting her utmost strength to speak, implored them to return to Connal. The men informed her they had orders not to quit her sight, and reluctant as they were to obey them, she could not prevail on them to leave her.

It was almost midnight, but the conflict had not ceased, and so totally unlike to modern war, that it seemed like the contest of two savage nations in their deserts: there was no array, no regularity, no conducted charge, no disciplined retreat. Except where Connal still maintained his bloody post near the centre of the isle, the rebels were every where broken, and the soldiers pursuing them in detached parties. Every cliff, every glen was the scene of a different action; it was the fight of man with man, the thrust of pike and bayonet hand to hand, the discharge of musket

and pistol at the very breast of the assailant; and this desultory conflict, that extended to every retreat in the isle, and tore all its echoes with the yell of assault, and the groan of death, was more terrible to the fugitives than one decisive and stationary action.

At first it was rather a rout than an engagement, rather a slaughter than a victory, but as the night advanced, the superior knowledge and activity of the rebels in their wild recesses, and the contempt of the military for these fugitive savages, was fatal to multitudes of the former, who pursued their victory too far; and before midnight, though the soldiers claimed the victory, the loss had been nearly equal.

It was two hours since Armida and her attendant, seated on a tomb-stone that rose in the centre of what had once been the aisle of a monastery, listened in vain for a sound of hope or safety.

The men at length leaving her, paced gloomily along the ruined cloisters, striking their pikes against the broken pavement with sullen impatience, and the woman, worn out by fatigue and horror, fell asleep at her feet.

Armida, left alone, looked upward for a moment: the moon was bright in heaven, the grey ruins were tinged with her full but solemn light: there was not a cloud in ether; the breeze scarce waved the foliage that wreathed the shattered walls, and this breathless stillness of nature, contrasting the passions of man, made them seem more formidable. She could scarce believe that amid such scenes fury could be felt, or blood could be shed by man.

She was startled from her reverie by the sound of voices and steps approaching: she recognized the English accent of the soldiers of Wandesford's regiment—they advanced—they would have

passed on, but the rebels observing the fewness of their numbers, in their zeal for vengeance betrayed the charge committed to them, and pursued them instantly.

A sharp contest followed, and the rebels, three of them wounded, retreated to the ruin: the soldiers pursued them, and in a moment Armida saw their bayonets sparkling, and the fire flashing before her eyes. Her terror had not deprived her of recollection, and she attempted to take shelter in the vaults, but her companion, delirious with fear, clung to her with such force that it was impossible to escape; and they sunk on the ground together.

The unfortunate men, whose rashness had betrayed her, now exerted the last remains of life to gather round her, and defend her from the soldiers. Three of them fell almost at her feet, and the soldiers, one of whom knew her, were advancing to seize her.

Horror overcame all her faculties, and for a few moments she remained insensible; but the flash and the conflict so near her allowed her but a short respite, and when she recovered, she saw another arm raised in her defence, whose force could not be mistaken. It was Connal, desperately encountering the soldiers alone, and in this tremendous struggle his more than human figure gave a kind of dignity even to slaughter.

The soldiers had expended their ball, and all whom he had not disabled pressed on him with their bayonets. He had no weapon but the pike of one of the fallen rebels, and with this in his hand, his back to the tomb where Armida had fallen, and his foot planted against a fragment of stone, it seemed easier to lift the building from its base than to make him yield an inch.

Armida gazed on him for a moment bewildered, and scarce believing that a

human being could support such a contest: but a few moments brought the dreadful conviction that he could not sustain it long: she heard his broken respiration; she felt him stagger; the ground trembled with his convulsive movements; the tomb was stained with his blood, and the force of the blows made it flow fast on Armida as she lay almost at his feet, alive only to the horrible idea of seeing him die before her: she called, she shrieked to the soldiers to spare his life, and promised all her wealth to reward them.

Connal cast a look of agony on her, but he had not breath to utter a word; desperate with terror, she fell on her knees, and offered to throw herself on their mercy, if they would spare him.

"I am the daughter of Lord Montclare," she cried; "I will follow you without a struggle: I am kneeling on the ground: I am humbled to the dust.

Hear me, hear me, and save his life ; the daughter of Lord Monclare begs it on her knees."

The men, incensed by Connal's desperate resistance, and determined on his life, closed round their victim.

Armida, driven to frenzy, looked round for a weapon to defend his life or end her own, and at that moment could she have wielded a pike her desperation would have driven it into the breast of the boldest of his assailants. Suddenly the wild yell of the rebels struck her ear; she echoed it involuntarily with a cry as wild, and a party of them, whom Connal almost fatally for himself had left far behind flying to her assistance, poured in to his rescue, and Connal, who had exhausted his utmost force in the last blow he had aimed, fell into the arms of the first who advanced to defend him. No conflict followed, for the rebels gathered in terror round their leader, whom they had never seen prostrate before, and

the soldiers resting on their arms in astonishment at their being spared by a number who could have destroyed them in a moment, but who seemed alive only to the fate of one man, after lingering for some time, gazing and doubtful of their senses, retired in safety.

Armida's senses wandered; sight and hearing failed her, though her recollection remained, and she seemed to struggle through mist and darkness for a clear perception of her danger. With an effort that suffering alone can make, she raised herself, and threw back her dishevelled hair to look round her: Connal, pale, bloody, and exhausted, was kneeling before her.

"You are safe, you are alive," he cried, but not in a voice of tenderness or joy: "now let me begone."

Armida, unable to speak, attempted to hold him; he broke from her, but the speechless agony of her look made him pause.

"Whither would you go?" said Armida, faintly.

"Back to my men to perish with them; back to the brave men whom I deserted, whom I left spending their blood for me, while I fled from them—yes, fled like a coward, at the very moment when another effort would have saved them from destruction. I saw a party of soldiers taking this direction: I knew they must discover you—no human heart could hold the conflict of mine—I trembled, and turned my back—you are safe, but I paid a price for it I would not pay for worlds—my men have seen me fly."

All Armida's sufferings were nothing compared to the bitterness of this moment, when, for the first time, Connal's lips reproached her; but her fear overcame every other feeling, and she still clung to him, though she did not dare to supplicate his stay.

He turned as she trembled at his feet;

his pale cheek for a moment burned with shame, anger, and love: "Are you my enemy too?" he cried: "would you erase my name from the book of life of the brave, and condemn me to eternal infamy?"

Armida, unable to bear the intolerable lustre of his eyes, that blazed with the agony of his heart and frame, released her hold, but as he rushed from her, she called to him to kill her before he went.

"You are safe," cried Connal; "the men who fled after their leader are round you—I am not fit to defend you: 'till I have recovered the post I deserted I am unworthy to draw a sword—an infant or a dastard might win you from me." Then springing forward with the enthusiasm of despair, "I will offer this last sacrifice to my country," he exclaimed, "though the temple is in ruins, and the priest himself the victim."

The energy of Armida's feelings rose above the pitch of nature: she followed him, and kneeling made a vow to heaven, that if his life was saved in this last conflict, she would suffer herself to be conducted any where that would save him the distraction of her presence amid his trials.

A smile of gratitude and joy lightened for a moment Connal's distracted features, and this smile was an omen of victory.

His men, few, faint and sore, maintained a dreadful fight on the hill where he had left them; but when he returned it was doubtful. His mind, relieved from the only burden that could subdue its energies, seemed almost independent of the aid of his worn and wounded frame: no mortal force could now make him waver or shrink, and the soldiers, harassed by the continued actions of the day, and feeling the extent of their loss far beyond

what they had imagined, retreated to the shore with the intent to quit the isles by day-break, unless a powerful reinforcement arrived.

Connal seized this moment to commit Armida to the care of Desmond: he had not a moment to deliberate where he should conduct her, and Desmond, whom nothing but this commission could divide from his brother, was compelled to think for them both.

A short and agitated council was held while the boat was preparing to convey her from the only part of the shore that was not filled with the king's troops, and the increasing light hurried her departure, while it was yet possible to depart without being observed or intercepted.

Desmond, with a sigh to the memory of Ines, proposed St. Austin's house as a retreat, till Connal's fate was decided.

Armida, to whom all places were alike

if banished from him, made no opposition.

“Speak, my love,” said Connal, “will you go to St. Austin: speak that I may hear the sound of your voice once—once more.”

She tried to answer him, but her utterance was choaked, and faintly holding out her hand, she tried to press his in token of confidence. The burning tears that dropt on it, the damp forehead and speechless lips it was pressed to, the broken and suffocating sobs that were breathed over it, called on her for a last exertion of courage, and she forced a smile on her convulsed features, as she leaned on Desmond for support.

“May this retreat prove more propitious to you than to your ill-fated sister!” murmured Desmond as he drew her away.

Connal bore her in his arms through the surf, and as he placed her in the boat, their bosoms, so long agitated by misfortune, now locked in a last agonizing em-

brace, partook at once of the extremes of anguish and joy.

Desmond's withered heart afforded one tear to this sight, and the men, resting on their oars, forgot their own danger as they gazed on the lovers.

"The morning is breaking," said Desmond; "we must be gone."

Connal leaped from the boat, and when he reached the shore, the agony of his heart forbidding even a word, a movement, a look to her parting figure, he knelt on the ground, and his locked hands, his quivering lips, his dishevelled hair, spoke that intenseness of devotion in which the spirit loses sight of every thing but heaven, and the object it offers to it.

Armida gazed on him for a moment: she felt her spirits exalted by this humiliation that implied so much confidence, and waving her hand to him, she cried, "We shall meet again."

"In heaven we shall," said Connal,

mentally, rising to take a last glimpse of the receding boat as it disappeared, and he proceeded alone to his desperate station.

*Fragments of letters from Rosine to Albert St. Austin, her uncle.*

“Dearest uncle, Armida is here—she came last night: though I see her before me, I can scarce believe my eyes, and I am still so agitated by her avowal, that I can hardly give you a legible account of it. Since your journey to Roscommon I have retired early every night, for the neighbourhood is still so much disturbed, that I dreaded the servants being out late. Last night I sat reading in my own room later than usual, when I thought I heard steps on the lawn, and the servants refusing entrance to someone. I was terrified at first, but the application for admission was so peaceable, that at last I took courage to open the window: the night was dark, and I could scarcely distinguish two

figures at the door—I spoke to them, but received no answer: one of the servants then came up to tell me that a man was below, whose voice they thought they knew, but who refused to enter unless I admitted him: this appeal removed my fears, and I went down and opened the door: I attempted to speak, but they passed me and hurried to my room, where they had seen lights burning. I followed them wondering, though not afraid: when I entered the room, one of the figures had sunk into a chair, and thrown off a thick mantle in which she was wrapt: the light fell full on her face—it was Armida: alas! how pale and changed she was. The whole day they had been coasting among the islands in an open boat, to escape the military, and when they landed in the evening, they concealed themselves among the rocks, till night-fall made it safe for them to venture out. They did not reach the house till midnight: what must have been her suffer-

ings! yet, perhaps, those which she speaks of are the least.

“Desmond, in spite of our supplications, left us before morning broke. She is now safe under this roof, if that can be called safety where life is suspended on the fate of another.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“This morning, when I view her more steadily, I perceive the alteration of last night proceeded rather from fatigue and terror. She is pale indeed, but there is an energy in her figure, a character in her expression, and even a glow on her cheek at times brighter than the tint of youth, or health, or happiness. I look with terror on that dazzling and frightful beauty that derives its lustre from passions too powerful for the frame, and almost makes you see the spirit shining through its fragile and transparent vesture. Her mind is more changed than her figure; she has no ambition, no imagination left; she talks calmly of

her past misfortunes, and of the prospects that await her, but she never speaks of Connal: I mentioned his name to-day, and I never shall forget her look, or the action with which she pressed her hand on her heart, as if to recover the blow that name had given her. Alas! what changes do those who have even seen little of life witness in all that once formed its ornament and delight.

“When I beheld her first all was meridian brightness around her: no mortal ever appeared so fortunate or so brilliant: no eye could discover a speck in the orb, but where her proud sensibility cast its shade for a moment.

“I see her now by night, pensive, shadowy, wan; and the lustre that yet hangs round her figure seems like that of the melancholy planet, by whose light grief loves to wander, and passion to weep.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Yet, it is not of her ruined mind, or her fading beauty she ever speaks or

thinks, and this total self-resignation, this devotion to another, and that other so unfortunate, gives her a charm she wanted in her days of happiness and splendour."

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have been making inquiries: dreadful fears are entertained for the fate of Connal: I know not what his present plans are, whether to retain possession of the islands, or to break through the forces stationed on the shore, and regain the mountains, or disperse themselves through the country. The emigration of such a number to America is almost impossible, and it is equally so that they can remain in safety here: in either case, her absence will leave every power unimpeded, but I fear their utmost exertion will never be able to accomplish their meeting once more in security."

\* \* \* \* \*

"What must be the character of this

unfortunate man, when the most loyal subjects in the country have been heard to express a wish that he might escape ; but the implacability of Wandesford, his interest, and his representations to government, leave no hope, though they cannot extinguish compassion."

\* \* \* \* \*

"How I have been terrified: Lady Kilcarrick has been here: since Gabriella's misconduct, and her disappointment about her, her sole delight is, I think, in inflicting misery on all she can. By some means she has procured intelligence from the servants, with the meanest of whom she would submit to converse to gratify her curiosity, and she came to tell me she had heard of the arrival of two persons at the house the preceding night at a late hour, and in a very mysterious manner. When she found that neither threats nor importunity could extort any thing from me, she even attempted to

search the house ; I prevented her almost by force, and she departed at last with a torrent of abuse.

“ My terror for Armida carried me beyond myself ; I called up the servants, and with as much violence as if I had power to execute my threats, I told them I would be their ruin, I would bring them to want a morsel of bread, if I ever found one of them had disclosed the event of last night : they promised secrecy, but how can I expect it from them. Dearest uncle come to me as soon as possible : I am not able to encounter these scenes alone.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ All is over : there has been an engagement between the military and the rebels : it was decisive : the rebels are defeated : hundreds have fallen, and hundreds more are prisoners ; Wandesford himself is wounded, and Connal and Desmond have perished.”

“ Great God ! what is life : I tremble

at my own existence, and at the misfortunes that disfigure mortality : I am sick of life : who shall escape, when Armida has encountered more than death : she whom I once regarded as a being above the claims and cares of humanity. How affection can pervert the heart, when I, whose very existence depends on the existing state of the country, listen almost in despair to the fate of a rebel.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Hours have elapsed since I traced those lines : I attempt to proceed ; but my fingers stiffen with horror when I take up my pen. The rebels are flying in all directions ; some of them passed within a mile of the house, with the soldiers pursuing them : I hear the firing this moment, and the light of the burning cabins on the heath is increasing dismally as the evening grows darker.

“ Two women, whose sons perished yesterday, brought the first intelligence : poor wretches, their screams as they

rushed into the house still ring in my ears. It was impossible to prevent Armida from hearing them; she rushed forward, and though I almost knelt to them to be silent, or at least to cease those horrid cries that told their tale before a word was uttered, she heard it all. Alas! it must be true that Connal is no more, for while one was left to stand by him he never would retreat."

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"We have been tortured with reports all day: Connal is sometimes dead, and sometimes a prisoner, and sometimes hiding in a cavern on the shore, with one surviving follower. My only consolation is that Armida is insensible of all.

"Since the first intelligence arrived every gleam of reason has disappeared. Her mind, wound up to the last pitch of hope, has broke, and never will the chord vibrate again.

"Oh God! what the sufferers must

feel, when a witness like me would almost escape by death from what I am compelled to undergo.

“ I am writing beside her bed : alas ! can this be Armida : that mind, whose powers might have enlightened or governed society is prostrated and broken ; that form, whose undulations might have suggested ideas to a creating spirit for the inmates of a new ethereal world of beauty, lies convulsed and distorted before me : and that voice, whose resources once tasked the art of harmony to find difficulties for, can only utter screams of despair and agony.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ Whatever be your engagements, I implore you to come home immediately : I cannot deal with these events alone : I am amid violent and dangerous people, whom I have neither powers nor passions to resist. She has been torn from me this moment. Lady Montclare and her

wretched husband broke in here this evening. They insisted on seeing Armida : I had no means of opposing them.

“ Lady Montclare loaded me with reproaches, and I appealed in vain to the humanity of the worthless O’Morven, who seemed to come only like one of his wife’s attendants. Alas ! that such a father should survive, and such sons should perish.

“ I entreated them at last not to remove her in her present state ; but her mother, without heeding me, ordered her to be lifted into the carriage. I saw her borne away like a corse : she was cold and senseless, and in the fulness of my heart, I wished she might never revive to wretchedness.

“ Dear uncle, return instantly, I dread this treacherous and daring woman : I am convinced she has some other plan in agitation. It is well known that her other daughter was sacrificed to her arts and to her violence : she regards no hu-

man being but as the agent of her ambition, and even Armida's dreadful state will be no protection from her mother."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Two days of solitude and terror—I have not had a line from you—I cannot hear any thing from the castle. While I look on its dark towers through the frowns of evening, my heart sinks within me.

"I know not whether Armida is alive or dead: the country is all in tumult: I kept the doors locked day and night till yesterday, when I was obliged to admit some soldiers who were billeted here. I trembled at their sight: perhaps one of them decided the fate of Connal."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Connal's fate is yet unknown: there is still hope, if that can be called hope where life appears to have more terrors than death. Two hours after the soldiers were removed, Desmond arrived: famine, fatigue, and wounds, have made

him almost a spectre. He was left for dead in the last engagement, and knew not how he escaped or recovered. He has wandered about since, not to seek safety, for he wished to die, but he wished first to see Armida, and communicate the hopes that are still felt for Connal's life. Desmond is certain he did not perish in the last engagement: at a late hour on that dreadful day he was still fighting. Those who saw him later say he was still alive, and his body has not yet been found. Many have been apprehended on suspicion of concealing him, but if alive he has hitherto escaped their search. Alas! he whom Wandesford pursues cannot long escape.

“Desmond is gone to the castle, determined to see Armida. I implored him to consult his safety by flight or concealment, while the soldiers were in the neighbourhood: he listened to me with a smile of desperation.

“I only lived for Connal,” said he,

‘and now all I can do is to die for him.’ How terrible is this contrasted union of early youth with a broken heart. Even Connal and Armida, tempest-shaken as they are, scarce present such a melancholy image as this young green branch withered in its vernal prime. Desmond, you are worthy of such a brother, but you were worthy of a better fate. In early youth, I already seem to myself to have lived too long to witness what I have done. Misfortunes antedate experience, and existence protracted for ever could hardly sustain such a loss again as it has done in Connal and Desmond: how much virtue and valour has perished with them! what genius and passion in Armida! what softness and innocence in Lues! I feel them as already lost; and the storm that is now howling through the sky seems to me as if it were passing over their graves. Alone, at midnight, the past full of misfortune, and the future of terror, I tremble with visionary fear, though I

am writing to you—what can this mean? A messenger from the castle, to require me to be present at Armida's marriage—Armida's marriage! and at midnight! I have read over the lines till I am almost giddy: it is her hand. This invitation to festivity at such a time, and from such a hand, seems to me more terrible than all I feared in the indefinite range of my gloomiest thoughts. I cannot but think something fearful is at hand. The prophecy of a heart inspired by grief seldom errs. The messenger waits for me, and I go to this marriage with a heavier heart than if I had been summoned to follow her to the grave."

## CHAP. III.

ON the dreadful evening of the engagement Connal was left alone on the heath. He looked round him: a few of the rebels still were seen on the dim verge of the heath, as if they were flying to hide themselves in the shades of the night. The sudden change from the tumult of fight to silence, solitude, and darkness, was terrible, and for a moment he stood spell-bound and unconscious of existence on the spot. He called on his men: his voice was echoed from the hills, but no one answered.

“Desmond! Desmond!” he cried; but Desmond was lying in a glen far distant, wounded and weltering in blood.

A thrill of anguish mixed with pride darted its last impulse through Connal’s breast, and he exclaimed aloud:

“Is there not one brave man left, who will plant his foot by mine, and perish by my side?” No voice answered, no foot approached. Connal threw down his sword on the heath. “All is lost!” broke from his lips: and the winds that whistled on the heath seemed to murmur back the sound—“All is lost!”

“Yet, yet there is one to be saved,” he exclaimed, as the thought of the poor old maniac in his cell rushed on his mind.

He retired from the field but slowly, for he expected to meet an enemy at every step. The heath was deserted, and he entered the rocky path that led to the glen where his grandfather was confined. On his entrance to it he started to avoid treading on a body that lay before his feet. He advanced again, and beheld a number scattered along the path: a party of rebels had contested that pass in the morning, and every man had fallen where he fought. “And these all perished for me!” said Connal, pausing.

Impelled by horror he sprung through this glen of death, and descended through the chasm that opened on the shore: all was dark, cold, and solitary. The echo of his step was the only sound, as he crossed the valley: it seemed like the warrior's grave, when the warrior's struggle was past.

As he hurried on with a beating heart, the roar of the ocean burst on his ear, and the wind rushing through this narrow pass seemed to swell to a storm the accents of horror and death he had lately heard rose on the gale, as if the spirits of those that had fallen were ascending on its wings in their flight to eternity: he stopped, and looked upward: the rocks were darkening above, and the ocean bursting at his feet—nature, as well as man, seemed arming against him. His mind, pressed with many cares and sufferings, began to fail, and he imagined that the spirits of those he had loved and destroyed hung on the clouds that black-

ened over his head. Desmond reproached him with his blasted hopes, and Armida reminded him of the extinguished lustre of her destiny, her talents, and her passion. He listened to these sounds of fancy, till, almost maddening with their terror, he turned with flashing eye, and dishevelled hair, to answer them. The wind sunk: he paused, and heard only the throbbing of his heart. Ashamed of his weakness, yet shrinking from its recurrence, he hurried to the habitation of the maniac.

His retreat was so secluded that no one, even in that day of ravage, had reached it; and Connal embarking with him, and one wounded rebel, who had sought shelter in the hut in an open boat, exerted the last remains of his strength to row to the shore before the soldiers quitted the island, and overspread it. He reached it before morning, and they gained the summit of a rock, where they stood aloof from their enemies in safety and despair.

Connal, who had carried his grandfather in his arms up this almost inaccessible steep, sunk exhausted on the ground on which he laid his helpless burden; and their companion, who had dragged his wounded limbs after them, died at their feet the moment he surmounted the acclivity. Even Connal's faculties and frame sunk for a time under his toil, and he fell into a sleep, whose stupefaction resembled that of death, till roused by the firing of the soldiers, who had landed on the coast, and were pursuing a few wretches who had escaped from the islands, he started up, and looked round for some cave to hide in for the day.

Evening came on: no step of friend or enemy approached. A cold sleet, drifting with a stormy wind, beat into the nook where they had shrunk: the bare stone supported the emaciated limbs of the maniac. Connal had in vain stripped himself of every garment he could spare to spread under him: drenched with wet,

they afforded no warmth to his chilled frame. He had in vain searched the rock for one drop of water to quench the burning thirst of frenzy: he returned from his hopeless wandering, and passed the whole of that dreadful night in listening to the moan of hunger, and the scream of madness.

Famine drove him out the next day in search of that relief, without which it was now impossible to live. His knowledge of the country enabled him to avoid every place probably frequented by the soldiers, but it confined him to those where no inhabitant was to be found, and no food could be procured. At length he saw a cabin on the side of the mountain he was wandering on, and, desperate from want, hurried towards it. An elderly woman was sitting at the door: she was in rags, her eyes were wild, and the stillness of her posture had no alliance with the wandering fierceness of her look.

Connal, almost insensible of her ap-

pearance, approached, and addressing her in Irish, implored some food for a famishing relative. The woman gazed at him for some time, and then said, in a hurried voice :

“ Yes, yes, I have food enough—enough for you and me: come in, come in, and let us enjoy it together.”

Connal followed her into the cabin. On a heap of straw lay the body of a young man, whom Connal remembered to have fallen beside him in the engagement of the preceding day.

“ There, there,” said the woman, with the eloquence of despair, pointing to the corpse, “ there he lies: you have laid him there. There is the feast I promised you: you may devour him yourself, for that is all you have left me to give you. There, gnaw his bones, but leave his heart to his mother.” And with a yell of agony, she threw herself on the body.

Connal flew from the cabin with the swiftness of lightning; but faster than

he flew her curses followed him, and still the dreadful cry, multiplied a thousand-fold by the mountain echoes, rung in his ears—"Woe, woe to the bloody house of O'Morven! The curse of a broken-hearted mother on the bloody house of O'Morven!"

When he had got to a distance, he sunk on his knees on the earth, and the prayer of deprecation, "Not unto me, oh, heaven! not unto me," burst from his heart, but his parched lips could not utter the sounds: yet, dreadful as his reception was in this house of death, he dreaded still more to return, and see a parent die of hunger on his bed of stone. "Yesterday," he thought, "I commanded an army, and to-day I pray for the sight of one human being who will give me a morsel of bread, and pray in vain." As he spoke, a boy, running with the speed of a mountaineer, passed him.

Connal called after him, but the boy

ran faster, and when Connal pursued him, falling on his knees, implored him to spare his life. "Do I look like a murderer then?" said Connal, retreating; and for the first time, his eye glancing on his own figure, he ceased to wonder at the child's terror. Almost naked, stained with blood (for his exertions had made his wounds bleed afresh), ghastly with famine, slaughter, and despair, even the grace and dignity of his figure appeared like the wild grandeur of a maniac, and added terror to his appearance. But the sound of his voice, which not even despair could divest of harmony, dispelled the fears of the boy, and he informed him he was the son of a cottager on the mountain, and was sent on a message to young O'Morven at the castle from the house below (pointing in the direction where St. Austin's house stood), as none of the servants from that house would be admitted by Lady Montclare.

"Young O'Morven!" said Connal, in

amazement, "is Desmond at the castle? Is he alive and safe?"

"He is," said the boy; "I saw him to-day."

"Oh! heaven has not deserted us," cried Connal, the tears bursting from his seared eyes.

"While Desmond has life, we shall not be let to perish."

"Fly to the castle, and tell him his grandfather is starving in a cave on this bleak mountain. Do not let him expose his safety by coming in search of us: let him but send us food; and, oh! implore him to send it soon, for in an hour it may arrive too late."

The boy promised, and Connal returned to his dreary retreat; but unable to enter it without relief, he stood at the entrance armed with the only weapon the rock afforded—the fragment of a gigantic ash that grew in one of its fissures. All day he strained his eyes over the distant heath for the return of the messenger, till his

heart sickening with expectation, and his sight dim with weakness, and unable to penetrate the gathering darkness, he sunk into the cave, and raising his grandfather's head on his breast, felt that the pangs that now tore it would be the last. A quick, light step approached. "Ah! that is Desmond's light foot," said Connal, starting from the ground. It was the boy.

After waiting for some hours, he was told that O'Morven did not believe the message was from his brother. "How can I convince him?" said Connal: "whoever sent the message he must at least have known required the relief he supplicated. I could not have trifled thus with the misery of famine." And his anguish for a moment overpowered his confidence in Desmond. "I have no means left of satisfying him but this," said he, and with his blood he scrawled on a piece of slate the name of Connal, and gave it to the boy, imploring him to

deliver it, if possible, to Desmond himself. The boy looked terrified at this second commission, and then confessed that two men had followed him over the mountain, and were now approaching the cave. "We are betrayed," said Connal, and the force of a giant seemed to nerve his arm, as he sprung forward to guard his parent's dying moment from insult. "They shall feel that the blows of a famished man are as fierce as the hunger that is tearing his vitals: better to starve on this black rock than to perish on their gibbets." Two men approached, but they came with no hostile intention: they were men, who, though strictly loyal, felt that dignified compassion for Connal which his character had inspired, even in his enemies, and conjecturing his situation, they had wandered all day on the mountain in quest of him, and at length discovered his retreat by pursuing his messenger.

Connal, unable to distinguish their

figures or their intention, placed himself at the entrance, and as they advanced, he exclaimed, "I am O'Morven! Let him that is reckless of life advance another step to this cave." The men, urged by the necessity of their own safety, for Connal, exhausted as he was, could have crushed them to dust, eagerly explained their motive for intruding on his retreat, and offered to lead his grandfather and him to one of their cabins, where he would be safe from pursuit or suspicion. "I know not what to believe, or whom to trust," said Connal, after a long pause; "but it is so long since I have heard even the language of humanity, that I cannot resist it. Lead me where you will, but remember that this hand, though unarmed, can deal with twice its odds, and even were it withered this moment, there is another that can reach those that oppress the defenceless and the trusting."

The men with assurances of fidelity entered the cave, and when they beheld

the deplorable state of O'Morven and his grandfather, they shed tears of grief and indignation, and one of them could not forbear expressions of resentment at the abuses of principle and habit by which such a man as Connal had been driven to extremes so horrible. "Hold," said Connal, his inextinguishable soul flashing from his eyes: "not a word against that venerable wretch: his prejudices, his errors are to me as hallowed as his white hairs, and like them, if they are torn up, the blood will follow." His spirit, even amid ruin and wretchedness, awed the very men upon whom his existence depended, and they silently prepared to remove the old man from the stones on which they found him stretched, but they viewed each other with looks that intimated their help had come too late.

It was night when they quitted the rock, for the soldiers were still about the country, and his exhausted state rendering it impossible to remove to the distance

of their own habitations, they placed him in one of the huts in which the shepherds watch the cattle during summer, and which was now deserted. Food was brought to them ; but the deadly sickness which Connal felt at the sight of it made him unable to taste a morsel, and it was with the utmost difficulty he could prevent his grandfather from devouring, with the ravenous appetite of madness, a quantity that would have destroyed him. He then hurried the men away, lest their being absent from their homes at night might expose them to danger on his account ; thanking heaven for the luxury of straw and a draught of cold water, he sunk into a slumber.

On the preceding day Desmond had arrived at the castle at a late hour in the evening.

It was almost dark ; but he could distinguish, as he approached, something like a procession issuing from the gate, and winding down the rock on which he stood.

He advanced with a boding apprehension for which he could not account: the procession stopped for a moment, and he discovered it was a funeral.

He attempted to ask whose it was; but his voice failed, and he was compelled to lean for support on the person of whom he inquired.

The man, who was one of the bearers, did not recognize his figure in the shade, and he answered abruptly it was the funeral of O'Morven, who had been so lately married to Lady Montclare.

"My father!" cried Desmond, falling breathless into the arms of his informer.

The report that one of O'Morven's sons was among them spread through the attendants; but there was no one there that would betray him.

He was borne back to the castle by some of them, who thought they might as well have suffered his corse-like figure to accompany his father.

Lady Montclare, from the window of her apartment, beheld him by the torches which the bearers had now lit, and at that moment the plan which she had been revolving ever since she had got Armida into her power appeared for the first time practicable.

Trembling in her castle, this unhappy victim of her own arts looked round, and beheld the ruin she had brought on all connected with her without procuring safety for herself.

By her constant irritation of Wandesford against Connal he had been impelled to that treachery which had driven the latter into rebellion and ruin. By her want of confidence in Armida she had been urged to follow the desperate fortunes of Connal.

Her arts had driven Desmond and Ines to destruction. Her agent, Merosini, had perished in the execution of her plans ; and the wretched O'Morven, wearied by her violence, and terrified by

her crimes, had, after one of the furious conflicts with which their short and unhappy marriage was attended, burst a blood-vessel, and expired in her sight.

Yet amid all this wide-spreading mischief she felt that almost all she had dreaded were either removed or no longer capable of molesting her.

Wandesford, intent only on vengeance, had probably forgot that such a being as Endymion once existed.

Connal, a hunted fugitive, whose life was forfeited to the laws, could inspire no fears. Her husband was no more, and Desmond, whose knowledge of her secret she could not doubt, was at length in her power, the last and only being she feared; and the plan that she now conceived, atrocious and wild as it was, seemed probable from the moment she beheld him. She hastened to attend him in person: she scattered rich and reviving essences over him with her own hands, and the

lifeless appearance of him whom she remembered so lately warm in youth and beauty, a blooming husband, and almost parent, deterred her not from sacrificing the remains of his doubtful existence to her plans the moment it was restored.

As he revived she assumed that aspect of sober and matron grief that she believed would conciliate his feelings; and the moment he was able to hear or to understand her, she commenced the development of her scheme.

Desmond at first revolted from it with horror: his reason was outraged by its improbability, and his feelings were torn by its violence; but he was no opponent for the woman he had to deal with. Her sophistry, her eloquence, and her passion, were alternately exerted. The opposition of his reason she overcame by evidences that seemed irresistible, and the conflict of his feelings she stilled by an appeal still more powerful. He yielded at length,

and she hurried to Armida, to subdue the only resistance to her purpose which she still feared.

Armida, whose reason was just sufficiently restored to comprehend her meaning, but who, in her delirious terror, grasped at any thing that promised immunity from the last and only evil she dreaded, submitted even more speedily than Desmond; and Lady Montclare, exulting in her success, and unmoved by the sufferings of her victims, set out herself on foot at that late hour in quest of a confidential agent in the neighbourhood.

She was returning alone: it was almost midnight; but, occupied by her own thoughts, she heeded neither solitude nor darkness, till, as she was ascending the rocky terrace that bounded the castle on the sea-side, a figure started forwards and crossed her path. She looked up, and screamed with undissembled terror. It was Connal, and his figure, wild, wasted, almost supernatural, appeared in

terrible alliance with the roar of the wind that raved on the rocks and the pale flashes of autumnal lightning that from time to time revealed and obscured it.

“Connal!” cried Lady Montclare, shrinking from his look, though half its terrific expression had not encountered her.

“Yes, Connal! the wretch whom your crimes, combined with those of others, have reduced to a spectre that blasts your sight.”

“Do you forget my rank?—Do you forget my sex?” said Lady Montclare, trying to assume a dignity of which her vices had deprived her.

“Yes, I have forgot every thing: I have lived to forget the laws that bind man to reverence woman, or to love his species. Wretched woman! shrink not from me: injured as I am, for the meanest of your sex I would yet shed the last drop of blood that is left in these veins: injured as I am, I would shed it even for

you. If you shrink from my sight thus, how will you bear what I must say to you before we part, for bear it you shall."

"Oh! heavens!" said Lady Montclare, struggling in terror, "do you mean to murder me?"

"Yes; I mean to pierce you to the very heart, if you have one.—Look at me," he cried, holding her at arm's length from his figure, while she shuddered at its dark unearthly majesty; "look at me! I am stained with blood, I am squalid with rags, I am scarce human in my form; yet your beautiful, your high-born Armida, will sit under the shadow of a gibbet one day with this felon-corse in her arms:—and will your pride support you then?"

"Merciful heaven! deliver me from this maniac," cried Lady Montclare.

"Yes, I am a maniac:—your arts and crimes have made me one. 'Tis you have planned this cursed marriage. I have borne much; but this is more than man

can bear. I thought last night when I watched a dying parent on straw in a hovel that heaven had exhausted its power to punish ; but heaven has punished my presumption. Armida, she has deserted me : she who never shrunk in war, and want, and misfortune ; she who almost fought by my side : and what have I done to her !—My sufferings have wearied her. 'Tis you, 'tis you who have driven her to this. The arts of hell have been practised on her, and you were their agent : you ! wretched woman, destroyer of your children, you !”

The terrified wretch sunk on her knees, and with the most horrid perjuries attested heaven that this marriage was Armida's own choice, and that her influence had never been exerted to accomplish it.

“ I would not believe an angel that descended from heaven to swear it. Bring me to her sight : I will believe no words but her's. I have parted with life, and

honour, and happiness, and my heart was never withered by a fear, my lips never breathed a murmur; but from Armida I will not be torn by mortal hand. I will see her this night, this moment, though you, and Wandesford, and Satan stood to oppose me."

"You shall see her," said Lady Montclare, who in the midst of terror had made this demand subservient to her plans; "you shall see her this night, and hear from her own lips what I have told you."

"I fear you," said Connal, musing, "I fear you are too much for me. I cannot penetrate your purposes: would I could penetrate your heart; but the attempt is desperate. Think, think, unnatural woman, before you sacrifice your other child, what is the wretched toy you are thus purchasing with your soul: with all your pride and wealth, you tremble before the most wretched of his species this moment; and-how will you

abide when your heart shall be laid as bare as this bosom?"

"I can give no other security," said Lady Montclare, unmoved at this appeal.

"Go," said Connal, releasing her, "I trust you not; but remember I will see Armida:" and he stretched himself on a rock before the castle-gate: she implored him to seek some concealment, but he listened to her with a disdainful smile, and at length she retired.

It was now that she was compelled to put forth all her strength to prevent the consequences of this interview, for she saw too well the fixed despair of Connal to hope it could be avoided. She hastened to Armida.

The same arguments that had prevailed on her to submit to the marriage were employed to make her consent to this interview without disclosing her motives. Armida's resolution sunk before the thought of meeting Connal, and on her knees she implored her mother to spare

her this last trial : but Lady Montclare believing that when this interview was over she had nothing more to dread, exhausted all her art to obtain it, and succeeded.

Armida and Connal met :—for two hours that they remained together Lady Montclare endured almost the punishment due to her crimes; from the apprehension that Armida's constancy might fail. At length she heard the door open : she flew from her apartment, she saw Connal depart with a firm step, and without one reverted look ; and Armida approached with a calmness of aspect that terrified her, for her guilty conscience was alarmed by every thing. She would have spoken to her, but Armida waved her hand with an expression that would not be resisted, and the smile that divided her pale lips had more terror for her guilty parent than the loudest reproaches.

Connal returned to the hovel where the corse of his grandfather had lain since he expired the night before ;

and so deep was the stupefaction that had invaded his mind and senses since the last interview with Armida, that it was not till after he had entered the hut he saw it was filled with the family who had sheltered him, and who were in despair.

During his absence, the soldiers who were in search of him had broken into the cottage, and convinced of his having been harboured there set it on fire, and the wretched family, half naked, fled for their lives to seek shelter in the hovel which had protected the O'Morvens. The despair of the father, whose son had been seized by the soldiers to extort information from him, the cries of the children, and the delirious shriek of the mother, who imagined she still saw her cabin on fire, and incessantly repeated, "Fire! fire! my husband and children in the flames!" burst all at once on the eyes and ears of Connal.

He stood for a moment gazing on them:

the situation in which he beheld them required not a word to explain it : he paused, and then grasping the wretched father's hand, said calmly, "Your son shall be restored to you ; I will be his ransom," and quitted the hovel without another word.

It was now midnight : he set out alone to surrender himself to Wandesford : he paused for a moment, but the cries that seemed to pursue him made him spring forward.

"Nature is weary of me," said he, as he stood alone under the black cope of a starless night : "I have nothing more to do or suffer. Nothing remains for me but the last struggle ; and what will that be compared to what I have been suffering for years of my life, and almost every day of those years. Armida ! and you have deserted me : deserted me when I had torn the last nerves of my heart to place you in safety, and at a distance. Your lips could not pronounce the words,

but your eyes told what the oaths of all mankind could not have made me believe. To the unfortunate their fate appears the result of mystery, of derangement: I could hardly believe it was Armida I saw: perhaps my senses have failed—they will soon be restored. The greatest of all mysteries will shortly be developed: no deception will blind Wandesford when he sees his victim in his power. I cannot summon the strength I wish to meet my last conflict with: if I think of her I shall tremble like a coward, and my enemies will believe it the fear of death. I will pause till I have forgot her, if that be possible."

He threw himself on the ground for a moment, but the thoughts of the unfortunate family rushed on his mind. He sprung from the ground, and a feeling of indignation warmed his breast as he exclaimed: "And I escaped from war, and peril, and famine, to fall at last by the falsehood of a woman: and in the arms

of her young bridegroom she will not even drop a tear on the grave of the man who lived only for her, and when he could live for her no longer, died."

Wandesford, though it was past midnight when he heard that Connal had arrived at his quarters to surrender himself, started from his bed with joy. He dismissed the soldier who brought him the intelligence, and walked up and down his room to deliberate how he should treat his prisoner. The debate ended in the most diabolical and unmanly vengeance: it was not from any fixed political principle, or a view of the dangers with which Connal's perverted education and heroic passions menaced his country, that Wandesford had pursued him with such hostility; his feeling was personal hatred, and his object the vengeance of an assassin. He did not put him to death, for he wished his sufferings to survive beyond death: similar punishments were

common in the unhappy times of Ireland. He ordered his men to give him five hundred lashes under pretence of his refusing information of concealed rebels; and to dismiss him if he survived their infliction: surrounded and overpowered, Connal submitted to what he knew it would be vain to resist; he hoped they would have ended their torture by death, but after a mockery of questions to which they knew he would give no answer, he was thrust out, and drawing over his mangled frame a cloak which one of them in humanity had given, he sunk down beneath the gallows on which the son of the man whose life he had hoped to rescue with his own had been hung that evening.

It was late on that eventful night when Rosine, full of terror and astonishment, arrived at the castle. The servants seemed surprised at seeing her, but Armida, who had grown imperious beyond her mother's

power of management, insisted on her presence, and Lady Montclare had no pretext for refusing. From the messenger who had come for her, and whom she repeatedly questioned during her short journey, she could learn nothing, for he knew only that Armida was to be married that night, and that the castle was all in a tumult of preparation.

Rosine, when she entered the hall, found herself unable to proceed another step, and she retired into a small apartment which she remembered well, while the servant went to announce her arrival to Armida. The room was empty, but a door was open to an adjacent apartment where lights were burning, and from which she heard the sound of voices: at first she did not distinguish them, and her weakness left her no power of retiring when she did.

After a long debate, which the emotion of the speakers rendered almost inarticulate she heard Desmond distinctly exclaim,

“Marry the object of my brother’s love! the woman devoted to him, and to him alone! there is incest in the very thought.”

She could not hear Lady Montclare’s reply, but she thought from the expression of “Connal’s life,” that occurred so often in it, that he submitted from some fear that threatened it. A pause ensued, and Desmond then in a voice broken with agony exclaimed: “I—I, who was the husband of her sister!”

Lady Montclare then audibly reminded him that the religion of her family being catholic, a dispensation had already been procured for his being the husband of two sisters: a long silence followed, but the opportunity for reflexion which it afforded Rosine was in vain: bewildered and distracted, she could not form a conjecture with regard to what she had heard, or what she was to witness. The marriage of Desmond and Armida seemed to throw a mist over her faculties, and

when the servant returned to conduct her to Armida, she followed him as she would the phantom of a dream.

The apartments of Armida, splendidly illuminated, and lavishly decorated with the brilliant monuments of her former talents, increased her wonder, and the silent and lifeless beauty of the statues and paintings as she moved among them, and felt the recollections excited by these well-known objects, made her feel as if she was entering the regions of the dead. As she traversed the apartments in a distant room, she caught a view of Armida's figure: she hurried forward, and Armida advanced to meet her: she was magnificently dressed, and there was an air of triumph and splendour in her figure and expression that Rosine never remembered to have beheld, but which would have recalled the memory of her earlier days to those who had known her in Italy. Rosine was almost dazzled by this brilliant phantom bursting on her, after the

darkness of her night journey, and she paused, unable to speak or to answer, till relieved by tears. Armida expressed pleasure at seeing her, but her manner was hurried and abstracted, and she had stopped in the midst of the shortest sentences as if she had forgot their meaning. At length she said with a smile that Rosine thought far from her heart, "You must not weep, Rosine; remember this is a bridal festival."

"I fear," said Rosine, trying to recover her spirits, "I fear I shall disgrace you in this homely dress: I am unfit to be the attendant of so splendid a bride."

Armida cast her eyes for a moment on Rosine, and then on her own gorgeous dress. the contrast between their feelings, and their external appearance, seemed to strike her with agonizing force; she turned away, and the expression of her countenance for a moment reminded Rosine of the time when the haughty and brilliant Armida knew no one on earth

who could equal her splendour, or rival her talents, or resist her power.

She continued to walk up and down the room with a hurried step. Rosine often attempted to speak, but her voice failed her, till at length, unable to bear the oppression of her heart, she ventured to inquire the reason of this precipitate marriage.

"You do not know it yet," said Armida, suddenly stopping and viewing her intently.

Rosine declared her ignorance even of the event itself till she was summoned to witness it.

"You will know it too soon perhaps," said Armida, after a long pause: "till then spare yourself and me all inquiries."

As she continued to walk, her figure reflected in a mirror caught her eye for a moment, and snatching a light that burned on the table, she stood before Rosine: "Am I not a brilliant figure?" said she.

"You are indeed," said Rosine; "but do not look at me so intently, Armida: I cannot bear the brightness of your eyes, and there is something in their expression that alarms me."

"Yes," said Armida, "the world might wonder at such a sacrifice, but they know not for whom it is made."

"Dear Armida," said Rosine, "why do you call your marriage a sacrifice, and if it does not contribute to happiness (as I guess too well) why is it made?"

"Yes, yes," said Armida, "it will contribute to my peace effectually, beyond all human expedients, or human power to disturb."

"I do not understand you," said Rosine; and sick with unspeakable fears, she turned to the window she was sitting at, and opening it, gasped for breath. Armida approached the window. The night was calm and beautiful, the clouds were dispersed, and every star in heaven burned with clear and steady lustre.

“How this solemn light changes every object!” said Rosine: “how different you appear to me from what you did but a few moments past! your glittering dress has grown dim, and you look deadly pale;” for she could not believe that feeling could produce so total a change as Armida’s countenance betrayed while she looked at her.

“Rosine,” said Armida, suddenly and solemnly interrupting her, “you are religious; you are conversant with those solemn things that have been only matter of curiosity, of vague speculation to me. Have you ever discovered what was the fate of those beings whom misfortune has made weary of life—who——” and she stopped, unable to find words that could convey her meaning without terrifying her companion.

“Ah!” said Rosine, eagerly catching at the sound of religion, “the truths I have been taught have convinced me that they alone afford a shelter from the

evils of life : that they alone give a peace which the world cannot give, and the world cannot take away."

"Rosine, you have been nursed in religion, and you turn to it from nature and from habit : to you it is like the return of a wanderer to his father's house, but to me, who was taught every thing but that, it is like the arrival of a stranger in a place where he is disowned and unwelcome : every thing looks dark and cold to me."

Rosine, with the eloquence of affection, and the energy of devotion, interrupted her, and she painted the blessedness of the spirit that reposes its cares and its struggles in the bosom of eternal peace, and sees the waves of a stormy world burst at its feet.

"I have read much like this," said Armida, "but can you answer my question—can you tell the fate of departed spirits—do they wander in darkness, or do they obtain a glimpse of the object

whom they loved more than life, and for whom life itself was renounced?"

"Darkness rests upon every question that does not belong to our peace," said Rosine.

"Then let us have no more of it," said Armida, wearily: "and why," she added, "why harass ourselves and our fellow-creatures with questions that a few moments must solve to them and us." She turned away as she spoke.

"A few moments!" repeated Rosine, following her; "how can a few moments disclose what life is unable to inform us? We must wait with faith and patience for these discoveries."

"There is perhaps another way of arriving at them," said Armida, thoughtfully.

"It is eternity alone can inform us," said Rosine.

"It is on eternity I will call to tell me," replied Armida.

Her dreadful meaning burst on Rosine in that moment: she stood at first gasping with horror, and then attempted to rush from the room.

“Where are you going?” said Armida, detaining her.

“To alarm the castle—to call for assistance. Armida, do not struggle with me; neither your talents nor your passions can awe me now—no eloquence or sophistry can persuade me that a crime is not a crime, and that the one you are meditating is not the worst of all. Frantic woman! was your lover then your god?”

“Be calm, Rosine; I promise you I will not seek the means of death to-night.”

Rosine looked doubtfully at her, but she had no other resource but to believe her: a long silence followed, and the conversation was resumed so faintly, and with such long intervals, that Rosine ex-

erted herself in vain against the depression that invaded all her faculties.

“ You are exhausted,” said Armida, looking at her with compassion: “ will you take some refreshment, or will you throw yourself on that sofa, and take some repose ? ”

“ No, no ; it is late, but I feel no weariness—I will sit up with you—I have often sat up later without fatigue—do you remember when I watched you in the ruined abbey ? ”

“ Yes, but let us talk not of misfortunes now : the evil is past ; let this night hear only the sounds of joy,” said Armida with frantic irony.

Rosine now resorted to any topic to avoid the oppressive silence that followed. “ When is this marriage to take place ? ” said she.

“ At midnight the priest is expected,” said Armida, “ and till then, Rosine, I wish to be a few moments alone—I have

need of some moments of reflexion to compose my mind."

"May they restore your peace," said Rosine, retiring: "I will pass the time in praying for it."

"I thank you," said Armida, when she found herself alone, "but I fear heaven will not hear it." She passed with rapid steps into her cabinet, the apartment where Connal and she had met the second time she ever beheld him. She looked round her: a fiery mist seemed to overspread every object, and a breeze every moment rung in her ears: she paused, and leaned against the door to support herself; she tried to collect her thoughts; she felt her pride revolt against the last moments of her life being thus lost in the obscurity of fear, and she repeatedly touched the objects near her to restore herself to recollection: but these objects, the memorials of her former existence, by reminding her of it at this moment, almost destroyed her resolution: she

looked round, and wondered at her own desolation, and at the misfortunes that had driven her to end by violence a life that might have been so distinguished. Her paintings, by the brilliancy of their colours, seemed to contrast the fate of their author: a veil that had been accidentally thrown over her harp she attempted with shuddering hands to remove, but the melancholy murmur that whispered from the strings overcame her.

“The next hand that touches ye,” she thought, “will not perhaps possess the skill of mine, but it will not, like mine, be disabled by grief.”

Some books lay on the table; she turned them over rapidly, with a hurried consciousness that it was for the last time. A Virgil lay open at the ominous passage in the fourth book: “*Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi et nunc magna mei sub terris ibit Imago felix, heu nimium felix.*”

“This is kind,” she repeated, as her

eye fell on the lines : “ how many warning spirits gather round me, like the breezes of evening whispering in the ear of the hastening traveller.”

On the table lay also some of the rich ornaments she had taken out that evening : she gazed on them for some time.

“ Brilliant toys ! how vainly ye sparkle in the eyes of death : never will ye sparkle on a breast that beat more strongly with the ambition of genius, or the enthusiasm of passion. How often ye have adorned me for their brilliant triumphs, and you will sparkle when I am faded and cold. There is not one of these that does not commemorate some hour of different existence. This bracelet my poor father gave me the first night I sung in public ; how proud he was then, and how proud was I. This armlet I drew the design for myself, and the artist admired my taste ; I wore it the night of the fête at Naples, the last scene of that splendid existence that was to close

so soon. Alas ! is not all pomp designed only to contrast the gloom of death : does it not reproach us with that lustre it gives to cheeks that must soon be pale, and eyes that are hastening to close while they view it ?”

These objects of art wearied her by their opposition to nature and passion, whose resources she had been compelled to explore so deeply. Her heart in this last hour turned to those grand and expansive views that awakened in the parting soul a consciousness of immortal energy, and are assimilated to its profoundest emotions. She gazed on the night, and the host of heaven ; and the breeze entering through the window, as it swept the strings of her harp, awoke those indefinite tones that accorded with the deep and mingled agitations of her soul, and whispered that harmony of death that the dying can only feel, and the living seek the image of in vain.

*The last thoughts of Armida.*

“How beautiful is the night! nature arrays herself in splendour to meet the last gaze of her votaries, but it is that melancholy splendour so congenial to her fate. Bright and blessed lights, your lustre first shone on me in my darling Italy; there I was taught your names and numbers, but did I ever think that the last time I was to behold you was with eyes that were to be closed with my own hand.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Many will wonder at my fate; they will say that I was distinguished by nature and fortune, that life had still enough to bestow, had I patience to wait for it, and that I escaped only to avoid imaginary misfortune: they are mistaken. I never was conscious of happiness till I loved, and to those who love as I did, fate presents but one alternative,

either to live for the object, or die for him. The latter was mine ; it was certainly the severer of the two, but it was the more honourable."

\* \* \* \* \*

" Connal, though the virtues of my heart never equalled your's, though in my best days I never was worthy of you, and compared to you was only like a meteor to the sun, yet surely this last sacrifice has removed the difference between us, and when life is thrown into the scale, the balance trembles. What has religion itself more to give: self-immolation is the last effort of a created being; we cannot make, but we can destroy: our power is universally limited to the infliction of pain, but sufferings make a victim more acceptable."

\* \* \* \* \*

" My figure is not yet faded, or my mind impaired: I am jealous of these advantages that make me more worthy of him: I would not be otherwise than I

am. The world will pity me, because the world knows not what it is to love."

\* \* \* \* \*

"I still wish he had beheld me in my days of early brilliancy: this is not the wish of vanity: passion can be at once selfish and disinterested. I would have concentrated the lustre of my powers to shine on him; I would—but it is time to have done with the thoughts that wander back to life."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Connal, it was here I first beheld you, and there is not a soul whom the poets imagine doomed to wander through the melancholy elysium of lovers that better knows its mazes than I do every spot where we met, and gazed, and parted. The soul concentrates its sinking fires to illuminate those objects; how mournful, yet how penetrating is their light; the twilight of the soul when the sun of life has gone down."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Connal, no pomp will attend your

fate; no monument will rise over your dust: the only heart that feels for you will be cold, the only eyes that weep for you will be closed; but your spirit will not disdain this epitaph—Armida died for him.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Of all our talents the passion for music is said to remain the longest. The wife of Roland was said to have passed the night before her execution at the instrument, but the tones she produced were so wild, frightful, and distracted, that the prisoners trembled to hear her. It is not so with me: perhaps what we have been most distinguished by in life becomes most painful to us when we are quitting it. I cannot touch the harp; it is so long since he heard it, that the sound would awake no association: yet one chord more: it was the last; with what applause was the first heard, but silence and death are the only witnesses of its last vibration.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“The clock strikes twelve; my equivocal promise to Rosine has now been kept: I have not sought the means of death to-night; could she believe then I would live.

“The morning of that day, whose end I shall never see, has commenced; I shall never see another sun: how we cling to the last object we are to behold, though we have beheld it with indifference a thousand times. What will be the next light I must behold, or shall I wander through darkness; shall I follow him dimly through mist and shadow, and ask him for a mortal song—imagination is weary in the pursuit of future existence.

“It remains not to think, but to act: why do I linger on this last page; can a sentiment of pride mingle with the deeper feelings of this hour; can I regret that oblivion must shroud the last traces of my existence.”

\* \* \* \* \*

She rose, and went to a small apart-

ment that adjoined the cabinet. Lord Montclare in his life-time had communicated to Armida the medical knowledge which he possessed in no common degree: among other extraordinary pursuits he had accustomed himself to the composition of poisons, and he had extracted one that after lingering in the frame for eight and forty hours, had the power of dismissing life without a struggle or a pang. He deposited this in a closet, and told her where it was to be found: she remembered it well: it was in the very spot he had mentioned. She took it: it was a small vial with a pale liquor. She sat down with it in her hand, and remained for some moments in a state of stupefaction. It was in vain she attempted to collect her thoughts; the last struggle had exhausted her heart, and though she gazed round the room with a quick and sparkling eye, she beheld only vacancy: suddenly a step approached: she started up, and afraid of an intruder,

swallowed it in a moment. The consciousness that her fate was now decided restored her resolution. The blood returning to her cheek flushed it almost with a sparkling crimson; her eyes shone with unusual light, and an awful and indefinite joy wandered through her heart. She was now in a state that had in ~~one moment~~ reduced the tyrants of her fate to the impotency of worms: the power of the whole earth could not compel her to suffer another pang, and the grandeur of this self-liberation supported her pride against its terrors. Rosine re-entered the room to tell her she was summoned to the chapel: she was astonished at the sudden and supernatural dignity of her figure, her silence, and the firm step with which she quitted the apartment.

Lady Montclare, Desmond, and the priest, were waiting for them. The chapel was dimly lit, and the faces, pale with different emotions, looked almost sepulchral in each others eyes: there

was a long pause, till Lady Montclare whispered some words to Desmond, who was leaning dejectedly against the railing of the altar: he started, and advancing, offered his hand to Armida. The priest opened the book, and even at that moment Rosine could not believe they were to be united, and she looked round in fixed and visionary expectation of some interruption. The ceremony began: a shriek that seemed to pierce their ears rung through the chapel: they started, and the priest stopped: it was followed by a few notes so wild, so plaintive, so unearthly, that it seemed the song of a maniac or a spirit.

Desmond dropt the hand of Armida, and, his eyes dilated with horror, gazed in the direction from which that well known voice seemed to come. The chapel door slowly opened, and a figure, so fair, so faint, so transparent, it seemed the embodied spirit of the breeze appeared at it. Lady Montclare rushed

forward, but she was too slow for the aërial flight of the figure, who, passing her, glided up to the altar, and gazed around he

“Merciful heaven! Ines!”

It was indeed the unfortunate Ines who had been snatched from a watry grave, and borne away by her mother's agents to the castle on the night their retreat was invaded, and while Desmond, who had lost his senses on seeing her plunge into the river, was alike unable to defend, and unconscious where she was conveyed.

Almost immediately on her arrival at the castle she was delivered of a dead child, and her sufferings operating on her situation, deranged her irrecoverably, though care preserved her life. Her mother, finding her unable to act in subservience to her plans, had confined and watched her with such strictness that the secret of her residence at the castle never had transpired, till this night, when Lady

Montclare, occupied in the consummation of her plans, and her attendant careless from fatigue, she stole from her apartment, and wandered to the chapel.

"Oh, heaven! oh, merciful heaven! and is it thus I have lost, and thus I have at last found you!" cried Desmond, sinking on the earth beside her. "Oh! better you had perished than live to give me this intolerable agony by your sight."

"I do not know you," said Ines, gazing on him: "I do not know you; yet your's are the first eyes I have seen this long, long time that beheld me with compassion."

"Compassion!—Oh! that this sight could dry them up, that they had been torn out of their sockets before they beheld you thus!—and do you not know me, Ines?"

"Ines," said Lady Montclare, in a tone of authority she had assumed over the unhappy maniac, "Ines, how did you wander here?"

"To dig a grave for him," cried Ines, "a

grave for my unborn babe.—You would not let me see him alive ; but I will steal out at night, and tear up a grave with these hands, and then I shall see him in his shroud and in death ; he will smile like his father. Oh, I have wandered far and near, day and night, and I have followed every gleam of the moon, for by moonlight I see best ; but no where can I find one green sod to cover him : every thing is withered, every thing I see is dry and burnt up, and when his father comes to his grave he will not know it :—but where shall I find his father ?”

“ Here ! here !—he is here !” cried the wretched Desmond, almost crushing her to his wasted heart.

“ I do not know you,” exclaimed Ines ; and tearing herself from his arms, she imagined she saw the corse of her child, and beating the ground with her hands, she shrieked —“ Dead eyes, dead eyes, will you not look at me ? Will you not reach to me your cold hands ? You are mine :

I bore you, though they told me I was not a mother. Ah! I know I am a parent, though I never saw my infant, for I was deserted both by husband and child, and left to strangers that bind me down in darkness, and sear my brain with burning irons when I complain."

"Monster! and this is your work!" cried Desmond turning from her, and darting an annihilating look at her mother: "and you knew she was alive, and you would have wedded me to her sister. What mystery of hell is this!—You told me it was to save Connal's life. Speak, wretch! speak! or I shall forget your sex, and do some vengeance on you as horrible as your crimes."

"I told you the truth," said Lady Montclare, firm in falsehood: "I thought your union was annulled by her derangement; and her life is so precarious, of so little consequence——"

"Hush, hush," cried Desmond; "dare not to measure her days: she shall not die!—she will know me again: will you

not, Ines, will you not know me again, your Desmond, the father of your babe : we will search for it together—will we not, Ines ?”

“ Be calm, be calm,” said Rosine, who knelt on the ground to support the exhausted maniac.

“ I will, I will,” cried Desmond, grasping her hand : “ I will not utter a word : I will sit here and watch her.—Ines, oh ! God ! her eyes look wilder :—she will never, never know me again. I cannot bear to look at her,” he exclaimed, starting away : “ only tell me when her eyes look calmer.”

Ines, released from his hold, rose feebly : she wandered about for some time, and her mother, defeated and terrified, did not dare to impede her. At length Armida's figure caught her eye, and she eagerly but timidly approached her.

Armida already felt the chill of death in her veins ; but nature still asserted its claims in her heart, and as the poor ma-

niac, half in adoration, and half in weakness, sunk before her, she fell on her neck, and wept even to agony. Ines gazed on her wildly.

“I know you,” she said, “I know you: but I cannot tell your name. I have forgot every thing but misfortune.—You were unhappy too. I remember your stately love:—they said he was a prince:—on earth there was none like him but my own; but mine was fairer, fresher, softer. I wooed a flower, and died of its fragrance: you clung to an oak; but the lightning struck it, and it crushed you in its fall. We were both ill-fated; but we will go to some world where no false lover shall come, and be happy, when I have found my babe.”

Armida, deluged with tears, had no power to answer.

“How glorious you are,” cried Ines, still gazing on her; “and yet you weep with all those gems sparkling round you. Once I saw you on the shore, while I was

wandering alone: your lover was there with all his train: a sad and shadowy band, that gathered round their chief like a storm; yet you followed him through mist and darkness:—did you not follow him?”

“I did, I did,” cried Armida.

“Yes;” I saw you rise into the air: you sought some isle of light in the western sky, where you were to reign together. I saw you ascend in pomp: I heard the blast of unearthly music: I saw your parting smile of light. You went upward with trump, and harp, and horn:—I wept to follow you; but darkness closed on me, and I was left alone.—Armida!” she cried with supernatural energy, “if you find my babe in the world of brightness where you dwell, tell him his mother weeps for him still, and every night when the moon rises, her heart seems to burst from her bosom, and prostrate itself before the throne of God to ask for him.” Armida

staggering with horror, fell into the arms of Rosine. When she recovered, she found herself in her apartment again. All thoughts of this dreadful marriage were over. Rosine was kneeling beside her: she started up, and reflected with despair that life had been sacrificed in vain, for she had been impelled to believe that Connal's life depended on her immediate union with Desmond.

"I am sick of crimes and horrors," she cried when her recollection awoke: "it was vain to bid me live: it is better to be no more, and cease to witness them, even though death only enables me to escape from it myself."

She now remembered the promise she had extorted from Connal, to see her for a few moments on that night, and from Lady Montclare that he should be admitted; yet, after the late scene that had developed a degree of selfish wickedness in her mother that was scarce credible, she doubted whether her promise would

be kept, and she implored Rosine to watch for him at the passage by the rocky terrace where he was to be admitted to her apartment, while she tried to collect her thoughts for this last meeting.

Connal had wandered about the castle from the moment the night shut in. He bore the load of life for a few hours still, for Armida had promised that night to disclose the motive that impelled her to a marriage with Desmond. As he lingered like a spectre beneath the walls, Wandesford, returning from a party with whom he had dined, rode past him. The forbearance of Connal was past: he had shaken hands with life, and he knew from many inexpressible warnings that his last hour was near. He instantly pursued Wandesford, and, seizing his bridle, ordered him in a tone that would not be disobeyed to dismount and listen to him. His servants had rode on towards his quarters, and he had no means of resistance. He recognised Connal, and his

proud spirit did not shrink from the encounter.

“Wandesford,” said Connal, with the calmness of a desperate man, “I have a few words to say, and you must listen to me. Whenever we have met, fortune has made a difference between us that rendered you a tyrant, and me your victim. You have had rank, power, and lawful authority on your side, and how you have used it I need not remind you. Enjoy its remembrance as you can, for its last term has arrived: this accidental meeting has removed the difference: we are now as nature made us.—It is midnight, we are alone, and before we part we must try to which of us nature will allot the victory in a personal struggle.”

“Villain!” said the haughty Wandesford, “do you know whom you speak to?”

“Villain! I retort the name,” said Connal: “I know you well: your gashes are in my flesh: your crimes are deeper in

my heart. Hear me, Colonel Wandesford, for I will mock you with your titles ; I am almost famished ; I am quite heart-broken : I have not tasted food for forty-eight hours. These rags are sticking to me only with the congealed blood your stripes have made. Yet, even thus, I do not shrink from challenging you to a fair and equal contest. I never shrunk from you when the thunder of your artillery stunned my ears : I did not shrink when your lashes penetrated almost to the bone, and you laid your cane in the bloody tracks to point to your men where the next were to be laid :—but I was tied then, and you were safe : I do not shrink now.—Colonel Wandesford, take your ground.”

“ And has my compassion spared you to threaten my life ? ” said Wandesford.

“ Your compassion ! ” re-echoed Con-  
mal in a voice of thunder : “ monster !—  
such another word, and these half-starved  
arms will tear you piecemeal. If you

wish to die the death of a man, throw me one of your pistols, and take your ground."

The proud spirit of Wandesford flushed in his face.

"It shall never be said," he cried, "that I shrunk from chastising a wretch whom his crimes had already degraded to the level of the most ignominious punishment."

His pistols were loaded: he gave one of them to Connal; but, trembling with rage and hatred, he discharged his own instantly.—It missed the aim; but Connal's was surer: the ball passed through Wandesford's heart.—He fell. Connal rushed forward to support his dying foe. With the blood that flowed from his mortal wound his enmity flowed away too. The man whom of all others he had hated and injured was the only one to support his convulsed frame, and hear his parting groan. A corroded

mind, delirious passions, an ulcerated heart, and a damning conscience, were the fearful companions of his dying moments. After a struggle more bitter than death, the proud Wandesford said feebly—  
“ O’Morven, you are an injured man. I hated you for your virtues : I hated you for your country : I hated you for her whom we both loved. I have no expiation to make but this confession.”

“ It is enough, Wandesford : I am too near death myself to be at enmity with man.”

“ And can you then forgive me, for you have had much wrong ?”

“ Can I hope to be myself forgiven except on this condition ?”

“ O’Morven, your dying enemy blesses you,” said Wandesford, struggling to rise from the bloody ground. It was too late.

Connal bowed to raise him ; but he saw the swimming eye, the livid dew, the

distorted feature of death, and his passions were extinguished by the sight. He bent close to the dying man, that he might whisper peace to his spirit; but his ear was cold.

“He is no more,” said Connal; “and with him die my last human feelings.—I am fit to meet her now, for I am beyond resentment for ever.”

He turned to the castle.

“Surely,” said he, “the night is darkened by the horrors it has witnessed, or my senses fail me, for I scarce can distinguish my way. No lights burn in the castle: nothing shines on me from heaven or earth: the stars are gone out: there is a terror in this darkness more than darkness can bring. Surely my last hour approaches: the shadows are lengthening, and the traveller is warned of the end of his journey.”

Rosine led Connal to Armida's apartment: neither of them spoke, and she retired, unable to witness their meeting.

There was a strange contrast between Armida, seated alone in this midnight and disastrous pomp, her cheek burning, and her expression exalted by the effect of the poison, and Connal, who, pale, bloody, and haggard, stood at a distance gazing on her resplendent figure, that seemed to him like the radiance of the apostate since his fall. The contrast was heightened by a long and mutual silence.

“Why do you gaze on me?” said Armida, forcing him to speak, that she might assure herself it was not a spectre she saw.

“I know not why,” said Connal; “for I can scarce believe the eyes I see you with, Armida. And have I lost you, whom neither danger or distress could drive from my ruined side? What error of head, or wandering of heart misled you? Armida, we loved so well, that your desertion, undone as I am, was almost a crime.”

“Go on,” said Armida, scarce able to

repress her fearful triumph, "go on, I am prepared to hear reproaches."

"I cannot utter them," said Connal, "my heart is too heavy. And why did you assume that splendour to insult a wretch whose eyes have never gazed but on misery since we parted?"

"I wore it that you might see for the last time what I have been. Connal, this is our last moment, and let us pass it like lovers: let no reproach, no resentment disturb it. We have loved as none ever loved, in grief and in danger, and we will part as none have parted, in triumph."

"Yes," said Connal, sternly, "such triumph as these wounds, this broken heart can afford you."

"Hush! hush!" cried Armida, suddenly rising, and approaching him with aërial and frantic animation, "not a murmur more. Let these last moments combine all that we have sought in vain through life—a sentiment of joy that nothing can disturb, but nothing can re-

store. My imagination is gone," said she, pausing: "not a ray of mind will light our parting hour; but the passions of a devoted heart will make vast amends. What thoughts will be ours! what recollections! what rich and burning tears! Heaven, that denied us the luxury of happiness, gave us the luxury of grief, and left us nothing to complain."

"Armida, is this mockery, or is it delirium?"

"Connal," said Armida, impetuously, "you must yield to my feelings: I have a right to be obeyed, for the purchase was great. Listen to my voice—you hear its last accents: these eyes gaze on you for the last time, and they have not lost all their power; and this form that once delighted you will not inspire you with horror at its last view. How blessed thus to blend the luxury of the senses with that of the heart, and remove from death the frown that conceals the visage of a friend. I did not wither away be-

fore you: my colours are yet glowing, though the storm of death is near. Think, oh, think with me some thought unutterably fond—think of a happy moment we have passed together, if ever we passed a moment of unbroken happiness—think even of some moment of grief, when our hearts met and melted together, and in the eye of heaven and of each other we were one—think of such a moment, and let your heart dissolve in its recollection.”

“It does, it does,” cried Connal, subdued by the eloquence of passion.

“And you weep, and those are tears of passion.”

“No other tears ever fell from these eyes.”

“Blessed dew!” cried Armida, sinking before him in enthusiasm, “fall on me, and embalm me: if there be a heaven for lovers, surely we shall be among the brightest there—the spirits of all who have loved greatly and unfortunately will

attend our triumph, when we arrive above. Armida and Connal, names so unhappy on earth, will yet be bright in paradise, and the pride of my heart will yet meet its triumph in the eternal enjoyment of that passion with which it struggled so long, and to which it was at last sacrificed."

Connal raised her in his arms.

"Armida," he said solemnly, "I came here not to weep, but to inquire. Armida, tell me the motive of your marriage with Desmond."

"Not yet, not yet," said Armida: "you will know too soon, and yet you will know too late."

"I have not strength to penetrate these mysteries, and I have not time. It is past midnight, and before the morning breaks I feel the traveller will be far on his last journey. Armida, tell me the motive of your marriage with Desmond."

Armida was silent. Connal bore her

in his arms to the casement: he pointed to the stars that had emerged in full glory from the passing clouds.

“No being ever yet shrunk from the truth under such an appeal: by those bright lights of heaven I adjure you, and will you not tell me the truth?”

Armida wished that he should witness her last moments, but she felt it was impossible to delay the explanation longer.

“Connal, have I not wandered? Have I not suffered with you? Have I not loved you as never woman loved? Have I not followed you with a constancy passing that of woman?”

“You have. You have been to me what no words can utter.”

“Was there another proof in human power to give of my devotion to you?”

“None.”

“Yes, there was one more—to die for you.”

“For me!”

“ Ah! what other motive could she, who loved as I did, have for resigning you, and uniting myself to another?”

“ What mystery is this—your life, and my safety! What connexion could there be between them, severed as we are?”

“ Ask Wandesford that,” said Armida, speaking with difficulty.

“ It is too late,” said Connal, “ to ask Wandesford: he is gone to answer at another tribunal: he fell by my hand to-night. Armida, how pale you grow. What change is this? You tremble, yet your hands burn; and those eyes—— Armida, speak to me.”

“ Connal, tell me truly, is Wandesford no more?”

“ Wandesford is no more.”

“ Oh!” she cried, with a scream of horror, “ we have been the victims of unexampled treachery.”

“ Armida, while I have breath to ask you, tell me what is the cause of the horror you express at the fate of Wan-

desford? Was Wandesford or Desmond then your choice, or was it all the mockery of fiends?"

"I fear it was, Connal; I cannot imagine, I cannot speak. Oh, Connal! my mother made me believe you were Wandesford's prisoner, and that he would spare your life solely on the condition——I cannot breathe."

"Go on, go on," cried the frantic Connal.

"On the condition that I should become the wife of Desmond. Desmond was told the same. I believed it, I trembled, I consented; but when I had secured your safety as I hoped, I found it impossible to live: I swallowed poison—it is now working in my veins. For you I would have wedded, for you I am expiring, and in vain."

"I never was Wandesford's prisoner: I would not have bought an existence for ages by the sacrifice of one moment of your's. I would have died, ten thousand

deaths I would have died, and you closed your heart and your ears against all explanation : when I knelt to you to tell me the motive of this fatal marriage, you referred me to this night. Ah ! had you spoken."

" I dreaded my resolution : I saw but one object before me—you in the power of Wandesford. I determined to save, but never to survive the sacrifice."

She sunk on the ground beside him, as he knelt : not a word was heard, not a tear was shed. Their locked and frozen hearts forgot feeling and pulsation, and death seemed already to have invaded the cold arms in which they clasped each other.

\* \* \* \* \*

The dead silence that pervaded the castle was broke by the trampling of horses, the clash of arms, and the clamour of soldiers. The party who had been out several days in pursuit of Connal had at length traced him to the castle :

Lady Montclare now as anxious for his life, since all hopes of the union of Desmond and Armida were over, as she had been for his ruin, opposed their entrance in vain.

He was torn from the convulsed but senseless grasp of Armida, and conducted to the quarters of the commanding officer, since Wandesford's death, to take his trial for rebellion, by military law.

It was noon when Armida, on whom The poison had not yet operated with mortal force, was restored to recollection. The intenseness of her sufferings awoke every faculty at once: she remembered distinctly every event of the preceding night, and determined in a moment to follow him to the extremity of his fate. Rosine did not dare to oppose her: her resolution, silently taken, but perfectly understood, admitted of no opposition: but as she was tearing off the ornaments that still glittered round her corse-like figure, to begin her last journey, her wretched

mother stood before her. Armida, with a smile of angel forbearance, waved her hand to her to retire. Lady Montclare fell on her knees before her immolated child, to implore her to forbear this last public exposure of her feelings.

“Mother,” said Armida, “God forgive you! go and restore Ines to her reason if you can, I am beyond your care.”

When she reached the hall, she saw the carriage prepared, and the servants waiting to attend her; she dismissed them.

“This pomp does not suit me now,” said she: “the bride of a rebel must seek him on foot, yet I am prouder this moment than if I were ascending a throne. Rosine, you will not desert me, it is my last journey, and exhausted friendship will not shrink from its final task.”

“I have never shrunk,” said the weeping Rosine: “spare me but words, and I will follow you while my strength supports me.”

It was late when they reached the town where Connal was confined. Armida's person was unknown as she passed through the streets, but the dignity of her figure, her flushed cheek, and her dishevelled hair, which had escaped from the band, and streamed on her shoulders, struck every passenger, and all that saw her conceived at once that her arrival was connected with the fate of Connal. This impression facilitated the inquiries Rosine made for him, and she was informed that he was on his trial at that moment, at the barracks, at a mile's distance. Thither the wanderers followed him: some of the poorer inhabitants pursued them, to gaze on Armida, whose beauty, though alternately flushed with emotion, and pale with the approach of death, was beyond all they had ever imagined. Some of them wondered in silence, but some of them prayed aloud for her success, though they knew not the cause in which she was engaged.

Armida heard them: she had no voice for thanks, but she eagerly scattered the contents of her purse among them, for she felt how much at this moment she needed the compassion of the meanest of her species. They loaded her with blessings, but shuddering at the name of happiness with which their prayers were filled, she hurried on. They entered on a heath where temporary barracks for the additional troops had been erected, and here Armida felt her strength begin to fail: she tottered to a shed where some of the soldiers' wives resided, and when she was admitted sunk upon a seat: Rosine bending over her, almost wished for the termination of her sufferings, even on this desolate and deserted spot. Some of the women who came from the barracks, unconscious of Armida's interest in the subject of their conversation, began to speak of the prisoner: Armida shivered, but she did not utter a word: some declared he would be pardoned

others spoke of his being ordered to immediate execution, but all concurred in compassion for the young officer who had followed him to prison, and now stood by his side, while he was on his trial. There was an old clergyman there too, they said, who wept like a child.

Connal had not been deserted: Desmond, careless of his danger, and St. Austin, in spite of his age and profession, had followed the rebel to his trial. In the few hours he was in confinement Connal exhausted every topic of persuasion to induce Desmond to consult his safety by concealing himself; but Desmond, whose heart was formed for affection, and who was at once deprived of every object of it, without father, brother, wife or child, and reduced to wish for the death of Ines under her present hopeless misery, listened with impatience to the mention of life.

“In early youth,” said he. “I look

all over life; I see it is a desert; I turn for shelter to the grave."

And the court with deep compassion saw a young officer who had fought for his country, overcome by fraternal affection, and domestic misfortune, stand by the side of a convicted rebel, and call upon the justice of his country for a similar sentence.

It was evening, when two women rushing into the shed announced that the prisoner was acquitted; a few minutes after they were followed by a third, who, overcome by what she had heard or seen, sat down weeping bitterly: at that sound Armida attempted to raise her stiffened limbs, and quit the shed, and the women then first perceiving the cause of her distress, gathered round her with expressions of pity:

"God bless you! God bless you!" said Armida, trying to break from them, "surely it is a feeling world I am leaving,

but I know it too late !” and habitually generous, she was about to divide her purse among them, but her recent bounty had exhausted it : she recollected that some of the rich ornaments she had worn the preceding night were still on her person, and in this extremity of her fate, grateful even for menial pity, the proud daughter of Lord Montclare was seen dividing in a shed among female peasants the ornaments in which she had glittered in the view of princes.

They set out again, it was almost twilight, but they distinguished a number of figures at a distance on the heath.

“ He is pardoned !” shrieked Armida, darting forward, “ he is pardoned !” but Rosine knew too well the fatal roll of the drums, she saw too well the circle that was forming among the distant figures : she rushed before Armida, and with all her strength attempted to turn her from the sight. It was too late—the roar of the musketry thundered over the heath, and

announced that Connal had met at least with the fate of the brave. At the moment the soldiers drew their triggers, a young man, bursting through the ranks, threw himself on his knees beside Connal: the impulse was so rapid that no one could prevent it: the soldiers fired, and Desmond fell beside Connal.

St. Austin implored the commanding officer to compel the soldiers and the crowd to retire, and leave the bodies to the care of some surviving friend: the officer was a man of humanity, and he complied. St. Austin stood by the corpses till he saw with horror Armida and Rosine approach. Armida knelt on the ground: a single glance distinguished the brothers. Connal lay calm as if in sleep; Desmond's more impetuous spirit had left an expression of defiance in the features that were stern in the fixedness of death.

"Noblest of men! here we are at length united!" cried Armida, sinking

on the earth, and raising his head on her knees : “ we are at length united, and I am worthy to be your bride : on the damp and bloody ground, with the corse of a rebel in my arms, I would not resign my place for empires : here is my last seat, and here I am more exalted than when I received the homage of a false world ! ”

Rosine and St. Austin stood at a distance : they did not interrupt this solemn scene, but by their audible and agonizing sobs.

Suddenly the noise of a carriage was heard approaching, and Lady Montclare springing from her splendid equipage knelt on the earth beside her daughter, and implored with maternal tenderness, felt too late, to return with her and be reconciled to life. It was then St. Austin felt it his duty to approach, and admonish the criminal, and console the sufferer : it was too late. Lady Montclare in the despair of sudden repentance was insensible to

every thing but the sight of her sacrificed daughter: and Armida, on whom the effect of the poison had been accelerated by her mental sufferings, was no longer capable of any sensation but that she clasped the corse of Connal in her arms.

At that moment a tumult among the servants who attended Lady Montclare announced something they attempted to prevent, but could not: it was Ines. Since her last view of Desmond she had become so intractable that nothing but the presence of her mother could restrain her, and compelled to quit the castle in search of Armida, she had been unable to leave Ines behind her. The moment her mother quitted the carriage she attempted to follow her: her screams and struggles terrified the servants into submission, and rushing forward she discovered the corse of Desmond before it was possible to prevent her flying to it, and clasping it with a force no mortal hand could sever.

The wretched mother at the same moment saw both her children in the arms of death, clinging to the remains of the chosen of their hearts : Armida was silent, but Ines raved with the piercing eloquence of madness.

“ Here the wanderer rests ! ” she cried : “ see how calm he lies, he speaks to me though you cannot hear his voice ; but the world cannot persuade me that those lips do not move when I speak to him.

“ Can this be death ! oh, how the fools who dread it are deceived : never was life so lovely ! Is he indeed dead ? Why should not the dead love ? Oh, we will be so happy in the grave, we will sit on the blue tomb-stones, and sing songs all night, and when my babe is chilled, the moon shall shine on it, and warm it, and we will make bresses of the church-yard flowers ; and the skulls and bones will serve us for tokens of love, and when mothers come to visit their children’s graves, we will bid them be merry

with us. Why should not the dead love, when death is so lovely !”

Lady Montclare, unable to support this sight, desired her servants to remove Ines ; they approached, and Ines, exhausted by her ravings, sunk into their arms ; but as they bore her to the carriage, a shriek, such as never come from human lips but in the agonies of death, announced that her sufferings had ceased.

Rosine and St. Austin continued to watch by Armida, though the night had shut in : she never uttered a word, she never heaved a sigh ; her glazed eye expressed no consciousness, and the firmness with which her arms were wreathed round the neck of Connal seemed rather the result of some mechanical cause, than the movement of a voluntary agent. It was midnight, when by accident a musket-shot was discharged at some distance : the flash on the night, the echo on the heath, by awaking the image of Connal's fate,

restored her faculties for a moment: that accident operating with the crisis of the poison, she half rose from the ground: her convulsed arms released Connal from their grasp, she pressed them to her heart with a scream of agony, and expired.

St. Austin and Rosine still reside near the deserted castle, for Lady Montclare has hid her crimes and her remorse in some convent.

They often wander on the spot where the lovers rest together; they remember their virtues, their charms, and their misfortunes: life grows barren to their view while they talk of them, but the world to which they are gone brightens in the contrast?

There is an ash-tree that grows near their graves: Rosine loves to sit under its shade, and hear the evening wind murmur through its branches: the thoughts that visit her there elevate her heart, while they fill her eyes with tears; and she feels that even grief, refined by

the consciousness of futurity, is beyond all the joys of mortality. When the darkness warns her home, she casts her eye as she departs on the simple inscription placed by St. Austin on the grave of Connal.

Ευδεις, ἀλλ' οὐ σέο λελασμένοι ἐσμεν.\*

\* Thou sleepest, but we do not forget thee.

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*Notes to the First Volume.*

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 2. ——— Description of Cormac's Chapel 17  
 3. The Dolphin ..... 18

THE END.

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