

## BOOK III.

### THEURGIA.

--i cavalier sen vanno  
dove il pino fatal gli attende in porto.  
Gerus. Lib., cant. xv (Argomento.)  
(The knights came where the fatal bark  
Awaited them in the port.)

### CHAPTER 3.I.

But that which especially distinguishes the brotherhood is their marvellous knowledge of all the resources of medical art. They work not by charms, but simples.--"MS. Account of the Origin and Attributes of the true Rosicrucians," by J. Von D--.

At this time it chanced that Viola had the opportunity to return the kindness shown to her by the friendly musician whose house had received and sheltered her when first left an orphan on the world. Old Bernardi had brought up three sons to the same profession as himself, and they had lately left Naples to seek their fortunes in the wealthier cities of Northern Europe, where the musical market was less overstocked. There was only left to glad the household of his aged wife and himself, a lively, prattling, dark-eyed girl of some eight years old, the child of his second son, whose mother had died in giving her birth. It so happened that, about a month previous to the date on which our story has now entered, a paralytic affection had disabled Bernardi from the duties of his calling. He had been always a social, harmless, improvident, generous fellow--living on his gains from day to day, as if the day of sickness and old age never was to arrive. Though he received a small allowance for his past services, it ill sufficed for his wants,; neither was he free from debt. Poverty stood at his hearth,--when Viola's grateful smile and liberal hand came to chase the grim fiend away. But it is not enough to a heart truly kind to send and give; more charitable is it to visit and console. "Forget not thy father's friend." So almost daily went the bright idol of Naples to the house of Bernardi. Suddenly a heavier affliction than either poverty or the palsy befell the old musician. His grandchild, his little Beatrice, fell ill, suddenly and dangerously ill, of one of those rapid fevers common to the South; and Viola was summoned from her strange and fearful reveries of love or fancy, to the sick-bed of the young sufferer.

The child was exceedingly fond of Viola, and the old people thought that her mere presence would bring healing; but when Viola arrived, Beatrice was insensible. Fortunately there was no performance that evening at San Carlo, and she resolved to stay the night and partake its fearful cares and dangerous vigil.

But during the night the child grew worse, the physician (the leechcraft has never been very skilful at Naples) shook his powdered head, kept his aromatics at his nostrils, administered his palliatives, and departed. Old Bernardi seated himself by the bedside in stern silence; here was the last tie that bound him to life. Well, let the anchor break and the battered ship go down! It was an iron resolve, more fearful than sorrow. An old man, with one foot in the grave, watching by the couch of a dying child, is one of the most awful spectacles in human calamities. The wife

was more active, more bustling, more hopeful, and more tearful. Viola took heed of all three. But towards dawn, Beatrice's state became so obviously alarming, that Viola herself began to despair. At this time she saw the old woman suddenly rise from before the image of the saint at which she had been kneeling, wrap herself in her cloak and hood, and quietly quit the chamber. Viola stole after her.

"It is cold for thee, good mother, to brave the air; let me go for the physician?"

"Child, I am not going to him. I have heard of one in the city who has been tender to the poor, and who, they say, has cured the sick when physicians failed. I will go and say to him, 'Signor, we are beggars in all else, but yesterday we were rich in love. We are at the close of life, but we lived in our grandchild's childhood. Give us back our wealth,--give us back our youth. Let us die blessing God that the thing we love survives us.'"

She was gone. Why did thy heart beat, Viola? The infant's sharp cry of pain called her back to the couch; and there still sat the old man, unconscious of his wife's movements, not stirring, his eyes glazing fast as they watched the agonies of that slight frame. By degrees the wail of pain died into a low moan,--the convulsions grew feebler, but more frequent; the glow of fever faded into the blue, pale tinge that settles into the last bloodless marble.

The daylight came broader and clearer through the casement; steps were heard on the stairs,--the old woman entered hastily; she rushed to the bed, cast a glance on the patient, "She lives yet, signor, she lives!"

Viola raised her eyes,--the child's head was pillowed on her bosom,--and she beheld Zanoni. He smiled on her with a tender and soft approval, and took the infant from her arms. Yet even then, as she saw him bending silently over that pale face, a superstitious fear mingled with her hopes. "Was it by lawful--by holy art that--" her self-questioning ceased abruptly; for his dark eye turned to her as if he read her soul, and his aspect accused her conscience for its suspicion, for it spoke reproach not unmingled with disdain.

"Be comforted," he said, gently turning to the old man, "the danger is not beyond the reach of human skill;" and, taking from his bosom a small crystal vase, he mingled a few drops with water. No sooner did this medicine moisten the infant's lips, than it seemed to produce an astonishing effect. The colour revived rapidly on the lips and cheeks; in a few moments the sufferer slept calmly, and with the regular breathing of painless sleep. And then the old man rose, rigidly, as a corpse might rise,--looked down, listened, and creeping gently away, stole to the corner of the room, and wept, and thanked Heaven! Now, old Bernardi had been, hitherto, but a cold believer; sorrow had never before led him aloft from earth. Old as he was, he had never before thought as the old should think of death,--that endangered life of the young had wakened up the careless soul of age. Zanoni whispered to the wife, and she drew the old man quietly from the room.

"Dost thou fear to leave me an hour with thy charge, Viola? Thinkest thou still that this knowledge is of the Fiend?"

"Ah," said Viola, humbled and yet rejoiced, "forgive me, forgive me, signor. Thou biddest the young live and the old pray. My thoughts never shall wrong thee more!"

Before the sun rose, Beatrice was out of danger; at noon Zanoni escaped from the blessings of the aged pair, and as he closed the door of the house, he found Viola awaiting him without.

She stood before him timidly, her hands crossed meekly on her bosom, her downcast eyes swimming with tears.

"Do not let me be the only one you leave unhappy!"

“And what cure can the herbs and anodynes effect for thee? If thou canst so readily believe ill of those who have aided and yet would serve thee, thy disease is of the heart; and--nay, weep not! nurse of the sick, and comforter of the sad, I should rather approve than chide thee. Forgive thee! Life, that ever needs forgiveness, has, for its first duty, to forgive.”

“No, do not forgive me yet. I do not deserve a pardon; for even now, while I feel how ungrateful I was to believe, suspect, aught injurious and false to my preserver, my tears flow from happiness, not remorse. Oh!” she continued, with a simple fervour, unconscious, in her innocence and her generous emotions, of all the secrets she betrayed,--”thou knowest not how bitter it was to believe thee not more good, more pure, more sacred than all the world. And when I saw thee,--the wealthy, the noble, coming from thy palace to minister to the sufferings of the hovel,--when I heard those blessings of the poor breathed upon thy parting footsteps, I felt my very self exalted,--good in thy goodness, noble at least in those thoughts that did NOT wrong thee.”

“And thinkest thou, Viola, that in a mere act of science there is so much virtue? The commonest leech will tend the sick for his fee. Are prayers and blessings a less reward than gold?”

“And mine, then, are not worthless? Thou wilt accept of mine?”

“Ah, Viola!” exclaimed Zanoni, with a sudden passion, that covered her face with blushes, “thou only, methinks, on all the earth, hast the power to wound or delight me!” He checked himself, and his face became grave and sad. “And this,” he added, in an altered tone, “because, if thou wouldst heed my counsels, methinks I could guide a guileless heart to a happy fate.”

“Thy counsels! I will obey them all. Mould me to what thou wilt. In thine absence, I am as a child that fears every shadow in the dark; in thy presence, my soul expands, and the whole world seems calm with a celestial noonday. Do not deny to me that presence. I am fatherless and ignorant and alone!”

Zanoni averted his face, and, after a moment’s silence, replied calmly,--

“Be it so. Sister, I will visit thee again!”

## CHAPTER 3.II.

Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy. Shakespeare.

Who so happy as Viola now! A dark load was lifted from her heart: her step seemed to tread on air; she would have sung for very delight as she went gayly home. It is such happiness to the pure to love,--but oh, such more than happiness to believe in the worth of the one beloved. Between them there might be human obstacles,--wealth, rank, man’s little world. But there was no longer that dark gulf which the imagination recoils to dwell on, and which separates forever soul from soul. He did not love her in return. Love her! But did she ask for love? Did she herself love? No; or she would never have been at once so humble and so bold. How merrily the ocean murmured in her ear; how radiant an aspect the commonest passer-by seemed to wear! She gained her home,--she looked upon the tree, glancing, with fantastic branches, in the sun. “Yes, brother mine!” she said, laughing in her joy, “like thee, I HAVE struggled to the light!”

She had never hitherto, like the more instructed Daughters of the North, accustomed herself to that delicious Confessional, the transfusion of thought to writing. Now, suddenly, her heart felt

an impulse; a new-born instinct, that bade it commune with itself, bade it disentangle its web of golden fancies,--made her wish to look upon her inmost self as in a glass. Upsprung from the embrace of Love and Soul--the Eros and the Psyche--their beautiful offspring, Genius! She blushed, she sighed, she trembled as she wrote. And from the fresh world that she had built for herself, she was awakened to prepare for the glittering stage. How dull became the music, how dim the scene, so exquisite and so bright of old. Stage, thou art the Fairy Land to the vision of the worldly. Fancy, whose music is not heard by men, whose scenes shift not by mortal hand, as the stage to the present world, art thou to the future and the past!

### CHAPTER 3.III.

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes. Shakespeare.

The next day, at noon, Zaroni visited Viola; and the next day and the next and again the next,--days that to her seemed like a special time set apart from the rest of life. And yet he never spoke to her in the language of flattery, and almost of adoration, to which she had been accustomed. Perhaps his very coldness, so gentle as it was, assisted to this mysterious charm. He talked to her much of her past life, and she was scarcely surprised (she now never thought of TERROR) to perceive how much of that past seemed known to him.

He made her speak to him of her father; he made her recall some of the airs of Pisani's wild music. And those airs seemed to charm and lull him into reverie.

"As music was to the musician," said he, "may science be to the wise. Your father looked abroad in the world; all was discord to the fine sympathies that he felt with the harmonies that daily and nightly float to the throne of Heaven. Life, with its noisy ambition and its mean passions, is so poor and base! Out of his soul he created the life and the world for which his soul was fitted. Viola, thou art the daughter of that life, and wilt be the denizen of that world."

In his earlier visits he did not speak of Glyndon. The day soon came on which he renewed the subject. And so trustful, obedient, and entire was the allegiance that Viola now owned to his dominion, that, unwelcome as that subject was, she restrained her heart, and listened to him in silence.

At last he said, "Thou hast promised thou wilt obey my counsels, and if, Viola, I should ask thee, nay adjure, to accept this stranger's hand, and share his fate, should he offer to thee such a lot,--wouldst thou refuse?"

And then she pressed back the tears that gushed to her eyes; and with a strange pleasure in the midst of pain,--the pleasure of one who sacrifices heart itself to the one who commands that heart,--she answered falteringly, "If thou CANST ordain it, why--"

"Speak on."

"Dispose of me as thou wilt!"

Zaroni stood in silence for some moments: he saw the struggle which the girl thought she concealed so well; he made an involuntary movement towards her, and pressed her hand to his lips; it was the first time he had ever departed even so far from a certain austerity which perhaps made her fear him and her own thoughts the less.

"Viola," said he, and his voice trembled, "the danger that I can avert no more, if thou linger still in Naples, comes hourly near and near to thee! On the third day from this thy fate must be

decided. I accept thy promise. Before the last hour of that day, come what may, I shall see thee again, HERE, at thine own house. Till then, farewell!"

### CHAPTER 3.IV.

Between two worlds life hovers like a star  
'Twixt night and morn.--Byron.

When Glyndon left Viola, as recorded in the concluding chapter of the second division of this work, he was absorbed again in those mystical desires and conjectures which the haunting recollection of Zanoni always served to create. And as he wandered through the streets, he was scarcely conscious of his own movements till, in the mechanism of custom, he found himself in the midst of one of the noble collections of pictures which form the boast of those Italian cities whose glory is in the past. Thither he had been wont, almost daily, to repair, for the gallery contained some of the finest specimens of a master especially the object of his enthusiasm and study. There, before the works of Salvator, he had often paused in deep and earnest reverence. The striking characteristic of that artist is the "Vigour of Will;" void of the elevated idea of abstract beauty, which furnishes a model and archetype to the genius of more illustrious order, the singular energy of the man hews out of the rock a dignity of his own. His images have the majesty, not of the god, but the savage; utterly free, like the sublimer schools, from the commonplace of imitation,--apart, with them, from the conventional littleness of the Real,--he grasps the imagination, and compels it to follow him, not to the heaven, but through all that is most wild and fantastic upon earth; a sorcery, not of the starry magian, but of the gloomy wizard,--a man of romance whose heart beat strongly, griping art with a hand of iron, and forcing it to idealise the scenes of his actual life. Before this powerful will, Glyndon drew back more awed and admiring than before the calmer beauty which rose from the soul of Raphael, like Venus from the deep.

And now, as awaking from his reverie, he stood opposite to that wild and magnificent gloom of Nature which frowned on him from the canvas, the very leaves on those gnome-like, distorted trees seemed to rustle sibylline secrets in his ear. Those rugged and sombre Apennines, the cataract that dashed between, suited, more than the actual scenes would have done, the mood and temper of his mind. The stern, uncouth forms at rest on the crags below, and dwarfed by the giant size of the Matter that reigned around them, impressed him with the might of Nature and the littleness of Man. As in genius of the more spiritual cast, the living man, and the soul that lives in him, are studiously made the prominent image; and the mere accessories of scene kept down, and cast back, as if to show that the exile from paradise is yet the monarch of the outward world,--so, in the landscapes of Salvator, the tree, the mountain, the waterfall, become the principal, and man himself dwindles to the accessory. The Matter seems to reign supreme, and its true lord to creep beneath its stupendous shadow. Inert matter giving interest to the immortal man, not the immortal man to the inert matter. A terrible philosophy in art!

While something of these thoughts passed through the mind of the painter, he felt his arm touched, and saw Nicot by his side.

"A great master," said Nicot, "but I do not love the school."

"I do not love, but I am awed by it. We love the beautiful and serene, but we have a feeling as deep as love for the terrible and dark."

“True,” said Nicot, thoughtfully. “And yet that feeling is only a superstition. The nursery, with its tales of ghosts and goblins, is the cradle of many of our impressions in the world. But art should not seek to pander to our ignorance; art should represent only truths. I confess that Raphael pleases me less, because I have no sympathy with his subjects. His saints and virgins are to me only men and women.”

“And from what source should painting, then, take its themes?”

“From history, without doubt,” returned Nicot, pragmatically,-- “those great Roman actions which inspire men with sentiments of liberty and valour, with the virtues of a republic. I wish the cartoons of Raphael had illustrated the story of the Horatii; but it remains for France and her Republic to give to posterity the new and the true school, which could never have arisen in a country of priestcraft and delusion.”

“And the saints and virgins of Raphael are to you only men and women?” repeated Glyndon, going back to Nicot’s candid confession in amaze, and scarcely hearing the deductions the Frenchman drew from his proposition.

“Assuredly. Ha, ha!” and Nicot laughed hideously, “do you ask me to believe in the calendar, or what?”

“But the ideal?”

“The ideal!” interrupted Nicot. “Stuff! The Italian critics, and your English Reynolds, have turned your head. They are so fond of their ‘gusto grande,’ and their ‘ideal beauty that speaks to the soul!’--soul!--IS there a soul? I understand a man when he talks of composing for a refined taste,--for an educated and intelligent reason; for a sense that comprehends truths. But as for the soul,--bah!--we are but modifications of matter, and painting is modification of matter also.”

Glyndon turned his eyes from the picture before him to Nicot, and from Nicot to the picture. The dogmatist gave a voice to the thoughts which the sight of the picture had awakened. He shook his head without reply.

“Tell me,” said Nicot, abruptly, “that imposter,--Zanoni!--oh! I have now learned his name and quackeries, forsooth,--what did he say to thee of me?”

“Of thee? Nothing; but to warn me against thy doctrines.”

“Aha! was that all?” said Nicot. “He is a notable inventor, and since, when we met last, I unmasked his delusions, I thought he might retaliate by some tale of slander.”

“Unmasked his delusions!--how?”

“A dull and long story: he wished to teach an old doting friend of mine his secrets of prolonged life and philosophical alchemy. I advise thee to renounce so discreditable an acquaintance.”

With that Nicot nodded significantly, and, not wishing to be further questioned, went his way.

Glyndon’s mind at that moment had escaped to his art, and the comments and presence of Nicot had been no welcome interruption. He turned from the landscape of Salvator, and his eye falling on a Nativity by Coreggio, the contrast between the two ranks of genius struck him as a discovery. That exquisite repose, that perfect sense of beauty, that strength without effort, that breathing moral of high art, which speaks to the mind through the eye, and raises the thoughts, by the aid of tenderness and love, to the regions of awe and wonder,--ay! THAT was the true school. He quitted the gallery with reluctant steps and inspired ideas; he sought his own home. Here, pleased not to find the sober Mervale, he leaned his face on his hands, and endeavoured to recall the words of Zanoni in their last meeting. Yes, he felt Nicot’s talk even on art was crime; it debased the imagination itself to mechanism. Could he, who saw nothing in the soul but a combination of matter, prate of schools that should excel a Raphael? Yes, art was magic; and as

he owned the truth of the aphorism, he could comprehend that in magic there may be religion, for religion is an essential to art. His old ambition, freeing itself from the frigid prudence with which Mervale sought to desecrate all images less substantial than the golden calf of the world, revived, and stirred, and kindled. The subtle detection of what he conceived to be an error in the school he had hitherto adopted, made more manifest to him by the grinning commentary of Nicot, seemed to open to him a new world of invention. He seized the happy moment,--he placed before him the colours and the canvas. Lost in his conceptions of a fresh ideal, his mind was lifted aloft into the airy realms of beauty; dark thoughts, unhallowed desires, vanished. Zanoni was right: the material world shrunk from his gaze; he viewed Nature as from a mountain-top afar; and as the waves of his unquiet heart became calm and still, again the angel eyes of Viola beamed on them as a holy star.

Locking himself in his chamber, he refused even the visits of Mervale. Intoxicated with the pure air of his fresh existence, he remained for three days, and almost nights, absorbed in his employment; but on the fourth morning came that reaction to which all labour is exposed. He woke listless and fatigued; and as he cast his eyes on the canvas, the glory seemed to have gone from it. Humiliating recollections of the great masters he aspired to rival forced themselves upon him; defects before unseen magnified themselves to deformities in his languid and discontented eyes. He touched and retouched, but his hand failed him; he threw down his instruments in despair; he opened his casement: the day without was bright and lovely; the street was crowded with that life which is ever so joyous and affluent in the animated population of Naples. He saw the lover, as he passed, conversing with his mistress by those mute gestures which have survived all changes of languages, the same now as when the Etruscan painted yon vases in the Museo Borbonico. Light from without beckoned his youth to its mirth and its pleasures; and the dull walls within, lately large enough to comprise heaven and earth, seemed now cabined and confined as a felon's prison. He welcomed the step of Mervale at his threshold, and unbarred the door.

"And is that all you have done?" said Mervale, glancing disdainfully at the canvas. "Is it for this that you have shut yourself out from the sunny days and moonlit nights of Naples?"

"While the fit was on me, I basked in a brighter sun, and imbibed the voluptuous luxury of a softer moon."

"You own that the fit is over. Well, that is some sign of returning sense. After all, it is better to daub canvas for three days than make a fool of yourself for life. This little siren?"

"Be dumb! I hate to hear you name her."

Mervale drew his chair nearer to Glyndon's, thrust his hands deep in his breeches-pockets, stretched his legs, and was about to begin a serious strain of expostulation, when a knock was heard at the door, and Nicot, without waiting for leave, obtruded his ugly head.

"Good-day, mon cher confrere. I wished to speak to you. Hein! you have been at work, I see. This is well,--very well! A bold outline,--great freedom in that right hand. But, hold! is the composition good? You have not got the great pyramidal form. Don't you think, too, that you have lost the advantage of contrast in this figure; since the right leg is put forward, surely the right arm should be put back? Peste! but that little finger is very fine!"

Mervale detested Nicot. For all speculators, Utopians, alterers of the world, and wanderers from the high road, were equally hateful to him; but he could have hugged the Frenchman at that moment. He saw in Glyndon's expressive countenance all the weariness and disgust he endured. After so wrapped a study, to be prated to about pyramidal forms and right arms and right legs,

the accident of the art, the whole conception to be overlooked, and the criticism to end in approval of the little finger!

“Oh,” said Glyndon, peevishly, throwing the cloth over his design, “enough of my poor performance. What is it you have to say to me?”

“In the first place,” said Nicot, huddling himself together upon a stool,--”in the first place, this Signor Zanoni,--this second Cagliostro,--who disputes my doctrines! (no doubt a spy of the man Capet) I am not vindictive; as Helvetius says, ‘our errors arise from our passions.’ I keep mine in order; but it is virtuous to hate in the cause of mankind; I would I had the denouncing and the judging of Signor Zanoni at Paris.” And Nicot’s small eyes shot fire, and he gnashed his teeth.

“Have you any new cause to hate him?”

“Yes,” said Nicot, fiercely. “Yes, I hear he is courting the girl I mean to marry.”

“You! Whom do you speak of?”

“The celebrated Pisani! She is divinely handsome. She would make my fortune in a republic. And a republic we shall have before the year is out.”

Mervale rubbed his hands, and chuckled. Glyndon coloured with rage and shame.

“Do you know the Signora Pisani? Have you ever spoken to her?”

“Not yet. But when I make up my mind to anything, it is soon done. I am about to return to Paris. They write me word that a handsome wife advances the career of a patriot. The age of prejudice is over. The sublimer virtues begin to be understood. I shall take back the handsomest wife in Europe.”

“Be quiet! What are you about?” said Mervale, seizing Glyndon as he saw him advance towards the Frenchman, his eyes sparkling, and his hands clenched.

“Sir!” said Glyndon, between his teeth, “you know not of whom you thus speak. Do you affect to suppose that Viola Pisani would accept YOU?”

“Not if she could get a better offer,” said Mervale, looking up to the ceiling.

“A better offer? You don’t understand me,” said Nicot. “I, Jean Nicot, propose to marry the girl; marry her! Others may make her more liberal offers, but no one, I apprehend, would make one so honourable. I alone have pity on her friendless situation. Besides, according to the dawning state of things, one will always, in France, be able to get rid of a wife whenever one wishes. We shall have new laws of divorce. Do you imagine that an Italian girl--and in no country in the world are maidens, it seems, more chaste (though wives may console themselves with virtues more philosophical)--would refuse the hand of an artist for the settlements of a prince? No; I think better of the Pisani than you do. I shall hasten to introduce myself to her.”

“I wish you all success, Monsieur Nicot,” said Mervale, rising, and shaking him heartily by the hand.

Glyndon cast at them both a disdainful glance.

“Perhaps, Monsieur Nicot,” said he, at length, constraining his lips into a bitter smile,--”perhaps you may have rivals.”

“So much the better,” replied Monsieur Nicot, carelessly, kicking his heels together, and appearing absorbed in admiration at the size of his large feet.

“I myself admire Viola Pisani.”

“Every painter must!”

“I may offer her marriage as well as yourself.”

“That would be folly in you, though wisdom in me. You would not know how to draw profit from the speculation! Cher confrere, you have prejudices.”

“You do not dare to say you would make profit from your own wife?”

“The virtuous Cato lent his wife to a friend. I love virtue, and I cannot do better than imitate Cato. But to be serious,--I do not fear you as a rival. You are good-looking, and I am ugly. But you are irresolute, and I decisive. While you are uttering fine phrases, I shall say, simply, ‘I have a bon etat. Will you marry me?’ So do your worst, cher confrere. Au revoir, behind the scenes!”

So saying, Nicot rose, stretched his long arms and short legs, yawned till he showed all his ragged teeth from ear to ear, pressed down his cap on his shaggy head with an air of defiance, and casting over his left shoulder a glance of triumph and malice at the indignant Glyndon, sauntered out of the room.

Mervale burst into a violent fit of laughter. “See how your Viola is estimated by your friend. A fine victory, to carry her off from the ugliest dog between Lapland and the Calmucks.”

Glyndon was yet too indignant to answer, when a new visitor arrived. It was Zanoni himself. Mervale, on whom the appearance and aspect of this personage imposed a kind of reluctant deference, which he was unwilling to acknowledge, and still more to betray, nodded to Glyndon, and saying, simply, “More when I see you again,” left the painter and his unexpected visitor.

“I see,” said Zanoni, lifting the cloth from the canvas, “that you have not slighted the advice I gave you. Courage, young artist; this is an escape from the schools: this is full of the bold self-confidence of real genius. You had no Nicot--no Mervale--at your elbow when this image of true beauty was conceived!”

Charmed back to his art by this unlooked-for praise, Glyndon replied modestly, “I thought well of my design till this morning; and then I was disenchanted of my happy persuasion.”

“Say, rather, that, unaccustomed to continuous labour, you were fatigued with your employment.”

“That is true. Shall I confess it? I began to miss the world without. It seemed to me as if, while I lavished my heart and my youth upon visions of beauty, I was losing the beautiful realities of actual life. And I envied the merry fisherman, singing as he passed below my casement, and the lover conversing with his mistress.”

“And,” said Zanoni, with an encouraging smile, “do you blame yourself for the natural and necessary return to earth, in which even the most habitual visitor of the Heavens of Invention seeks his relaxation and repose? Man’s genius is a bird that cannot be always on the wing; when the craving for the actual world is felt, it is a hunger that must be appeased. They who command best the ideal, enjoy ever most the real. See the true artist, when abroad in men’s thoroughfares, ever observant, ever diving into the heart, ever alive to the least as to the greatest of the complicated truths of existence; descending to what pedants would call the trivial and the frivolous. From every mesh in the social web, he can disentangle a grace. And for him each airy gossamer floats in the gold of the sunlight. Know you not that around the animalcule that sports in the water there shines a halo, as around the star (The monas mica, found in the purest pools, is encompassed with a halo. And this is frequent amongst many other species of animalcule.) that revolves in bright pastime through the space? True art finds beauty everywhere. In the street, in the market-place, in the hovel, it gathers food for the hive of its thoughts. In the mire of politics, Dante and Milton selected pearls for the wreath of song.

“Who ever told you that Raphael did not enjoy the life without, carrying everywhere with him the one inward idea of beauty which attracted and imbedded in its own amber every straw that the feet of the dull man trampled into mud? As some lord of the forest wanders abroad for its prey, and scents and follows it over plain and hill, through brake and jungle, but, seizing it at last, bears the quarry to its unwitnessed cave,--so Genius searches through wood and waste,

untiringly and eagerly, every sense awake, every nerve strained to speed and strength, for the scattered and flying images of matter, that it seizes at last with its mighty talons, and bears away with it into solitudes no footstep can invade. Go, seek the world without; it is for art the inexhaustible pasture-ground and harvest to the world within!"

"You comfort me," said Glyndon, brightening. "I had imagined my weariness a proof of my deficiency! But not now would I speak to you of these labours. Pardon me, if I pass from the toil to the reward. You have uttered dim prophecies of my future, if I wed one who, in the judgment of the sober world, would only darken its prospects and obstruct its ambition. Do you speak from the wisdom which is experience, or that which aspires to prediction?"

"Are they not allied? Is it not he best accustomed to calculation who can solve at a glance any new problem in the arithmetic of chances?"

"You evade my question."

"No; but I will adapt my answer the better to your comprehension, for it is upon this very point that I have sought you. Listen to me!" Zanoni fixed his eyes earnestly on his listener, and continued: "For the accomplishment of whatever is great and lofty, the clear perception of truths is the first requisite,-- truths adapted to the object desired. The warrior thus reduces the chances of battle to combinations almost of mathematics. He can predict a result, if he can but depend upon the materials he is forced to employ. At such a loss he can cross that bridge; in such a time he can reduce that fort. Still more accurately, for he depends less on material causes than ideas at his command, can the commander of the purer science or diviner art, if he once perceive the truths that are in him and around, foretell what he can achieve, and in what he is condemned to fail. But this perception of truths is disturbed by many causes,--vanity, passion, fear, indolence in himself, ignorance of the fitting means without to accomplish what he designs. He may miscalculate his own forces; he may have no chart of the country he would invade. It is only in a peculiar state of the mind that it is capable of perceiving truth; and that state is profound serenity. Your mind is fevered by a desire for truth: you would compel it to your embraces; you would ask me to impart to you, without ordeal or preparation, the grandest secrets that exist in Nature. But truth can no more be seen by the mind unprepared for it, than the sun can dawn upon the midst of night. Such a mind receives truth only to pollute it: to use the simile of one who has wandered near to the secret of the sublime Goetia (or the magic that lies within Nature, as electricity within the cloud), 'He who pours water into the muddy well, does but disturb the mud.'" ("Iamb. de Vit. Pythag.")

"What do you tend to?"

"This: that you have faculties that may attain to surpassing power, that may rank you among those enchanters who, greater than the magian, leave behind them an enduring influence, worshipped wherever beauty is comprehended, wherever the soul is sensible of a higher world than that in which matter struggles for crude and incomplete existence.

"But to make available those faculties, need I be a prophet to tell you that you must learn to concentrate upon great objects all your desires? The heart must rest, that the mind may be active. At present you wander from aim to aim. As the ballast to the ship, so to the spirit are faith and love. With your whole heart, affections, humanity, centred in one object, your mind and aspirations will become equally steadfast and in earnest. Viola is a child as yet; you do not perceive the high nature the trials of life will develop. Pardon me, if I say that her soul, purer and loftier than your own, will bear it upward, as a secret hymn carries aloft the spirits of the world. Your nature wants the harmony, the music which, as the Pythagoreans wisely taught, at once elevates and soothes. I offer you that music in her love."

“But am I sure that she does love me?”

“Artist, no; she loves you not at present; her affections are full of another. But if I could transfer to you, as the loadstone transfers its attraction to the magnet, the love that she has now for me,--if I could cause her to see in you the ideal of her dreams--”

“Is such a gift in the power of man?”

“I offer it to you, if your love be lawful, if your faith in virtue and yourself be deep and loyal; if not, think you that I would disenchant her with truth to make her adore a falsehood?”

“But if,” persisted Glyndon,--“if she be all that you tell me, and if she love you, how can you rob yourself of so priceless a treasure?”

“Oh, shallow and mean heart of man!” exclaimed Zanoni, with unaccustomed passion and vehemence, “dost thou conceive so little of love as not to know that it sacrifices all--love itself--for the happiness of the thing it loves? Hear me!” And Zanoni’s face grew pale. “Hear me! I press this upon you, because I love her, and because I fear that with me her fate will be less fair than with yourself. Why,--ask not, for I will not tell you. Enough! Time presses now for your answer; it cannot long be delayed. Before the night of the third day from this, all choice will be forbid you!”

“But,” said Glyndon, still doubting and suspicious,--“but why this haste?”

“Man, you are not worthy of her when you ask me. All I can tell you here, you should have known yourself. This ravisher, this man of will, this son of the old Visconti, unlike you,--steadfast, resolute, earnest even in his crimes,--never relinquishes an object. But one passion controls his lust,--it is his avarice. The day after his attempt on Viola, his uncle, the Cardinal --, from whom he has large expectations of land and gold, sent for him, and forbade him, on pain of forfeiting all the possessions which his schemes already had parcelled out, to pursue with dishonourable designs one whom the Cardinal had heeded and loved from childhood. This is the cause of his present pause from his pursuit. While we speak, the cause expires. Before the hand of the clock reaches the hour of noon, the Cardinal -- will be no more. At this very moment thy friend, Jean Nicot, is with the Prince di --.”

“He! wherefore?”

“To ask what dower shall go with Viola Pisani, the morning that she leaves the palace of the prince.”

“And how do you know all this?”

“Fool! I tell thee again, because a lover is a watcher by night and day; because love never sleeps when danger menaces the beloved one!”

“And you it was that informed the Cardinal --?”

“Yes; and what has been my task might as easily have been thine. Speak,--thine answer!”

“You shall have it on the third day from this.”

“Be it so. Put off, poor waverer, thy happiness to the last hour. On the third day from this, I will ask thee thy resolve.”

“And where shall we meet?”

“Before midnight, where you may least expect me. You cannot shun me, though you may seek to do so!”

“Stay one moment! You condemn me as doubtful, irresolute, suspicious. Have I no cause? Can I yield without a struggle to the strange fascination you exert upon my mind? What interest can you have in me, a stranger, that you should thus dictate to me the gravest action in the life of man? Do you suppose that any one in his senses would not pause, and deliberate, and ask himself, ‘Why should this stranger care thus for me?’“

“And yet,” said Zanoni, “if I told thee that I could initiate thee into the secrets of that magic which the philosophy of the whole existing world treats as a chimera, or imposture; if I promised to show thee how to command the beings of air and ocean, how to accumulate wealth more easily than a child can gather pebbles on the shore, to place in thy hands the essence of the herbs which prolong life from age to age, the mystery of that attraction by which to awe all danger and disarm all violence and subdue man as the serpent charms the bird,--if I told thee that all these it was mine to possess and to communicate, thou wouldst listen to me then, and obey me without a doubt!”

“It is true; and I can account for this only by the imperfect associations of my childhood,--by traditions in our house of--”

“Your forefather, who, in the revival of science, sought the secrets of Apollonius and Paracelsus.”

“What!” said Glyndon, amazed, “are you so well acquainted with the annals of an obscure lineage?”

“To the man who aspires to know, no man who has been the meanest student of knowledge should be unknown. You ask me why I have shown this interest in your fate? There is one reason which I have not yet told you. There is a fraternity as to whose laws and whose mysteries the most inquisitive schoolmen are in the dark. By those laws all are pledged to warn, to aid, and to guide even the remotest descendants of men who have toiled, though vainly, like your ancestor, in the mysteries of the Order. We are bound to advise them to their welfare; nay, more,--if they command us to it, we must accept them as our pupils. I am a survivor of that most ancient and immemorial union. This it was that bound me to thee at the first; this, perhaps, attracted thyself unconsciously, Son of our Brotherhood, to me.”

“If this be so, I command thee, in the name of the laws thou obeyest, to receive me as thy pupil!”

“What do you ask?” said Zanoni, passionately. “Learn, first, the conditions. No neophyte must have, at his initiation, one affection or desire that chains him to the world. He must be pure from the love of woman, free from avarice and ambition, free from the dreams even of art, or the hope of earthly fame. The first sacrifice thou must make is--Viola herself. And for what? For an ordeal that the most daring courage only can encounter, the most ethereal natures alone survive! Thou art unfit for the science that has made me and others what we are or have been; for thy whole nature is one fear!”

“Fear!” cried Glyndon, colouring with resentment, and rising to the full height of his stature.

“Fear! and the worst fear,--fear of the world’s opinion; fear of the Nicots and the Mervales; fear of thine own impulses when most generous; fear of thine own powers when thy genius is most bold; fear that virtue is not eternal; fear that God does not live in heaven to keep watch on earth; fear, the fear of little men; and that fear is never known to the great.”

With these words Zanoni abruptly left the artist, humbled, bewildered, and not convinced. He remained alone with his thoughts till he was aroused by the striking of the clock; he then suddenly remembered Zanoni’s prediction of the Cardinal’s death; and, seized with an intense desire to learn its truth, he hurried into the streets,--he gained the Cardinal’s palace. Five minutes before noon his Eminence had expired, after an illness of less than an hour. Zanoni’s visit had occupied more time than the illness of the Cardinal. Awed and perplexed, he turned from the palace, and as he walked through the Chiaja, he saw Jean Nicot emerge from the portals of the Prince di --.

## CHAPTER 3.V.

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,  
Which like two spirits do suggest me still.--Shakespeare.

Venerable Brotherhood, so sacred and so little known, from whose secret and precious archives the materials for this history have been drawn; ye who have retained, from century to century, all that time has spared of the august and venerable science,--thanks to you, if now, for the first time, some record of the thoughts and actions of no false and self-styled luminary of your Order be given, however imperfectly, to the world. Many have called themselves of your band; many spurious pretenders have been so-called by the learned ignorance which still, baffled and perplexed, is driven to confess that it knows nothing of your origin, your ceremonies or doctrines, nor even if you still have local habitation on the earth. Thanks to you if I, the only one of my country, in this age, admitted, with a profane footstep, into your mysterious Academe (The reader will have the goodness to remember that this is said by the author of the original MS., not by the editor.), have been by you empowered and instructed to adapt to the comprehension of the uninitiated, some few of the starry truths which shone on the great Shemaia of the Chaldean Lore, and gleamed dimly through the darkened knowledge of latter disciples, labouring, like Psellus and Iamblichus, to revive the embers of the fire which burned in the Hamarin of the East. Though not to us of an aged and hoary world is vouchsafed the NAME which, so say the earliest oracles of the earth, "rushes into the infinite worlds," yet is it ours to trace the reviving truths, through each new discovery of the philosopher and chemist. The laws of attraction, of electricity, and of the yet more mysterious agency of that great principal of life, which, if drawn from the universe, would leave the universe a grave, were but the code in which the Theurgy of old sought the guides that led it to a legislation and science of its own. To rebuild on words the fragments of this history, it seems to me as if, in a solemn trance, I was led through the ruins of a city whose only remains were tombs. From the sarcophagus and the urn I awake the genius (The Greek Genius of Death.) of the extinguished Torch, and so closely does its shape resemble Eros, that at moments I scarcely know which of ye dictates to me,--O Love! O Death!

And it stirred in the virgin's heart,--this new, unfathomable, and divine emotion! Was it only the ordinary affection of the pulse and the fancy, of the eye to the Beautiful, of the ear to the Eloquent, or did it not justify the notion she herself conceived of it,--that it was born not of the senses, that it was less of earthly and human love than the effect of some wondrous but not unholy charm? I said that, from that day in which, no longer with awe and trembling, she surrendered herself to the influence of Zanoni, she had sought to put her thoughts into words. Let the thoughts attest their own nature.

### THE SELF CONFESSIONAL.

"Is it the daylight that shines on me, or the memory of thy presence? Wherever I look, the world seems full of thee; in every ray that trembles on the water, that smiles upon the leaves, I behold but a likeness to thine eyes. What is this change, that alters not only myself, but the face of the whole universe?

...

How instantaneously leaped into life the power with which thou swayest my heart in its ebb and flow. Thousands were around me, and I saw but thee. That was the night in which I first

entered upon the world which crowds life into a drama, and has no language but music. How strangely and how suddenly with thee became that world evermore connected! What the delusion of the stage was to others, thy presence was to me. My life, too, seemed to centre into those short hours, and from thy lips I heard a music, mute to all ears but mine. I sit in the room where my father dwelt. Here, on that happy night, forgetting why THEY were so happy, I shrunk into the shadow, and sought to guess what thou wert to me; and my mother's low voice woke me, and I crept to my father's side, close--close, from fear of my own thoughts.

"Ah! sweet and sad was the morrow to that night, when thy lips warned me of the future. An orphan now,--what is there that lives for me to think of, to dream upon, to revere, but thou!

"How tenderly thou hast rebuked me for the grievous wrong that my thoughts did thee! Why should I have shuddered to feel thee glancing upon my thoughts like the beam on the solitary tree, to which thou didst once liken me so well? It was--it was, that, like the tree, I struggled for the light, and the light came. They tell me of love, and my very life of the stage breathes the language of love into my lips. No; again and again, I know THAT is not the love that I feel for thee!--it is not a passion, it is a thought! I ask not to be loved again. I murmur not that thy words are stern and thy looks are cold. I ask not if I have rivals; I sigh not to be fair in thine eyes. It is my SPIRIT that would blend itself with thine. I would give worlds, though we were apart, though oceans rolled between us, to know the hour in which thy gaze was lifted to the stars,--in which thy heart poured itself in prayer. They tell me thou art more beautiful than the marble images that are fairer than all human forms; but I have never dared to gaze steadfastly on thy face, that memory might compare thee with the rest. Only thine eyes and thy soft, calm smile haunt me; as when I look upon the moon, all that passes into my heart is her silent light.

...

"Often, when the air is calm, I have thought that I hear the strains of my father's music; often, though long stilled in the grave, have they waked me from the dreams of the solemn night. Methinks, ere thou comest to me that I hear them herald thy approach. Methinks I hear them wail and moan, when I sink back into myself on seeing thee depart. Thou art OF that music,--its spirit, its genius. My father must have guessed at thee and thy native regions, when the winds hushed to listen to his tones, and the world deemed him mad! I hear where I sit, the far murmur of the sea. Murmur on, ye blessed waters! The waves are the pulses of the shore. They beat with the gladness of the morning wind,-- so beats my heart in the freshness and light that make up the thoughts of thee!

...

"Often in my childhood I have mused and asked for what I was born; and my soul answered my heart and said, 'THOU WERT BORN TO WORSHIP!' Yes; I know why the real world has ever seemed to me so false and cold. I know why the world of the stage charmed and dazzled me. I know why it was so sweet to sit apart and gaze my whole being into the distant heavens. My nature is not formed for this life, happy though that life seem to others. It is its very want to have ever before it some image loftier than itself! Stranger, in what realm above, when the grave is past, shall my soul, hour after hour, worship at the same source as thine?

...

"In the gardens of my neighbour there is a small fountain. I stood by it this morning after sunrise. How it sprung up, with its eager spray, to the sunbeams! And then I thought that I should see thee again this day, and so sprung my heart to the new morning which thou bringest me from the skies.

...

“I HAVE seen, I have LISTENED to thee again. How bold I have become! I ran on with my childlike thoughts and stories, my recollections of the past, as if I had known thee from an infant. Suddenly the idea of my presumption struck me. I stopped, and timidly sought thine eyes.

“‘Well, and when you found that the nightingale refused to sing?’--

“‘Ah!’ I said, ‘what to thee this history of the heart of a child?’

“‘Viola,’ didst thou answer, with that voice, so inexpressibly calm and earnest!--’Viola, the darkness of a child’s heart is often but the shadow of a star. Speak on! And thy nightingale, when they caught and caged it, refused to sing?’

“‘And I placed the cage yonder, amidst the vine-leaves, and took up my lute, and spoke to it on the strings; for I thought that all music was its native language, and it would understand that I sought to comfort it.’

“‘Yes,’ saidst thou. ‘And at last it answered thee, but not with song,--in a sharp, brief cry; so mournful, that thy hands let fall the lute, and the tears gushed from thine eyes. So softly didst thou unbar the cage, and the nightingale flew into yonder thicket; and thou heardst the foliage rustle, and, looking through the moonlight, thine eyes saw that it had found its mate. It sang to thee then from the boughs a long, loud, joyous jubilee. And musing, thou didst feel that it was not the vine- leaves or the moonlight that made the bird give melody to night, and that the secret of its music was the presence of a thing beloved.’

“‘How didst thou know my thoughts in that childlike time better than I knew myself! How is the humble life of my past years, with its mean events, so mysteriously familiar to thee, bright stranger! I wonder,--but I do not again dare to fear thee!

...

“‘Once the thought of him oppressed and weighed me down. As an infant that longs for the moon, my being was one vague desire for something never to be attained. Now I feel rather as if to think of thee sufficed to remove every fetter from my spirit. I float in the still seas of light, and nothing seems too high for my wings, too glorious for my eyes. It was mine ignorance that made me fear thee. A knowledge that is not in books seems to breathe around thee as an atmosphere. How little have I read!--how little have I learned! Yet when thou art by my side, it seems as if the veil were lifted from all wisdom and all Nature. I startle when I look even at the words I have written; they seem not to come from myself, but are the signs of another language which thou hast taught my heart, and which my hand traces rapidly, as at thy dictation. Sometimes, while I write or muse, I could fancy that I heard light wings hovering around me, and saw dim shapes of beauty floating round, and vanishing as they smiled upon me. No unquiet and fearful dream ever comes to me now in sleep, yet sleep and waking are alike but as one dream. In sleep I wander with thee, not through the paths of earth, but through impalpable air--an air which seems a music--upward and upward, as the soul mounts on the tones of a lyre! Till I knew thee, I was as a slave to the earth. Thou hast given to me the liberty of the universe! Before, it was life; it seems to me now as if I had commenced eternity!

...

“‘Formerly, when I was to appear upon the stage, my heart beat more loudly. I trembled to encounter the audience, whose breath gave shame or renown; and now I have no fear of them. I see them, heed them, hear them not! I know that there will be music in my voice, for it is a hymn that I pour to thee. Thou never comest to the theatre; and that no longer grieves me. Thou art become too sacred to appear a part of the common world, and I feel glad that thou art not by when crowds have a right to judge me.

...

“And he spoke to me of ANOTHER: to another he would consign me! No, it is not love that I feel for thee, Zanoni; or why did I hear thee without anger, why did thy command seem to me not a thing impossible? As the strings of the instrument obey the hand of the master, thy look modulates the wildest chords of my heart to thy will. If it please thee,--yes, let it be so. Thou art lord of my destinies; they cannot rebel against thee! I almost think I could love him, whoever it be, on whom thou wouldst shed the rays that circumfuse thyself. Whatever thou hast touched, I love; whatever thou speakest of, I love. Thy hand played with these vine leaves; I wear them in my bosom. Thou seemest to me the source of all love; too high and too bright to be loved thyself, but darting light into other objects, on which the eye can gaze less dazzled. No, no; it is not love that I feel for thee, and therefore it is that I do not blush to nourish and confess it. Shame on me if I loved, knowing myself so worthless a thing to thee!

...

“ANOTHER!--my memory echoes back that word. Another! Dost thou mean that I shall see thee no more? It is not sadness,--it is not despair that seizes me. I cannot weep. It is an utter sense of desolation. I am plunged back into the common life; and I shudder coldly at the solitude. But I will obey thee, if thou wilt. Shall I not see thee again beyond the grave? O how sweet it were to die!

“Why do I not struggle from the web in which my will is thus entangled? Hast thou a right to dispose of me thus? Give me back--give me back the life I knew before I gave life itself away to thee. Give me back the careless dreams of my youth,--my liberty of heart that sung aloud as it walked the earth. Thou hast disenchanted me of everything that is not of thyself. Where was the sin, at least, to think of thee,--to see thee? Thy kiss still glows upon my hand; is that hand mine to bestow? Thy kiss claimed and hallowed it to thyself. Stranger, I will NOT obey thee.

...

“Another day,--one day of the fatal three is gone! It is strange to me that since the sleep of the last night, a deep calm has settled upon my breast. I feel so assured that my very being is become a part of thee, that I cannot believe that my life can be separated from thine; and in this conviction I repose, and smile even at thy words and my own fears. Thou art fond of one maxim, which thou repeatest in a thousand forms,--that the beauty of the soul is faith; that as ideal loveliness to the sculptor, faith is to the heart; that faith, rightly understood, extends over all the works of the Creator, whom we can know but through belief; that it embraces a tranquil confidence in ourselves, and a serene repose as to our future; that it is the moonlight that sways the tides of the human sea. That faith I comprehend now. I reject all doubt, all fear. I know that I have inextricably linked the whole that makes the inner life to thee; and thou canst not tear me from thee, if thou wouldst! And this change from struggle into calm came to me with sleep,--a sleep without a dream; but when I woke, it was with a mysterious sense of happiness,--an indistinct memory of something blessed,--as if thou hadst cast from afar off a smile upon my slumber. At night I was so sad; not a blossom that had not closed itself up, as if never more to open to the sun; and the night itself, in the heart as on the earth, has ripened the blossoms into flowers. The world is beautiful once more, but beautiful in repose,--not a breeze stirs thy tree, not a doubt my soul!”

## CHAPTER 3.VI.

Tu vegga o per violenza o per inganno  
Patire o disonore o mortal danno.

“Orlando Furioso,” Cant. xlii. i.

(Thou art about, either through violence or artifice, to suffer either dishonour or mortal loss.)

It was a small cabinet; the walls were covered with pictures, one of which was worth more than the whole lineage of the owner of the palace. Oh, yes! Zaroni was right. The painter IS a magician; the gold he at least wrings from his crucible is no delusion. A Venetian noble might be a fribble, or an assassin,-- a scoundrel, or a dolt; worthless, or worse than worthless, yet he might have sat to Titian, and his portrait may be inestimable,--a few inches of painted canvas a thousand times more valuable than a man with his veins and muscles, brain, will, heart, and intellect!

In this cabinet sat a man of about three-and-forty,--dark-eyed, sallow, with short, prominent features, a massive conformation of jaw, and thick, sensual, but resolute lips; this man was the Prince di --. His form, above the middle height, and rather inclined to corpulence, was clad in a loose dressing-robe of rich brocade. On a table before him lay an old-fashioned sword and hat, a mask, dice and dice-box, a portfolio, and an inkstand of silver curiously carved.

“Well, Mascari,” said the prince, looking up towards his parasite, who stood by the embrasure of the deep-set barricaded window,--“well! the Cardinal sleeps with his fathers. I require comfort for the loss of so excellent a relation; and where a more dulcet voice than Viola Pisani’s?”

“Is your Excellency serious? So soon after the death of his Eminence?”

“It will be the less talked of, and I the less suspected. Hast thou ascertained the name of the insolent who baffled us that night, and advised the Cardinal the next day?”

“Not yet.”

“Sapient Mascari! I will inform thee. It was the strange Unknown.”

“The Signor Zaroni! Are you sure, my prince?”

“Mascari, yes. There is a tone in that man’s voice that I never can mistake; so clear, and so commanding, when I hear it I almost fancy there is such a thing as conscience. However, we must rid ourselves of an impertinent. Mascari, Signor Zaroni hath not yet honoured our poor house with his presence. He is a distinguished stranger,--we must give a banquet in his honour.”

“Ah, and the Cyprus wine! The cypress is a proper emblem of the grave.”

“But this anon. I am superstitious; there are strange stories of Zaroni’s power and foresight; remember the death of Ughelli. No matter, though the Fiend were his ally, he should not rob me of my prize; no, nor my revenge.”

“Your Excellency is infatuated; the actress has bewitched you.”

“Mascari,” said the prince, with a haughty smile, “through these veins rolls the blood of the old Visconti--of those who boasted that no woman ever escaped their lust, and no man their resentment. The crown of my fathers has shrunk into a gewgaw and a toy,--their ambition and their spirit are undecayed! My honour is now enlisted in this pursuit,--Viola must be mine!”

“Another ambushade?” said Mascari, inquiringly.

“Nay, why not enter the house itself?--the situation is lonely, and the door is not made of iron.”

“But what if, on her return home, she tell the tale of our violence? A house forced,--a virgin stolen! Reflect; though the feudal privileges are not destroyed, even a Visconti is not now above the law.”

“Is he not, Mascari? Fool! in what age of the world, even if the Madmen of France succeed in their chimeras, will the iron of law not bend itself, like an osier twig, to the strong hand of power and gold? But look not so pale, Mascari; I have foreplanned all things. The day that she leaves this palace, she will leave it for France, with Monsieur Jean Nicot.”

Before Mascari could reply, the gentleman of the chamber announced the Signor Zanoni.

The prince involuntarily laid his hand upon the sword placed on the table, then with a smile at his own impulse, rose, and met his visitor at the threshold, with all the profuse and respectful courtesy of Italian simulation.

“This is an honour highly prized,” said the prince. “I have long desired to clasp the hand of one so distinguished.”

“And I give it in the spirit with which you seek it,” replied Zanoni.

The Neapolitan bowed over the hand he pressed; but as he touched it a shiver came over him, and his heart stood still. Zanoni bent on him his dark, smiling eyes, and then seated himself with a familiar air.

“Thus it is signed and sealed; I mean our friendship, noble prince. And now I will tell you the object of my visit. I find, Excellency, that, unconsciously perhaps, we are rivals. Can we not accommodate out pretensions!”

“Ah!” said the prince, carelessly, “you, then, were the cavalier who robbed me of the reward of my chase. All stratagems fair in love, as in war. Reconcile our pretensions! Well, here is the dice-box; let us throw for her. He who casts the lowest shall resign his claim.”

“Is this a decision by which you will promise to be bound?”

“Yes, on my faith.”

“And for him who breaks his word so plighted, what shall be the forfeit?”

“The sword lies next to the dice-box, Signor Zanoni. Let him who stands not by his honour fall by the sword.”

“And you invoke that sentence if either of us fail his word? Be it so; let Signor Mascari cast for us.”

“Well said!--Mascari, the dice!”

The prince threw himself back in his chair; and, world-hardened as he was, could not suppress the glow of triumph and satisfaction that spread itself over his features. Mascari took up the three dice, and rattled them noisily in the box. Zanoni, leaning his cheek on his hand, and bending over the table, fixed his eyes steadfastly on the parasite; Mascari in vain struggled to extricate from that searching gaze; he grew pale, and trembled, he put down the box.

“I give the first throw to your Excellency. Signor Mascari, be pleased to terminate our suspense.”

Again Mascari took up the box; again his hand shook so that the dice rattled within. He threw; the numbers were sixteen.

“It is a high throw,” said Zanoni, calmly; “nevertheless, Signor Mascari, I do not despond.”

Mascari gathered up the dice, shook the box, and rolled the contents once more on the table: the number was the highest that can be thrown,--eighteen.

The prince darted a glance of fire at his minion, who stood with gaping mouth, staring at the dice, and trembling from head to foot.

“I have won, you see,” said Zanoni; “may we be friends still?”

“Signor,” said the prince, obviously struggling with anger and confusion, “the victory is yours. But pardon me, you have spoken lightly of this young girl,--will anything tempt you to yield your claim?”

“Ah, do not think so ill of my gallantry; and,” resumed Zanoni, with a stern meaning in his voice, “forget not the forfeit your own lips have named.”

The prince knit his brow, but constrained the haughty answer that was his first impulse.

“Enough!” he said, forcing a smile; “I yield. Let me prove that I do not yield ungraciously; will you favour me with your presence at a little feast I propose to give in honour,” he added, with a sardonic mockery, “of the elevation of my kinsman, the late Cardinal, of pious memory, to the true seat of St. Peter?”

“It is, indeed, a happiness to hear one command of yours I can obey.”

Zanoni then turned the conversation, talked lightly and gayly, and soon afterwards departed.

“Villain!” then exclaimed the prince, grasping Mascari by the collar, “you betrayed me!”

“I assure your Excellency that the dice were properly arranged; he should have thrown twelve; but he is the Devil, and that’s the end of it.”

“There is no time to be lost,” said the prince, quitting his hold of his parasite, who quietly resettled his cravat.

“My blood is up,—I will win this girl, if I die for it! What noise is that?”

“It is but the sword of your illustrious ancestor that has fallen from the table.”

### CHAPTER 3.VII.

Il ne faut appeler aucun ordre si ce n’est en tems clair et serein.--“Les Clavicules du Rabbi Salomon.”

(No order of spirits must be invoked unless the weather be clear and serene.)

Letter from Zanoni to Mejnour.

My art is already dim and troubled. I have lost the tranquillity which is power. I cannot influence the decisions of those whom I would most guide to the shore; I see them wander farther and deeper into the infinite ocean where our barks sail evermore to the horizon that flies before us! Amazed and awed to find that I can only warn where I would control, I have looked into my own soul. It is true that the desires of earth chain me to the present, and shut me from the solemn secrets which Intellect, purified from all the dross of the clay, alone can examine and survey. The stern condition on which we hold our nobler and diviner gifts darkens our vision towards the future of those for whom we know the human infirmities of jealousy or hate or love. Mejnour, all around me is mist and haze; I have gone back in our sublime existence; and from the bosom of the imperishable youth that blooms only in the spirit, springs up the dark poison-flower of human love.

This man is not worthy of her,—I know that truth; yet in his nature are the seeds of good and greatness, if the tares and weeds of worldly vanities and fears would suffer them to grow. If she were his, and I had thus transplanted to another soil the passion that obscures my gaze and disarms my power, unseen, unheard, unrecognised, I could watch over his fate, and secretly prompt his deeds, and minister to her welfare through his own. But time rushes on! Through the shadows that encircle me, I see, gathering round her, the darkest dangers. No choice but flight, -- no escape save with him or me. With me!--the rapturous thought,—the terrible conviction! With me! Mejnour, canst thou wonder that I would save her from myself? A moment in the life of ages,—a bubble on the shoreless sea. What else to me can be human love? And in this exquisite

nature of hers,--more pure, more spiritual, even in its young affections than ever heretofore the countless volumes of the heart, race after race, have given to my gaze: there is yet a deep-buried feeling that warns me of inevitable woe. Thou austere and remorseless Hierophant,--thou who hast sought to convert to our brotherhood every spirit that seemed to thee most high and bold,--even thou knowest, by horrible experience, how vain the hope to banish FEAR from the heart of woman.

My life would be to her one marvel. Even if, on the other hand, I sought to guide her path through the realms of terror to the light, think of the Haunter of the Threshold, and shudder with me at the awful hazard! I have endeavoured to fill the Englishman's ambition with the true glory of his art; but the restless spirit of his ancestor still seems to whisper in him, and to attract to the spheres in which it lost its own wandering way. There is a mystery in man's inheritance from his fathers. Peculiarities of the mind, as diseases of the body, rest dormant for generations, to revive in some distant descendant, baffle all treatment and elude all skill. Come to me from thy solitude amidst the wrecks of Rome! I pant for a living confidant,--for one who in the old time has himself known jealousy and love. I have sought commune with Adon-Ai; but his presence, that once inspired such heavenly content with knowledge, and so serene a confidence in destiny, now only troubles and perplexes me. From the height from which I strive to search into the shadows of things to come, I see confused spectres of menace and wrath. Methinks I behold a ghastly limit to the wondrous existence I have held,--methinks that, after ages of the Ideal Life, I see my course merge into the most stormy whirlpool of the Real. Where the stars opened to me their gates, there looms a scaffold,--thick steams of blood rise as from a shambles. What is more strange to me, a creature here, a very type of the false ideal of common men,--body and mind, a hideous mockery of the art that shapes the Beautiful, and the desires that seek the Perfect, ever haunts my vision amidst these perturbed and broken clouds of the fate to be. By that shadowy scaffold it stands and gibbers at me, with lips dropping slime and gore. Come, O friend of the far-time; for me, at least, thy wisdom has not purged away thy human affections. According to the bonds of our solemn order, reduced now to thee and myself, lone survivors of so many haughty and glorious aspirants, thou art pledged, too, to warn the descendant of those whom thy counsels sought to initiate into the great secret in a former age. The last of that bold Visconti who was once thy pupil is the relentless persecutor of this fair child. With thoughts of lust and murder, he is digging his own grave; thou mayest yet daunt him from his doom. And I also mysteriously, by the same bond, am pledged to obey, if he so command, a less guilty descendant of a baffled but nobler student. If he reject my counsel, and insist upon the pledge, Mejnour, thou wilt have another neophyte. Beware of another victim! Come to me! This will reach thee with all speed. Answer it by the pressure of one hand that I can dare to clasp!

### CHAPTER 3.VIII.

Il lupo

Ferito, credo, mi conobbe e 'ncontro

Mi venne con la bocca sanguinosa.--"Aminta," At. iv. Sc. i.

(The wounded wolf, I think, knew me, and came to meet me with its bloody mouth.)

At Naples, the tomb of Virgil, beetling over the cave of Posilipo, is revered, not with the feelings that should hallow the memory of the poet, but the awe that wraps the memory of the magician. To his charms they ascribe the hollowing of that mountain passage; and tradition yet guards his tomb by the spirits he had raised to construct the cavern. This spot, in the immediate vicinity of Viola's home, had often attracted her solitary footsteps. She had loved the dim and solemn fancies that beset her as she looked into the lengthened gloom of the grotto, or, ascending to the tomb, gazed from the rock on the dwarfed figures of the busy crowd that seemed to creep like insects along the windings of the soil below; and now, at noon, she bent thither her thoughtful way. She threaded the narrow path, she passed the gloomy vineyard that clammers up the rock, and gained the lofty spot, green with moss and luxuriant foliage, where the dust of him who yet soothes and elevates the minds of men is believed to rest. From afar rose the huge fortress of St. Elmo, frowning darkly amidst spires and domes that glittered in the sun. Lulled in its azure splendour lay the Siren's sea; and the grey smoke of Vesuvius, in the clear distance, soared like a moving pillar into the lucid sky. Motionless on the brink of the precipice, Viola looked upon the lovely and living world that stretched below; and the sullen vapour of Vesuvius fascinated her eye yet more than the scattered gardens, or the gleaming Caprea, smiling amidst the smiles of the sea. She heard not a step that had followed her on her path and started to hear a voice at hand. So sudden was the apparition of the form that stood by her side, emerging from the bushes that clad the crags, and so singularly did it harmonise in its uncouth ugliness with the wild nature of the scene immediately around her, and the wizard traditions of the place, that the colour left her cheek, and a faint cry broke from her lips.

"Tush, pretty trembler!--do not be frightened at my face," said the man, with a bitter smile. "After three months' marriage, there is no different between ugliness and beauty. Custom is a great leveller. I was coming to your house when I saw you leave it; so, as I have matters of importance to communicate, I ventured to follow your footsteps. My name is Jean Nicot, a name already favourably known as a French artist. The art of painting and the art of music are nearly connected, and the stage is an altar that unites the two."

There was something frank and unembarrassed in the man's address that served to dispel the fear his appearance had occasioned. He seated himself, as he spoke, on a crag beside her, and, looking up steadily into her face, continued:--

"You are very beautiful, Viola Pisani, and I am not surprised at the number of your admirers. If I presume to place myself in the list, it is because I am the only one who loves thee honestly, and woos thee fairly. Nay, look not so indignant! Listen to me. Has the Prince di -- ever spoken to thee of marriage; or the beautiful imposter Zanoni, or the young blue-eyed Englishman, Clarence Glyndon? It is marriage,--it is a home, it is safety, it is reputation, that I offer to thee; and these last when the straight form grows crooked, and the bright eyes dim. What say you?" and he attempted to seize her hand.

Viola shrunk from him, and silently turned to depart. He rose abruptly and placed himself on her path.

"Actress, you must hear me! Do you know what this calling of the stage is in the eyes of prejudice,--that is, of the common opinion of mankind? It is to be a princess before the lamps, and a Pariah before the day. No man believes in your virtue, no man credits your vows; you are the puppet that they consent to trick out with tinsel for their amusement, not an idol for their worship. Are you so enamoured of this career that you scorn even to think of security and honour? Perhaps you are different from what you seem. Perhaps you laugh at the prejudice that would degrade you, and would wisely turn it to advantage. Speak frankly to me; I have no

prejudice either. Sweet one, I am sure we should agree. Now, this Prince di --, I have a message from him. Shall I deliver it?"

Never had Viola felt as she felt then, never had she so thoroughly seen all the perils of her forelorn condition and her fearful renown. Nicot continued:--

"Zanoni would but amuse himself with thy vanity; Glyndon would despise himself, if he offered thee his name, and thee, if thou wouldst accept it; but the Prince di -- is in earnest, and he is wealthy. Listen!"

And Nicot approached his lips to her, and hissed a sentence which she did not suffer him to complete. She darted from him with one glance of unutterable disdain. As he strove to regain his hold of her arm, he lost his footing, and fell down the sides of the rock till, bruised and lacerated, a pine-branch saved him from the yawning abyss below. She heard his exclamation of rage and pain as she bounded down the path, and, without once turning to look behind, regained her home. By the porch stood Glyndon, conversing with Gionetta. She passed him abruptly, entered the house, and, sinking on the floor, wept loud and passionately.

Glyndon, who had followed her in surprise, vainly sought to soothe and calm her. She would not reply to his questions; she did not seem to listen to his protestations of love, till suddenly, as Nicot's terrible picture of the world's judgment of that profession which to her younger thoughts had seemed the service of Song and the Beautiful, forced itself upon her, she raised her face from her hands, and, looking steadily upon the Englishman, said, "False one, dost thou talk of me of love?"

"By my honour, words fail to tell thee how I love!"

"Wilt thou give me thy home, thy name? Dost thou woo me as thy wife?" And at that moment, had Glyndon answered as his better angel would have counselled, perhaps, in that revolution of her whole mind which the words of Nicot had effected, which made her despise her very self, sicken of her lofty dreams, despair of the future, and distrust her whole ideal,--perhaps, I say, in restoring her self-esteem,--he would have won her confidence, and ultimately secured her love. But against the prompting of his nobler nature rose up at that sudden question all those doubts which, as Zanoni had so well implied, made the true enemies of his soul. Was he thus suddenly to be entangled into a snare laid for his credulity by deceivers? Was she not instructed to seize the moment to force him into an avowal which prudence must repent? Was not the great actress rehearsing a premeditated part? He turned round, as these thoughts, the children of the world, passed across him, for he literally fancied that he heard the sarcastic laugh of Mervale without. Nor was he deceived. Mervale was passing by the threshold, and Gionetta had told him his friend was within. Who does not know the effect of the world's laugh? Mervale was the personation of the world. The whole world seemed to shout derision in those ringing tones. He drew back,--he recoiled. Viola followed him with her earnest, impatient eyes. At last, he faltered forth, "Do all of thy profession, beautiful Viola, exact marriage as the sole condition of love?" Oh, bitter question! Oh, poisoned taunt! He repented it the moment after. He was seized with remorse of reason, of feeling, and of conscience. He saw her form shrink, as it were, at his cruel words. He saw the colour come and go, to leave the writhing lips like marble; and then, with a sad, gentle look of self-pity, rather than reproach, she pressed her hands tightly to her bosom, and said,--

"He was right! Pardon me, Englishman; I see now, indeed, that I am the Pariah and the outcast."

"Hear me. I retract. Viola, Viola! it is for you to forgive!"

But Viola waved him from her, and, smiling mournfully as she passed him by, glided from the chamber; and he did not dare to detain her.

### CHAPTER 3.IX.

Dafne: Ma, chi lung' e d'Amor?

Tirsi: Chi teme e fuggè.

Dafne: E che giova fuggir da lui ch' ha l' ali?

Tirsi: AMOR NASCENTE HA CORTE L' ALI!--"Aminta," At. ii. Sc. ii.

(Dafne: But, who is far from Love?

Tirsi: He who fears and flies.

Dafne: What use to flee from one who has wings?

Tirsi: The wings of Love, while he yet grows, are short.)

When Glyndon found himself without Viola's house, Mervale, still loitering at the door, seized his arm. Glyndon shook him off abruptly.

"Thou and thy counsels," said he, bitterly, "have made me a coward and a wretch. But I will go home,--I will write to her. I will pour out my whole soul; she will forgive me yet."

Mervale, who was a man of imperturbable temper, arranged his ruffles, which his friend's angry gesture had a little discomposed, and not till Glyndon had exhausted himself awhile by passionate exclamations and reproaches, did the experienced angler begin to tighten the line. He then drew from Glyndon the explanation of what had passed, and artfully sought not to irritate, but soothe him. Mervale, indeed, was by no means a bad man; he had stronger moral notions than are common amongst the young. He sincerely reproved his friend for harbouring dishonourable intentions with regard to the actress. "Because I would not have her thy wife, I never dreamed that thou shouldst degrade her to thy mistress. Better of the two an imprudent match than an illicit connection. But pause yet, do not act on the impulse of the moment."

"But there is no time to lose. I have promised to Zanoni to give him my answer by to-morrow night. Later than that time, all option ceases."

"Ah!" said Mervale, "this seems suspicious. Explain yourself."

And Glyndon, in the earnestness of his passion, told his friend what had passed between himself and Zanoni,--suppressing only, he scarce knew why, the reference to his ancestor and the mysterious brotherhood.

This recital gave to Mervale all the advantage he could desire. Heavens! with what sound, shrewd common-sense he talked. How evidently some charlatanic coalition between the actress, and perhaps,--who knows?--her clandestine protector, sated with possession! How equivocal the character of one,--the position of the other! What cunning in the question of the actress! How profoundly had Glyndon, at the first suggestion of his sober reason, seen through the snare. What! was he to be thus mystically cajoled and hurried into a rash marriage, because Zanoni, a mere stranger, told him with a grave face that he must decide before the clock struck a certain hour?

"Do this at least," said Mervale, reasonably enough,--"wait till the time expires; it is but another day. Baffle Zanoni. He tells thee that he will meet thee before midnight to-morrow, and defies thee to avoid him. Pooh! let us quit Naples for some neighbouring place, where, unless he

be indeed the Devil, he cannot possibly find us. Show him that you will not be led blindfold even into an act that you meditate yourself. Defer to write to her, or to see her, till after to-morrow. This is all I ask. Then visit her, and decide for yourself."

Glyndon was staggered. He could not combat the reasonings of his friend; he was not convinced, but he hesitated; and at that moment Nicot passed them. He turned round, and stopped, as he saw Glyndon.

"Well, and do you think still of the Pisani?"

"Yes; and you--"

"Have seen and conversed with her. She shall be Madame Nicot before this day week! I am going to the cafe, in the Toledo; and hark ye, when next you meet your friend Signor Zanoni, tell him that he has twice crossed my path. Jean Nicot, though a painter, is a plain, honest man, and always pays his debts."

"It is a good doctrine in money matters," said Mervale; "as to revenge, it is not so moral, and certainly not so wise. But is it in your love that Zanoni has crossed your path? How that, if your suit prosper so well?"

"Ask Viola Pisani that question. Bah! Glyndon, she is a prude only to thee. But I have no prejudices. Once more, farewell."

"Rouse thyself, man!" said Mervale, slapping Glyndon on the shoulder. "What think you of your fair one now?"

"This man must lie."

"Will you write to her at once?"

"No; if she be really playing a game, I could renounce her without a sigh. I will watch her closely; and, at all events, Zanoni shall not be the master of my fate. Let us, as you advise, leave Naples at daybreak to-morrow."

### CHAPTER 3.X.

O chiunque tu sia, che fuor d'ogni uso  
Pieghi Natura ad opre altere e strane,  
E, spiando i segreti, entri al piu chiuso  
Spazi' a tua voglia delle menti umane--  
Deh, Dimmi!--"Gerus. Lib.," Cant. x. xviii.

(O thou, whoever thou art, who through every use bendest Nature to works foreign and strange; and by spying into her secrets, enterest at thy will into the closest recesses of the human mind,-- O speak! O tell me!)

Early the next morning the young Englishmen mounted their horses, and took the road towards Baiae.

Glyndon left word at his hotel, that if Signor Zanoni sought him, it was in the neighbourhood of that once celebrated watering-place of the ancients that he should be found.

They passed by Viola's house, but Glyndon resisted the temptation of pausing there; and after threading the grotto of Posilipo, they wound by a circuitous route back into the suburbs of the city, and took the opposite road, which conducts to Portici and Pompeii. It was late at noon

when they arrived at the former of these places. Here they halted to dine; for Mervale had heard much of the excellence of the macaroni at Portici, and Mervale was a bon vivant.

They put up at an inn of very humble pretensions, and dined under an awning. Mervale was more than usually gay; he pressed the lacrima upon his friend, and conversed gayly.

“Well, my dear friend, we have foiled Signor Zanoni in one of his predictions at least. You will have no faith in him hereafter.”

“The ides are come, not gone.”

“Tush! If he be the soothsayer, you are not the Caesar. It is your vanity that makes you credulous. Thank Heaven, I do not think myself of such importance that the operations of Nature should be changed in order to frighten me.”

“But why should the operations of Nature be changed? There may be a deeper philosophy than we dream of,—a philosophy that discovers the secrets of Nature, but does not alter, by penetrating, its courses.”

“Ah, you relapse into your heretical credulity; you seriously suppose Zanoni to be a prophet,—a reader of the future; perhaps an associate of genii and spirits!”

Here the landlord, a little, fat, oily fellow, came up with a fresh bottle of lacrima. He hoped their Excellencies were pleased. He was most touched--touched to the heart, that they liked the macaroni. Were their Excellencies going to Vesuvius? There was a slight eruption; they could not see it where they were, but it was pretty, and would be prettier still after sunset.

“A capital idea!” cried Mervale. “What say you, Glyndon?”

“I have not yet seen an eruption; I should like it much.”

“But is there no danger?” asked the prudent Mervale.

“Oh, not at all; the mountain is very civil at present. It only plays a little, just to amuse their Excellencies the English.”

“Well, order the horses, and bring the bill; we will go before it is dark. Clarence, my friend,—nunc est bibendum; but take care of the pede libero, which will scarce do for walking on lava!”

The bottle was finished, the bill paid; the gentlemen mounted, the landlord bowed, and they bent their way, in the cool of the delightful evening, towards Resina.

The wine, perhaps the excitement of his thoughts, animated Glyndon, whose unequal spirits were, at times, high and brilliant as those of a schoolboy released; and the laughter of the Northern tourists sounded oft and merrily along the melancholy domains of buried cities.

Hesperus had lighted his lamp amidst the rosy skies as they arrived at Resina. Here they quitted their horses, and took mules and a guide. As the sky grew darker and more dark, the mountain fire burned with an intense lustre. In various streaks and streamlets, the fountain of flame rolled down the dark summit, and the Englishmen began to feel increase upon them, as they ascended, that sensation of solemnity and awe which makes the very atmosphere that surrounds the Giant of the Plains of the Antique Hades.

It was night, when, leaving the mules, they ascended on foot, accompanied by their guide, and a peasant who bore a rude torch. The guide was a conversable, garrulous fellow, like most of his country and his calling; and Mervale, who possessed a sociable temper, loved to amuse or to instruct himself on every incidental occasion.

“Ah, Excellency,” said the guide, “your countrymen have a strong passion for the volcano. Long life to them, they bring us plenty of money! If our fortunes depended on the Neapolitans, we should starve.”

“True, they have no curiosity,” said Mervale. “Do you remember, Glyndon, the contempt with which that old count said to us, ‘You will go to Vesuvius, I suppose? I have never been; why

should I go? You have cold, you have hunger, you have fatigue, you have danger, and all for nothing but to see fire, which looks just as well in a brazier as on a mountain.' Ha! ha! the old fellow was right."

"But, Excellency," said the guide, "that is not all: some cavaliers think to ascend the mountain without our help. I am sure they deserve to tumble into the crater."

"They must be bold fellows to go alone; you don't often find such."

"Sometimes among the French, signor. But the other night--I never was so frightened--I had been with an English party, and a lady had left a pocket-book on the mountain, where she had been sketching. She offered me a handsome sum to return for it, and bring it to her at Naples. So I went in the evening. I found it, sure enough, and was about to return, when I saw a figure that seemed to emerge from the crater itself. The air there was so pestiferous that I could not have conceived a human creature could breathe it, and live. I was so astounded that I stood still as a stone, till the figure came over the hot ashes, and stood before me, face to face. Santa Maria, what a head!"

"What! hideous?"

"No; so beautiful, but so terrible. It had nothing human in its aspect."

"And what said the salamander?"

"Nothing! It did not even seem to perceive me, though I was near as I am to you; but its eyes seemed to emerge prying into the air. It passed by me quickly, and, walking across a stream of burning lava, soon vanished on the other side of the mountain. I was curious and foolhardy, and resolved to see if I could bear the atmosphere which this visitor had left; but though I did not advance within thirty yards of the spot at which he had first appeared, I was driven back by a vapour that wellnigh stifled me. Cospetto! I have spat blood ever since."

"Now will I lay a wager that you fancy this fire-king must be Zanoni," whispered Mervale, laughing.

The little party had now arrived nearly at the summit of the mountain; and unspeakably grand was the spectacle on which they gazed. From the crater arose a vapour, intensely dark, that overspread the whole background of the heavens; in the centre whereof rose a flame that assumed a form singularly beautiful. It might have been compared to a crest of gigantic feathers, the diadem of the mountain, high-arched, and drooping downward, with the hues delicately shaded off, and the whole shifting and tremulous as the plumage on a warrior's helmet.

The glare of the flame spread, luminous and crimson, over the dark and rugged ground on which they stood, and drew an innumerable variety of shadows from crag and hollow. An oppressive and sulphureous exhalation served to increase the gloomy and sublime terror of the place. But on turning from the mountain, and towards the distant and unseen ocean, the contrast was wonderfully great; the heavens serene and blue, the stars still and calm as the eyes of Divine Love. It was as if the realms of the opposing principles of Evil and of Good were brought in one view before the gaze of man! Glyndon--once more the enthusiast, the artist--was enchained and entranced by emotions vague and undefinable, half of delight and half of pain. Leaning on the shoulder of his friend, he gazed around him, and heard with deepening awe the rumbling of the earth below, the wheels and voices of the Ministry of Nature in her darkest and most inscrutable recess. Suddenly, as a bomb from a shell, a huge stone was flung hundreds of yards up from the jaws of the crater, and falling with a mighty crash upon the rock below, split into ten thousand fragments, which bounded down the sides of the mountain, sparkling and groaning as they went. One of these, the largest fragment, struck the narrow space of soil between the Englishmen and

the guide, not three feet from the spot where the former stood. Mervale uttered an exclamation of terror, and Glyndon held his breath, and shuddered.

“Diavolo!” cried the guide. “Descend, Excellencies,--descend! we have not a moment to lose; follow me close!”

So saying, the guide and the peasant fled with as much swiftness as they were able to bring to bear. Mervale, ever more prompt and ready than his friend, imitated their example; and Glyndon, more confused than alarmed, followed close. But they had not gone many yards, before, with a rushing and sudden blast, came from the crater an enormous volume of vapour. It pursued,--it overtook, it overspread them. It swept the light from the heavens. All was abrupt and utter darkness; and through the gloom was heard the shout of the guide, already distant, and lost in an instant amidst the sound of the rushing gust and the groans of the earth beneath. Glyndon paused. He was separated from his friend, from the guide. He was alone,--with the Darkness and the Terror. The vapour rolled sullenly away; the form of the plumed fire was again dimly visible, and its struggling and perturbed reflection again shed a glow over the horrors of the path. Glyndon recovered himself, and sped onward. Below, he heard the voice of Mervale calling on him, though he no longer saw his form. The sound served as a guide. Dizzy and breathless, he bounded forward; when--hark!--a sullen, slow rolling sounded in his ear! He halted,--and turned back to gaze. The fire had overflowed its course; it had opened itself a channel amidst the furrows of the mountain. The stream pursued him fast--fast; and the hot breath of the chasing and preternatural foe came closer and closer upon his cheek! He turned aside; he climbed desperately with hands and feet upon a crag that, to the right, broke the scathed and blasted level of the soil. The stream rolled beside and beneath him, and then taking a sudden wind round the spot on which he stood, interposed its liquid fire,--a broad and impassable barrier between his resting-place and escape. There he stood, cut off from descent, and with no alternative but to retrace his steps towards the crater, and thence seek, without guide or clew, some other pathway.

For a moment his courage left him; he cried in despair, and in that overstrained pitch of voice which is never heard afar off, to the guide, to Mervale, to return to aid him.

No answer came; and the Englishman, thus abandoned solely to his own resources, felt his spirit and energy rise against the danger. He turned back, and ventured as far towards the crater as the noxious exhalation would permit; then, gazing below, carefully and deliberately he chalked out for himself a path by which he trusted to shun the direction the fire-stream had taken, and trod firmly and quickly over the crumbling and heated strata.

He had proceeded about fifty yards, when he halted abruptly; an unspeakable and unaccountable horror, not hitherto experienced amidst all his peril, came over him. He shook in every limb; his muscles refused his will,--he felt, as it were, palsied and death-stricken. The horror, I say, was unaccountable, for the path seemed clear and safe. The fire, above and behind, burned clear and far; and beyond, the stars lent him their cheering guidance. No obstacle was visible,--no danger seemed at hand. As thus, spell-bound, and panic-stricken, he stood chained to the soil,--his breast heaving, large drops rolling down his brow, and his eyes starting wildly from their sockets,--he saw before him, at some distance, gradually shaping itself more and more distinctly to his gaze, a colossal shadow; a shadow that seemed partially borrowed from the human shape, but immeasurably above the human stature; vague, dark, almost formless; and differing, he could not tell where or why, not only from the proportions, but also from the limbs and outline of man.

The glare of the volcano, that seemed to shrink and collapse from this gigantic and appalling apparition, nevertheless threw its light, redly and steadily, upon another shape that stood beside, quiet and motionless; and it was, perhaps, the contrast of these two things--the Being and the Shadow--that impressed the beholder with the difference between them,--the Man and the Superhuman. It was but for a moment--nay, for the tenth part of a moment-- that this sight was permitted to the wanderer. A second eddy of sulphureous vapours from the volcano, yet more rapidly, yet more densely than its predecessor, rolled over the mountain; and either the nature of the exhalation, or the excess of his own dread, was such, that Glyndon, after one wild gasp for breath, fell senseless on the earth.

### CHAPTER 3.XI.

Was hab'ich,

Wenn ich nicht Alles habe?-sprach der Jungling.--"Das Verschleierte Bild zu Sais."

("What have I, if I possess not All?" said the youth.)

Mervale and the Italians arrived in safety at the spot where they had left the mules; and not till they had recovered their own alarm and breath did they think of Glyndon. But then, as the minutes passed, and he appeared not, Mervale, whose heart was as good at least as human hearts are in general, grew seriously alarmed. He insisted on returning to search for his friend; and by dint of prodigal promises prevailed at last on the guide to accompany him. The lower part of the mountain lay calm and white in the starlight; and the guide's practised eye could discern all objects on the surface at a considerable distance. They had not, however, gone very far, before they perceived two forms slowly approaching them.

As they came near, Mervale recognised the form of his friend. "Thank Heaven, he is safe!" he cried, turning to the guide.

"Holy angels befriend us!" said the Italian, trembling,--"behold the very being that crossed me last Friday night. It is he, but his face is human now!"

"Signor Inglese," said the voice of Zanoni, as Glyndon--pale, wan, and silent--returned passively the joyous greeting of Mervale,--"Signor Inglese, I told your friend that we should meet to-night. You see you have NOT foiled my prediction."

"But how?--but where?" stammered Mervale, in great confusion and surprise.

"I found your friend stretched on the ground, overpowered by the mephitic exhalation of the crater. I bore him to a purer atmosphere; and as I know the mountain well, I have conducted him safely to you. This is all our history. You see, sir, that were it not for that prophecy which you desired to frustrate, your friend would ere this time have been a corpse; one minute more, and the vapour had done its work. Adieu; goodnight, and pleasant dreams."

"But, my preserver, you will not leave us?" said Glyndon, anxiously, and speaking for the first time. "Will you not return with us?"

Zanoni paused, and drew Glyndon aside. "Young man," said he, gravely, "it is necessary that we should again meet to-night. It is necessary that you should, ere the first hour of morning, decide on your own fate. I know that you have insulted her whom you profess to love. It is not too late to repent. Consult not your friend: he is sensible and wise; but not now is his wisdom needed. There are times in life when, from the imagination, and not the reason, should wisdom

come,--this, for you, is one of them. I ask not your answer now. Collect your thoughts,--recover your jaded and scattered spirits. It wants two hours of midnight. Before midnight I will be with you."

"Incomprehensible being!" replied the Englishman, "I would leave the life you have preserved in your own hands; but what I have seen this night has swept even Viola from my thoughts. A fiercer desire than that of love burns in my veins,--the desire not to resemble but to surpass my kind; the desire to penetrate and to share the secret of your own existence--the desire of a preternatural knowledge and unearthly power. I make my choice. In my ancestor's name, I adjure and remind thee of thy pledge. Instruct me; school me; make me thine; and I surrender to thee at once, and without a murmur, the woman whom, till I saw thee, I would have defied a world to obtain."

"I bid thee consider well: on the one hand, Viola, a tranquil home, a happy and serene life; on the other hand, all is darkness,--darkness, that even these eyes cannot penetrate."

"But thou hast told me, that if I wed Viola, I must be contented with the common existence,--if I refuse, it is to aspire to thy knowledge and thy power."

"Vain man, knowledge and power are not happiness."

"But they are better than happiness. Say!--if I marry Viola, wilt thou be my master,--my guide? Say this, and I am resolved."

"It were impossible."

"Then I renounce her? I renounce love. I renounce happiness. Welcome solitude,--welcome despair; if they are the entrances to thy dark and sublime secret."

"I will not take thy answer now. Before the last hour of night thou shalt give it in one word,--ay or no! Farewell till then."

Zanoni waved his hand, and, descending rapidly, was seen no more.

Glyndon rejoined his impatient and wondering friend; but Mervale, gazing on his face, saw that a great change had passed there. The flexible and dubious expression of youth was forever gone. The features were locked, rigid, and stern; and so faded was the natural bloom, that an hour seemed to have done the work of years.

## CHAPTER 3.XII.

Was ist's

Das hinter diesem Schleier sich verbirgt?--"Das Verschleierte Bild zu Sais."

(What is it that conceals itself behind this veil?)

On returning from Vesuvius or Pompeii, you enter Naples through its most animated, its most Neapolitan quarter,--through that quarter in which modern life most closely resembles the ancient; and in which, when, on a fair-day, the thoroughfare swarms alike with Indolence and Trade, you are impressed at once with the recollection of that restless, lively race from which the population of Naples derives its origin; so that in one day you may see at Pompeii the habitations of a remote age; and on the Mole, at Naples, you may imagine you behold the very beings with whom those habitations had been peopled.

But now, as the Englishmen rode slowly through the deserted streets, lighted but by the lamps of heaven, all the gayety of day was hushed and breathless. Here and there, stretched under a

portico or a dingy booth, were sleeping groups of houseless Lazzaroni,--a tribe now merging its indolent individuality amidst an energetic and active population.

The Englishman rode on in silence; for Glyndon neither appeared to heed nor hear the questions and comments of Mervale, and Mervale himself was almost as weary as the jaded animal he bestrode.

Suddenly the silence of earth and ocean was broken by the sound of a distant clock that proclaimed the quarter preceding the last hour of night. Glyndon started from his reverie, and looked anxiously round. As the final stroke died, the noise of hoofs rung on the broad stones of the pavement, and from a narrow street to the right emerged the form of a solitary horseman. He neared the Englishmen, and Glyndon recognised the features and mien of Zanoni.

“What! do we meet again, signor?” said Mervale, in a vexed but drowsy tone.

“Your friend and I have business together,” replied Zanoni, as he wheeled his steed to the side of Glyndon. “But it will be soon transacted. Perhaps you, sir, will ride on to your hotel.”

“Alone!”

“There is no danger!” returned Zanoni, with a slight expression of disdain in his voice.

“None to me; but to Glyndon?”

“Danger from me! Ah, perhaps you are right.”

“Go on, my dear Mervale,” said Glyndon; “I will join you before you reach the hotel.”

Mervale nodded, whistled, and pushed his horse into a kind of amble.

“Now your answer,--quick?”

“I have decided. The love of Viola has vanished from my heart. The pursuit is over.”

“You have decided?”

“I have; and now my reward.”

“Thy reward! Well; ere this hour to-morrow it shall await thee.”

Zanoni gave the rein to his horse; it sprang forward with a bound: the sparks flew from its hoofs, and horse and rider disappeared amidst the shadows of the street whence they had emerged.

Mervale was surprised to see his friend by his side, a minute after they had parted.

“What has passed between you and Zanoni?”

“Mervale, do not ask me to-night! I am in a dream.”

“I do not wonder at it, for even I am in a sleep. Let us push on.”

In the retirement of his chamber, Glyndon sought to recollect his thoughts. He sat down on the foot of his bed, and pressed his hands tightly to his throbbing temples. The events of the last few hours; the apparition of the gigantic and shadowy Companion of the Mystic, amidst the fires and clouds of Vesuvius; the strange encounter with Zanoni himself, on a spot in which he could never, by ordinary reasoning, have calculated on finding Glyndon, filled his mind with emotions, in which terror and awe the least prevailed. A fire, the train of which had been long laid, was lighted at his heart,--the asbestos-fire that, once lit, is never to be quenched. All his early aspirations--his young ambition, his longings for the laurel--were merged in one passionate yearning to surpass the bounds of the common knowledge of man, and reach that solemn spot, between two worlds, on which the mysterious stranger appeared to have fixed his home.

Far from recalling with renewed affright the remembrance of the apparition that had so appalled him, the recollection only served to kindle and concentrate his curiosity into a burning focus. He had said aright,--**LOVE HAD VANISHED FROM HIS HEART**; there was no longer a serene space amidst its disordered elements for human affection to move and breathe. The enthusiast was rapt from this earth; and he would have surrendered all that mortal beauty ever

promised, that mortal hope ever whispered, for one hour with Zanoni beyond the portals of the visible world.

He rose, oppressed and fevered with the new thoughts that raged within him, and threw open his casement for air. The ocean lay suffused in the starry light, and the stillness of the heavens never more eloquently preached the morality of repose to the madness of earthly passions. But such was Glyndon's mood that their very hush only served to deepen the wild desires that preyed upon his soul; and the solemn stars, that are mysteries in themselves, seemed, by a kindred sympathy, to agitate the wings of the spirit no longer contented with its cage. As he gazed, a star shot from its brethren, and vanished from the depth of space!

### CHAPTER 3.XIII.

O, be gone!

By Heaven, I love thee better than myself,

For I came hither armed against myself.--"Romeo and Juliet."

The young actress and Gionetta had returned from the theatre; and Viola fatigued and exhausted, had thrown herself on a sofa, while Gionetta busied herself with the long tresses which, released from the fillet that bound them, half-concealed the form of the actress, like a veil of threads of gold. As she smoothed the luxuriant locks, the old nurse ran gossiping on about the little events of the night, the scandal and politics of the scenes and the tireroom. Gionetta was a worthy soul. Almanzor, in Dryden's tragedy of "Almahide," did not change sides with more gallant indifference than the exemplary nurse. She was at last grieved and scandalised that Viola had not selected one chosen cavalier. But the choice she left wholly to her fair charge. Zegri or Abencerrage, Glyndon or Zanoni, it had been the same to her, except that the rumours she had collected respecting the latter, combined with his own recommendations of his rival, had given her preference to the Englishman. She interpreted ill the impatient and heavy sigh with which Viola greeted her praises of Glyndon, and her wonder that he had of late so neglected his attentions behind the scenes, and she exhausted all her powers of panegyric upon the supposed object of the sigh. "And then, too," she said, "if nothing else were to be said against the other signor, it is enough that he is about to leave Naples."

"Leave Naples!--Zanoni?"

"Yes, darling! In passing by the Mole to-day, there was a crowd round some outlandish-looking sailors. His ship arrived this morning, and anchors in the bay. The sailors say that they are to be prepared to sail with the first wind; they were taking in fresh stores. They--"

"Leave me, Gionetta! Leave me!"

The time had already passed when the girl could confide in Gionetta. Her thoughts had advanced to that point when the heart recoils from all confidence, and feels that it cannot be comprehended. Alone now, in the principal apartment of the house, she paced its narrow boundaries with tremulous and agitated steps: she recalled the frightful suit of Nicot,--the injurious taunt of Glyndon; and she sickened at the remembrance of the hollow applauses which, bestowed on the actress, not the woman, only subjected her to contumely and insult. In that room the recollection of her father's death, the withered laurel and the broken chords, rose chillingly before her. Hers, she felt, was a yet gloomier fate,--the chords may break while the

laurel is yet green. The lamp, waning in its socket, burned pale and dim, and her eyes instinctively turned from the darker corner of the room. Orphan, by the hearth of thy parent, dost thou fear the presence of the dead!

And was Zanoni indeed about to quit Naples? Should she see him no more? Oh, fool, to think that there was grief in any other thought! The past!--that was gone! The future!--there was no future to her, Zanoni absent! But this was the night of the third day on which Zanoni had told her that, come what might, he would visit her again. It was, then, if she might believe him, some appointed crisis in her fate; and how should she tell him of Glyndon's hateful words? The pure and the proud mind can never confide its wrongs to another, only its triumphs and its happiness. But at that late hour would Zanoni visit her,--could she receive him? Midnight was at hand. Still in undefined suspense, in intense anxiety, she lingered in the room. The quarter before midnight sounded, dull and distant. All was still, and she was about to pass to her sleeping-room, when she heard the hoofs of a horse at full speed; the sound ceased, there was a knock at the door. Her heart beat violently; but fear gave way to another sentiment when she heard a voice, too well known, calling on her name. She paused, and then, with the fearlessness of innocence, descended and unbarred the door.

Zanoni entered with a light and hasty step. His horseman's cloak fitted tightly to his noble form, and his broad hat threw a gloomy shade over his commanding features.

The girl followed him into the room she had just left, trembling and blushing deeply, and stood before him with the lamp she held shining upward on her cheek and the long hair that fell like a shower of light over the half-clad shoulders and heaving bust.

"Viola," said Zanoni, in a voice that spoke deep emotion, "I am by thy side once more to save thee. Not a moment is to be lost. Thou must fly with me, or remain the victim of the Prince di --. I would have made the charge I now undertake another's; thou knowest I would,--thou knowest it!--but he is not worthy of thee, the cold Englishman! I throw myself at thy feet; have trust in me, and fly."

He grasped her hand passionately as he dropped on his knee, and looked up into her face with his bright, beseeching eyes.

"Fly with thee!" said Viola, scarce believing her senses.

"With me. Name, fame, honour,--all will be sacrificed if thou dost not."

"Then--then," said the wild girl, falteringly, and turning aside her face,--"then I am not indifferent to thee; thou wouldst not give me to another?"

Zanoni was silent; but his breast heaved, his cheeks flushed, his eyes darted dark and impassioned fire.

"Speak!" exclaimed Viola, in jealous suspicion of his silence.

"Indifferent to me! No; but I dare not yet say that I love thee."

"Then what matters my fate?" said Viola, turning pale, and shrinking from his side; "leave me,--I fear no danger. My life, and therefore my honour, is in mine own hands."

"Be not so mad," said Zanoni. "Hark! do you hear the neigh of my steed?--it is an alarm that warns us of the approaching peril. Haste, or you are lost!"

"Why dost thou care for me?" said the girl, bitterly. "Thou hast read my heart; thou knowest that thou art become the lord of my destiny. But to be bound beneath the weight of a cold obligation; to be the beggar on the eyes of indifference; to cast myself on one who loves me not,--THAT were indeed the vilest sin of my sex. Ah, Zanoni, rather let me die!"

She had thrown back her clustering hair from her face while she spoke; and as she now stood, with her arms drooping mournfully, and her hands clasped together with the proud bitterness of

her wayward spirit, giving new zest and charm to her singular beauty, it was impossible to conceive a sight more irresistible to the eye and the heart.

“Tempt me not to thine own danger,--perhaps destruction!” exclaimed Zanoni, in faltering accents. “Thou canst not dream of what thou wouldst demand,--come!” and, advancing, he wound his arm round her waist. “Come, Viola; believe at least in my friendship, my honour, my protection--”

“And not thy love,” said the Italian, turning on him her reproachful eyes. Those eyes met his, and he could not withdraw from the charm of their gaze. He felt her heart throbbing beneath his own; her breath came warm upon his cheek. He trembled,--HE! the lofty, the mysterious Zanoni, who seemed to stand aloof from his race. With a deep and burning sigh, he murmured, “Viola, I love thee! Oh!” he continued passionately, and, releasing his hold, he threw himself abruptly at her feet, “I no more command,--as woman should be wooed, I woo thee. From the first glance of those eyes, from the first sound of thy voice, thou becamest too fatally dear to me. Thou speakest of fascination,--it lives and it breathes in thee! I fled from Naples to fly from thy presence,--it pursued me. Months, years passed, and thy sweet face still shone upon my heart. I returned, because I pictured thee alone and sorrowful in the world, and knew that dangers, from which I might save thee, were gathering near thee and around. Beautiful Soul! whose leaves I have read with reverence, it was for thy sake, thine alone, that I would have given thee to one who might make thee happier on earth than I can. Viola! Viola! thou knowest not--never canst thou know--how dear thou art to me!”

It is in vain to seek for words to describe the delight--the proud, the full, the complete, and the entire delight--that filled the heart of the Neapolitan. He whom she had considered too lofty even for love,--more humble to her than those she had half-despised! She was silent, but her eyes spoke to him; and then slowly, as aware, at last, that the human love had advanced on the ideal, she shrank into the terrors of a modest and virtuous nature. She did not dare,--she did not dream to ask him the question she had so fearlessly made to Glyndon; but she felt a sudden coldness,--a sense that a barrier was yet between love and love. “Oh, Zanoni!” she murmured, with downcast eyes, “ask me not to fly with thee; tempt me not to my shame. Thou wouldst protect me from others. Oh, protect me from thyself!”

“Poor orphan!” said he, tenderly, “and canst thou think that I ask from thee one sacrifice,--still less the greatest that woman can give to love? As my wife I woo thee, and by every tie, and by every vow that can hallow and endear affection. Alas! they have belied love to thee indeed, if thou dost not know the religion that belongs to it! They who truly love would seek, for the treasure they obtain, every bond that can make it lasting and secure. Viola, weep not, unless thou givest me the holy right to kiss away thy tears!”

And that beautiful face, no more averted, drooped upon his bosom; and as he bent down, his lips sought the rosy mouth: a long and burning kiss,--danger, life, the world was forgotten! Suddenly Zanoni tore himself from her.

“Hearest thou the wind that sighs, and dies away? As that wind, my power to preserve thee, to guard thee, to foresee the storm in thy skies, is gone. No matter. Haste, haste; and may love supply the loss of all that it has dared to sacrifice! Come.”

Viola hesitated no more. She threw her mantle over her shoulders, and gathered up her dishevelled hair; a moment, and she was prepared, when a sudden crash was heard below.

“Too late!--fool that I was, too late!” cried Zanoni, in a sharp tone of agony, as he hurried to the door. He opened it, only to be borne back by the press of armed men. The room literally swarmed with the followers of the ravisher, masked, and armed to the teeth.

Viola was already in the grasp of two of the myrmidons. Her shriek smote the ear of Zanoni. He sprang forward; and Viola heard his wild cry in a foreign tongue. She saw the blades of the ruffians pointed at his breast! She lost her senses; and when she recovered, she found herself gagged, and in a carriage that was driven rapidly, by the side of a masked and motionless figure. The carriage stopped at the portals of a gloomy mansion. The gates opened noiselessly; a broad flight of steps, brilliantly illumined, was before her. She was in the palace of the Prince di --.

#### CHAPTER 3.XIV.

Ma lasciamo, per Dio, Signore, ormai

Di parlar d' ira, e di cantar di morte.--"Orlando Furioso," Canto xvii. xvii.

(But leave me, I solemnly conjure thee, signor, to speak of wrath, and to sing of death.)

The young actress was led to, and left alone in a chamber adorned with all the luxurious and half-Eastern taste that at one time characterised the palaces of the great seigneurs of Italy. Her first thought was for Zanoni. Was he yet living? Had he escaped unscathed the blades of the foe,--her new treasure, the new light of her life, her lord, at last her lover?

She had short time for reflection. She heard steps approaching the chamber; she drew back, but trembled not. A courage not of herself, never known before, sparkled in her eyes, and dilated her stature. Living or dead, she would be faithful still to Zanoni! There was a new motive to the preservation of honour. The door opened, and the prince entered in the gorgeous and gaudy costume still worn at that time in Naples.

"Fair and cruel one," said he, advancing with a half-sneer upon his lip, "thou wilt not too harshly blame the violence of love." He attempted to take her hand as he spoke.

"Nay," said he, as she recoiled, "reflect that thou art now in the power of one that never faltered in the pursuit of an object less dear to him than thou art. Thy lover, presumptuous though he be, is not by to save thee. Mine thou art; but instead of thy master, suffer me to be thy slave."

"Prince," said Viola, with a stern gravity, "your boast is in vain. Your power! I am NOT in your power. Life and death are in my own hands. I will not defy; but I do not fear you. I feel--and in some feelings," added Viola, with a solemnity almost thrilling, "there is all the strength, and all the divinity of knowledge--I feel that I am safe even here; but you--you, Prince di --, have brought danger to your home and hearth!"

The Neapolitan seemed startled by an earnestness and boldness he was but little prepared for. He was not, however, a man easily intimidated or deterred from any purpose he had formed; and, approaching Viola, he was about to reply with much warmth, real or affected, when a knock was heard at the door of the chamber. The sound was repeated, and the prince, chafed at the interruption, opened the door and demanded impatiently who had ventured to disobey his orders, and invade his leisure. Mascari presented himself, pale and agitated: "My lord," said he, in a whisper, "pardon me; but a stranger is below, who insists on seeing you; and, from some words he let fall, I judged it advisable even to infringe your commands."

"A stranger!--and at this hour! What business can he pretend? Why was he even admitted?"

“He asserts that your life is in imminent danger. The source whence it proceeds he will relate to your Excellency alone.”

The prince frowned; but his colour changed. He mused a moment, and then, re-entering the chamber and advancing towards Viola, he said,--

“Believe me, fair creature, I have no wish to take advantage of my power. I would fain trust alone to the gentler authorities of affection. Hold yourself queen within these walls more absolutely than you have ever enacted that part on the stage. To-night, farewell! May your sleep be calm, and your dreams propitious to my hopes.”

With these words he retired, and in a few moments Viola was surrounded by officious attendants, whom she at length, with some difficulty, dismissed; and, refusing to retire to rest, she spent the night in examining the chamber, which she found was secured, and in thoughts of Zanoni, in whose power she felt an almost preternatural confidence.

Meanwhile the prince descended the stairs and sought the room into which the stranger had been shown.

He found the visitor wrapped from head to foot in a long robe, half-gown, half-mantle, such as was sometimes worn by ecclesiastics. The face of this stranger was remarkable. So sunburnt and swarthy were his hues, that he must, apparently, have derived his origin amongst the races of the farthest East. His forehead was lofty, and his eyes so penetrating yet so calm in their gaze that the prince shrank from them as we shrink from a questioner who is drawing forth the guiltiest secret of our hearts.

“What would you with me?” asked the prince, motioning his visitor to a seat.

“Prince of --,” said the stranger, in a voice deep and sweet, but foreign in its accent,--”son of the most energetic and masculine race that ever applied godlike genius to the service of Human Will, with its winding wickedness and its stubborn grandeur; descendant of the great Visconti in whose chronicles lies the history of Italy in her palmy day, and in whose rise was the development of the mightiest intellect, ripened by the most restless ambition,--I come to gaze upon the last star in a darkening firmament. By this hour to-morrow space shall know it not. Man, unless thy whole nature change, thy days are numbered!”

“What means this jargon?” said the prince, in visible astonishment and secret awe. “Comest thou to menace me in my own halls, or wouldst thou warn me of a danger? Art thou some itinerant mountebank, or some unguessed-of friend? Speak out, and plainly. What danger threatens me?”

“Zanoni and thy ancestor’s sword,” replied the stranger.

“Ha! ha!” said the prince, laughing scornfully; “I half-suspected thee from the first. Thou art then the accomplice or the tool of that most dexterous, but, at present, defeated charlatan? And I suppose thou wilt tell me that if I were to release a certain captive I have made, the danger would vanish, and the hand of the dial would be put back?”

“Judge of me as thou wilt, Prince di --. I confess my knowledge of Zanoni. Thou, too, wilt know his power, but not till it consume thee. I would save, therefore I warn thee. Dost thou ask me why? I will tell thee. Canst thou remember to have heard wild tales of thy grandsire; of his desire for a knowledge that passes that of the schools and cloisters; of a strange man from the East who was his familiar and master in lore against which the Vatican has, from age to age, launched its mimic thunder? Dost thou call to mind the fortunes of thy ancestor?--how he succeeded in youth to little but a name; how, after a career wild and dissolute as thine, he disappeared from Milan, a pauper, and a self-exile; how, after years spent, none knew in what climes or in what pursuits, he again revisited the city where his progenitors had reigned; how

with him came the wise man of the East, the mystic Mejnour; how they who beheld him, beheld with amaze and fear that time had ploughed no furrow on his brow; that youth seemed fixed, as by a spell, upon his face and form? Dost thou not know that from that hour his fortunes rose? Kinsmen the most remote died; estate upon estate fell into the hands of the ruined noble. He became the guide of princes, the first magnate of Italy. He founded anew the house of which thou art the last lineal upholder, and transferred his splendour from Milan to the Sicilian realms. Visions of high ambition were then present with him nightly and daily. Had he lived, Italy would have known a new dynasty, and the Visconti would have reigned over Magna- Graecia. He was a man such as the world rarely sees; but his ends, too earthly, were at war with the means he sought. Had his ambition been more or less, he had been worthy of a realm mightier than the Caesars swayed; worthy of our solemn order; worthy of the fellowship of Mejnour, whom you now behold before you."

The prince, who had listened with deep and breathless attention to the words of his singular guest, started from his seat at his last words. "Imposter!" he cried, "can you dare thus to play with my credulity? Sixty years have flown since my grandsire died; were he living, he had passed his hundred and twentieth year; and you, whose old age is erect and vigorous, have the assurance to pretend to have been his contemporary! But you have imperfectly learned your tale. You know not, it seems, that my grandsire, wise and illustrious indeed, in all save his faith in a charlatan, was found dead in his bed, in the very hour when his colossal plans were ripe for execution, and that Mejnour was guilty of his murder."

"Alas!" answered the stranger, in a voice of great sadness, "had he but listened to Mejnour,-- had he but delayed the last and most perilous ordeal of daring wisdom until the requisite training and initiation had been completed,--your ancestor would have stood with me upon an eminence which the waters of Death itself wash everlastingly, but cannot overflow. Your grandsire resisted my fervent prayers, disobeyed my most absolute commands, and in the sublime rashness of a soul that panted for secrets, which he who desires orbs and sceptres never can obtain, perished, the victim of his own frenzy."

"He was poisoned, and Mejnour fled."

"Mejnour fled not," answered the stranger, proudly--"Mejnour could not fly from danger; for to him danger is a thing long left behind. It was the day before the duke took the fatal draft which he believed was to confer on the mortal the immortal boon, that, finding my power over him was gone, I abandoned him to his doom. But a truce with this: I loved your grandsire! I would save the last of his race. Oppose not thyself to Zanoni. Yield not thy soul to thine evil passions. Draw back from the precipice while there is yet time. In thy front, and in thine eyes, I detect some of that diviner glory which belonged to thy race. Thou hast in thee some germs of their hereditary genius, but they are choked up by worse than thy hereditary vices. Recollect that by genius thy house rose; by vice it ever failed to perpetuate its power. In the laws which regulate the universe, it is decreed that nothing wicked can long endure. Be wise, and let history warn thee. Thou standest on the verge of two worlds, the past and the future; and voices from either shriek omen in thy ear. I have done. I bid thee farewell!"

"Not so; thou shalt not quit these walls. I will make experiment of thy boasted power. What, ho there!--ho!"

The prince shouted; the room was filled with his minions.

"Seize that man!" he cried, pointing to the spot which had been filled by the form of Mejnour. To his inconceivable amaze and horror, the spot was vacant. The mysterious stranger had vanished like a dream; but a thin and fragrant mist undulated, in pale volumes, round the walls of

the chamber. "Look to my lord," cried Mascari. The prince had fallen to the floor insensible. For many hours he seemed in a kind of trance. When he recovered, he dismissed his attendants, and his step was heard in his chamber, pacing to and fro, with heavy and disordered strides. Not till an hour before his banquet the next day did he seem restored to his wonted self.

#### CHAPTER 3.XV.

Oime! come poss' io

Altri trovar, se me trovar non posso.--"Amint.," At. i. Sc. ii.

(Alas! how can I find another when I cannot find myself?)

The sleep of Glyndon, the night after his last interview with Zanoni, was unusually profound; and the sun streamed full upon his eyes as he opened them to the day. He rose refreshed, and with a strange sentiment of calmness that seemed more the result of resolution than exhaustion. The incidents and emotions of the past night had settled into distinct and clear impressions. He thought of them but slightly,--he thought rather of the future. He was as one of the initiated in the old Egyptian mysteries who have crossed the gate only to long more ardently for the penetralia.

He dressed himself, and was relieved to find that Mervale had joined a party of his countrymen on an excursion to Ischia. He spent the heat of noon in thoughtful solitude, and gradually the image of Viola returned to his heart. It was a holy--for it was a HUMAN--image. He had resigned her; and though he repented not, he was troubled at the thought that repentance would have come too late.

He started impatiently from his seat, and strode with rapid steps to the humble abode of the actress.

The distance was considerable, and the air oppressive. Glyndon arrived at the door breathless and heated. He knocked; no answer came. He lifted the latch and entered. He ascended the stairs; no sound, no sight of life met his ear and eye. In the front chamber, on a table, lay the guitar of the actress, and some manuscript parts in the favourite operas. He paused, and, summoning courage, tapped at the door which seemed to lead into the inner apartment. The door was ajar; and, hearing no sound within, he pushed it open. It was the sleeping-chamber of the young actress, that holiest ground to a lover; and well did the place become the presiding deity: none of the tawdry finery of the profession was visible, on the one hand; none of the slovenly disorder common to the humbler classes of the South, on the other. All was pure and simple; even the ornaments were those of an innocent refinement,--a few books, placed carefully on shelves, a few half-faded flowers in an earthen vase, which was modelled and painted in the Etruscan fashion. The sunlight streamed over the snowy draperies of the bed, and a few articles of clothing on the chair beside it. Viola was not there; but the nurse!--was she gone also? He made the house resound with the name of Gionetta, but there was not even an echo to reply. At last, as he reluctantly quitted the desolate abode, he perceived Gionetta coming towards him from the street.

The poor old woman uttered an exclamation of joy on seeing him; but, to their mutual disappointment, neither had any cheerful tidings or satisfactory explanation to afford the other. Gionetta had been aroused from her slumber the night before by the noise in the rooms below; but ere she could muster courage to descend, Viola was gone! She found the marks of violence

on the door without; and all she had since been able to learn in the neighbourhood was, that a Lazzarone, from his nocturnal resting- place on the Chiaja, had seen by the moonlight a carriage, which he recognised as belonging to the Prince di --, pass and repass that road about the first hour of morning. Glyndon, on gathering from the confused words and broken sobs of the old nurse the heads of this account, abruptly left her, and repaired to the palace of Zanoni. There he was informed that the signor was gone to the banquet of the Prince di --, and would not return till late. Glyndon stood motionless with perplexity and dismay; he knew not what to believe, or how to act. Even Mervale was not at hand to advise him. His conscience smote him bitterly. He had had the power to save the woman he had loved, and had foregone that power; but how was it that in this Zanoni himself had failed? How was it that he was gone to the very banquet of the ravisher? Could Zanoni be aware of what had passed? If not, should he lose a moment in apprising him? Though mentally irresolute, no man was more physically brave. He would repair at once to the palace of the prince himself; and if Zanoni failed in the trust he had half-appeared to arrogate, he, the humble foreigner, would demand the captive of fraud and force, in the very halls and before the assembled guests of the Prince di --.

### CHAPTER 3.XVI.

*Ardua vallatur duris sapientia scrupis.*

Hadr. Jun.,--“Emblem.” xxxvii.

(Lofty wisdom is circled round with rugged rocks.)

We must go back some hours in the progress of this narrative. It was the first faint and gradual break of the summer dawn; and two men stood in a balcony overhanging a garden fragrant with the scents of the awakening flowers. The stars had not yet left the sky,--the birds were yet silent on the boughs: all was still, hushed, and tranquil; but how different the tranquillity of reviving day from the solemn repose of night! In the music of silence there are a thousand variations. These men, who alone seemed awake in Naples, were Zanoni and the mysterious stranger who had but an hour or two ago startled the Prince di -- in his voluptuous palace.

“No,” said the latter; “hadst thou delayed the acceptance of the Arch-gift until thou hadst attained to the years, and passed through all the desolate bereavements that chilled and seared myself ere my researches had made it mine, thou wouldst have escaped the curse of which thou complainest now,--thou wouldst not have mourned over the brevity of human affection as compared to the duration of thine own existence; for thou wouldst have survived the very desire and dream of the love of woman. Brightest, and, but for that error, perhaps the loftiest, of the secret and solemn race that fills up the interval in creation between mankind and the children of the Empyrean, age after age wilt thou rue the splendid folly which made thee ask to carry the beauty and the passions of youth into the dreary grandeur of earthly immortality.”

“I do not repent, nor shall I,” answered Zanoni. “The transport and the sorrow, so wildly blended, which have at intervals diversified my doom, are better than the calm and bloodless tenor of thy solitary way--thou, who lovest nothing, hatest nothing, feelest nothing, and walkest the world with the noiseless and joyless footsteps of a dream!”

“You mistake,” replied he who had owned the name of Mejnour,-- “though I care not for love, and am dead to every PASSION that agitates the sons of clay, I am not dead to their more serene

enjoyments. I carry down the stream of the countless years, not the turbulent desires of youth, but the calm and spiritual delights of age. Wisely and deliberately I abandoned youth forever when I separated my lot from men. Let us not envy or reproach each other. I would have saved this Neapolitan, Zanoni (since so it now pleases thee to be called), partly because his grandsire was but divided by the last airy barrier from our own brotherhood, partly because I know that in the man himself lurk the elements of ancestral courage and power, which in earlier life would have fitted him for one of us. Earth holds but few to whom Nature has given the qualities that can bear the ordeal. But time and excess, that have quickened his grosser senses, have blunted his imagination. I relinquish him to his doom.”

“And still, then, Mejnour, you cherish the desire to revive our order, limited now to ourselves alone, by new converts and allies. Surely--surely--thy experience might have taught thee, that scarcely once in a thousand years is born the being who can pass through the horrible gates that lead into the worlds without! Is not thy path already strewn with thy victims? Do not their ghastly faces of agony and fear--the blood-stained suicide, the raving maniac--rise before thee, and warn what is yet left to thee of human sympathy from thy insane ambition?”

“Nay,” answered Mejnour; “have I not had success to counterbalance failure? And can I forego this lofty and august hope, worthy alone of our high condition,--the hope to form a mighty and numerous race with a force and power sufficient to permit them to acknowledge to mankind their majestic conquests and dominion, to become the true lords of this planet, invaders, perchance, of others, masters of the inimical and malignant tribes by which at this moment we are surrounded: a race that may proceed, in their deathless destinies, from stage to stage of celestial glory, and rank at last amongst the nearest ministrants and agents gathered round the Throne of Thrones? What matter a thousand victims for one convert to our band? And you, Zanoni,” continued Mejnour, after a pause,--“you, even you, should this affection for a mortal beauty that you have dared, despite yourself, to cherish, be more than a passing fancy; should it, once admitted into your inmost nature, partake of its bright and enduring essence,--even you may brave all things to raise the beloved one into your equal. Nay, interrupt me not. Can you see sickness menace her; danger hover around; years creep on; the eyes grow dim; the beauty fade, while the heart, youthful still, clings and fastens round your own,--can you see this, and know it is yours to--”

“Cease!” cried Zanoni, fiercely. “What is all other fate as compared to the death of terror? What, when the coldest sage, the most heated enthusiast, the hardiest warrior with his nerves of iron, have been found dead in their beds, with straining eyeballs and horrent hair, at the first step of the Dread Progress,--thinkest thou that this weak woman--from whose cheek a sound at the window, the screech of the night-owl, the sight of a drop of blood on a man’s sword, would start the colour--could brave one glance of--Away! the very thought of such sights for her makes even myself a coward!”

“When you told her you loved her,--when you clasped her to your breast, you renounced all power to foresee her future lot, or protect her from harm. Henceforth to her you are human, and human only. How know you, then, to what you may be tempted; how know you what her curiosity may learn and her courage brave? But enough of this,--you are bent on your pursuit?”

“The fiat has gone forth.”

“And to-morrow?”

“To-morrow, at this hour, our bark will be bounding over yonder ocean, and the weight of ages will have fallen from my heart! I compassionate thee, O foolish sage,--THOU hast given up THY youth!”

## CHAPTER 3.XVII.

Alch: Thou always speakest riddles. Tell me if thou art that fountain of which Bernard Lord Trevizan writ?

Merc: I am not that fountain, but I am the water. The fountain compasseth me about.-- Sandivogius, "New Light of Alchymy."

The Prince di -- was not a man whom Naples could suppose to be addicted to superstitious fancies. Still, in the South of Italy, there was then, and there still lingers a certain spirit of credulity, which may, ever and anon, be visible amidst the boldest dogmas of their philosophers and sceptics. In his childhood, the prince had learned strange tales of the ambition, the genius, and the career of his grandsire,--and secretly, perhaps influenced by ancestral example, in earlier youth he himself had followed science, not only through her legitimate course, but her antiquated and erratic windings. I have, indeed, been shown in Naples a little volume, blazoned with the arms of the Visconti, and ascribed to the nobleman I refer to, which treats of alchemy in a spirit half-mocking and half-reverential.

Pleasure soon distracted him from such speculations, and his talents, which were unquestionably great, were wholly perverted to extravagant intrigues, or to the embellishment of a gorgeous ostentation with something of classic grace. His immense wealth, his imperious pride, his unscrupulous and daring character, made him an object of no inconsiderable fear to a feeble and timid court; and the ministers of the indolent government willingly connived at excesses which allured him at least from ambition. The strange visit and yet more strange departure of Mejnour filled the breast of the Neapolitan with awe and wonder, against which all the haughty arrogance and learned scepticism of his maturer manhood combated in vain. The apparition of Mejnour served, indeed, to invest Zanoni with a character in which the prince had not hitherto regarded him. He felt a strange alarm at the rival he had braved,--at the foe he had provoked. When, a little before his banquet, he had resumed his self-possession, it was with a fell and gloomy resolution that he brooded over the perfidious schemes he had previously formed. He felt as if the death of the mysterious Zanoni were necessary for the preservation of his own life; and if at an earlier period of their rivalry he had determined on the fate of Zanoni, the warnings of Mejnour only served to confirm his resolve.

"We will try if his magic can invent an antidote to the bane," said he, half-aloud, and with a stern smile, as he summoned Mascari to his presence. The poison which the prince, with his own hands, mixed into the wine intended for his guest, was compounded from materials, the secret of which had been one of the proudest heir-looms of that able and evil race which gave to Italy her wisest and guiltiest tyrants. Its operation was quick yet not sudden: it produced no pain,--it left on the form no grim convulsion, on the skin no purpling spot, to arouse suspicion; you might have cut and carved every membrane and fibre of the corpse, but the sharpest eyes of the leech would not have detected the presence of the subtle life-queller. For twelve hours the victim felt nothing save a joyous and elated exhilaration of the blood; a delicious languor followed, the sure forerunner of apoplexy. No lancet then could save! Apoplexy had run much in the families of the enemies of the Visconti!

The hour of the feast arrived,--the guests assembled. There were the flower of the Neapolitan seignorie, the descendants of the Norman, the Teuton, the Goth; for Naples had then a nobility, but derived it from the North, which has indeed been the Nutrix Leonum,--the nurse of the lion-hearted chivalry of the world.

Last of the guests came Zaroni; and the crowd gave way as the dazzling foreigner moved along to the lord of the palace. The prince greeted him with a meaning smile, to which Zaroni answered by a whisper, "He who plays with loaded dice does not always win."

The prince bit his lip, and Zaroni, passing on, seemed deep in conversation with the fawning Mascari.

"Who is the prince's heir?" asked the guest.

"A distant relation on the mother's side; with his Excellency dies the male line."

"Is the heir present at our host's banquet?"

"No; they are not friends."

"No matter; he will be here to-morrow."

Mascari stared in surprise; but the signal for the banquet was given, and the guests were marshalled to the board. As was the custom then, the feast took place not long after mid-day. It was a long, oval hall, the whole of one side opening by a marble colonnade upon a court or garden, in which the eye rested gratefully upon cool fountains and statues of whitest marble, half-sheltered by orange-trees. Every art that luxury could invent to give freshness and coolness to the languid and breezeless heat of the day without (a day on which the breath of the sirocco was abroad) had been called into existence. Artificial currents of air through invisible tubes, silken blinds waving to and fro, as if to cheat the senses into the belief of an April wind, and miniature jets d'eau in each corner of the apartment, gave to the Italians the same sense of exhilaration and COMFORT (if I may use the word) which the well-drawn curtains and the blazing hearth afford to the children of colder climes.

The conversation was somewhat more lively and intellectual than is common amongst the languid pleasure-hunters of the South; for the prince, himself accomplished, sought his acquaintance not only amongst the beaux esprits of his own country, but amongst the gay foreigners who adorned and relieved the monotony of the Neapolitan circles. There were present two or three of the brilliant Frenchmen of the old regime, who had already emigrated from the advancing Revolution; and their peculiar turn of thought and wit was well calculated for the meridian of a society that made the dolce far niente at once its philosophy and its faith. The prince, however, was more silent than usual; and when he sought to rouse himself, his spirits were forced and exaggerated. To the manners of his host, those of Zaroni afforded a striking contrast. The bearing of this singular person was at all times characterised by a calm and polished ease, which was attributed by the courtiers to the long habit of society. He could scarcely be called gay; yet few persons more tended to animate the general spirits of a convivial circle. He seemed, by a kind of intuition, to elicit from each companion the qualities in which he most excelled; and if occasionally a certain tone of latent mockery characterised his remarks upon the topics on which the conversation fell, it appeared to men who took nothing in earnest to be the language both of wit and wisdom. To the Frenchmen, in particular, there was something startling in his intimate knowledge of the minutest events in their own capital and country, and his profound penetration (evinced but in epigrams and sarcasms) into the eminent characters who were then playing a part upon the great stage of continental intrigue.

It was while this conversation grew animated, and the feast was at its height, that Glyndon arrived at the palace. The porter, perceiving by his dress that he was not one of the invited

guests, told him that his Excellency was engaged, and on no account could be disturbed; and Glyndon then, for the first time, became aware how strange and embarrassing was the duty he had taken on himself. To force an entrance into the banquet-hall of a great and powerful noble, surrounded by the rank of Naples, and to arraign him for what to his boon-companions would appear but an act of gallantry, was an exploit that could not fail to be at once ludicrous and impotent. He mused a moment, and, slipping a piece of gold into the porter's hand, said that he was commissioned to seek the Signor Zanoni upon an errand of life and death, and easily won his way across the court, and into the interior building. He passed up the broad staircase, and the voices and merriment of the revellers smote his ear at a distance. At the entrance of the reception-rooms he found a page, whom he despatched with a message to Zanoni. The page did the errand; and Zanoni, on hearing the whispered name of Glyndon, turned to his host.

"Pardon me, my lord; an English friend of mine, the Signor Glyndon (not unknown by name to your Excellency) waits without,-- the business must indeed be urgent on which he has sought me in such an hour. You will forgive my momentary absence."

"Nay, signor," answered the prince, courteously, but with a sinister smile on his countenance, "would it not be better for your friend to join us? An Englishman is welcome everywhere; and even were he a Dutchman, your friendship would invest his presence with attraction. Pray his attendance; we would not spare you even for a moment."

Zanoni bowed; the page was despatched with all flattering messages to Glyndon,--a seat next to Zanoni was placed for him, and the young Englishman entered.

"You are most welcome, sir. I trust your business to our illustrious guest is of good omen and pleasant import. If you bring evil news, defer it, I pray you."

Glyndon's brow was sullen; and he was about to startle the guests by his reply, when Zanoni, touching his arm significantly, whispered in English, "I know why you have sought me. Be silent, and witness what ensues."

"You know then that Viola, whom you boasted you had the power to save from danger--"

"Is in this house!--yes. I know also that Murder sits at the right hand of our host. But his fate is now separated from hers forever; and the mirror which glasses it to my eye is clear through the streams of blood. Be still, and learn the fate that awaits the wicked!"

"My lord," said Zanoni, speaking aloud, "the Signor Glyndon has indeed brought me tidings not wholly unexpected. I am compelled to leave Naples,--an additional motive to make the most of the present hour."

"And what, if I may venture to ask, may be the cause that brings such affliction on the fair dames of Naples?"

"It is the approaching death of one who honoured me with most loyal friendship," replied Zanoni, gravely. "Let us not speak of it; grief cannot put back the dial. As we supply by new flowers those that fade in our vases, so it is the secret of worldly wisdom to replace by fresh friendships those that fade from our path."

"True philosophy!" exclaimed the prince. "'Not to admire,' was the Roman's maxim; 'Never to mourn,' is mine. There is nothing in life to grieve for, save, indeed, Signor Zanoni, when some young beauty, on whom we have set our hearts, slips from our grasp. In such a moment we have need of all our wisdom, not to succumb to despair, and shake hands with death. What say you, signor? You smile! Such never could be your lot. Pledge me in a sentiment, 'Long life to the fortunate lover,--a quick release to the baffled suitor'?"

"I pledge you," said Zanoni; and, as the fatal wine was poured into his glass, he repeated, fixing his eyes on the prince, "I pledge you even in this wine!"

He lifted the glass to his lips. The prince seemed ghastly pale, while the gaze of his guest bent upon him, with an intent and stern brightness, beneath which the conscience-stricken host cowered and quailed. Not till he had drained his draft, and replaced the glass upon the board, did Zanoni turn his eyes from the prince; and he then said, "Your wine has been kept too long; it has lost its virtues. It might disagree with many, but do not fear: it will not harm me, prince, Signor Mascari, you are a judge of the grape; will you favour us with your opinion?"

"Nay," answered Mascari, with well-affected composure, "I like not the wines of Cyprus; they are heating. Perhaps Signor Glyndon may not have the same distaste? The English are said to love their potations warm and pungent."

"Do you wish my friend also to taste the wine, prince?" said Zanoni. "Recollect, all cannot drink it with the same impunity as myself."

"No," said the prince, hastily; "if you do not recommend the wine, Heaven forbid that we should constrain our guests! My lord duke," turning to one of the Frenchmen, "yours is the true soil of Bacchus. What think you of this cask from Burgundy? Has it borne the journey?"

"Ah," said Zanoni, "let us change both the wine and the theme."

With that, Zanoni grew yet more animated and brilliant. Never did wit more sparkling, airy, exhilarating, flash from the lips of reveller. His spirits fascinated all present--even the prince himself, even Glyndon--with a strange and wild contagion. The former, indeed, whom the words and gaze of Zanoni, when he drained the poison, had filled with fearful misgivings, now hailed in the brilliant eloquence of his wit a certain sign of the operation of the bane. The wine circulated fast; but none seemed conscious of its effects. One by one the rest of the party fell into a charmed and spellbound silence, as Zanoni continued to pour forth sally upon sally, tale upon tale. They hung on his words, they almost held their breath to listen. Yet, how bitter was his mirth; how full of contempt for the triflers present, and for the trifles which made their life!

Night came on; the room grew dim, and the feast had lasted several hours longer than was the customary duration of similar entertainments at that day. Still the guests stirred not, and still Zanoni continued, with glittering eye and mocking lip, to lavish his stores of intellect and anecdote; when suddenly the moon rose, and shed its rays over the flowers and fountains in the court without, leaving the room itself half in shadow, and half tinged by a quiet and ghostly light.

It was then that Zanoni rose. "Well, gentlemen," said he, "we have not yet wearied our host, I hope; and his garden offers a new temptation to protract our stay. Have you no musicians among your train, prince, that might regale our ears while we inhale the fragrance of your orange-trees?"

"An excellent thought!" said the prince. "Mascari, see to the music."

The party rose simultaneously to adjourn to the garden; and then, for the first time, the effect of the wine they had drunk seemed to make itself felt.

With flushed cheeks and unsteady steps they came into the open air, which tended yet more to stimulate that glowing fever of the grape. As if to make up for the silence with which the guests had hitherto listened to Zanoni, every tongue was now loosened,-- every man talked, no man listened. There was something wild and fearful in the contrast between the calm beauty of the night and scene, and the hubbub and clamour of these disorderly roysters. One of the Frenchmen, in especial, the young Duc de R--, a nobleman of the highest rank, and of all the quick, vivacious, and irascible temperament of his countrymen, was particularly noisy and excited. And as circumstances, the remembrance of which is still preserved among certain circles of Naples, rendered it afterwards necessary that the duc should himself give evidence of what occurred, I will here translate the short account he drew up, and which was kindly submitted to me some few years ago by my accomplished and lively friend, Il Cavaliere di B--.

“I never remember,” writes the duc, “to have felt my spirits so excited as on that evening; we were like so many boys released from school, jostling each other as we reeled or ran down the flight of seven or eight stairs that led from the colonnade into the garden,--some laughing, some whooping, some scolding, some babbling. The wine had brought out, as it were, each man’s inmost character. Some were loud and quarrelsome, others sentimental and whining; some, whom we had hitherto thought dull, most mirthful; some, whom we had ever regarded as discreet and taciturn, most garrulous and uproarious. I remember that in the midst of our clamorous gayety, my eye fell upon the cavalier Signor Zanoni, whose conversation had so enchanted us all; and I felt a certain chill come over me to perceive that he wore the same calm and unsympathising smile upon his countenance which had characterised it in his singular and curious stories of the court of Louis XIV. I felt, indeed, half-inclined to seek a quarrel with one whose composure was almost an insult to our disorder. Nor was such an effect of this irritating and mocking tranquillity confined to myself alone. Several of the party have told me since, that on looking at Zanoni they felt their blood yet more heated, and gayety change to resentment. There seemed in his icy smile a very charm to wound vanity and provoke rage. It was at this moment that the prince came up to me, and, passing his arm into mine, led me a little apart from the rest. He had certainly indulged in the same excess as ourselves, but it did not produce the same effect of noisy excitement. There was, on the contrary, a certain cold arrogance and supercilious scorn in his bearing and language, which, even while affecting so much caressing courtesy towards me, roused my self-love against him. He seemed as if Zanoni had infected him; and in imitating the manner of his guest, he surpassed the original. He rallied me on some court gossip, which had honoured my name by associating it with a certain beautiful and distinguished Sicilian lady, and affected to treat with contempt that which, had it been true, I should have regarded as a boast. He spoke, indeed, as if he himself had gathered all the flowers of Naples, and left us foreigners only the gleanings he had scorned. At this my natural and national gallantry was piqued, and I retorted by some sarcasms that I should certainly have spared had my blood been cooler. He laughed heartily, and left me in a strange fit of resentment and anger. Perhaps (I must own the truth) the wine had produced in me a wild disposition to take offence and provoke quarrel. As the prince left me, I turned, and saw Zanoni at my side.

“‘The prince is a braggart,’ said he, with the same smile that displeased me before. ‘He would monopolize all fortune and all love. Let us take our revenge.’

“‘And how?’

“‘He has at this moment, in his house, the most enchanting singer in Naples,--the celebrated Viola Pisani. She is here, it is true, not by her own choice; he carried her hither by force, but he will pretend that she adores him. Let us insist on his producing this secret treasure, and when she enters, the Duc de R-- can have no doubt that his flatteries and attentions will charm the lady, and provoke all the jealous fears of our host. It would be a fair revenge upon his imperious self-conceit.’

“This suggestion delighted me. I hastened to the prince. At that instant the musicians had just commenced; I waved my hand, ordered the music to stop, and, addressing the prince, who was standing in the centre of one of the gayest groups, complained of his want of hospitality in affording to us such poor proficient in the art, while he reserved for his own solace the lute and voice of the first performer in Naples. I demanded, half-laughingly, half-seriously, that he should produce the Pisani. My demand was received with shouts of applause by the rest. We drowned the replies of our host with uproar, and would hear no denial. ‘Gentlemen,’ at last said the prince, when he could obtain an audience, ‘even were I to assent to your proposal, I could not

induce the signora to present herself before an assemblage as riotous as they are noble. You have too much chivalry to use compulsion with her, though the Duc de R-- forgets himself sufficiently to administer it to me.'

'I was stung by this taunt, however well deserved. 'Prince,' said I, 'I have for the indelicacy of compulsion so illustrious an example that I cannot hesitate to pursue the path honoured by your own footsteps. All Naples knows that the Pisani despises at once your gold and your love; that force alone could have brought her under your roof; and that you refuse to produce her, because you fear her complaints, and know enough of the chivalry your vanity sneers at to feel assured that the gentlemen of France are not more disposed to worship beauty than to defend it from wrong.'

“‘You speak well, sir,’ said Zanoni, gravely. ‘The prince dares not produce his prize!’

“The prince remained speechless for a few moments, as if with indignation. At last he broke out into expressions the most injurious and insulting against Signor Zanoni and myself. Zanoni replied not; I was more hot and hasty. The guests appeared to delight in our dispute. None, except Mascari, whom we pushed aside and disdained to hear, strove to conciliate; some took one side, some another. The issue may be well foreseen. Swords were called for and procured. Two were offered me by one of the party. I was about to choose one, when Zanoni placed in my hand the other, which, from its hilt, appeared of antiquated workmanship. At the same moment, looking towards the prince, he said, smilingly, ‘The duc takes your grandsire’s sword. Prince, you are too brave a man for superstition; you have forgot the forfeit!’ Our host seemed to me to recoil and turn pale at those words; nevertheless, he returned Zanoni’s smile with a look of defiance. The next moment all was broil and disorder. There might be some six or eight persons engaged in a strange and confused kind of melee, but the prince and myself only sought each other. The noise around us, the confusion of the guests, the cries of the musicians, the clash of our own swords, only served to stimulate our unhappy fury. We feared to be interrupted by the attendants, and fought like madmen, without skill or method. I thrust and parried mechanically, blind and frantic, as if a demon had entered into me, till I saw the prince stretched at my feet, bathed in his blood, and Zanoni bending over him, and whispering in his ear. That sight cooled us all. The strife ceased; we gathered, in shame, remorse, and horror, round our ill-fated host; but it was too late,—his eyes rolled fearfully in his head. I have seen many men die, but never one who wore such horror on his countenance. At last all was over! Zanoni rose from the corpse, and, taking, with great composure, the sword from my hand, said calmly, ‘Ye are witnesses, gentlemen, that the prince brought his fate upon himself. The last of that illustrious house has perished in a brawl.’

“I saw no more of Zanoni. I hastened to our envoy to narrate the event, and abide the issue. I am grateful to the Neapolitan government, and to the illustrious heir of the unfortunate nobleman, for the lenient and generous, yet just, interpretation put upon a misfortune the memory of which will afflict me to the last hour of my life. (Signed) “Louis Victor, Duc de R.”

In the above memorial, the reader will find the most exact and minute account yet given of an event which created the most lively sensation at Naples in that day.

Glyndon had taken no part in the affray, neither had he participated largely in the excesses of the revel. For his exemption from both he was perhaps indebted to the whispered exhortations of Zanoni. When the last rose from the corpse, and withdrew from that scene of confusion, Glyndon remarked that in passing the crowd he touched Mascari on the shoulder, and said something which the Englishman did not overhear. Glyndon followed Zanoni into the banquet-

room, which, save where the moonlight slept on the marble floor, was wrapped in the sad and gloomy shadows of the advancing night.

“How could you foretell this fearful event? He fell not by your arm!” said Glyndon, in a tremulous and hollow tone.

“The general who calculates on the victory does not fight in person,” answered Zanoni; “let the past sleep with the dead. Meet me at midnight by the sea-shore, half a mile to the left of your hotel. You will know the spot by a rude pillar--the only one near--to which a broken chain is attached. There and then, if thou wouldst learn our lore, thou shalt find the master. Go; I have business here yet. Remember, Viola is still in the house of the dead man!”

Here Mascari approached, and Zanoni, turning to the Italian, and waving his hand to Glyndon, drew the former aside. Glyndon slowly departed.

“Mascari,” said Zanoni, “your patron is no more; your services will be valueless to his heir,--a sober man whom poverty has preserved from vice. For yourself, thank me that I do not give you up to the executioner; recollect the wine of Cyprus. Well, never tremble, man; it could not act on me, though it might react on others; in that it is a common type of crime. I forgive you; and if the wine should kill me, I promise you that my ghost shall not haunt so worshipful a penitent. Enough of this; conduct me to the chamber of Viola Pisani. You have no further need of her. The death of the jailer opens the cell of the captive. Be quick; I would be gone.”

Mascari muttered some inaudible words, bowed low, and led the way to the chamber in which Viola was confined.

### CHAPTER 3.XVIII.

Merc: Tell me, therefore, what thou seekest after, and what thou wilt have. What dost thou desire to make?

Alch: The Philosopher's Stone.--Sandivogius.

It wanted several minutes of midnight, and Glyndon repaired to the appointed spot. The mysterious empire which Zanoni had acquired over him, was still more solemnly confirmed by the events of the last few hours; the sudden fate of the prince, so deliberately foreshadowed, and yet so seemingly accidental, brought out by causes the most commonplace, and yet associated with words the most prophetic, impressed him with the deepest sentiments of admiration and awe. It was as if this dark and wondrous being could convert the most ordinary events and the meanest instruments into the agencies of his inscrutable will; yet, if so, why have permitted the capture of Viola? Why not have prevented the crime rather than punish the criminal? And did Zanoni really feel love for Viola? Love, and yet offer to resign her to himself,--to a rival whom his arts could not have failed to baffle. He no longer reverted to the belief that Zanoni or Viola had sought to dupe him into marriage. His fear and reverence for the former now forbade the notion of so poor an imposture. Did he any longer love Viola himself? No; when that morning he had heard of her danger, he had, it is true, returned to the sympathies and the fears of affection; but with the death of the prince her image faded from his heart, and he felt no jealous pang at the thought that she had been saved by Zanoni,-- that at that moment she was perhaps beneath his roof. Whoever has, in the course of his life, indulged the absorbing passion of the gamester, will remember how all other pursuits and objects vanished from his mind; how solely

he was wrapped in the one wild delusion; with what a sceptre of magic power the despot-demon ruled every feeling and every thought. Far more intense than the passion of the gamester was the frantic yet sublime desire that mastered the breast of Glyndon. He would be the rival of Zanoni, not in human and perishable affections, but in preternatural and eternal lore. He would have laid down life with content--nay, rapture--as the price of learning those solemn secrets which separated the stranger from mankind. Enamoured of the goddess of goddesses, he stretched forth his arms--the wild Ixion--and embraced a cloud!

The night was most lovely and serene, and the waves scarcely rippled at his feet as the Englishman glided on by the cool and starry beach. At length he arrived at the spot, and there, leaning against the broken pillar, he beheld a man wrapped in a long mantle, and in an attitude of profound repose. He approached, and uttered the name of Zanoni. The figure turned, and he saw the face of a stranger: a face not stamped by the glorious beauty of Zanoni, but equally majestic in its aspect, and perhaps still more impressive from the mature age and the passionless depth of thought that characterised the expanded forehead, and deep-set but piercing eyes.

"You seek Zanoni," said the stranger; "he will be here anon; but, perhaps, he whom you see before you is more connected with your destiny, and more disposed to realise your dreams."

"Hath the earth, then, another Zanoni?"

"If not," replied the stranger, "why do you cherish the hope and the wild faith to be yourself a Zanoni? Think you that none others have burned with the same godlike dream? Who, indeed in his first youth,--youth when the soul is nearer to the heaven from which it sprang, and its divine and primal longings are not all effaced by the sordid passions and petty cares that are begot in time,--who is there in youth that has not nourished the belief that the universe has secrets not known to the common herd, and panted, as the hart for the water-springs, for the fountains that lie hid and far away amidst the broad wilderness of trackless science? The music of the fountain is heard in the soul WITHIN, till the steps, deceived and erring, rove away from its waters, and the wanderer dies in the mighty desert. Think you that none who have cherished the hope have found the truth, or that the yearning after the Ineffable Knowledge was given to us utterly in vain? No! Every desire in human hearts is but a glimpse of things that exist, alike distant and divine. No! in the world there have been from age to age some brighter and happier spirits who have attained to the air in which the beings above mankind move and breathe. Zanoni, great though he be, stands not alone. He has had his predecessors, and long lines of successors may be yet to come."

"And will you tell me," said Glyndon, "that in yourself I behold one of that mighty few over whom Zanoni has no superiority in power and wisdom?"

"In me," answered the stranger, "you see one from whom Zanoni himself learned some of his loftiest secrets. On these shores, on this spot, have I stood in ages that your chroniclers but feebly reach. The Phoenician, the Greek, the Oscan, the Roman, the Lombard, I have seen them all!--leaves gay and glittering on the trunk of the universal life, scattered in due season and again renewed; till, indeed, the same race that gave its glory to the ancient world bestowed a second youth upon the new. For the pure Greeks, the Hellenes, whose origin has bewildered your dreaming scholars, were of the same great family as the Norman tribe, born to be the lords of the universe, and in no land on earth destined to become the hewers of wood. Even the dim traditions of the learned, which bring the sons of Hellas from the vast and undetermined territories of Northern Thrace, to be the victors of the pastoral Pelasgi, and the founders of the line of demi-gods; which assign to a population bronzed beneath the suns of the West, the blue-eyed Minerva and the yellow-haired Achilles (physical characteristics of the North); which

introduce, amongst a pastoral people, warlike aristocracies and limited monarchies, the feudalism of the classic time,--even these might serve you to trace back the primeval settlements of the Hellenes to the same region whence, in later times, the Norman warriors broke on the dull and savage hordes of the Celt, and became the Greeks of the Christian world. But this interests you not, and you are wise in your indifference. Not in the knowledge of things without, but in the perfection of the soul within, lies the empire of man aspiring to be more than man.”

“And what books contain that science; from what laboratory is it wrought?”

“Nature supplies the materials; they are around you in your daily walks. In the herbs that the beast devours and the chemist disdains to cull; in the elements from which matter in its meanest and its mightiest shapes is deduced; in the wide bosom of the air; in the black abysses of the earth; everywhere are given to mortals the resources and libraries of immortal lore. But as the simplest problems in the simplest of all studies are obscure to one who braces not his mind to their comprehension; as the rower in yonder vessel cannot tell you why two circles can touch each other only in one point,--so though all earth were carved over and inscribed with the letters of diviner knowledge, the characters would be valueless to him who does not pause to inquire the language and meditate the truth. Young man, if thy imagination is vivid, if thy heart is daring, if thy curiosity is insatiate, I will accept thee as my pupil. But the first lessons are stern and dread.”

“If thou hast mastered them, why not I?” answered Glyndon, boldly. “I have felt from my boyhood that strange mysteries were reserved for my career; and from the proudest ends of ordinary ambition I have carried my gaze into the cloud and darkness that stretch beyond. The instant I beheld Zanoni, I felt as if I had discovered the guide and the tutor for which my youth had idly languished and vainly burned.”

“And to me his duty is transferred,” replied the stranger. “Yonder lies, anchored in the bay, the vessel in which Zanoni seeks a fairer home; a little while and the breeze will rise, the sail will swell; and the stranger will have passed, like a wind, away. Still, like the wind, he leaves in thy heart the seeds that may bear the blossom and the fruit. Zanoni hath performed his task,--he is wanted no more; the perfecter of his work is at thy side. He comes! I hear the dash of the oar. You will have your choice submitted to you. According as you decide we shall meet again.” With these words the stranger moved slowly away, and disappeared beneath the shadow of the cliffs. A boat glided rapidly across the waters: it touched land; a man leaped on shore, and Glyndon recognised Zanoni.

“I give thee, Glyndon,--I give thee no more the option of happy love and serene enjoyment. That hour is past, and fate has linked the hand that might have been thine own to mine. But I have ample gifts to bestow upon thee, if thou wilt abandon the hope that gnaws thy heart, and the realisation of which even I have not the power to foresee. Be thine ambition human, and I can gratify it to the full. Men desire four things in life,-- love, wealth, fame, power. The first I cannot give thee, the rest are at my disposal. Select which of them thou wilt, and let us part in peace.”

“Such are not the gifts I covet. I choose knowledge; that knowledge must be thine own. For this, and for this alone, I surrendered the love of Viola; this, and this alone, must be my recompense.”

“I cannot gain say thee, though I can warn. The desire to learn does not always contain the faculty to acquire. I can give thee, it is true, the teacher,--the rest must depend on thee. Be wise in time, and take that which I can assure to thee.”

“Answer me but these questions, and according to your answer I will decide. Is it in the power of man to attain intercourse with the beings of other worlds? Is it in the power of man to influence the elements, and to insure life against the sword and against disease?”

“All this may be possible,” answered Zanoni, evasively, “to the few; but for one who attains such secrets, millions may perish in the attempt.”

“One question more. Thou--”

“Beware! Of myself, as I have said before, I render no account.”

“Well, then, the stranger I have met this night,--are his boasts to be believed? Is he in truth one of the chosen seers whom you allow to have mastered the mysteries I yearn to fathom?”

“Rash man,” said Zanoni, in a tone of compassion, “thy crisis is past, and thy choice made! I can only bid thee be bold and prosper; yes, I resign thee to a master who HAS the power and the will to open to thee the gates of an awful world. Thy weal or woe are as nought in the eyes of his relentless wisdom. I would bid him spare thee, but he will heed me not. Mejnour, receive thy pupil!” Glyndon turned, and his heart beat when he perceived that the stranger, whose footsteps he had not heard upon the pebbles, whose approach he had not beheld in the moonlight, was once more by his side.

“Farewell,” resumed Zanoni; “thy trial commences. When next we meet, thou wilt be the victim or the victor.”

Glyndon’s eyes followed the receding form of the mysterious stranger. He saw him enter the boat, and he then for the first time noticed that besides the rowers there was a female, who stood up as Zanoni gained the boat. Even at the distance he recognised the once-adored form of Viola. She waved her hand to him, and across the still and shining air came her voice, mournfully and sweetly, in her mother’s tongue, “Farewell, Clarence,--I forgive thee!--farewell, farewell!”

He strove to answer; but the voice touched a chord at his heart, and the words failed him. Viola was then lost forever, gone with this dread stranger; darkness was round her lot! And he himself had decided her fate and his own! The boat bounded on, the soft waves flashed and sparkled beneath the oars, and it was along one sapphire track of moonlight that the frail vessel bore away the lovers. Farther and farther from his gaze sped the boat, till at last the speck, scarcely visible, touched the side of the ship that lay lifeless in the glorious bay. At that instant, as if by magic, up sprang, with a glad murmur, the playful and freshening wind: and Glyndon turned to Mejnour and broke the silence.

“Tell me--if thou canst read the future--tell me that HER lot will be fair, and that HER choice at least is wise?”

“My pupil!” answered Mejnour, in a voice the calmness of which well accorded with the chilling words, “thy first task must be to withdraw all thought, feeling, sympathy from others. The elementary stage of knowledge is to make self, and self alone, thy study and thy world. Thou hast decided thine own career; thou hast renounced love; thou hast rejected wealth, fame, and the vulgar pomps of power. What, then, are all mankind to thee? To perfect thy faculties, and concentrate thy emotions, is henceforth thy only aim!”

“And will happiness be the end?”

“If happiness exist,” answered Mejnour, “it must be centred in a SELF to which all passion is unknown. But happiness is the last state of being; and as yet thou art on the threshold of the first.”

As Mejnour spoke, the distant vessel spread its sails to the wind, and moved slowly along the deep. Glyndon sighed, and the pupil and the master retraced their steps towards the city.