



confidence I give it, when I ask you, whether you are conscious of being the same estimable Valancourt—whom I once loved.'

'Once loved!' cried he,—'the same—the same!' He paused in extreme emotion, and then added, in a voice at once solemn, and dejected,— 'No—I am not the same!—I am lost—I am no longer worthy of you!'

He again concealed his face. Emily was too much affected by this honest confession to reply immediately, and, while she struggled to overcome the pleadings of her heart, and to act with the decisive firmness, which was necessary for her future peace, she perceived all the danger of trusting long to her resolution, in the presence of Valancourt, and was anxious to conclude an interview, that tortured them both; yet, when she considered, that this was probably their last meeting, her fortitude sunk at once, and she experienced only emotions of tenderness and of despondency.

Valancourt, meanwhile, lost in emotions of remorse and grief, which he had neither the power, or the will to express, sat insensible almost of the presence of Emily, his features still concealed, and his breast agitated by convulsive sighs.

'Spare me the necessity,' said Emily, recollecting her fortitude, 'spare me the necessity of mentioning those circumstances of your conduct, which oblige me to break our connection forever.—We must part, I now see you for the last time.'

'Impossible!' cried Valancourt, roused from his deep silence, 'You cannot mean what you say!—you cannot mean to throw me from you forever!'

'We must part,' repeated Emily, with emphasis,—'and that forever! Your own conduct has made this necessary.'

'This is the Count's determination,' said he haughtily, 'not yours, and I shall enquire by what authority he interferes between us.' He now rose, and walked about the room in great emotion.

'Let me save you from this error,' said Emily, not less agitated—'it is my determination, and, if you reflect a moment on your late conduct, you will perceive, that my future peace requires it.'

'Your future peace requires, that we should part—part forever!' said Valancourt, 'How little did I ever expect to hear you say so!'

'And how little did I expect, that it would be necessary for me to say so!' rejoined Emily, while her voice softened into tenderness, and her tears flowed again.—'That you—you, Valancourt, would ever fall from my esteem!'

He was silent a moment, as if overwhelmed by the consciousness of no longer deserving this esteem, as well as the certainty of having lost it, and then, with impassioned grief, lamented the criminality of his late conduct and the misery to which it had reduced him, till, overcome by a recollection of the past and a conviction of the future, he burst into tears, and uttered only deep and broken sighs.

The remorse he had expressed, and the distress he suffered could not be witnessed by Emily with indifference, and, had she not called to her recollection all the circumstances, of which Count De Villefort had informed her, and all he had said of the danger of confiding in repentance, formed under the influence of passion, she might perhaps have trusted to the assurances of her heart, and have forgotten his misconduct in the tenderness, which that repentance excited.

Valancourt, returning to the chair beside her, at length, said, in a calm voice, 'tis true, I am fallen—fallen from my own esteem! but could you, Emily, so soon, so suddenly resign, if you had not before ceased to love me, or, if your conduct was not governed by the designs, I will say, the selfish designs of another person! Would you not otherwise be willing to hope for my

reformation—and could you bear, by estranging me from you, to abandon me to misery—to myself!’—Emily wept aloud.—’No, Emily—no—you would not do this, if you still loved me. You would find your own happiness in saving mine.’

‘There are too many probabilities against that hope,’ said Emily, ‘to justify me in trusting the comfort of my whole life to it. May I not also ask, whether you could wish me to do this, if you really loved me?’

‘Really loved you!’ exclaimed Valancourt—’is it possible you can doubt my love! Yet it is reasonable, that you should do so, since you see, that I am less ready to suffer the horror of parting with you, than that of involving you in my ruin. Yes, Emily—I am ruined—irreparably ruined—I am involved in debts, which I can never discharge!’ Valancourt’s look, which was wild, as he spoke this, soon settled into an expression of gloomy despair; and Emily, while she was compelled to admire his sincerity, saw, with unutterable anguish, new reasons for fear in the suddenness of his feelings and the extent of the misery, in which they might involve him. After some minutes, she seemed to contend against her grief and to struggle for fortitude to conclude the interview. ‘I will not prolong these moments,’ said she, ‘by a conversation, which can answer no good purpose. Valancourt, farewell!’

‘You are not going?’ said he, wildly interrupting her—’You will not leave me thus—you will not abandon me even before my mind has suggested any possibility of compromise between the last indulgence of my despair and the endurance of my loss!’ Emily was terrified by the sternness of his look, and said, in a soothing voice, ‘You have yourself acknowledged, that it is necessary we should part;—if you wish, that I should believe you love me, you will repeat the acknowledgment.’—’Never—never,’ cried he—’I was distracted when I made it. O! Emily—this is too much;—though you are not deceived as to my faults, you must be deluded into this exasperation against them. The Count is the barrier between us; but he shall not long remain so.’

‘You are, indeed, distracted,’ said Emily, ‘the Count is not your enemy; on the contrary, he is my friend, and that might, in some degree, induce you to consider him as yours.’—’Your friend!’ said Valancourt, hastily, ‘how long has he been your friend, that he can so easily make you forget your lover? Was it he, who recommended to your favour the Monsieur Du Pont, who, you say, accompanied you from Italy, and who, I say, has stolen your affections? But I have no right to question you;—you are your own mistress. Du Pont, perhaps, may not long triumph over my fallen fortunes!’ Emily, more frightened than before by the frantic looks of Valancourt, said, in a tone scarcely audible, ‘For heaven’s sake be reasonable—be composed. Monsieur Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the Count his advocate. You have no rival; nor, except yourself, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguish, which must increase while your frantic behaviour shews me, more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accustomed to love.’

He made no reply, but sat with his arms rested on the table and his face concealed by his hands; while Emily stood, silent and trembling, wretched for herself and dreading to leave him in this state of mind.

‘O excess of misery!’ he suddenly exclaimed, ‘that I can never lament my sufferings, without accusing myself, nor remember you, without recollecting the folly and the vice, by which I have lost you! Why was I forced to Paris, and why did I yield to allurements, which were to make me despicable for ever! O! why cannot I look back, without interruption, to those days of innocence and peace, the days of our early love!’—The recollection seemed to melt his heart, and the frenzy of despair yielded to tears. After a long pause, turning towards her and taking her hand, he said, in a softened voice, ‘Emily, can you bear that we should part—can you resolve to give up an heart, that loves you like mine—an heart, which, though it has erred—widely erred, is not

irretrievable from error, as, you well know, it never can be retrievable from love?' Emily made no reply, but with her tears. 'Can you,' continued he, 'can you forget all our former days of happiness and confidence—when I had not a thought, that I might wish to conceal from you—when I had no taste—no pleasures, in which you did not participate?'

'O do not lead me to the remembrance of those days,' said Emily, 'unless you can teach me to forget the present; I do not mean to reproach you; if I did, I should be spared these tears; but why will you render your present sufferings more conspicuous, by contrasting them with your former virtues?'

'Those virtues,' said Valancourt, 'might, perhaps, again be mine, if your affection, which nurtured them, was unchanged;—but I fear, indeed, I see, that you can no longer love me; else the happy hours, which we have passed together, would plead for me, and you could not look back upon them unmoved. Yet, why should I torture myself with the remembrance—why do I linger here? Am I not ruined—would it not be madness to involve you in my misfortunes, even if your heart was still my own? I will not distress you further. Yet, before I go,' added he, in a solemn voice, 'let me repeat, that, whatever may be my destiny—whatever I may be doomed to suffer, I must always love you— most fondly love you! I am going, Emily, I am going to leave you—to leave you, forever!' As he spoke the last words, his voice trembled, and he threw himself again into the chair, from which he had risen. Emily was utterly unable to leave the room, or to say farewell. All impression of his criminal conduct and almost of his follies was obliterated from her mind, and she was sensible only of pity and grief.

'My fortitude is gone,' said Valancourt at length; 'I can no longer even struggle to recall it. I cannot now leave you—I cannot bid you an eternal farewell; say, at least, that you will see me once again.' Emily's heart was somewhat relieved by the request, and she endeavoured to believe, that she ought not to refuse it. Yet she was embarrassed by recollecting, that she was a visitor in the house of the Count, who could not be pleased by the return of Valancourt. Other considerations, however, soon overcame this, and she granted his request, on the condition, that he would neither think of the Count, as his enemy, nor Du Pont as his rival. He then left her, with a heart, so much lightened by this short respite, that he almost lost every former sense of misfortune.

Emily withdrew to her own room, that she might compose her spirits and remove the traces of her tears, which would encourage the censorious remarks of the Countess and her favourite, as well as excite the curiosity of the rest of the family. She found it, however, impossible to tranquillize her mind, from which she could not expel the remembrance of the late scene with Valancourt, or the consciousness, that she was to see him again, on the morrow. This meeting now appeared more terrible to her than the last, for the ingenuous confession he had made of his ill conduct and his embarrassed circumstances, with the strength and tenderness of affection, which this confession discovered, had deeply impressed her, and, in spite of all she had heard and believed to his disadvantage, her esteem began to return. It frequently appeared to her impossible, that he could have been guilty of the depravities, reported of him, which, if not inconsistent with his warmth and impetuosity, were entirely so with his candour and sensibility. Whatever was the criminality, which had given rise to the reports, she could not now believe them to be wholly true, nor that his heart was finally closed against the charms of virtue. The deep consciousness, which he felt as well as expressed of his errors, seemed to justify the opinion; and, as she understood not the instability of youthful dispositions, when opposed by habit, and that professions frequently deceive those, who make, as well as those, who hear them, she might have yielded to the flattering persuasions of her own heart and the pleadings of

Valancourt, had she not been guided by the superior prudence of the Count. He represented to her, in a clear light, the danger of her present situation, that of listening to promises of amendment, made under the influence of strong passion, and the slight hope, which could attach to a connection, whose chance of happiness rested upon the retrieval of ruined circumstances and the reform of corrupted habits. On these accounts, he lamented, that Emily had consented to a second interview, for he saw how much it would shake her resolution and increase the difficulty of her conquest.

Her mind was now so entirely occupied by nearer interests, that she forgot the old housekeeper and the promised history, which so lately had excited her curiosity, but which Dorothée was probably not very anxious to disclose, for night came; the hours passed; and she did not appear in Emily's chamber. With the latter it was a sleepless and dismal night; the more she suffered her memory to dwell on the late scenes with Valancourt, the more her resolution declined, and she was obliged to recollect all the arguments, which the Count had made use of to strengthen it, and all the precepts, which she had received from her deceased father, on the subject of self-command, to enable her to act, with prudence and dignity, on this the most severe occasion of her life. There were moments, when all her fortitude forsook her, and when, remembering the confidence of former times, she thought it impossible, that she could renounce Valancourt. His reformation then appeared certain; the arguments of Count De Villefort were forgotten; she readily believed all she wished, and was willing to encounter any evil, rather than that of an immediate separation.

Thus passed the night in ineffectual struggles between affection and reason, and she rose, in the morning, with a mind, weakened and irresolute, and a frame, trembling with illness.

## CHAPTER II

Come, weep with me;—past hope, past cure, past help!—ROMEO AND JULIET

Valancourt, meanwhile, suffered the tortures of remorse and despair. The sight of Emily had renewed all the ardour, with which he first loved her, and which had suffered a temporary abatement from absence and the passing scenes of busy life. When, on the receipt of her letter, he set out for Languedoc, he then knew, that his own folly had involved him in ruin, and it was no part of his design to conceal this from her. But he lamented only the delay which his ill-conduct must give to their marriage, and did not foresee, that the information could induce her to break their connection forever. While the prospect of this separation overwhelmed his mind, before stung with self-reproach, he awaited their second interview, in a state little short of distraction, yet was still inclined to hope, that his pleadings might prevail upon her not to exact it. In the morning, he sent to know at what hour she would see him; and his note arrived, when she was with the Count, who had sought an opportunity of again conversing with her of Valancourt; for he perceived the extreme distress of her mind, and feared, more than ever, that her fortitude would desert her. Emily having dismissed the messenger, the Count returned to the subject of their late conversation, urging his fear of Valancourt's entreaties, and again pointing out to her the lengthened misery, that must ensue, if she should refuse to encounter some present uneasiness. His repeated arguments could, indeed, alone have protected her from the affection she still felt for Valancourt, and she resolved to be governed by them.

The hour of interview, at length, arrived. Emily went to it, at least, with composure of manner, but Valancourt was so much agitated, that he could not speak, for several minutes, and his first words were alternately those of lamentation, entreaty, and self-reproach. Afterward, he said, 'Emily, I have loved you—I do love you, better than my life; but I am ruined by my own conduct. Yet I would seek to entangle you in a connection, that must be miserable for you, rather than subject myself to the punishment, which is my due, the loss of you. I am a wretch, but I will be a villain no longer.—I will not endeavour to shake your resolution by the pleadings of a selfish passion. I resign you, Emily, and will endeavour to find consolation in considering, that, though I am miserable, you, at least, may be happy. The merit of the sacrifice is, indeed, not my own, for I should never have attained strength of mind to surrender you, if your prudence had not demanded it.'

He paused a moment, while Emily attempted to conceal the tears, which came to her eyes. She would have said, 'You speak now, as you were wont to do,' but she checked herself.—'Forgive me, Emily,' said he, 'all the sufferings I have occasioned you, and, sometimes, when you think of the wretched Valancourt, remember, that his only consolation would be to believe, that you are no longer unhappy by his folly.' The tears now fell fast upon her cheek, and he was relapsing into the phrensy of despair, when Emily endeavoured to recall her fortitude and to terminate an interview, which only seemed to increase the distress of both. Perceiving her tears and that she was rising to go, Valancourt struggled, once more, to overcome his own feelings and to sooth hers. 'The remembrance of this sorrow,' said he, 'shall in future be my protection. O! never again will example, or temptation have power to seduce me to evil, exalted as I shall be by the recollection of your grief for me.'

Emily was somewhat comforted by this assurance. 'We are now parting for ever,' said she; 'but, if my happiness is dear to you, you will always remember, that nothing can contribute to it more, than to believe, that you have recovered your own esteem.' Valancourt took her hand;—his eyes were covered with tears, and the farewell he would have spoken was lost in sighs. After a few moments, Emily said, with difficulty and emotion, 'Farewell, Valancourt, may you be happy!' She repeated her 'farewell,' and attempted to withdraw her hand, but he still held it and bathed it with his tears. 'Why prolong these moments?' said Emily, in a voice scarcely audible, 'they are too painful to us both.' 'This is too—too much,' exclaimed Valancourt, resigning her hand and throwing himself into a chair, where he covered his face with his hands and was overcome, for some moments, by convulsive sighs. After a long pause, during which Emily wept in silence, and Valancourt seemed struggling with his grief, she again rose to take leave of him. Then, endeavouring to recover his composure, 'I am again afflicting you,' said he, 'but let the anguish I suffer plead for me.' He then added, in a solemn voice, which frequently trembled with the agitation of his heart, 'Farewell, Emily, you will always be the only object of my tenderness. Sometimes you will think of the unhappy Valancourt, and it will be with pity, though it may not be with esteem. O! what is the whole world to me, without you—without your esteem!' He checked himself—'I am falling again into the error I have just lamented. I must not intrude longer upon your patience, or I shall relapse into despair.'

He once more bade Emily adieu, pressed her hand to his lips, looked at her, for the last time, and hurried out of the room.

Emily remained in the chair, where he had left her, oppressed with a pain at her heart, which scarcely permitted her to breathe, and listening to his departing steps, sinking fainter and fainter, as he crossed the hall. She was, at length, roused by the voice of the Countess in the garden, and, her attention being then awakened, the first object, which struck her sight, was the vacant chair,

where Valancourt had sat. The tears, which had been, for some time, repressed by the kind of astonishment, that followed his departure, now came to her relief, and she was, at length, sufficiently composed to return to her own room.

### CHAPTER III

This is no mortal business, nor no sound  
That the earth owes!—SHAKESPEARE

We now return to the mention of Montoni, whose rage and disappointment were soon lost in nearer interests, than any, which the unhappy Emily had awakened. His depredations having exceeded their usual limits, and reached an extent, at which neither the timidity of the then commercial senate of Venice, nor their hope of his occasional assistance would permit them to connive, the same effort, it was resolved, should complete the suppression of his power and the correction of his outrages. While a corps of considerable strength was upon the point of receiving orders to march for Udolpho, a young officer, prompted partly by resentment, for some injury, received from Montoni, and partly by the hope of distinction, solicited an interview with the Minister, who directed the enterprise. To him he represented, that the situation of Udolpho rendered it too strong to be taken by open force, except after some tedious operations; that Montoni had lately shewn how capable he was of adding to its strength all the advantages, which could be derived from the skill of a commander; that so considerable a body of troops, as that allotted to the expedition, could not approach Udolpho without his knowledge, and that it was not for the honour of the republic to have a large part of its regular force employed, for such a time as the siege of Udolpho would require, upon the attack of a handful of banditti. The object of the expedition, he thought, might be accomplished much more safely and speedily by mingling contrivance with force. It was possible to meet Montoni and his party, without their walls, and to attack them then; or, by approaching the fortress, with the secrecy, consistent with the march of smaller bodies of troops, to take advantage either of the treachery, or negligence of some of his party, and to rush unexpectedly upon the whole even in the castle of Udolpho.

This advice was seriously attended to, and the officer, who gave it, received the command of the troops, demanded for his purpose. His first efforts were accordingly those of contrivance alone. In the neighbourhood of Udolpho, he waited, till he had secured the assistance of several of the condottieri, of whom he found none, that he addressed, unwilling to punish their imperious master and to secure their own pardon from the senate. He learned also the number of Montoni's troops, and that it had been much increased, since his late successes. The conclusion of his plan was soon effected. Having returned with his party, who received the watch-word and other assistance from their friends within, Montoni and his officers were surprised by one division, who had been directed to their apartment, while the other maintained the slight combat, which preceded the surrender of the whole garrison. Among the persons, seized with Montoni, was Orsino, the assassin, who had joined him on his first arrival at Udolpho, and whose concealment had been made known to the senate by Count Morano, after the unsuccessful attempt of the latter to carry off Emily. It was, indeed, partly for the purpose of capturing this man, by whom one of the senate had been murdered, that the expedition was undertaken, and its success was so acceptable to them, that Morano was instantly released, notwithstanding the political suspicions, which Montoni, by his secret accusation, had excited against him. The celerity and ease, with

which this whole transaction was completed, prevented it from attracting curiosity, or even from obtaining a place in any of the published records of that time; so that Emily, who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and signal humiliation of her late persecutor.

Her mind was now occupied with sufferings, which no effort of reason had yet been able to controul. Count De Villefort, who sincerely attempted whatever benevolence could suggest for softening them, sometimes allowed her the solitude she wished for, sometimes led her into friendly parties, and constantly protected her, as much as possible, from the shrewd enquiries and critical conversation of the Countess. He often invited her to make excursions, with him and his daughter, during which he conversed entirely on questions, suitable to her taste, without appearing to consult it, and thus endeavoured gradually to withdraw her from the subject of her grief, and to awake other interests in her mind. Emily, to whom he appeared as the enlightened friend and protector of her youth, soon felt for him the tender affection of a daughter, and her heart expanded to her young friend Blanche, as to a sister, whose kindness and simplicity compensated for the want of more brilliant qualities. It was long before she could sufficiently abstract her mind from Valancourt to listen to the story, promised by old Dorothee, concerning which her curiosity had once been so deeply interested; but Dorothee, at length, reminded her of it, and Emily desired, that she would come, that night, to her chamber.

Still her thoughts were employed by considerations, which weakened her curiosity, and Dorothee's tap at the door, soon after twelve, surprised her almost as much as if it had not been appointed. 'I am come, at last, lady,' said she; 'I wonder what it is makes my old limbs shake so, to-night. I thought, once or twice, I should have dropped, as I was a-coming.' Emily seated her in a chair, and desired, that she would compose her spirits, before she entered upon the subject, that had brought her thither. 'Alas,' said Dorothee, 'it is thinking of that, I believe, which has disturbed me so. In my way hither too, I passed the chamber, where my dear lady died, and every thing was so still and gloomy about me, that I almost fancied I saw her, as she appeared upon her death-bed.'

Emily now drew her chair near to Dorothee, who went on. 'It is about twenty years since my lady Marchioness came a bride to the chateau. O! I well remember how she looked, when she came into the great hall, where we servants were all assembled to welcome her, and how happy my lord the Marquis seemed. Ah! who would have thought then!—But, as I was saying, ma'amselle, I thought the Marchioness, with all her sweet looks, did not look happy at heart, and so I told my husband, and he said it was all fancy; so I said no more, but I made my remarks, for all that. My lady Marchioness was then about your age, and, as I have often thought, very like you. Well! my lord the Marquis kept open house, for a long time, and gave such entertainments and there were such gay doings as have never been in the chateau since. I was younger, ma'amselle, then, than I am now, and was as gay at the best of them. I remember I danced with Philip, the butler, in a pink gown, with yellow ribbons, and a coif, not such as they wear now, but plaited high, with ribbons all about it. It was very becoming truly;—my lord, the Marquis, noticed me. Ah! he was a good-natured gentleman then—who would have thought that he!'—

'But the Marchioness, Dorothee,' said Emily, 'you was telling me of her.'

'O yes, my lady Marchioness, I thought she did not seem happy at heart, and once, soon after the marriage, I caught her crying in her chamber; but, when she saw me, she dried her eyes, and pretended to smile. I did not dare then to ask what was the matter; but, the next time I saw her crying, I did, and she seemed displeased;—so I said no more. I found out, some time after, how it was. Her father, it seems, had commanded her to marry my lord, the Marquis, for his money, and there was another nobleman, or else a chevalier, that she liked better and that was very fond of

her, and she fretted for the loss of him, I fancy, but she never told me so. My lady always tried to conceal her tears from the Marquis, for I have often seen her, after she has been so sorrowful, look so calm and sweet, when he came into the room! But my lord, all of a sudden, grew gloomy and fretful, and very unkind sometimes to my lady. This afflicted her very much, as I saw, for she never complained, and she used to try so sweetly to oblige him and to bring him into a good humour, that my heart has often ached to see it. But he used to be stubborn, and give her harsh answers, and then, when she found it all in vain, she would go to her own room, and cry so! I used to hear her in the anti-room, poor dear lady! but I seldom ventured to go to her. I used, sometimes, to think my lord was jealous. To be sure my lady was greatly admired, but she was too good to deserve suspicion. Among the many chevaliers, that visited at the chateau, there was one, that I always thought seemed just suited for my lady; he was so courteous, yet so spirited, and there was such a grace, as it were, in all he did, or said. I always observed, that, whenever he had been there, the Marquis was more gloomy and my lady more thoughtful, and it came into my head, that this was the chevalier she ought to have married, but I never could learn for certain.'

'What was the chevalier's name, Dorothée?' said Emily.

'Why that I will not tell even to you, ma'amselle, for evil may come of it. I once heard from a person, who is since dead, that the Marchioness was not in law the wife of the Marquis, for that she had before been privately married to the gentleman she was so much attached to, and was afterwards afraid to own it to her father, who was a very stern man; but this seems very unlikely, and I never gave much faith to it. As I was saying, the Marquis was most out of humour, as I thought, when the chevalier I spoke of had been at the chateau, and, at last, his ill treatment of my lady made her quite miserable. He would see hardly any visitors at the castle, and made her live almost by herself. I was her constant attendant, and saw all she suffered, but still she never complained.

'After matters had gone on thus, for near a year, my lady was taken ill, and I thought her long fretting had made her so,—but, alas! I fear it was worse than that.'

'Worse! Dorothée,' said Emily, 'can that be possible?'

'I fear it was so, madam, there were strange appearances. But I will only tell what happened. My lord, the Marquis—'

'Hush, Dorothée, what sounds were those?' said Emily.

Dorothée changed countenance, and, while they both listened, they heard, on the stillness of the night, music of uncommon sweetness.

'I have surely heard that voice before!' said Emily, at length.

'I have often heard it, and at this same hour,' said Dorothée, solemnly, 'and, if spirits ever bring music—that is surely the music of one!'

Emily, as the sounds drew nearer, knew them to be the same she had formerly heard at the time of her father's death, and, whether it was the remembrance they now revived of that melancholy event, or that she was struck with superstitious awe, it is certain she was so much affected, that she had nearly fainted.

'I think I once told you, madam,' said Dorothée, 'that I first heard this music, soon after my lady's death! I well remember the night!'

'Hark! it comes again!' said Emily, 'let us open the window, and listen.'

They did so; but, soon, the sounds floated gradually away into distance, and all was again still; they seemed to have sunk among the woods, whose tufted tops were visible upon the clear horizon, while every other feature of the scene was involved in the night-shade, which, however, allowed the eye an indistinct view of some objects in the garden below.

As Emily leaned on the window, gazing with a kind of thrilling awe upon the obscurity beneath, and then upon the cloudless arch above, enlightened only by the stars, Dorothée, in a low voice, resumed her narrative.

‘I was saying, ma’amselle, that I well remember when first I heard that music. It was one night, soon after my lady’s death, that I had sat up later than usual, and I don’t know how it was, but I had been thinking a great deal about my poor mistress, and of the sad scene I had lately witnessed. The chateau was quite still, and I was in the chamber at a good distance from the rest of the servants, and this, with the mournful things I had been thinking of, I suppose, made me low spirited, for I felt very lonely and forlorn, as it were, and listened often, wishing to hear a sound in the chateau, for you know, ma’amselle, when one can hear people moving, one does not so much mind, about one’s fears. But all the servants were gone to bed, and I sat, thinking and thinking, till I was almost afraid to look round the room, and my poor lady’s countenance often came to my mind, such as I had seen her when she was dying, and, once or twice, I almost thought I saw her before me,—when suddenly I heard such sweet music! It seemed just at my window, and I shall never forget what I felt. I had not power to move from my chair, but then, when I thought it was my dear lady’s voice, the tears came to my eyes. I had often heard her sing, in her life-time, and to be sure she had a very fine voice; it had made me cry to hear her, many a time, when she has sat in her oriel, of an evening, playing upon her lute such sad songs, and singing so. O! it went to one’s heart! I have listened in the anti-chamber, for the hour together, and she would sometimes sit playing, with the window open, when it was summer time, till it was quite dark, and when I have gone in, to shut it, she has hardly seemed to know what hour it was. But, as I said, madam,’ continued Dorothée, ‘when first I heard the music, that came just now, I thought it was my late lady’s, and I have often thought so again, when I have heard it, as I have done at intervals, ever since. Sometimes, many months have gone by, but still it has returned.’

‘It is extraordinary,’ observed Emily, ‘that no person has yet discovered the musician.’

‘Aye, ma’amselle, if it had been any thing earthly it would have been discovered long ago, but who could have courage to follow a spirit, and if they had, what good could it do?—for spirits, YOU KNOW, ma’am, can take any shape, or no shape, and they will be here, one minute, and, the next perhaps, in a quite different place!’

‘Pray resume your story of the Marchioness,’ said Emily, ‘and acquaint me with the manner of her death.’

‘I will, ma’am,’ said Dorothée, ‘but shall we leave the window?’

‘This cool air refreshes me,’ replied Emily, ‘and I love to hear it creep along the woods, and to look upon this dusky landscape. You was speaking of my lord, the Marquis, when the music interrupted us.’

‘Yes, madam, my lord, the Marquis, became more and more gloomy; and my lady grew worse and worse, till, one night, she was taken very ill, indeed. I was called up, and, when I came to her bedside, I was shocked to see her countenance—it was so changed! She looked piteously up at me, and desired I would call the Marquis again, for he was not yet come, and tell him she had something particular to say to him. At last, he came, and he did, to be sure, seem very sorry to see her, but he said very little. My lady told him she felt herself to be dying, and wished to speak with him alone, and then I left the room, but I shall never forget his look as I went.’

‘When I returned, I ventured to remind my lord about sending for a doctor, for I supposed he had forgot to do so, in his grief; but my lady said it was then too late; but my lord, so far from thinking so, seemed to think light of her disorder—till she was seized with such terrible pains! O,

I never shall forget her shriek! My lord then sent off a man and horse for the doctor, and walked about the room and all over the chateau in the greatest distress; and I staid by my dear lady, and did what I could to ease her sufferings. She had intervals of ease, and in one of these she sent for my lord again; when he came, I was going, but she desired I would not leave her. O! I shall never forget what a scene passed—I can hardly bear to think of it now! My lord was almost distracted, for my lady behaved with so much goodness, and took such pains to comfort him, that, if he ever had suffered a suspicion to enter his head, he must now have been convinced he was wrong. And to be sure he did seem to be overwhelmed with the thought of his treatment of her, and this affected her so much, that she fainted away.

‘We then got my lord out of the room; he went into his library, and threw himself on the floor, and there he staid, and would hear no reason, that was talked to him. When my lady recovered, she enquired for him, but, afterwards, said she could not bear to see his grief, and desired we would let her die quietly. She died in my arms, ma’amselle, and she went off as peacefully as a child, for all the violence of her disorder was passed.’

Dorothee paused, and wept, and Emily wept with her; for she was much affected by the goodness of the late Marchioness, and by the meek patience, with which she had suffered.

‘When the doctor came,’ resumed Dorothee, ‘alas! he came too late; he appeared greatly shocked to see her, for soon after her death a frightful blackness spread all over her face. When he had sent the attendants out of the room, he asked me several odd questions about the Marchioness, particularly concerning the manner, in which she had been seized, and he often shook his head at my answers, and seemed to mean more, than he chose to say. But I understood him too well. However, I kept my remarks to myself, and only told them to my husband, who bade me hold my tongue. Some of the other servants, however, suspected what I did, and strange reports were whispered about the neighbourhood, but nobody dared to make any stir about them. When my lord heard that my lady was dead, he shut himself up, and would see nobody but the doctor, who used to be with him alone, sometimes for an hour together; and, after that, the doctor never talked with me again about my lady. When she was buried in the church of the convent, at a little distance yonder, if the moon was up you might see the towers here, ma’amselle, all my lord’s vassals followed the funeral, and there was not a dry eye among them, for she had done a deal of good among the poor. My lord, the Marquis, I never saw any body so melancholy as he was afterwards, and sometimes he would be in such fits of violence, that we almost thought he had lost his senses. He did not stay long at the chateau, but joined his regiment, and, soon after, all the servants, except my husband and I, received notice to go, for my lord went to the wars. I never saw him after, for he would not return to the chateau, though it is such a fine place, and never finished those fine rooms he was building on the west side of it, and it has, in a manner, been shut up ever since, till my lord the Count came here.’

‘The death of the Marchioness appears extraordinary,’ said Emily, who was anxious to know more than she dared to ask.

‘Yes, madam,’ replied Dorothee, ‘it was extraordinary; I have told you all I saw, and you may easily guess what I think, I cannot say more, because I would not spread reports, that might offend my lord the Count.’

‘You are very right,’ said Emily;—‘where did the Marquis die?’—‘In the north of France, I believe, ma’amselle,’ replied Dorothee. ‘I was very glad, when I heard my lord the Count was coming, for this had been a sad desolate place, these many years, and we heard such strange noises, sometimes, after my lady’s death, that, as I told you before, my husband and I left it for a neighbouring cottage. And now, lady, I have told you all this sad history, and all my thoughts,

and you have promised, you know, never to give the least hint about it.’—‘I have,’ said Emily, ‘and I will be faithful to my promise, Dorothee;—what you have told has interested me more than you can imagine. I only wish I could prevail upon you to tell the name of the chevalier, whom you thought so deserving of the Marchioness.’

Dorothee, however, steadily refused to do this, and then returned to the notice of Emily’s likeness to the late Marchioness. ‘There is another picture of her,’ added she, ‘hanging in a room of the suite, which was shut up. It was drawn, as I have heard, before she was married, and is much more like you than the miniature.’ When Emily expressed a strong desire to see this, Dorothee replied, that she did not like to open those rooms; but Emily reminded her, that the Count had talked the other day of ordering them to be opened; of which Dorothee seemed to consider much, and then she owned, that she should feel less, if she went into them with Emily first, than otherwise, and at length promised to shew the picture.

The night was too far advanced and Emily was too much affected by the narrative of the scenes, which had passed in those apartments, to wish to visit them at this hour, but she requested that Dorothee would return on the following night, when they were not likely to be observed, and conduct her thither. Besides her wish to examine the portrait, she felt a thrilling curiosity to see the chamber, in which the Marchioness had died, and which Dorothee had said remained, with the bed and furniture, just as when the corpse was removed for interment. The solemn emotions, which the expectation of viewing such a scene had awakened, were in unison with the present tone of her mind, depressed by severe disappointment. Cheerful objects rather added to, than removed this depression; but, perhaps, she yielded too much to her melancholy inclination, and imprudently lamented the misfortune, which no virtue of her own could have taught her to avoid, though no effort of reason could make her look unmoved upon the self-degradation of him, whom she had once esteemed and loved.

Dorothee promised to return, on the following night, with the keys of the chambers, and then wished Emily good repose, and departed. Emily, however, continued at the window, musing upon the melancholy fate of the Marchioness and listening, in awful expectation, for a return of the music. But the stillness of the night remained long unbroken, except by the murmuring sounds of the woods, as they waved in the breeze, and then by the distant bell of the convent, striking one. She now withdrew from the window, and, as she sat at her bed-side, indulging melancholy reveries, which the loneliness of the hour assisted, the stillness was suddenly interrupted not by music, but by very uncommon sounds, that seemed to come either from the room, adjoining her own, or from one below. The terrible catastrophe, that had been related to her, together with the mysterious circumstances, said to have since occurred in the chateau, had so much shocked her spirits, that she now sunk, for a moment, under the weakness of superstition. The sounds, however, did not return, and she retired, to forget in sleep the disastrous story she had heard.

#### CHAPTER IV

Now it is the time of night,  
That, the graves all gaping wide,  
Every one lets forth his spite,  
In the church-way path to glide.—SHAKESPEARE

On the next night, about the same hour as before, Dorothée came to Emily's chamber, with the keys of that suite of rooms, which had been particularly appropriated to the late Marchioness. These extended along the north side of the chateau, forming part of the old building; and, as Emily's room was in the south, they had to pass over a great extent of the castle, and by the chambers of several of the family, whose observations Dorothée was anxious to avoid, since it might excite enquiry, and raise reports, such as would displease the Count. She, therefore, requested, that Emily would wait half an hour, before they ventured forth, that they might be certain all the servants were gone to bed. It was nearly one, before the chateau was perfectly still, or Dorothée thought it prudent to leave the chamber. In this interval, her spirits seemed to be greatly affected by the remembrance of past events, and by the prospect of entering again upon places, where these had occurred, and in which she had not been for so many years. Emily too was affected, but her feelings had more of solemnity, and less of fear. From the silence, into which reflection and expectation had thrown them, they, at length, roused themselves, and left the chamber. Dorothée, at first, carried the lamp, but her hand trembled so much with infirmity and alarm, that Emily took it from her, and offered her arm, to support her feeble steps.

They had to descend the great stair-case, and, after passing over a wide extent of the chateau, to ascend another, which led to the suite of rooms they were in quest of. They stepped cautiously along the open corridor, that ran round the great hall, and into which the chambers of the Count, Countess, and the Lady Blanche, opened, and, from thence, descending the chief stair-case, they crossed the hall itself. Proceeding through the servants hall, where the dying embers of a wood fire still glimmered on the hearth, and the supper table was surrounded by chairs, that obstructed their passage, they came to the foot of the back stair-case. Old Dorothée here paused, and looked around; 'Let us listen,' said she, 'if any thing is stirring; Ma'amselle, do you hear any voice?' 'None,' said Emily, 'there certainly is no person up in the chateau, besides ourselves.'—'No, ma'amselle,' said Dorothée, 'but I have never been here at this hour before, and, after what I know, my fears are not wonderful.'—'What do you know?' said Emily.—'O, ma'amselle, we have no time for talking now; let us go on. That door on the left is the one we must open.'

They proceeded, and, having reached the top of the stair-case, Dorothée applied the key to the lock. 'Ah,' said she, as she endeavoured to turn it, 'so many years have passed since this was opened, that I fear it will not move.' Emily was more successful, and they presently entered a spacious and ancient chamber.

'Alas!' exclaimed Dorothée, as she entered, 'the last time I passed through this door—I followed my poor lady's corpse!'

Emily, struck with the circumstance, and affected by the dusky and solemn air of the apartment, remained silent, and they passed on through a long suite of rooms, till they came to one more spacious than the rest, and rich in the remains of faded magnificence.

'Let us rest here awhile, madam,' said Dorothée faintly, 'we are going into the chamber, where my lady died! that door opens into it. Ah, ma'amselle! why did you persuade me to come?'

Emily drew one of the massy arm-chairs, with which the apartment was furnished, and begged Dorothée would sit down, and try to compose her spirits.

'How the sight of this place brings all that passed formerly to my mind!' said Dorothée; 'it seems as if it was but yesterday since all that sad affair happened!'

'Hark! what noise is that?' said Emily.

Dorothée, half starting from her chair, looked round the apartment, and they listened—but, every thing remaining still, the old woman spoke again upon the subject of her sorrow. 'This saloon, ma'amselle, was in my lady's time the finest apartment in the chateau, and it was fitted

up according to her own taste. All this grand furniture, but you can now hardly see what it is for the dust, and our light is none of the best—ah! how I have seen this room lighted up in my lady's time!—all this grand furniture came from Paris, and was made after the fashion of some in the Louvre there, except those large glasses, and they came from some outlandish place, and that rich tapestry. How the colours are faded already!—since I saw it last!

'I understood, that was twenty years ago,' observed Emily.

'Thereabout, madam,' said Dorothée, 'and well remembered, but all the time between then and now seems as nothing. That tapestry used to be greatly admired at, it tells the stories out of some famous book, or other, but I have forgot the name.'

Emily now rose to examine the figures it exhibited, and discovered, by verses in the Provencal tongue, wrought underneath each scene, that it exhibited stories from some of the most celebrated ancient romances.

Dorothée's spirits being now more composed, she rose, and unlocked the door that led into the late Marchioness's apartment, and Emily passed into a lofty chamber, hung round with dark arras, and so spacious, that the lamp she held up did not shew its extent; while Dorothée, when she entered, had dropped into a chair, where, sighing deeply, she scarcely trusted herself with the view of a scene so affecting to her. It was some time before Emily perceived, through the dusk, the bed on which the Marchioness was said to have died; when, advancing to the upper end of the room, she discovered the high canopied tester of dark green damask, with the curtains descending to the floor in the fashion of a tent, half drawn, and remaining apparently, as they had been left twenty years before; and over the whole bedding was thrown a counterpane, or pall, of black velvet, that hung down to the floor. Emily shuddered, as she held the lamp over it, and looked within the dark curtains, where she almost expected to have seen a human face, and, suddenly remembering the horror she had suffered upon discovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret-chamber of Udolpho, her spirits fainted, and she was turning from the bed, when Dorothée, who had now reached it, exclaimed, 'Holy Virgin! methinks I see my lady stretched upon that pall—as when last I saw her!'

Emily, shocked by this exclamation, looked involuntarily again within the curtains, but the blackness of the pall only appeared; while Dorothée was compelled to support herself upon the side of the bed, and presently tears brought her some relief.

'Ah!' said she, after she had wept awhile, 'it was here I sat on that terrible night, and held my lady's hand, and heard her last words, and saw all her sufferings—HERE she died in my arms!'

'Do not indulge these painful recollections,' said Emily, 'let us go. Shew me the picture you mentioned, if it will not too much affect you.'

'It hangs in the oriel,' said Dorothée rising, and going towards a small door near the bed's head, which she opened, and Emily followed with the light, into the closet of the late Marchioness.

'Alas! there she is, ma'amselle,' said Dorothée, pointing to a portrait of a lady, 'there is her very self! just as she looked when she came first to the chateau. You see, madam, she was all blooming like you, then—and so soon to be cut off!'

While Dorothée spoke, Emily was attentively examining the picture, which bore a strong resemblance to the miniature, though the expression of the countenance in each was somewhat different; but still she thought she perceived something of that pensive melancholy in the portrait, which so strongly characterised the miniature.

'Pray, ma'amselle, stand beside the picture, that I may look at you together,' said Dorothée, who, when the request was complied with, exclaimed again at the resemblance. Emily also, as

she gazed upon it, thought that she had somewhere seen a person very like it, though she could not now recollect who this was.

In this closet were many memorials of the departed Marchioness; a robe and several articles of her dress were scattered upon the chairs, as if they had just been thrown off. On the floor were a pair of black satin slippers, and, on the dressing-table, a pair of gloves and a long black veil, which, as Emily took it up to examine, she perceived was dropping to pieces with age.

‘Ah!’ said Dorothée, observing the veil, ‘my lady’s hand laid it there; it has never been moved since!’

Emily, shuddering, immediately laid it down again. ‘I well remember seeing her take it off,’ continued Dorothée, ‘it was on the night before her death, when she had returned from a little walk I had persuaded her to take in the gardens, and she seemed refreshed by it. I told her how much better she looked, and I remember what a languid smile she gave me; but, alas! she little thought, or I either, that she was to die, that night.’

Dorothée wept again, and then, taking up the veil, threw it suddenly over Emily, who shuddered to find it wrapped round her, descending even to her feet, and, as she endeavoured to throw it off, Dorothée intreated that she would keep it on for one moment. ‘I thought,’ added she, ‘how like you would look to my dear mistress in that veil;—may your life, ma’amselle, be a happier one than hers!’

Emily, having disengaged herself from the veil, laid it again on the dressing-table, and surveyed the closet, where every object, on which her eye fixed, seemed to speak of the Marchioness. In a large oriel window of painted glass, stood a table, with a silver crucifix, and a prayer-book open; and Emily remembered with emotion what Dorothée had mentioned concerning her custom of playing on her lute in this window, before she observed the lute itself, lying on a corner of the table, as if it had been carelessly placed there by the hand, that had so often awakened it.

‘This is a sad forlorn place!’ said Dorothée, ‘for, when my dear lady died, I had no heart to put it to rights, or the chamber either; and my lord never came into the rooms after, so they remain just as they did when my lady was removed for interment.’

While Dorothée spoke, Emily was still looking on the lute, which was a Spanish one, and remarkably large; and then, with a hesitating hand, she took it up, and passed her fingers over the chords. They were out of tune, but uttered a deep and full sound. Dorothée started at their well-known tones, and, seeing the lute in Emily’s hand, said, ‘This is the lute my lady Marchioness loved so! I remember when last she played upon it—it was on the night that she died. I came as usual to undress her, and, as I entered the bed-chamber, I heard the sound of music from the oriel, and perceiving it was my lady’s, who was sitting there, I stepped softly to the door, which stood a little open, to listen; for the music—though it was mournful—was so sweet! There I saw her, with the lute in her hand, looking upwards, and the tears fell upon her cheeks, while she sung a vesper hymn, so soft, and so solemn! and her voice trembled, as it were, and then she would stop for a moment, and wipe away her tears, and go on again, lower than before. O! I had often listened to my lady, but never heard any thing so sweet as this; it made me cry, almost, to hear it. She had been at prayers, I fancy, for there was the book open on the table beside her—aye, and there it lies open still! Pray, let us leave the oriel, ma’amselle,’ added Dorothée, ‘this is a heart-breaking place!’

Having returned into the chamber, she desired to look once more upon the bed, when, as they came opposite to the open door, leading into the saloon, Emily, in the partial gleam, which the lamp threw into it, thought she saw something glide along into the obscurer part of the room. Her

spirits had been much affected by the surrounding scene, or it is probable this circumstance, whether real or imaginary, would not have affected her in the degree it did; but she endeavoured to conceal her emotion from Dorothée, who, however, observing her countenance change, enquired if she was ill.

‘Let us go,’ said Emily, faintly, ‘the air of these rooms is unwholesome;’ but, when she attempted to do so, considering that she must pass through the apartment where the phantom of her terror had appeared, this terror increased, and, too faint to support herself, she sat down on the side of the bed.

Dorothée, believing that she was only affected by a consideration of the melancholy catastrophe, which had happened on this spot, endeavoured to cheer her; and then, as they sat together on the bed, she began to relate other particulars concerning it, and this without reflecting, that it might increase Emily’s emotion, but because they were particularly interesting to herself. ‘A little before my lady’s death,’ said she, ‘when the pains were gone off, she called me to her, and stretching out her hand to me, I sat down just there—where the curtain falls upon the bed. How well I remember her look at the time—death was in it!—I can almost fancy I see her now.—There she lay, ma’amselle—her face was upon the pillow there! This black counterpane was not upon the bed then; it was laid on, after her death, and she was laid out upon it.’

Emily turned to look within the dusky curtains, as if she could have seen the countenance of which Dorothée spoke. The edge of the white pillow only appeared above the blackness of the pall, but, as her eyes wandered over the pall itself, she fancied she saw it move. Without speaking, she caught Dorothée’s arm, who, surprised by the action, and by the look of terror that accompanied it, turned her eyes from Emily to the bed, where, in the next moment she, too, saw the pall slowly lifted, and fall again.

Emily attempted to go, but Dorothée stood fixed and gazing upon the bed; and, at length, said—‘It is only the wind, that waves it, ma’amselle; we have left all the doors open: see how the air waves the lamp, too.—It is only the wind.’

She had scarcely uttered these words, when the pall was more violently agitated than before; but Emily, somewhat ashamed of her terrors, stepped back to the bed, willing to be convinced that the wind only had occasioned her alarm; when, as she gazed within the curtains, the pall moved again, and, in the next moment, the apparition of a human countenance rose above it.

Screaming with terror, they both fled, and got out of the chamber as fast as their trembling limbs would bear them, leaving open the doors of all the rooms, through which they passed. When they reached the stair-case, Dorothée threw open a chamber door, where some of the female servants slept, and sunk breathless on the bed; while Emily, deprived of all presence of mind, made only a feeble attempt to conceal the occasion of her terror from the astonished servants; and, though Dorothée, when she could speak, endeavoured to laugh at her own fright, and was joined by Emily, no remonstrances could prevail with the servants, who had quickly taken the alarm, to pass even the remainder of the night in a room so near to these terrific chambers.

Dorothée having accompanied Emily to her own apartment, they then began to talk over, with some degree of coolness, the strange circumstance, that had just occurred; and Emily would almost have doubted her own perceptions, had not those of Dorothée attested their truth. Having now mentioned what she had observed in the outer chamber, she asked the housekeeper, whether she was certain no door had been left unfastened, by which a person might secretly have entered the apartments? Dorothée replied, that she had constantly kept the keys of the several doors in

her own possession; that, when she had gone her rounds through the castle, as she frequently did, to examine if all was safe, she had tried these doors among the rest, and had always found them fastened. It was, therefore, impossible, she added, that any person could have got admittance into the apartments; and, if they could—it was very improbable they should have chose to sleep in a place so cold and forlorn.

Emily observed, that their visit to these chambers had, perhaps, been watched, and that some person, for a frolic, had followed them into the rooms, with a design to frighten them, and, while they were in the oriel, had taken the opportunity of concealing himself in the bed.

Dorothée allowed, that this was possible, till she recollected, that, on entering the apartments, she had turned the key of the outer door, and this, which had been done to prevent their visit being noticed by any of the family, who might happen to be up, must effectually have excluded every person, except themselves, from the chambers; and she now persisted in affirming, that the ghastly countenance she had seen was nothing human, but some dreadful apparition.

Emily was very solemnly affected. Of whatever nature might be the appearance she had witnessed, whether human or supernatural, the fate of the deceased Marchioness was a truth not to be doubted; and this unaccountable circumstance, occurring in the very scene of her sufferings, affected Emily's imagination with a superstitious awe, to which, after having detected the fallacies at Udolpho, she might not have yielded, had she been ignorant of the unhappy story, related by the housekeeper. Her she now solemnly conjured to conceal the occurrence of this night, and to make light of the terror she had already betrayed, that the Count might not be distressed by reports, which would certainly spread alarm and confusion among his family. 'Time,' she added, 'may explain this mysterious affair; meanwhile let us watch the event in silence.'

Dorothée readily acquiesced; but she now recollected that she had left all the doors of the north suite of rooms open, and, not having courage to return alone to lock even the outer one, Emily, after some effort, so far conquered her own fears, that she offered to accompany her to the foot of the back stair-case, and to wait there while Dorothée ascended, whose resolution being reassured by this circumstance, she consented to go, and they left Emily's apartment together.

No sound disturbed the stillness, as they passed along the halls and galleries; but, on reaching the foot of the back stair-case, Dorothée's resolution failed again; having, however, paused a moment to listen, and no sound being heard above, she ascended, leaving Emily below, and, scarcely suffering her eye to glance within the first chamber, she fastened the door, which shut up the whole suite of apartments, and returned to Emily.

As they stepped along the passage, leading into the great hall, a sound of lamentation was heard, which seemed to come from the hall itself, and they stopped in new alarm to listen, when Emily presently distinguished the voice of Annette, whom she found crossing the hall, with another female servant, and so terrified by the report, which the other maids had spread, that, believing she could be safe only where her lady was, she was going for refuge to her apartment. Emily's endeavours to laugh, or to argue her out of these terrors, were equally vain, and, in compassion to her distress, she consented that she should remain in her room during the night.

## CHAPTER V

Hail, mildly-pleasing Solitude!  
Companion of the wise and good—

Thine is the balmy breath of morn,  
Just as the dew-bent rose is born.

But chief when evening scenes decay  
And the faint landscape swims away,  
Thine is the doubtful, soft decline,  
And that best hour of musing thine.—THOMSON

Emily's injunctions to Annette to be silent on the subject of her terror were ineffectual, and the occurrence of the preceding night spread such alarm among the servants, who now all affirmed, that they had frequently heard unaccountable noises in the chateau, that a report soon reached the Count of the north side of the castle being haunted. He treated this, at first, with ridicule, but, perceiving, that it was productive of serious evil, in the confusion it occasioned among his household, he forbade any person to repeat it, on pain of punishment.

The arrival of a party of his friends soon withdrew his thoughts entirely from this subject, and his servants had now little leisure to brood over it, except, indeed, in the evenings after supper, when they all assembled in their hall, and related stories of ghosts, till they feared to look round the room; started, if the echo of a closing door murmured along the passage, and refused to go singly to any part of the castle.

On these occasions Annette made a distinguished figure. When she told not only of all the wonders she had witnessed, but of all that she had imagined, in the castle of Udolpho, with the story of the strange disappearance of Signora Laurentini, she made no trifling impression on the mind of her attentive auditors. Her suspicions, concerning Montoni, she would also have freely disclosed, had not Ludovico, who was now in the service of the Count, prudently checked her loquacity, whenever it pointed to that subject.

Among the visitors at the chateau was the Baron de Saint Foix, an old friend of the Count, and his son, the Chevalier St. Foix, a sensible and amiable young man, who, having in the preceding year seen the Lady Blanche, at Paris, had become her declared admirer. The friendship, which the Count had long entertained for his father, and the equality of their circumstances made him secretly approve of the connection; but, thinking his daughter at this time too young to fix her choice for life, and wishing to prove the sincerity and strength of the Chevalier's attachment, he then rejected his suit, though without forbidding his future hope. This young man now came, with the Baron, his father, to claim the reward of a steady affection, a claim, which the Count admitted and which Blanche did not reject.

While these visitors were at the chateau, it became a scene of gaiety and splendour. The pavilion in the woods was fitted up and frequented, in the fine evenings, as a supper-room, when the hour usually concluded with a concert, at which the Count and Countess, who were scientific performers, and the Chevaliers Henri and St. Foix, with the Lady Blanche and Emily, whose voices and fine taste compensated for the want of more skilful execution, usually assisted. Several of the Count's servants performed on horns and other instruments, some of which, placed at a little distance among the woods, spoke, in sweet response, to the harmony, that proceeded from the pavilion.

At any other period, these parties would have been delightful to Emily; but her spirits were now oppressed with a melancholy, which she perceived that no kind of what is called amusement had power to dissipate, and which the tender and, frequently, pathetic, melody of these concerts sometimes increased to a very painful degree.

She was particularly fond of walking in the woods, that hung on a promontory, overlooking the sea. Their luxuriant shade was soothing to her pensive mind, and, in the partial views, which they afforded of the Mediterranean, with its winding shores and passing sails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. The paths were rude and frequently overgrown with vegetation, but their tasteful owner would suffer little to be done to them, and scarcely a single branch to be lopped from the venerable trees. On an eminence, in one of the most sequestered parts of these woods, was a rustic seat, formed of the trunk of a decayed oak, which had once been a noble tree, and of which many lofty branches still flourishing united with beech and pines to over-canopy the spot. Beneath their deep umbrage, the eye passed over the tops of other woods, to the Mediterranean, and, to the left, through an opening, was seen a ruined watch-tower, standing on a point of rock, near the sea, and rising from among the tufted foliage.

Hither Emily often came alone in the silence of evening, and, soothed by the scenery and by the faint murmur, that rose from the waves, would sit, till darkness obliged her to return to the chateau. Frequently, also, she visited the watch-tower, which commanded the entire prospect, and, when she leaned against its broken walls, and thought of Valancourt, she not once imagined, what was so true, that this tower had been almost as frequently his resort, as her own, since his estrangement from the neighbouring chateau.

One evening, she lingered here to a late hour. She had sat on the steps of the building, watching, in tranquil melancholy, the gradual effect of evening over the extensive prospect, till the gray waters of the Mediterranean and the massy woods were almost the only features of the scene, that remained visible; when, as she gazed alternately on these, and on the mild blue of the heavens, where the first pale star of evening appeared, she personified the hour in the following lines:—

#### SONG OF THE EVENING HOUR

Last of the Hours, that track the fading Day,  
I move along the realms of twilight air,  
And hear, remote, the choral song decay  
Of sister-nymphs, who dance around his car.

Then, as I follow through the azure void,  
His partial splendour from my straining eye  
Sinks in the depth of space; my only guide  
His faint ray dawning on the farthest sky;

Save that sweet, lingering strain of gayer Hours,  
Whose close my voice prolongs in dying notes,  
While mortals on the green earth own its pow'rs,  
As downward on the evening gale it floats.

When fades along the West the Sun's last beam,  
As, weary, to the nether world he goes,  
And mountain-summits catch the purple gleam,  
And slumbering ocean faint and fainter glows,

Silent upon the globe's broad shade I steal,  
And o'er its dry turf shed the cooling dews,  
And ev'ry fever'd herb and flow'ret heal,  
And all their fragrance on the air diffuse.

Where'er I move, a tranquil pleasure reigns;  
O'er all the scene the dusky tints I send,  
That forests wild and mountains, stretching plains  
And peopled towns, in soft confusion blend.

Wide o'er the world I waft the fresh'ning wind,  
Low breathing through the woods and twilight vale,  
In whispers soft, that woo the pensive mind  
Of him, who loves my lonely steps to hail.

His tender oaten reed I watch to hear,  
Stealing its sweetness o'er some plaining rill,  
Or soothing ocean's wave, when storms are near,  
Or swelling in the breeze from distant hill!

I wake the fairy elves, who shun the light;  
When, from their blossom'd beds, they slily peep,  
And spy my pale star, leading on the night,—  
Forth to their games and revelry they leap;

Send all the prison'd sweets abroad in air,  
That with them slumber'd in the flow'ret's cell;  
Then to the shores and moon-light brooks repair,  
Till the high larks their matin-carol swell.

The wood-nymphs hail my airs and temper'd shade,  
With ditties soft and lightly sportive dance,  
On river margin of some bow'ry glade,  
And strew their fresh buds as my steps advance:

But, swift I pass, and distant regions trace,  
For moon-beams silver all the eastern cloud,  
And Day's last crimson vestige fades apace;  
Down the steep west I fly from Midnight's shroud.

The moon was now rising out of the sea. She watched its gradual progress, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the sparkling oars, the sail faintly silvered, and the wood-tops and the battlements of the watch-tower, at whose foot she was sitting, just tinted with the rays. Emily's spirits were in harmony with this scene. As she sat meditating, sounds stole by her on the air, which she immediately knew to be the music and the voice she had formerly heard at midnight, and the emotion of awe, which she felt, was not unmixed with terror, when she considered her remote and lonely situation. The sounds drew nearer. She would have risen to leave the place, but they seemed to come from the way she must have taken towards the chateau, and she awaited the event in trembling expectation. The sounds continued to approach, for some time, and then ceased. Emily sat listening, gazing and unable to move, when she saw a figure emerge from the shade of the woods and pass along the bank, at some little distance before her. It went swiftly, and her spirits were so overcome with awe, that, though she saw, she did not much observe it.

Having left the spot, with a resolution never again to visit it alone, at so late an hour, she began to approach the chateau, when she heard voices calling her from the part of the wood, which was nearest to it. They were the shouts of the Count's servants, who were sent to search for her; and

when she entered the supper-room, where he sat with Henri and Blanche, he gently reproached her with a look, which she blushed to have deserved.

This little occurrence deeply impressed her mind, and, when she withdrew to her own room, it recalled so forcibly the circumstances she had witnessed, a few nights before, that she had scarcely courage to remain alone. She watched to a late hour, when, no sound having renewed her fears, she, at length, sunk to repose. But this was of short continuance, for she was disturbed by a loud and unusual noise, that seemed to come from the gallery, into which her chamber opened. Groans were distinctly heard, and, immediately after, a dead weight fell against the door, with a violence, that threatened to burst it open. She called loudly to know who was there, but received no answer, though, at intervals, she still thought she heard something like a low moaning. Fear deprived her of the power to move. Soon after, she heard footsteps in a remote part of the gallery, and, as they approached, she called more loudly than before, till the steps paused at her door. She then distinguished the voices of several of the servants, who seemed too much engaged by some circumstance without, to attend to her calls; but, Annette soon after entering the room for water, Emily understood, that one of the maids had fainted, whom she immediately desired them to bring into her room, where she assisted to restore her. When this girl had recovered her speech, she affirmed, that, as she was passing up the back stair-case, in the way to her chamber, she had seen an apparition on the second landing-place; she held the lamp low, she said, that she might pick her way, several of the stairs being infirm and even decayed, and it was upon raising her eyes, that she saw this appearance. It stood for a moment in the corner of the landing-place, which she was approaching, and then, gliding up the stairs, vanished at the door of the apartment, that had been lately opened. She heard afterwards a hollow sound.

‘Then the devil has got a key to that apartment,’ said Dorothée, ‘for it could be nobody but he; I locked the door myself!’

The girl, springing down the stairs and passing up the great stair-case, had run, with a faint scream, till she reached the gallery, where she fell, groaning, at Emily’s door.

Gently chiding her for the alarm she had occasioned, Emily tried to make her ashamed of her fears; but the girl persisted in saying, that she had seen an apparition, till she went to her own room, whither she was accompanied by all the servants present, except Dorothée, who, at Emily’s request, remained with her during the night. Emily was perplexed, and Dorothée was terrified, and mentioned many occurrences of former times, which had long since confirmed her superstitions; among these, according to her belief, she had once witnessed an appearance, like that just described, and on the very same spot, and it was the remembrance of it, that had made her pause, when she was going to ascend the stairs with Emily, and which had increased her reluctance to open the north apartments. Whatever might be Emily’s opinions, she did not disclose them, but listened attentively to all that Dorothée communicated, which occasioned her much thought and perplexity.

From this night the terror of the servants increased to such an excess, that several of them determined to leave the chateau, and requested their discharge of the Count, who, if he had any faith in the subject of their alarm, thought proper to dissemble it, and, anxious to avoid the inconvenience that threatened him, employed ridicule and then argument to convince them they had nothing to apprehend from supernatural agency. But fear had rendered their minds inaccessible to reason; and it was now, that Ludovico proved at once his courage and his gratitude for the kindness he had received from the Count, by offering to watch, during a night, in the suite of rooms, reputed to be haunted. He feared, he said, no spirits, and, if any thing of human form appeared—he would prove that he dreaded that as little.

The Count paused upon the offer, while the servants, who heard it, looked upon one another in doubt and amazement, and Annette, terrified for the safety of Ludovico, employed tears and entreaties to dissuade him from his purpose.

‘You are a bold fellow,’ said the Count, smiling, ‘Think well of what you are going to encounter, before you finally determine upon it. However, if you persevere in your resolution, I will accept your offer, and your intrepidity shall not go unrewarded.’

‘I desire no reward, your excellenza,’ replied Ludovico, ‘but your approbation. Your excellenza has been sufficiently good to me already; but I wish to have arms, that I may be equal to my enemy, if he should appear.’

‘Your sword cannot defend you against a ghost,’ replied the Count, throwing a glance of irony upon the other servants, ‘neither can bars, or bolts; for a spirit, you know, can glide through a keyhole as easily as through a door.’

‘Give me a sword, my lord Count,’ said Ludovico, ‘and I will lay all the spirits, that shall attack me, in the red sea.’

‘Well,’ said the Count, ‘you shall have a sword, and good cheer, too; and your brave comrades here will, perhaps, have courage enough to remain another night in the chateau, since your boldness will certainly, for this night, at least, confine all the malice of the spectre to yourself.’

Curiosity now struggled with fear in the minds of several of his fellow servants, and, at length, they resolved to await the event of Ludovico’s rashness.

Emily was surprised and concerned, when she heard of his intention, and was frequently inclined to mention what she had witnessed in the north apartments to the Count, for she could not entirely divest herself of fears for Ludovico’s safety, though her reason represented these to be absurd. The necessity, however, of concealing the secret, with which Dorothee had entrusted her, and which must have been mentioned, with the late occurrence, in excuse for her having so privately visited the north apartments, kept her entirely silent on the subject of her apprehension; and she tried only to sooth Annette, who held, that Ludovico was certainly to be destroyed; and who was much less affected by Emily’s consolatory efforts, than by the manner of old Dorothee, who often, as she exclaimed Ludovico, sighed, and threw up her eyes to heaven.