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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
FATAL REVENGE

or,

THE FAMILY OF MONTORS

A Romance.

BY DENNIS JASPER MURPHY

IN THREE VOLUMES.

"Εὐθύλημοι δὲ οἱ πόλεις καὶ ἦν αὐτὰ μόνον, ἄκουσεν ἐν γεραφαίς ὀρᾷ,
ἀλλὰ τοὺς ανθρώπους αὐτὰς, καὶ τὰ πράγματα, καὶ οἷα λέγουσι.

LUCIAN, 'Επισκοποντος.

I wished not merely to see cities and woods as one can see them in maps; but men, and what they do, and what they say.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HU' PATERNOST
The present style of novels is most piteously bewailed by those who are, or say they are, well affected to the cause of literature. *Diavolerie, tales fit to frighten the nursery,* German horrors, are the best language they give us. Whatever literary articles have been imported in the *plague-ship* of German letters, I heartily wish were pronounced contraband by competent inspectors. But I really conceive that the present subjects of novels and romances, are calculate
to unlock every store of fancy and of feeling. I question whether there be a source of emotion in the whole mental frame, so powerful or universal as the fear arising from objects of invisible terror. Perhaps there is no other that has been at some period or other of life, the predominant and indelible sensation of every mind, of every class, and under every circumstance. Love, supposed to be the most general of passions, has certainly been felt in its purity by very few, and by some not at all, even in its most indefinite and simple state.

The same might be said, a fortiori, of other passions. But who is there that has never feared? Who is there that has not involuntarily remembered the gossip's tale in solitude or in darkness? Who is there that has not sometimes
Sometimes shivered under an influence he would scarce acknowledge to himself. I might trace this passion to a high and obvious source.

It is enough for my purpose to assert its existence and prevalent, which will scarcely be disputed by those who remember it. It is absurd to depreciate this passion, and deride its influence. It is not the weak and trivial impulse of the nursery, to be forgotten and scorned by manhood. It is the aspiration of a spirit; "it is the passion of immortals," that dread and desire of their final habitation.

The abuse of the influence of this passion by vulgar and unhallowed hands, is no argument against its use. The magic book has indeed often
often been borne by a rude ignorant, like William of Deloraine, journeying from the abbey of Melrose with his wizard treasure. The wand and robe of Prospero have often been snatch-ed by Caliban; but, in a master's hand, gracious Heaven! what won- ders might it work!

I have read novels, ghost-stories, where the spirit has become so inti-mate with flesh and blood, and so affable, that I protest I have almost expected it, and some of its human interlocutors, like the conspirators in Mr. Bayes's play, to "take out their snuff-boxes and feague it away." Such writers have certainly made ri-diculous what Shakespeare has con-sidered and treated as awful.

Such have occasioned the outcry against
against converting the theatre of literature into a phantasmagoria, and substituting the figures of a German magic-lantern, for those forms which are visible to "the eye in a fine frenzy rolling." But pace tantorum virorum, I have presumed to found the interest of a Romance on the passion of supernatural fear, and on that almost alone. It is pitiful to deplore deserved and inevitable censure; every work must have faults, and the Reviewers are heartily welcome to mine. I am not insensible of praise, nor inaccessible, I hope, to animadversion. If youth, in acquaintance with literary habits, and the "original sin" of national dulness, be any mitigation of severity, critical, or eclectic, or of the cold and bitter blasts of
of the north, let this serve to inform my Readers, that I am four and twenty, that I never had literary friend or counsellor, and that I am an Irishman of the name of

Dennis Jasper Murphy.

Dublin,
December 15, 1806.
INTRODUCTION.

At the siege of Barcelona by the French, in the year 1697, two young officers entered into the service at its most hot and critical period. Their appearance excited some surprise and perplexity. Their melancholy was Spanish, their accent Italian, their names and habits French.

They distinguished themselves in the service, by a kind of careless and desperate courage, that appeared equally insensible of praise or of danger. They forced themselves intoa
all the *coup de mains*, the wild and perilous sallies that abound in a spirited siege, and mark it with a greater variety and vivacity of character, than a regular campaign. *Here* they were in their element. But among their brother officers, so cold, so distant, so repulsive, that even *they* who loved their courage, or were interested by their melancholy, stood aloof in awkward and hesitating sympathy. Still, though they would not accept the offices of the benevolence their appearance inspired, they were involuntarily, always conciliating. Their figures and motions were so eminently noble and striking, their affection for each other so conspicuous, and their youthful melancholy so deep and hopeless, that every one inquired, and sought intelligence of them from an impulse
impulse stronger than curiosity. Nothing could be learnt; nothing was known, or even conjectured of them.

During the siege, an Italian officer, of middle age, arrived to assume the command of a post of distinction. His first meeting with these young men was remarkable. They stood speechless and staring at each other for some time. In the mixture of emotions that passed over their countenances, no one predominant or decisive could be traced by the many and anxious witnesses that surrounded them.

As soon as they separated, the Italian officer was persecuted with inquiries about the strangers. He answered none of them; yet he admitted that he knew circumstances sufficiently extraordinary relating to the
the young men, who, he said, were natives of Italy.

A few days after, Barcelona was taken by the French forces. The assault was terrible; the young officers were in the very rage of the fight; they coveted and courted danger; they stood amid showers of grape and ball; they rushed into the heart and crater of explosions; they literally "wrought in the fire." The effects of their dreadful courage were foreseen by all, and cries of recal and expostulation sounded around them on every side, in vain.

On the French taking possession of the town, there was a general demand for the brothers. With difficulty the bodies were discovered, and brought with melancholy pomp into the commander's presence. The Italian
lian officer was there; every eye was turned on him.

There was an appeal in the general silence. The Italian felt and answered it. "No circumstances but these," said he, "in which I see those brave, unhappy men, would justify me in the disclosure I am about to make. I am acquainted with their name, and their country, and their misfortunes. The discovery cannot affect them now. They are for ever beyond the reach of shame or pain; but for the living, who are not beyond instruction, the tale is intended, and to them may it prove useful." At intervals which its length required, he related the following story.

FATAL.
About the year 1690, the family of Montorio, one of the most distinguished in Italy, occupied their hereditary seat, in the vicinity of Naples. To the tale of the strange fortunes of this family, it may be necessary to prefix a sketch of its character.

It was marked by wild and uncommon features, such as rarely occur in those of more temperate climates. But in a coun-

FATAL REVENGE;

or,

THE FAMILY OF MONTORIO.

CHAP. I.

Sæva Pelopis domus. Horace.

"Pelops' cruel offspring."

try
try, like the seat of these adventures, where climate and scenery have almost as much effect on the human mind, as habit and education, the wonder dissolves, and the most striking exhibition of moral phenomena present only the reflected consequences of the natural.

The general idea of the Italian character was fully realized in that of the Montorio family; weak, yet obstinate; credulous, but mistrustful; inflamed with wild wishes to attain the secrets and communion of another world, yet sunk in the depth of both national and local superstition. Their palaces were haunted by groups of monks, and magicians, and alchymists, and astrologers; and amid the most superstitious state of the country of superstition, the House of Montorio was distinguished by weak and gloomy credulity. The character and habits of the present Count were, like those of his predecessors, singular. In the early part of his
his life, he had unexpectedly succeeded to his ancestorial wealth and honours, by the sudden death of their possessor and all his family. Shocked by such a concurrence of domestic calamity, the Count had precipitately quitted his castle, nor could he, till after a considerable time, prevail on himself to quit Apulia, and revisit it. When at length he returned, it was visible that the blow, which his spirits had sustained, was irrecoverable. He returned, accompanied by his Countess, his children, and a numerous retinue of attendants, and from that moment, the sight or sound of cheerfulness was banished from the walls of Muralto. The aged domestics, who had resided there in their lord's absence, and to whom that absence had felt like their own exile, now saw with sorrow, that the change his return had produced was almost for the worse. The habits of the castle and its present possessor, recalled to their memory the former
former master, and the festivity of happier days, threw a deeper shade over the stately gloom of the present. Of their former lord, they were lavish in commendation; and as it is the nature of enthusiasm to remember only the virtues of the object it delights to praise, while they celebrated the excellences and graces of his character, they forgot that he had been jealous, violent, and vindictive, even beyond Italian irritability; that his credulity was without bounds, his rage without restraint, and his vengeance without remorse. The many graces however of his person and mind, and the melancholy fate of a man who had suddenly died amid the most exquisite sensibility and enjoyment of domestic delights, drew a shade over the memory of his failings, and those who remembered him, remembered him only as the master whose eye poured forth benignity, and whose hand was lavish of bounty.
To the remembrance of such days and characters, the present afforded a striking contrast. The Count, dark, silent, solitary, repelled all approach, retreated from all attachment; and when his attendants raised their eyes to his, it was said they saw an expression there which made them withdraw them, under an impulse of terror, intuitive and inexpressible. The temper of a master, however ungenial, soon pervades his household. The servants glided through the apartments with steps that seemed to dread their own echo; orders were communicated in whispers, and executed in silence; and the bells that summoned its inmates to rest or to religion, were almost the only sounds heard within its walls. Sometimes this calm was suddenly and strangely broken, and the Count, attended by his confessor, would often summon the family to attend him at midnight to the chapel, where they remained engaged in solemn and se-
were acts of religion till morning; and often, under still more terrible agitations of mind, he would hurry the Countess and his family from their rest, and compel them to accompany him by night to Naples, from whence, after a short residence, he would return to his castle, to silence and to solitude. A conduct so extraordinary excited many comments; but the recent misfortunes, and known character of the family, were a sufficient answer to these, and curiosity soon grew weary of a subject that furnished nothing to gratify inquiry. Besides, the Count had now arrived at that period of life when a man is chiefly represented by his children; when the stronger features of a character are dimmed by the distance of retirement and rest—when declining ambition reposes itself amongst those for whom it has toiled, and the hopes and views of society are transferred to its young successors.
Of the Count's numerous family, four sons, and four daughters, still survived. All of them partook of the peculiarities which marked their house, the two elder sons eminently. Amid the family group, the bold and original figure of the Countess stood alone. Her beauty still untouched by time, her mind unimpaired by the weakness of her sex or country, she yet seemed to share the dark despondency of her husband. But while the source and degree of their secret suffering appeared the same, their modes of sustaining it were strikingly different. His, was the gloom of a mind bowed by affliction;—hers, of a mind resolved to make affliction bow to it. He, was wild, dejected, and unequal;—she, calm, collected, and silent. But her calmness was evidently that of subdued pain; it was the calmness of one, who, stretched upon the rack, suffers not a groan to escape him. In the lower circles of domestic duty, she moved with a care-
less absence, which was neither the absence of indolence nor of affectation; it was the abstraction of a mind obviously capable of higher occupations, and from which the discharge of common duties neither required an effort, nor a suspension of its inward and peculiar operations. She performed the severest offices of religion, which her superstitious husband exacted from her, with the steady patience of one who submits to a remedy, but who expects not relief— with her children she took no comfort; from her husband she sought no counsel: whatever were her secret trials, she seemed bent to bear them, unaided, unallied, and alone. She presented the image of a great mind sinking under calamity, but sinking without complaint or weakness, like Cæsar falling at the base of Pompey's statue, but covering his face as he fell.

Of her children, her daughters appeared the most beloved, and of her sons, the two younger,
younger, though the elder were confessedly more the favourites of nature as well as of society. At Naples, the elder, the beautiful and dissipated Ippolito, was the delight of every assembly, the soul of every pleasure. Driven from retirement, from the gloom of the castle and its inmates, entitled by his rank to mingle in the first assemblies, and indulged by his father with a splendid establishment; Ippolito, plunging into all the voluptuous madness of Naples, seemed resolved to indemnify himself for the short restraint of his early years. All the rich assemblage of imagery that youth, talents, and sensibility can present, and flattery magnify and embellish, Ippolito sought to realize in his brilliant and tumultuous career. Thus the flame of genius, which should have been fed by close and inward cultivation, was wasted in wild and eccentric blazes, and society, with heedless selfishness, exhausted the powers in whose display it delighted.
Had this young man been instructed, either by nature or by habit, in the conduct of his imagination, or the conquest of his passions, his being would have answered some better purpose than the delight of dissipation, or the example of a moral tale. Ippolito resembled his mother in the graces of a person which revived the finished forms of classic antiquity:—a face, warm with the rich tints of Italian beauty, a dark-brown complexion, over which the glow of conversation or of sentiment, the hurry of motion or of accident, spread a speaking crimson;—eyes, whose lustre, sometimes softened, sometimes deepened, as his dark locks were parted, or permitted to cluster over them, spoke sensibility in every change—features, over which the very soul of expression hovered, in a thousand charms, mingled and mutable. Such was the form, that enclosed a mind bold, ardent, credulous, and volatile;—of which the reason was
was as little under regulation as the passions. He possessed talents, but he rather delighted in their display, than their exercise—and that display was of the most fantastic kind. He loved to soar into the untravelled regions of thought, to raise the airy fabrics of fancy on vacancy, to enter on the very confines of intellect, and bend over the world of shadows and unreal forms. This mental malady was aggravated by indulgence till no proposition struck him, but under the form of a paradox, no event interested him, unless darkened by a shade of mystery or adventure;—but this intellectual obliquity was only partial, it was confined to his mode of apprehending, not of pursuing objects; for, when the direction of his mind was once discovered, by an artful application to its assailable part, its future progress might be ascertained without the least allowance for delay or deviation. Under this heated and irregular state of mind he had
had embraced the study of astrology; a study of which none but those who have travelled know the influence, which is as general as it is violent, and under which foreign nobility are often known to maintain a professional astrologer in their palaces, rather as an assistant of habitual knowledge, than a hidden agent of superstition. On a mind like that of Ippolito, this pursuit operated with peculiar danger; by pointing out, as the subjects of its study, some of the most striking objects of sense, it tempted a mind but too susceptible of impressions from such subjects. Few can resist the emotions inspired by the night-view of an Italian sky; a view, unfolding the Host of Heaven in lustre, magnitude, and number, never witnessed and never imagined in our cloudy and contracted hemisphere;—and few can calculate the awful solicitude to which those emotions swell, when the gazer thinks he beholds in those solemn objects the arbiters
ters of his destiny, traces in their progress the mysterious movements of fate, and seeks from their position, a knowledge of those events, which all are alike solicitous to know, though conscious that their knowledge can neither hasten nor retard their approach, neither diminish their certainty, nor mitigate their inflictions. At first, this study was confined to the more serious events of life; but in a short time, its influence became so extensive, that it mingled in the most trivial, even in those lighter moments of which solemn thought is deemed an interruption. If this topic was alluded to, the laugh was hushed, the frolic suspended, and the giddy Ippolito became intensely thoughtful, or laboriously inquisitive. Of this a proof occurred shortly after his arrival in Naples, attended by circumstances somewhat peculiar. At the gay season of the carnival, when superstition indulges her votaries with a remission of austerity, Ippolito was present at a masked
masked ball given by a Neapolitan of rank. On this gay evening, every hour saw him a new character, and every character was marked by some frolic of levity, or some sally of wit. Through the gardens, which the softened lights, the foliage, the fountains, the invisible minstrelsy, and mingled moon-light, made to resemble the bowers of enchantment, he glided, sometimes as the shepherd of Guarini, and sometimes as the hero of Ariosto; he now attracted the multitude by a spontaneous burst of eloquence and song, and now entertained a female mask with the most animating gallantery—at length, weary of frolic, he assumed the habit of a domino, and mixing among the groups, endeavoured to receive the amusements he had so lavishly afforded. In a short time his attention was arrested by a mask who had hovered around the whole evening, apparently unconnected with any party. The dress and figure were fantastic
fantastic, even beyond the licence of a mask; it had united the characters of a gipsy and an astrologer, under an emblematic habit; its mask depicted a countenance wild and haggard, and its language, unlike the quaint jargon of the place, was sombrous, solemn, and unusual. This mask had frequently approached Ippolito during the evening, yet when he attempted to address it, abruptly turned away. But its language and gesture were inviting, for it sometimes sung, and sometimes scattered among the groups, the following lines:

I.

Agents of this earthy sphere,
Now on joy’s bright billow swelling,
Now pent in misery’s murky dwelling,
The sport of hope, the prey of care—
But wildly anxious, still, to know
The mystic current’s ebb and flow,
Attend my song, my skill revere,
List to believe, and pause to hear—
II.
'Tis mine to bid life's colours glow,
To swell its bliss, or sooth its woe;
From doubt's dim sphere, bid shadows fly,
And people void futurity;—
To sooth pale passion's feverous dream,
To feed ambition's lurking flame,
Chastise proud joy with menaced ill,
Fierce pain, with promised pleasure, still,
Till hope wears, 'mid the mimic strife,
The tints of truth, the forms of life.

III.
Nor wants me source the skill to gain
That mocks at nature's bounded reign—
Where ocean beats against the sky,
Beyond their mingling bounds I fly,
And all amid the wheeling spheres
I read their viewless characters—
Those waning forms, so wan and pale,
That thwart the moon, all dimly sail,
To the wrapt eye that reads, unfold
More than to mortal may be told—
Anon I wing the waste of night,
Arrest the comet in his flight,
And shoot upon his burning wing,
And round my spells of wonder fling.
THE FAMILY OF MONTORIO.

Agents of this lower sphere
List to believe, and pause to hear.—

The festivity was now closing, and the masks dispersing, and amid the last murmurs of departing gaiety, this mask again approached Ippolito;—he turned, it paused, and when it spoke, its voice was tremulous and hesitating.—"Youth," it said, "thy favourable star presides tonight."—"I have as yet experienced but little of its influence," said Ippolito, with careless gaiety: "I have sought amusement, and found only weariness and disappointment. I have sought nectar on the lip of a Hebe, and been almost stifled with the scent of diabolone. I was on the point of conducting the goddess of chastity to a cassino, when, intreating her to remain no longer under an eclipse, I removed her mask, and discovered Diana converted into Hecate. I encountered a vestal virgin, whose shrine"—Here he was interrupted
interrupted by the mask, who, mingling moral strictures with a characteristic speech, informed him, he was commissioned by the stars to announce the approach of an aerial monitor, a little, benign, officious sylph; "Just now," said he, "darting from the planet Mercury, on an invisible line of light—invisible to all eyes but mine. His task is to be your moral improvement, your happiness his delight and reward. He will assume a form, he will speak a language like your own. He will attend, he will watch, he will warn you. Beware you repel him not, for if you do, he spreads his fairy pennons, and happiness flies you for ever."

On Ippolito's peculiarly constructed mind, this address had its full effect; similar language, on any other subject, he had heard with derision, but this, because mingled with the terms of astrology, arrested his attention and his curiosity. The circumstances,
circumstances, too, of time and place, gave an unsuspected force to the impression. Solitude succeeding to the concourse of crowds, and silence to their clamours, which still left a mixt murmur on the ear—the dim and partial light which fell on the wild features of the mask, and the tones of its voice, which every moment assumed a more plaintive and natural earnestness. "When and where shall I see this messenger of the stars," said Ippolito, almost seriously, "if you have power to announce his approach, you have also power to expedite it—shew me his form, let me hear his voice."—If I do," interrupted the mask, "will you believe my prediction—will you admit the object of it to your service, your confidence?" Ippolito assented. The mask hesitated incredulously. His curiosity was now inflamed, and he promised solemnly. "Look here," said the mask, drawing from beneath its garment a glass,
figured with strange characters, "look here, you are obeyed."—Ippolito eagerly gazed on the glass, and beheld a face, which looking over his shoulder, disappeared in a moment; the view was instantaneous, but the impression indelible; for the features bore a peculiar and interesting expression, which once seen, could scarce be forgotten. The mask glided away, and, while Ippolito yet paused in wonder, was lost among the groups and the shadows.

Of his wonder, he felt the effect to be both pleasing and painful; pleasing, because it soothed his love of the marvellous, and painful, because the curiosity it excited was ungratified. As he slowly returned homewards, he almost expected his promised visitor to appear behind the shade of a pillar as he passed, or cross his path with some strange greeting. He had arrived, however, without interruption at the Palazzo di Montorio, and was preparing
preparing to ascend the steps, when a light figure, which had been leaning half unseen against the balustrade, approached, and solicited reception in the language of the mask: as it spoke, it withdrew a large hat which shaded its face, and discovered the very features which Ippolito had seen flit over the glass of the wizard. Disarmed at this moment of every power, but the power to gaze, he viewed the figure, and for an instant suffered himself to doubt if it belonged to earth or not; then endeavouring to recal his spirits, addressed it in a style of appropriate gaiety:—inquired from what sphere it had fallen—and asked whether it had travelled on a meteor or a moon-beam? His raillery was only answered by more earnest petitions for admission, with which Ippolito, on whom the circumstances of the night had made more impression than he would either acknowledge or resist, at length complied.—

Such
Such was the conduct of this light-minded young man, whose judgment and imagination were at perpetual though unequal war, and who ridiculed at one moment the feelings, whose impulse, at the next, was suffered to decide the events of life. — He knew not, if the person he had admitted was not an assassin or a heretic, but he knew, that to admit him flattered his favourite propensity — the love of the marvellous.
Ah, wretch! believed the spouse of God in vain.

Pope.

On the succeeding day, Ippolito found a recent extraordinary circumstance the theme of every assembly he visited. In narratives of wonders, we are never contented with facts, without inquiring into motives, though the subtler springs of human actions often elude the discovery of the agents themselves.—But here was ample room for conjecture:—
On Rosolia di Valozzi, the daughter of a noble family, resident at Naples, were bestowed the most dangerous gifts of nature, an interesting form, and a mind susceptible "even to madness."

All the softer, and all the stronger, modes of this dangerous quality were assembled in her mind:—there is a domestic sensibility which expends itself on the common vicissitudes, and petty disasters of life; and there is a lofty frame of feeling which, overlooking the lower modes of human suffering, creates for itself a system of heroic dignity, and unaffected distress.

The more subtle spirit of both these was hers, but both purified, blended, and reconciled; the former, without its hacknied parade of daily exhibition; the latter, without its proud and pedantic inutility.—Thus she was prevented from knowing that relief which vulgar and romantic sensibility individually enjoy, (the one
one from the natural diminution of divided feeling, the other from the necessary remission of superhuman loftiness) and her feelings were tempered to that exquisite mixture of softness and firmness, which, whilst it sought its object and its exercise among the things of this world, would employ in their attainment a reach and energy of power, only commensurate to the great objects of another.

These uncommon faculties were first developed amid objects and scenery eminently calculated to elicit the latent, and stimulate the awakening sensibility of a young mind;—amid woods, whose depth of shade soothed and solemnized—seas, whose vastness and serenity poured stillness on the soul—mountains, whose wilder features mixed fear with wonder—masses of Gothic and Grecian ruins, whose very stones breathed round them that nameless spirit of antiquity, which makes us tremble with a delicious dread on the ground.
marked by its remains:—amid such scenes, Rosolia, yet an infant, wandered—amid such her mind imbibed a tincture of enthusiasm, full, rich and deep:—amid such scenes, stood the convent where Rosolia, with other female nobility, was educated. Here she wandered, without a guide, or a companion; for melancholy is unsocial, and enthusiasm impatient of restraint or interruption, and the feelings which she delighted to indulge, sought no participation, and disdained all control. Here life was expended in stimulating a sensibility already too exquisite for reason, or almost for life, and instead of subduing her mind to the pursuit of rational utility and practicable happiness, in elevating herself into the agent of another system, surrounded by forms and objects of her own creation, whose brilliancy proclaimed their want of reality, and whose exquisite and fallacious delights untuned her mind for the simplicity of substantial enjoyment.
joyment. Nature and solitude gradually lead the mind to abstraction, and of abstract imagery, the most powerful and splendid are the presence and perfections of the Deity. To these, therefore, her mind was naturally elevated; and no impressions from external or temporal objects could pervert the homage of her feelings.

At the age of fourteen, therefore, never concluding that her feelings could have any other object or occasion of exercise than the present—that any subject of interest could exist beyond the bounds of a cloister, or the sphere of monasticism; she announced her intention of taking the veil within the walls of the convent where she had been educated. Her family, too wealthy for the needy policy which devotes the younger daughters of Italian families to the veil, heard her resolution with regret, and endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose. She remained inflexible, and her parents were compelled to content
content themselves with obtaining the respite of one year, which it was proposed she should pass with them at Naples. To this invitation she acceded, with that disdain of temptation, from which it borrows its greatest danger; and, rather to gratify her religious feelings by a solemn exercise, than to bind them by inviolable security, alone, at midnight, at the foot of the altar, she engaged herself by a solemn vow, when the importunity of the world had ceased, to return to the convent, and assume the veil. Thus fortified, she entered the world, to bestow on it a passing glance of disdain, and then quit it for ever,—and on her first appearance, was received with wonder and delight. Her pensive and nun-like beauty, the simplicity of her manner, and her mind, over which the glow of enthusiasm, and the shade of melancholy chased each other alternately, like the varying shades of a beautiful complexion; the careless over-
flow of her sentiments, at once reaching by happy excellence all that the refinements of practice, and the labours of art profess slowly and painfully to teach; all this made her, even to the sophisticated sense of fashion, a new and exquisite feast. Rosolia at first retreated; for, though not unconscious of excellence, she was too timid for notoriety, and too delicate for flattery. But we are easily reconciled to our own praises, and she soon appeared content to stay a little longer in the world, to irradiate and delight it.

Amid this blaze of admiration, while a soft consciousness of pleasure seemed to be stealing over her mind and senses, she became on a sudden more lonely and pensive than ever; her cheek grew pale, and her eye wandered. Her family, who observed the change, and enquired the cause, received evasive answers; and when their solicitude, increasing with her increasing malady, became importunate, it was answered
swered by her declaring, that her resolution to take the veil had been delayed too long, and she was resolved to put it in immediate execution.

The scruples of conscience, though all lamented, none could oppose, and about a year after her entrance into the world, she quitted it for ever. But from the moment that the grate was closed on her, her silence became gloom, and her melancholy, misery; and after lingering a few months in hopeless dejection, she disappeared one evening after vespers, and was seen no more. Of an event so strange, none could assign either the motive or the means; and after the usual forms of inquiry and lamentation were observed, a wild conjecture, or an exclamation of wonder, were all that commemorated the fate of Rosolia.

When Ippolito returned to the palace, he found a letter from his brother Annibal, who resided with the family at the Castle, and with
with whom he maintained a regular correspondence. The attachment which produced this was rendered remarkable by the total dissimilarity of their characters. Annibal was as timid, gloomy, and mistrustful, as Ippolito was bold, open, and credulous; but both partook equally of that attachment to dark pursuits which characterized the family, and of that inflexibility of sombrous resolution, with which they adhered to a visionary pursuit, however irregularly conceived.—The substance of the letter was nearly as follows.—
My mind has been so occupied by strange events, and the reflections they have suggested, that I have forborne, for some time past, to write to you. When about to relate them, I again revolve those circumstances, so simple in their commencement.
ment, yet gradually unfolding something that arrests incredulity itself, and still pointing onward to things dark and unknown—I revolve all this, I seem in a dream, and try in vain to give form and reality to the shadows that are hovering round me.—

I have slept and awoke again—I have stood at my casement—this is the arbutus and the laurel that wave beneath it—this is the sea-breeze that breathes freshness on me—I see the glorious sun standing in the heaven,—these all are the objects of the senses, and they make their due and wonted impression on mine. Yet the objects I have lately witnessed are not less palpable than these. You have often laughed at my visionary gloom, prepare now to share the ridicule, or to resign the evidence of your senses.

The old chapel, without the walls of the castle, has long been dilapidated, and is at present filled with workmen.
You know my fondness for ruins. I strolled there after my sieste. I found the great doors closed, and that the workmen had entered through a chasm under one of the shattered windows. As I looked through the cavity, the various features of the view, the fragments of ruin, the rustic groups, some labouring, some gazing vacantly around, and the figure of a boy, who placed in a recess half-hid among the clustering shrubs, breathed a few wild notes on his pipe, touched me with that pleasant melancholy, which is suggested by the view of ancient decay and modern apathy, of desolated majesty, and ignorance gazing amongst its ruins. As I continued to lean on a projection of the chasm, unseen, I overheard a conversation, suggested by the place, and such as I would live to listen to on a wintry night, by a low, flitting, ember-fire. It told of spirit and shadow, and self-lighted tapers, and bells that rung
rung untouched within those deserted walls. I listened with curiosity pleasantly stirred, till I was roused by some dark allusions. I listened, but could not understand; they spake "of the Count's not resting better in his bed, than his ancestors in their graves, if those things were known;" and observed that "old, white-headed Michelo, in spite of his guarded silence, was too well acquainted with them. " Though my first impulse, on returning to the castle, was to send for the old groom of the chambers, and satiate my appetite for the marvellous with his legendary wonders, I had no other object than to pass a vacant hour in listening to a tale that required little effort either of thought or credit. I had at least little apprehension of what awaited me, little fear of being in a state like that of one who is gradually impelled towards a precipice, the terrors of which he can nei-
ther measure nor avoid. Michelo came on my summons. Desirous of full information, and aware of his cautious and timid temper, I endeavoured to frame my request skilfully. "Michelo," said I, "I have often listened with delight to the family legends your memory is so well stored with;---but I am informed you are in possession of some still more marvellous and terrible, something you will not communicate to a common ear, and which I hope you have reserved for mine." This address, so far from an accusation, and only implying a knowledge compatible with the purest innocence, produced the most terrible effect on the old man. His lips quivered, and his countenance changed, and with the most earnest solemnity he besought me, not to importune him for the disclosure I referred to. The impression I received from his agitation was indescribable. The vague curiosity with which I had begun the
the conversation was at once exchanged for the pursuit of something I could not well define, but whose importance was increased by its obscurity.

I told him I was now convinced he was acquainted with something—"something which it is perhaps necessary for me, as a son of this house, to know—something into which more than curiosity ought to inquire." I assured him of my favour if he complied, and if not, menaced him with my father's displeasure. His answer, though confused and broken, I shall not soon forget. "Oh, Signor, for the Virgin's sake, let not my lord your father know of this conference; do not draw his vengeance on us, his vengeance is terrible. Little do you know, little alas, do I know myself, if I knew all, or even believed what I have heard, how could I pass the chapel, as I do at night, how could I traverse these lone apartments, or venture to sleep in that little turret, over the
very room—where the wind sings so doleful that if I suffered myself to think I might fancy it was—I might run mad listening to it.” I bade him be composed, but the composure I recommended, I was far from enjoying myself. My anxious love of the marvellous was mixed with other feelings; nor could I, (though I affected to do so) believe the agitation of the old man was occasioned by the nugatory tales of menial superstition. He rose from his knees, condemning himself for having “foolishly and wickedly betrayed himself, overcome by my sudden question and piercing eye.’’—I will not harass you with the repetition of menace and intreaty, of expostulation and evasion. He at length consented to admit me to his lone, remote turret that night, for he still dreaded our being discovered or even observed by the family. The night, like every other period to which solicitude adds an imaginary length, was slow in arrival.
When I ascended the turret, I thought I observed in the old man's face an expression of artificial composure, the effort of recollected and resolute craftiness. He seated himself, trimmed his lamp, and then abruptly demanded what it was I required him to relate. In the tumult of expectation, in that state of suspense which expects the disclosure of something unknown, this had entirely escaped me; and apprehending that my curiosity would be mocked by some temporary and trivial invention, hastily and almost unintentionally, I desired him to relate the circumstances by which my father, who I understood was distantly related to the late possessor, had succeeded to the family honours. He appeared confounded, but unable to retreat; and it occurred to me, if I could engage him to commence the narrative, I might trust to his habitual prolixity to disclose what he might at first intend to conceal. After some delay, he informed
informed me, that possessor had been my uncle, my father's own brother. Of this man he gave a character that seemed to warm him into eloquence; he described it as a mixture of the most shining qualities, and the fiercest passions. His love was madness, his courage, rashness, his hatred deadly, and his vengeance, though honourable, as the cavaliers in Naples call it, there was no escaping from with life.—"All your house," continued he, "were much attached to secret studies; your uncle was in particular much versed in strange books and arts, and in a way of going up to ask the stars whether he was to be happy or miserable:—Alas, it would have been better to have asked his own heart.—Many a night would my lord pass on the high turrets of his castle, and on his descent, he would walk about his apartment for hours, talking to himself about trines, and sextiles, and quadrants, and horoscopes, and ascendants, hard words;
words, which I learnt, from hearing them repeated so often, without knowing their meaning.

"I would not, to be lord of this castle, know it. For a holy benedictine once assured me, it was all heresy, and that these were only different names for Lucifer." I will endeavour to abridge Michelo's narrative: he mentioned my uncle's marriage with the loveliest, the gentlest, the most heavenly of women. He mentioned that he had children; the picture of the Countess, he said, was yet in a deserted part of the castle, with most of the furniture of those gay days; there he had removed them on my father's return to the castle. The story was sad and intricate; he told of my uncle's domestic happiness being suddenly and strangely suspended by a habit of fierceness and gloom, which he emphatically dated from the arrival of my father, and a confidential servant of his, whom he called
called Ascanio, at the castle.—"Even amid all the revelry and mirth on my lord's arrival," said he, "it was whispered by the domestics, who accompanied them from Naples, that the lady was likely to lead a life of lone, uncomfortable splendour; for owing either to my lord's jealousy, or some secret cause of disquiet, that even then spread a shade of melancholy over her beautiful face; they both seemed resolved on total retirement.—Matters grew more dark and strange; my lady wept in her chamber alone; my lord stalked silently through his; your father appeared distracted with the distress he witnessed, and alternately conferred with each alone, I suppose, endeavouring to conciliate and soothe them. At length it was announced that my lord was to make an excursion to the Grecian Isles; this excursion the Countess, now near her confinement, was not to accompany; he was to be attended only by Ascanio. Ascanio, at
at this time, appeared to enjoy the confidence of both brothers exclusively. I envied him not; my love and fidelity to my lord were, what a domestic's should be, humble, and distant, though dear; I lamented my master's sorrows, without presuming to inquire into them, but Ascanio was bold, forward, and subtle."

"Is this Ascanio yet alive," said I, "he might eke out your narrative with some strange particulars." "He might indeed," said the old man—"no, Signor, he is dead, and his end was strange and fearful." I would not tempt him to digression by inquiring. "When my lord had now been some months gone, we could perceive that a greater consternation than ever reigned in the castle; packets were hourly arriving from abroad, the Countess never quitted her apartment, and my lord your father appeared overborne with agitation. At length, it was about the close of autumn, it had been a sickly, sultry season,
season, and the mountain had been turbulent, and the people while they listened to its murmurs, said, that they presaged sad and strange events would soon happen. We were assembled in the hall of the castle for vespers, for the chapel was then repairing; a hot intermitting blast breathed through the casement, and some of the domestics who had been in Naples that day, told us that the mountain had sent forth strange sounds in the night, and that the city awaited the approach of that evening in terror; one of them said, that as they came along, there was a heavy murmuring through the woods, and that their tops waved without a breath of wind—"Yes," said another, "but that was not the strangest object I saw in the woods to day." We desired him to explain, and the domestic then affirmed with solemn asseverations, that the Count his master had appeared to him that day in the wood at a little distance from—at this
this fantastic account of one whom we knew to be absent in the Grecian Islands, all laughed, when the man suddenly rising from his seat, and rushing into the passage that communicates with the great stairs, called us loudly to "See him running them, and beckoning to him from the balustrade."—In a moment every individual was in the passage, the echo of a step was distinctly heard, and some averred they saw a shadow pass on the stairs—but our attention was quickly withdrawn. Ascanio arrived, breathless and spent, and pushing away the eager inquirers with both his hands, hastened to your father's apartment. Meanwhile evening was aggravated by a gathering darkness; a mass of vapour issued from the mountain, and the sun appeared as a dim and bloody globe in the midst of an immense vault of black cloud—every one breathed an inward prayer, and none told their fears to the other—when, as in a moment, a column
column of fire, brighter than noon, rose from the mountain, flashing a horrible glare of yellow light on the woods, and shore, its edgings lanced with lightnings, and its centre white with intense heat; it was suspended a moment at its greatest height, or appeared so to our eyes, and the next came rushing down the sides of the mountain in floods of fire—a strong concussion of the earth followed, the air and elements were in wondrous motion; and the lightnings, or meteors rather, broad and flaky, hissed and wreathed in fearful play on the turret points and casements. When the first burst of terror was over, I thought of the Countess and her children; she used to sit with them in a high and lonely tower, of which I scarcely believed but it was crumbled to ashes. I hastened up the great stairs, when—the terrors of my tale are coming on, they are too strong for me, let me have air, let me have breath, Signor.”—— Solicitous
Solicitous, both for the old domestic and his story, I assisted him to rise, and supported him to his narrow casement. In a few moments he respired; I watched the progress of his recovery; my eye was fixed on his; it became suddenly fixed and hollow; he extended his arm from the casement; but the breath which he had but just recovered, utterly forsook him—he could not speak—my eye followed the pointing of his finger. The night was still and dark, the ruined chapel was beneath the casement—as I gazed, a light, pale but distinct, fell on the walls, and on the shrubs that have mantled round them; I watched it, it wandered, borne by no hand, accompanied by no step, along the chancel, (I saw it gleaming past our windows), and expired at the tomb of our uncle. Michelo and I remained aghast—we remained near an hour, silent, scarcely breathing—we saw it return. Then I tried to swallow down the thick and stifling
stifling sensation with which my throat was filled. "Michelo," said I, "has this been seen before?" "Often," said the old man, "by me." "Has no visible form, no distinct sound attended it?" "Often," said he again. "And have you ever witnessed?"—"Listen, Signor,—to you alone would I tell what I have witnessed: other strange appearances have long been talked of within these walls; this is but recent. A few nights ago, when I first observed that light, I was tempted to follow it. I thought it might be some one whom curiosity or ignorance had led there, and I entered without apprehension. The light that glided before me, disappeared at the tomb of Count Orazio; I heard a sound issuing from it, that could scarce be called a groan, or any thing that signifies a human accent. I approached it, I know not how; I shudder now to tell it; yet I remember I did not shudder then. The massive grating of the vault was wrenched open—
open—I descended—yes, I did descend: a flash of light burst forth again, and as it hissed on the damp arching, the palls waved with a visible motion—the coffins rattled on the biers—something, I could neither distinguish nor describe, hovered before my eyes—a pressure (not of a fleshly hand) came over my face; it was bony, and cold, and damp. I lost all further power or feeling, and when I recovered, I was laid without the walls of the chapel, on the damp grass, my lamp burning beside me; could I have travelled there in trance? I hasted to my turret-room, I stood to collect my breath, my eyes fell on that mirror you are looking at now, my face reeked with livid streaks of blood!—To none but you have I mentioned this."

No one could hear the old man's earnest voice, and look on his pale face, and disbelieve him. You know my habit, to
reason on every thing: but what could I do, with what I had just seen and heard; they were too palpable for fancy, yet too wild for conjecture, and I endeavoured, alike in vain, to treat them as a fume of mental vapour, or try them by any rule of sober solution. My thoughts wandered from Michelo and his narrative to myself; insensibly I began to conceive myself in his situation, possessed, it should seem, of dark secrets, and tempted to supernatural intercourse. I examined, involuntarily, how such an emergency would find me prepared. I calculated the chances of deception. I inquired into the constitution of my mind, and the probable power of such impressions over it, were it exposed to them. The result gave me a strange satisfaction. I felt as if I were called to such a trial, and would approve myself in it. I am strong of frame, steady of nerve, slow in perception; possessing but little of
of the light or fantastic powers of mind; seldom indulging them in their airy play; and when I do, surveying it as the traveller surveys the fallacious dance of the fairy lights, only to shun their illusions. Such a character presents only one assailable part, in that attachment to visionary subjects by which, I have heard, our family are distinguished.

But even this has attained no habitual or positive influence over my mind. It diffuses rather a shade than a gloom; its effect has been like that of twilight, whose shadows inspire a dubious and grateful awe, not midnight that peoples its dark recesses with shapes of fear. The result of my deliberations has been what perhaps it would have been, if I had not deliberated at all,—to gratify the simple and original impulse of curiosity, by a pursuit of which I vainly flatter myself the object is higher. I determined to make
Michelo conclude his narrative; I determined to visit the tomb of Count Orazio at night. I need not tell you I accepted Michelo's offer to accompany me, without reluctance. He has a knowledge of private passages in the castle which may be useful in eluding observation. "Signor," said he, "the passages we must traverse, lead near those apartments so long shut up, the apartments of your late uncle and his Countess. You must permit me, as we pass them, to shut my eyes; do you, Signor, lead me, and as we draw near them speak cheerfully, and let me feel your hand on mine."

I consented to his conditions. The watch-night has arrived; the family are at rest, and I am in the turret, awaiting the arrival of Michelo. Ippolito! what is there in that nature and state, to which our better part aspires, that the belief of its agency is thus awful, that the thought of
of its visible approach or presence is scarcely supportable. I have no definite apprehension of what I may meet or see, but there is a busy and alarmed motion within me, as if something of evil impended, whose magnitude was too extensive, or whose features were too terrible even for expectation. I feel, at least, that its contemplation leaves room for no other object, though it is thus indefinite and vague itself. I have brought books; I cannot read them. I have commenced several trains of thought; I have started from them all, imagining I was in the vault. In spite of my resolution, I feel my respiration grow short, and a sensation like swelling, oppressing my throat. I will walk up and down my narrow apartment. It will not do. . . . my steps seemed limited to a certain track, beyond which I almost feared to extend them, and their echo was too loud. The hour is approaching; a few moments
moments more, and the castle bell will toll. The hour that I have longed for, I almost begin now to wish more distant. I almost dread to hear the steps of Michelo. • • • Hark!—the bell tolls—the old turret seems to rock to its echo; and the silence that succeeds, how deep, how stilly—would I could hear an owl scream.—Ha! 'twas the lightning that gleamed across me. I will go to the casement; the roar of the elements will be welcome at such a moment as this. • • • • • • The night is dark and unruly—the wind bursts in strong and fitful blasts against the casement. The clouds are hurried along in scattering masses. There is a murmur from the forests below, that in a lighter hour I could trust fancy to listen to; but in my present mood, I dare not follow her wanderings. Would my old guide were come! I feel that any state of fear is supportable, accompanied by the sight
THE FAMILY OF MONTORIO.

or sound of a human being... Was that shriek fancy?—again, again—impossible! Hark! there is a tumult in the castle—lights and voices beneath the turret... What is this they tell me?
CHAP. IV.

Nec mens mihi, nec color
Certà sede manet, humor et in genas
Furtim labitur, arguens
Quam lentis penitus macerer ignibus.

Horace.

My reason in confusion flies,
And on my cheek th' uncertain colour dies;
While the down-stealing tear betrays
The lingering flame that on my vitals preys.

Dryden.

From the messenger who brought this letter, no further intelligence could be obtained. While Ippolito read it, the visionary spirit kindled within him, and he wished himself at the castle, to feast his fancy with the dark imagery of spectred
spectred terrors; while Annibal's mind, differently constructed, was employed in resisting suspected imposition, and submitting with stubborn reluctance to the influence that thus inscrutably overcame him. But Ippolito's curiosity was now as much occupied by his young domestic, as his brother's was by his old one. Amused by the strange circumstances of his introduction, Ippolito had assigned him an apartment near his own, and exempted him from every office of servitude. This was indeed a gratuitous indulgence, for had Cyprian, as he called himself, actually dropt from the sphere of another planet, he could scarce have been more ignorant of every thing relative to this. Ippolito perceived it, and resigned him to his own pursuits.

The form of Cyprian was slight and delicate, a profusion of chesnut hair shaded his cheeks, and deepened the dark tint of melancholy thought, that sat for ever on his...
his face. His head was seldom raised from a declining posture; his features seldom varied their pensive expression; but when they did, their sudden and eager brightness of intelligence, bespoke a mind of suppressed energies, and habitual dejection. Though voluntarily assuming a station of servitude, he possessed all the refinements of manner and acquirement that mark the higher ranks of society. Seated at the harp, or organ, Cyprian poured through his delicate, half-open lips a stream of sound, more resembling respiration than tones modulated by art and practice; they were the very sighs of music; while his fingers, sinking into the strings, seemed almost to partake living sensibility, and forget the power of motion at the cadence. As a painter, his merit was distinguished; but in all he did, nothing appeared laboured, nothing even finished; he seemed to possess the genius of art, apparently without its rules or its labour.
labours, and over all was spread a species of fragility, a certain delicacy of imperfection, that characterized the desultory efforts of a mind which only required stability to arrive at perfection. But it was soon discovered, that neither as a painter, nor a musician, did he remit that influence which he claimed for higher offices. He entered on his office of monitor to Ippolito with a spirit and power that actually seemed given him from above. Ippolito listened with surprise, but it was surprise which the gentleness of the pleader disarmed of anger, and into which his eloquence infused admiration.

Turning into jest, however, a conflict with a boy, he collected the powers of sophistry and declamation he was too well accustomed to wield, and imagined that a few sentences of rapid brilliancy, would overwhelm the poor little pleader at once. But this meretricious array was displayed before
before Cyprian in vain; simple, earnest, sincere, he pursued his florid opponent with the eloquence of a man, and the fervency of an angel. He was neither dazzled by verbiage, nor disconcerted by subtlety, and Ippolito's pride summoned him in vain to the cause which his conscience deserted. The conclusion of the debate proved that it was not for victory the young disputant had engaged; he proceeded with tenfold earnestness to press the practical consequences of his concessions on Ippolito. Such was his ingenuous pride, that what he could not defend he dared not practice; and a boy caught the promise of reformation from a blushing libertine. But a more difficult task yet remained—to direct the choice of life while it was yet suspended, and to effect a transition from one mode and habitude to another; yet to conceal the interruption, and prevent the intermediate wanderings of vacancy. At this moment
moment, therefore, Cyprian displayed all his resources; painting, and harmony, and poetry; and over all his taste spread a charm, chaste and mellow, like that of moon-light on a landscape—till Ippolito was delighted by the conscious expansion of latent powers, which he mistook for the acquisition of new ones; and Cyprian succeeded in recalling to the forgotten pleasures of nature and of taste, a mind, fevered by the noxious stimulants of artificial voluptuousness. But minds thus habituated are not easily weaned from periodical indulgence, and when the night arrived, not all the taste or talents of Cyprian could prevent the chronic fit of vacancy. When they failed, even the pensiveness of the little monitor would yield to his solicitude for his pupil; in the graceful petulance of airy command, he would wind his slender arms around Ippolito, and with female blandishments, declare he should not quit the palace, blandishments,
dishments, to which he bowed with the pouting smile of yielding reluctance.

They loved to wander amid the scenery of the shore, to gaze on the last rich day-streak of purple, on the landscape melting into shade, and flattering the eye with a thousand mixt and visionary forms. The sea pouring forth an expanse of infinite brightness, dotted with dark skiffs and gallies, the moles and promontories stretching their narrow lines into the sea, and terminating in watch-towers, whose summits still retained the sun-light; and to the North-East, Vesuvius, filling the view with masses of bold, tumultuous darkness. They lingered and listened to the stilly sounds of evening, the flow of the sea-breeze, the ripple of the tide, the hoarse voices of the seamen, and the lighter tones of peasants, who were dancing in groups on the shore, and mingled with, though distinct from, all that hum of ceaseless sound, which a populous city sends
sends forth at night, forming together a kind of animal music, which soothed, if it did not elevate. They lingered till Ippolito's mind, "not touched but rapt," suggested to Cyprian an opportunity for the object of his never-ending solicitude.

He spoke of earthly things in all their excellency and beauty, being but as a veil spread before the fulness of impassible perfection, to which we are not to look, but through them; he spake of the dissolution of earthly things, as but the withdrawing of a veil, when that which it concealed shall break upon us in all its glorious beauty, filling our renewed faculties with a fulness of joy, "such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard."

Ippolito listened, and was "almost persuaded to be a Christian."
CHAP. V.

Cum subito e sylvis, macie confecta suprema
Ignoti nova forma viri, miserandaque cultū
Procedit.  

When from the woods there bolts before our sight,
Somewhat betwixt a mortal and a spright,
So thin, so ghastly, meagre, and so wan,
So bare of flesh, he scarce resembled man. DRYDEN.

Second Letter from Annibal.

My last conclusion was abrupt; I broke off in expectation of something important—I was disappointed—the cries I heard were uttered by a servant, who passing near the chapel saw, or imagined he saw,
saw, something that terrified him almost to death. I listened to his story—I will listen to such no more; they unshiege and dissipate the powers which I would wish to concentrate and to fortify. I have a dark, inward intimation that I shall be called to something which will require no common energies of thought and action. The only circumstance of this man's fear worth relating, was, that when he recovered his senses, he demanded to be led to my father, and requested his confessor to attend. My father with a facility that astonished me, consented—but the monk was nowhere to be found. My father then seemed to recollect something that disturbed him, and was dismissing the man when, from the small door of his oratory, the monk issued, and stood among us. His appearance just at this juncture, his gaunt and sallow visage, the knots of his discipline stained with blood, the loose dark drapery
drapery of his habit, which as he stood in the shade, gave a kind of floating obscurity to his form, combined to make an impression on me, I do not like to recal. On the man, who had desired to see him, it was terrible; he again became insensible, and was conveyed from the apartment. I found Michelo had taken advantage of the confusion this incident had produced to defeat my intention of visiting the chapel that night, an intention of which it would be difficult to tell, whether the late circumstances had increased or diminished the force.— Have I mentioned the confessor to you before, Ippolito?—If I have not, let me do it now; he is a strange being. He was originally an ecclesiastic of the Greek communion, the errors of which he renounced, and shortly after entered into a convent in the neighbourhood of Naples, the superior of which recommended him as a person of uncommon sanctity
sanctity and unction. To this was added the reputation of his strict and almost supernatural austerity; qualifications still more welcome to our gloomy father.

I never saw a form and air more unearthly, a whole appearance more remote from the beings or business of this world, than this man's, whose name is Father Raffaello Schemoli. In his large fixed eye, all human fire appears to be dead; his face is marked with the traces of past, rather than the expression of present, passions or events; it seems like the bed of a torrent that has flowed away, but whose violence may yet be traced in its deep, dry, unlevelled furrows. The very few who have seen or known this man, speak of him with a kind of obscure fear. He is indeed an object for superstition or fancy to scare themselves with. Even to my mind, he often has borne the aspect of those beings who are said to hold communion with both worlds.
worlds, who are permitted to mock us with a semblance of human shape and intercourse, while they are doing their dark offices in other elements than ours. I am ashamed to write thus superstitiously of him, but I would you could see him. For three following days Michelo shrunk from me; at length I met him in the west corridor, and without waiting for a reply which I was determined to disregard, I told him I would visit his turret that night, and quitted him. But on my repairing to his chamber at night, what was my astonishment when he tenaciously refused to conclude the narrative of my uncle's disappearance. I entreated and expostulated; he was silent; I again threatened him with my father's interference. He shook his head emphatically: "Interference in this business," said he, "my lord is not likely to use; he already knows all that can be told, and perhaps is not solicitous that all should be known to you."
you."—Incensed, I intimated violent means.—"Violence can do nothing but destroy," said he, "and what pleasure can there be in sending with pain an old man to the grave but a few days before he would sink into it tranquilly." To this pathetic obstinacy of the old man what could be replyed? Yet still I continued to importune him, till casting a searching glance round the chamber, and rising, he grasped my hands for a moment, and whispered, "Signor, I am forbid."—I believe he meant to convey the impression which I at once received from these words, that the influence which constrained him was more than human; still my solicitude was resistless, more resistless for this dark intimation.—And I pursued the subject in the hope of leading him by vague and indirect questions to unfold it. "Have my uncle and his Countess been long dead,"—"their tombs have stood in the old chapel now eighteen years."—"This is
is evasive, Michelo, your knowledge must be positive.” “Is it then possible to know the living from the dead,” said he, wildly. “There are some who go in and out, and walk amongst us as living things, over whom has long been laid many a good weight of earth and stone, but” (checking himself) “for the Count Orazio, peace to his bones, they never rested in the chapel of his ancestors.”—“Explain, Michelo.” “Yes, Signor, for that I can tell. Shortly after the report of the late Countess’s death,”—“The Countess then is dead.” “Pardon me, Signor, I only mentioned the report of her death—I was returning from a journey, (on which I had been sent by your father,) and on approaching the castle by night I saw the chapel illuminated, and heard the chant of many voices, chanting the requiem. I hastened forward and learnt from some of the attendants, that my lord had died abroad, and that they were now interring the
THE FAMILY OF MONTORIO. 71

the remains, which had been brought over by Ascanio. I was at first stupified at the shock of such a desolation. The Countess, the children, my lord, within a few months!!!—I recovered a little—I wandered into the chapel—the service was over; the monks and attendants were dispersing; most of the torches were extinguished; nothing was heard but the low, faint beat of the last bell—I approached the bier, they had descended into the vault to prepare for its reception. I was alone, and longed for a last look of my master's face. As I bowed over the bier I thought the pall moved.—I retreated, but returned, and with a quivering hand, withdrew it.—There was neither shroud, nor cear cloth. I examined it with astonishment; there was no corse, nor any thing belonging to a corse within; the bier was overspread with pall and vestment only. I replaced them, I heard the steps of attendants ascending from
from the vault---I retired.'---In vain I pressed Michelo for conjectures on this extraordinary circumstance---at length he said, "sometimes I think Signor, that if he be indeed dead, they have laid him in some remote and unhallowed place, and the poor wanderer comes here to seek rest among his ancestors, but cannot obtain it." A long pause followed this melancholy and unsatisfying solution. I recollected, that these circumstances must, when they occurred, have caused some amazement, and I asked, had no doubts been suggested, no inquiries been made, had society slept over these marvels?

Michelo appeared to enter on his narrative with fear. "Shortly after these circumstances," said he, "my lord, your father, retired to his estates in Apulia, where you, and most of your family were born. I still resided in this castle, from which I brought my accounts to your father in his Apulian residence. About ten years ago, I set
I set out on such a journey, in the close of autumn. As I was obliged to cross the Apulian mountains, I took care to provide me a host in that wild country, who, as is the custom there, shifted his hut and flocks, according to the vicissitude of the seasons. I expected to find him among the woody recesses of the mountains, but after wasting the evening in search of him, I at length directed my mule to the foot of the mountains, in hopes of meeting some other hut in which to pass the night. In the first I saw, a large company of peasants were assembled round a blazing wood-fire; I joined them, and perceived my old host among them; he was relating a marvellous tale, to which I listened among the rest. It was wild and strange; it told of something that had been lately seen on the mountains, the terror of which had driven them together into the valley; what it was, I could not comprehend; some described it as a good,
some as an evil spirit; some said it was a human creature like themselves, and some affirmed, that it pursued and scared travellers out of their senses, to drag them to its den, and prey on their bodies. In this discourse the night passed on, and when the flaggons were dry, and the embers low, we stretched ourselves on skins and leaves around it, to sleep.

The strange tales I had heard, kept me for some time awake, and as the dying fire threw its red gleams around the hut, I almost fancied I saw shapes quivering in its light. At length, however, I commended my soul to the patron-saint of the mountain, and tried to rest. I heard a gentle noise at the door of the hut, as if the latch were raised and let down again; I immediately roused, and just leaned up on one elbow; my head was full of what I had just heard, and I watched the door silently. In a few moments, it opened, and something appeared at it which
which, after a pause, entered the hut. When I beheld it, I conjectured at once it was the shape that was seen on the mountain. It was indeed ghastly and horrible, and as it moved, all by the dusky ember-light, surely it seemed like something that had strayed from its prison-house of pain: I know not whether it was from curiosity, or the very extremity of my fear, but I disturbed no one, and it seemed to disregard me. At length it drew near the fire, and began a low muttering sound, accompanied with strange gestures, and I, who began to fear it was busied in some witchery, dreaded that the hut and its inhabitants would in a moment be wafted into the air. However, after some time, it rose and tottered out again, but after that, all the long night, as the blast came strong and loud from the mountains, such dolorous sounds were scattered on it as I could scarce think were uttered by a human voice. The next morning
morning I concluded my journey."—"And did no consequence or explanation follow all this?"—"Whenever after that I went into Apulia, Signor, I was sure to hear the same tales repeated. It was about two years after that, passing over the mountains, I reached about the close of evening, a woody defile, thick and dark, with ash, and elm, and chesnut. As I entered it, I thought I heard a voice call on me; the sound was like no sound ever heard or uttered before. I turned, and saw approaching from behind, the very figure I had beheld in the woodland hut; my mule stopped—it approached, and uttered a sound that I thought resembled my name. It was dismal; around me were the thick trees, and the light dimly appearing above their tops. I tried to rush into the wood, but my mule would not move. I stood trembling, and crossing myself, and now it came nearer, and now it was close to me. It spake; but the sounds
sounds were wilder than the howl of wolves. Its language was all mows and chattering; yet still it held me, and still seemed anxious for conference; I spoke, I know not what, in a pacifying tone, and I perceived, as my fear diminished, it became articulate. It spake at length in a kind of strange rhyme, which, though I did not understand, I cannot forget: among other things it said—

There is another of us here,
And we two dwell alone;
The raven that meets us, back doth fly,
And the she-wolf looketh ghastily
When she sees us by the moon.

I now acquired some courage, and spoke to it rationally— but it interrupted me—

And wilt thou on my errand go,
Nor baffle me with mock and mow—
Like the foul things, whose nightly nest
Is in the cranny of my breast.—
A fiery gush is in my throat,
And drowns confession's struggling note—

They
They bind me strong with darkling spell,
And what I wis—I may not tell—
And oft I bid on errand go
The leaf that falls, the gales that blow.
'Tis in the roar of dark-brown flood—
'Tis in the moan of wintry wood—
And every form that nature wears
Blairs it in burnish'd characters.
And still no eye the tale can read,
And still no tongue doth trump the deed—
Still, till my ghastly tale is told,
I scream a-night on wood and wold.—

When it had ceased, it released me, and I sprung onward. But in a moment afterwards it crossed me, and all the live-long night it beset me. Sometimes it would catch my mule's bridle, and stare me in the face; anon it would be seen playing its goblin-gamboils among the branches of the trees, from which it would drop down beneath my feet, and then, with a wild cry, bound away into the woods. I arrived, spent, and breathless at a hamlet in the wood, and"—" But how can this contribute
contribute to the explanation of any events that may have happened at the castle?"

"Pardon the prolixity of an old man, Signor; if I do not tell events in the order they occurred to me, I shall be unable to relate them at all. It is not long now, since I sojourned for the last time, with my old host in the valley; I saw when I entered, he was bursting with strange intelligence, nor did I wait long for his information. 'Two nights ago,' said he, 'we heard a knocking at the wicket of the hut, we were too much afraid of the vampire to open it; however, when the door was opened in the morning, it was found extended before it, without sense or motion. When it was brought in, and revived, we began to mistrust that it was a human creature, and when it was recovered, it addressed us in christian accents, and just like a christian man, besought us for shelter and blessed charity, and talked like one that was
was recovering from a long trance, and beginning to feel human feelings about his heart again. All that day he was faint and feeble, but still spoke in Christian accents; but towards night, we somehow began to feel uneasy again, not knowing what evil thing it might be, and fearful of some unknown mischief, we made a great fire, and sat round it all night, telling our beads, and watching as it lay; it started and groaned often, but made no other movements all night. Towards morning it was still weaker, and it besought them for the love of the virgin, to send for some pious man, and have the offices of Christian charity and grace done by it. They sent with all speed for a holy monk to a monastery in the mountains, and when he came, he started at the sight of such an object, but on conversing with him, and receiving clear and pious answers, he prepared to receive his confession, and administer the last rites. The
The peasant and his family left the hut, and the monk and the dying man were left alone. They were shut up that day and evening, and when the old man returned, he was struck with terror at what he beheld. The penitent had scarce a moment to live, and the confessor appeared nearly in the same state. He held out the crucifix with a trembling hand to the dying man, and the moment the breath left the body, he fainted. While they were using means for his recovery, he uttered some extraordinary words, which they believed referred to some terrible secret the confession had disclosed. When he recovered, he immediately prepared to return to the monastery, but a storm arose, that rendered it impossible for him to proceed. The monk was in an agony of solicitude; he stalked about the hut, and peeped from the casement, and at length demanded if the old peasant could supply him with materials for writing.
'For if' said he, 'the smallest article of what I am to attest, should escape, the consequences might be visited on me hereafter.'—The materials were procured, the monk sat down, and wrote all night, often crossing himself, and dropping his pen, and then again compelling himself to proceed. At length when he had finished his writing, he set out to return to the monastery; 'And we,' said the old man, 'are preparing to follow him with the body for interment.' I inquired, was the body still under his roof, and hastened to the room where it was laid. I approached it in curiosity and fear, for I remembered our encounter in the forest, when no power could have persuaded me the being I saw was human. I bent over it; the distortion of filth, and famine, and madness, was on the countenance no longer. I viewed it; I could not credit my eyes; again I looked on it, and again; it was indeed the figure I had beheld in the
the wood, and that figure, Signor, was—Ascanio.”—“How, Michelo, who?—the confidential servant whom you mentioned in your former narrative.”—“The same, Signor: in my late visits to Apulia, I had indeed observed Ascanio’s absence, and heard the strange conjectures of the domestics.”—“But then, Michelo, the monk and the secret subject of the confession—did nothing ever transpire? are these intricacies to be without solution, and without end?”—“Peace be with the souls of the departed,” said Michelo, crossing himself. “Strange means, it is said, were employed to suppress that story. Shortly after my return to the castle, there was a kind of report, that the monk was in possession of some secret, dark and terrible, relating to the Family of Montorio: it became an affair of public consternation and solicitude. The whole territory of Naples had their eyes fixed on the supposed movements of the monastery; it
it was said, they were preparing to divulge something to high authority, and that the monk who confessed the dying wanderer was to have an audience of the Pope himself; others said, that he had never been himself since the confession, and that the subject of it had been communicated to the prior, who was to assume the conduct of the affair. At length it was certain, that the monk set out on a journey with numerous attendants; that he seemed greatly agitated; that he travelled with extraordinary expedition; that he was often heard to say, (though in perfect health) he never would live to conclude the journey, and that after arriving at an obscure inn on the road to Rome, he could be traced no further; there was much inquiry and commotion about it. The host and his family were lodged in the Inquisition; and several in the neighbouring village apprehended, and vast rewards offered for the smallest intelligence
gence of the monk or of the documents that were supposed to be in his possession, when he disappeared. The prior of the convent, supported, it was said, by the enemies of the Family of Montorio, pursued the search with all the zeal and tenacity of an inquisitor; but the grave kept its secrets well.—Thus, Signor, the last remaining possibility of any intelligence relative to those events, was removed, and thus we remain, in ignorance and in fear.”

What passed through my mind, a moment after he ceased to speak, I will not dare to breathe even to you, Ippolito; if you can discover it from the question I asked, you may.—“My father, was he much shocked at these events?”—“He was much shocked at these events,” said the old man, as if fearful of using any words but mine.

“Perhaps,” said I, “his present gloomy dejection is owing to their preying on
him still;"—"I firmly believe," said Michelo, "they continue o prey on him still."—There was a dreary pause; the bell tolled three;—"'Tis late, Signor, we have wasted many hours in this melancholy conference; permit me to see you to your chamber."—I rose almost unconsciously; the sound of what I had heard was yet in my ears, nor did it quit them after I retired to rest.
It was not extraordinary that on Ippolito these letters should produce an effect merely slight and partial. His mind was not constructed to receive the impressions Annibal wanted to convey. That some strange obscurity had gathered over the fate of the late Count and his Countess, was plain from every part of the narrative; yet Ippolito, innocent and noble of mind, perused
perused the letters, not with suspicion, but with curiosity; and in the avidity with which he read a *narrative of wonders*, the observation (relative to his father's concern in those transactions) which had been suggested to the dark penetration of Annibal, was totally overlooked by his brother. His two predominant passions, love of the marvellous, and love of heroic adventure, inspired him with the thought, that some dark act of oppression or violence had been committed, the unfolding of which was reserved for him; and, as he thought, of relieving distress, or of vindicating virtue, his cheek glowed, and his frame mantled and dilated with generous enthusiasm. He was roused from his trance of heroism, by Cyprian, who invited him to their evening excursion. Ippolito, who was in that state of mind, which is pleased with itself and its purposes, complied; and the smile which, as he assented, lit up his beautiful countenance, gave to it almost an
an angel brightness and benignity. From such an expression in Ippolito's face, Cyprian was always observed to turn away abruptly and tremulously. When that face was partially averted, he would view it, with such a fixedness, as if his very mind was eye; when it was turned towards him with no marked expression, he would venture, timidly to look up; but when Ippolito smiled, Cyprian shrunk from him, with a sick and miserable delight, which was equally difficult to describe or account for.

They set out. It was one of those evenings, of which it is difficult for one not conversant with Italian scenery and climate to imagine the beauty. There was a blaze of animated, but tranquil loveliness, diffused over earth, and sea, and sky; there was a splendour which did not dazzle, a richness which did not satiate; there was not a cloud in heaven, not a dark spot on earth; the eye wandered over
over an extent of view, which its brightness made seem immeasurable, and rested on it with a fulness of complacency. The West, that presented a broad sweep of golden light; the sea, that chequered the reflection by the heaving of its waters, and the gliding of its vessels; the wooded windings of the shore, and the promontories clothed in their most verdurous and lovely hues, endless variety of shape and shade, from the dark brown tufts, to the feathery spray, that quivered in the breeze, and admitted the blue sky through its fibres; the spires and palaces, whose glowing western fronts, shone like jasper and topaz in the setting sun—all these objects, seemed to produce a kind of visible harmony, as sensible to sight, as the mingled accordance of sounds to the ear.

They ascended a path they knew, which conducted them to a recess, where shadowed by the arbutus and the mangolia, they sat, and surveyed the prospect.

After
After a silent pause—"Tell me," said Cyprian, "What is necessary to form a poet, but to be conversant amid such scenery as this?" "Many things more are necessary," said Ippolito; "labour, and art, and study, and knowledge, which must be supplied by experience, by observation on the mixt forms of artificial life, and by those hereditary habits of association, both of sentiment and language, which must be acquired by an intimacy with the works of similar authors. He who exposes himself merely to the impressions of nature, will indeed acquire a sensibility of them, but it will be a savage and solitary feeling, which cannot be embellished from want of internal cultivation, and cannot be communicated, from want of the aids and colourings of appropriate language." "Pardon me," said Cyprian, "your own observation seems favourable to me: you mention habits of hereditary association derived from one poet
poet to another—that this is true I admit, and if it be true, it must follow that the first representations were distinguished by their fidelity and excellence; now the early poets must have copied from nature solely, for society was in a crude and elementary state, and of previous models the first artists can have had none.”

“When I mentioned the early poets,” said Ippolito, “I did not mean the aborigines of Parnassus, the bards of savage tribes, as savage as they—whose effusions were oral and traditionary—I meant the poets of an age cultivated, but not so cultivated as our own. Nature must indeed be the object of poetical representation, but it must be nature modified and conformed to the existing habits and taste of society.”

“Were I a poet,” said Cyprian, “I should invert your rule, and admit the influence of prevailing manners into my strains, so far as they were conformable to.
to nature. From that species called pastoral, for instance, I would banish that trim and fantastic garniture, which removes it from every thing with which the observation or fancy has ever held alliance. Shepherds laying aside all concern for the simple objects and pleasures of a pastoral life, to pursue their mistresses with *speeches*, which to them ought to be unassuming and unintelligible, expending a portion of time which rural life can seldom spare, to talk of pains and pleasures, which even refinement feigns to feel, and which here, therefore, divest fiction of all imposing resemblance to truth. All this I would exchange for the true and visible imagery of rural life:—For the little peasant boy chasing the fire-fly, or feeding the silk-worm, slumbering in the shade at noon, or led, in pursuit of some wanderer of the flock, to a scene of unexplored wildness, treading with rude awe where his steps are not echoed by a human sound, and gazing on views,
views, which no eye, save the eye of the lone genius of the place, had ever before beheld; or touched with local and rural superstition, trembling in moon-light or in storm, amid ruins, deemed the resort of beings not of this earth. Or, if shepherds must be in love, I would represent them loving like shepherds, with simple fidelity, with unfastidious jealousy, with services such as pastoral life may require and receive, and with hopes of rustic enjoyment, such as labour may acquire, and simplicity relish. I am sure an assemblage of such imagery would give pleasure to those who love nature, and those who do not, might find at operas and carnivals, shepherds and shepherdesses sufficiently courtly and unnatural."

"You should study the poesy of the heretic English, as a penance for your own poetical heterodoxy," said Ippolito, "though perhaps the task would have little of penance in it. I have been acquainted
acquainted some time with the chaplain of the English Embassy; he is reckoned a man of literature in his own country, and were he not a heretic, I should think him a man of sense and probity. He tells me, that (from the surly independence of the national spirit, from the roughness of the climate, or from a taste derived from their ancestry) there is a spirit in their poesy, quite different from that of the continental. A simple appeal to the strong and common feelings of our nature, often made in such language as the speakers of common life clothe their conceptions in. Of this he describes the effect to be inconceivable by a reader accustomed to the poetry of Italy. From their dramas and poems, remote and heroic adventures are almost banished, and they turn with more emotion to the indigent peasant, weeping over her famishing babes—to the maniac, who shrieks on the nightly waste—to age, pining in lonely misery—
to honest toil crushed in the sore and fruitless struggle with oppression and adversity—than to the raving princess, or the declaiming hero. They have also a species of poesy among them, (unknown I believe to any but the northern nations of Europe,) which contributes to maintain this taste—the traditionary tales of their ancestry, the rude chronicles of a bold and warlike people, of which the language is wild and peculiar even to the ears of its admirers, from a kind of quaint and antique rhythm, which irresistibly associated in the minds of the hearers, with the thoughts of times long past, with melancholy and awe-breathing remembrances. These are the ballads of the West and North of Europe; they are set to a simple and monotonous melody, and chaunted with enthusiasm.

"There is a nation of people wild and little known, in a Western island, whose national poetry is still richer, and whose harmony
harmony is said to be more melting than that of the English—I have forgot their name, but of a people so endowed, the name will not be always obscure. The little poem I am about to read to you, relates the actions of a rude chieftain of that country."

**Bruno-Lin, the Irish Outlaw.**

A. D. 1302.

Bruno-Lin awoke in the night,
He griped his mace, and he roused his might,
He deemed it long till his followers all
With food and plunder filled his hall.—

* The subject of the following lines was taken from a note on a Poem, from which it is an honour to borrow a hint however slight or remote. It is perhaps the only merit of this trifle that it was suggested on reading a passage in "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." It is lamented that the scenery of this Ballad is so topical, that whoever has not been in Ireland, can scarce read it with pleasure; whoever has, will not be sorry to think again of the ruins of Melik, and the waters of the Shannon.—Bruno-Lin, (or Bryan-o-Lin, as he is sometimes called), is a Chieftain still famous in the memory of Irish song.
His followers food and plunder sought
From warded tower to hurtled cot—
A band of blood—they raised the spear,
And never a foeman stood anear.—
A band of blood—they laid them down
And there was not a meal for four miles round.

Where saintly peace at Melik* dwells,
They burst the convent's seared cells;
And broke the pix at altar's base,
And flung the wine in the Sacristan's face.

He griped his mace with a grimly smile,
(Hard to lift, and heavy to feel,
Banded with brass, and studded with steel)
The moon shone thro' a rift the while.—

He griped it, and swore by Mary's might,
To go and meet the traveller-wight.—

Bruno-Lin he left his tower
All in the mirk and midnight hour,
Through mossy bog, and matted brier,
He sprung with the speed of fairy fire,
Nor rested till his firm step stood
Where fords † dispart the wandering flood.

* Melik, an Abbey, whose beautiful ruins are yet extant on the banks of the Shannon, where it flows between Galway and Leinster.

† Fords of Melik.
O'er Shannon's broad and bridgeless stream,
Was passage else nor far nor near—
Through buttress'd arch, and shadowy pier,
In its dark blue wave, now frequent gleam.

He leaned with his mace on the red-moss stone,
And watched for the step of traveller lone.
—Was not a sound to stir the ear—
—Was not a form that thought could fear—
The owlet slept in tufted nest;
The river's ripplings whispered—rest.
The ear might list, till murmurs still
Of unheard sound the sense did fill.—
The eye might gaze, till forms of night
'Gan quiver in the misty sight.—

The breathless calm of the lone hour
Held o'er his soul unwonted power.—
Bruno cursed the stilly night,
And waved his mace, to wake his might—
He would rather hear the tempest rave,
And shout to the toss of the crested wave.—

A step—he lurks behind the stone;
A step—he comes—the traveller lone.—

It was a knight of moody mien,
His hand unglaised, his lance in rest;
His barded steed scarce felt the rein,
His footing stint the stirrup press'd.—

Thrice
Thrice as his step the brink assay'd,
A voice of woe did sweep the stream;
And thrice beneath the moon's wan beam
A bloody stain the waves embayed:

Bruno rushed from his trysting place,
   And dashed in the courser's front his mace—
In bone and brain the iron stood,
Reck'd to its base both spike and stud—
The mad steed bounding with the pain
Rose like a meteor in the air,
Left in sore plight his rider there,
   And plunged into the flood amain.—

Bruno rushed on the struggling wight,
And bore him to the earth outright:
On ringing plate, and riven mail,
The massive mace did bound like hail.
He cannot rise, he cannot breathe—
His lance is locked, his sword in sheathe:
From gash and rent the life-blood flows,
And faint and short his struggling grows:
His quivering head, and stark-swoln breast
The chase of hunted life confest—
"Lay me on Melik's holy shore!"
His last prayer sped—he breathes no more.—

Three paces backward Bruno strode,
And on the corse did sometime gaze;
Then in his arms assayed to raise—
And felt it was a dead-man's load.—
He rent the mail from his bleeding breast,
He rent the gems from his plumed crest:
The shield from his left arm unwreathed,
And half the burnished brand unsheathed:
But he would not the visor's band unbrace,
For he cared not to look on the dead man's face;
He heaps the spoil on the red-moss stone,
And lists for the step of traveller lone.

He comes—a lone and lowly wight,
Scant was his speed—and vile his plight:
He is y'douned in dusky weeds,
And loud, as he goes, he tells his beads.—
Bruno's deigned, this enemy
With craft, or weaponed might assail,
Or mell in perilous battaile;
So forth he strode, and bad him "die."
"For Christ's bless'd mother spare my blood;
I do not plead for craven life;
'Tis for a soul's most precious strife;
By Him who died on holy rood.—

Warrior—I held a wide domain,
Iron portals fenced my keep,
Mailed warders watched my sleep:
Warrior—I led an hardy train.
This hand, that marshalled my bold crew
In the fell foray of the *Pale,*
Armed with glaive of iron scale,
This hand an only brother slew!—

Oh, what shall give a murderer rest!
Still, still I feel the worm within,
Still burns the unquenched fire for sin—
And I have roamed from east to west.

Full fifty choirs their requiems raise;
On fifty shrines the tapers blaze,
*Them* fifty priests do watch by night
With missal chaunt, and taper'd rite;
O'er flourished cross, and trophied tomb,
His banner waves in warlike gloom,
And bells shall toll—till day of doom.—

Oh, what shall give the murderer rest!
I feel th' undying worm within,
Still burns th' unquenched fire for sin,
And I have roamed from east to west.

Aid from each sainted name I crave,
From cloistered tower to Eremite's cave;
To stone and well I ceaseless wend,
At cross and cairn my head I bend;
I've knelt and wept from morn to morn,
My knees are stone, mine eyes are horn—
All vain of penanced lore, the rede
Rite, and relic, and charmed bead,
And vigil pale, and pilgrim weed.

And now with faltering step I go—
These costly gifts shall Melik gain,
To the last rood of my domain—
(The dark fiend doth beset me so)
Peace to the parted soul to win
Or free the living soul from sin.

Warrior—for grace thy weapon sheathe,
So may thy last prayer gracious be,
So may thy soul part peacefully,
So may it triumph gloriously;
Nor plunge a soul unblest’d in death.”—

Bruno scarce marked his woful tale:
Small was his wreck of penance—rede
Scant was his ruth of saintly weed:

“Pilgrim, a shorter shrift shall ’vail,
If without book thou knowest a prayer,
Address thee, for thy corse lies there.”
Sore strove the man in agony!

But Bruno wrenched him without toil,
Like tufted weed from mossy soil,
And plunged him in the darksome waste—
And still his death-cry swell’d the blast;
"Might I but reach the shadowed spire,
Within its shadow but expire"—
Till the dark waters quench'd his cry.
Then Bruno from his scrip 'gan pour Pix, and chalice, and taper high,
And rood, and altar's imagery,
And vase, and vest for sacristy,
Of monkish wealth, a goodly store:

He heaped them on the mossy stone—
'Vails not to tell, how many a wight
Bowed beneath his mace that night;
'Vails not to tell, how, rich foray
With dint of perilous assay
Was won that night from traveller lone.

Bruno homeward now doth wend,
His prey around him heavy hung;
Beneath a part his shoulders bend,
Part in his mantle broad he flung,
And some was tied to his mace's end.

Home he wends with footsteps wight,
The moss beneath his backward tread,
Scant bow'd his lithe and limber head:
When lo—a meteor flames his tower,
Bright as the beam from faery bower

When wanderers,—mark o'er wat'ry Strath,
How burns the Elfin's taper'd path—
So shone that bright and wonderous light.—
Swift
Swift he comes—his followers all
With feast and foray had filled his hall.
There was note of boasting loud,
Pointing to prey, and stuanching of blood,
Till Bruno check'd the wassel rude.

His eye was lit with high disdain,
As he threw the prede upon the ground
And leant on his mace with idlesse stound,
All-while his followers gazed it round:

Then sudden with a startled mien—

"Who lapped our keep in nightly fire?
On towery ridge of castled wall,
Bartizan and beacon-spire,
Casement arch, and arrow loop,
And grated cleft and chink withal;
A flood of sheeny flame did tower—
When, as I entered, all was mirk."

None the cause could rede, I trow,
Much they mus'd, and murmur'd low:

"The lonely taper that lights our hall,
Gleams in a crevice of the wall;
Not broader seen than Melik's spire,
O'er Shannon's far and moon-light wave."

But soon they started from moody stound,
And as they bask round ruddy fire,
Gibe, and jest, in gamesome sort,
With the wide wassel cup went round—

When
When hark!—when hark!—
A blow upon the barred door!
The band,—each drew his unwiped dirk,
Indrew with quivering lip his breath,
And starting, grasped the board unneath,
And glanced around the hollow eye.
When louder, as of iron stave,
On boss and bar, the smiting rung—
The boldest of the rever's train,
Pressed on his lip his wary hand,
Seized with shorten'd grip his brand,
And went—but ne'er returned again.

Loud and more loud the smiting grew,
As bar and bolt in splinters flew:
Another goes—his mazed feere
With ear that faltered on the sound,
Listened as down the stair he wound;
But thence nor voice nor step could hear—
Loud and more loud the smiting grew—
Others still, and others went—
Bruno sat in his lonely selle—
He heard his band, as one by one
They trod the winding stair of stone;
Adown the footing, hard and dank,
He heard their sandals' iron clank;
He heard them reach the arched door,
But thence nor step, nor voice heard more.
Was nigh him now, nor friend nor seere—
Lonely thought his heart 'gan quell,
His proud eye 'vailed its hardiment:
As slow he rose, and now through mist
Of umber'd arch the door mote see,
He sign'd the cross, which he deemed a spell,
And faltered a broken Ave-Marie.—
Untouched—the door far backwards flew,
What shapes are they—through mist and fog
Now dimly seen, now sudden lost,
That lap in flame the fenny bog,
And distant now, and now anear,
Edge the dark lining of the cloud,
Sweep in dim march the heathy hill,
And now below in darkling dell,
Mantle the toothed and matted briar
With ridgy head, and spiky hand,
Talon and fang, of fringed fire—
All instantly and visibly?

Shapes, now sheeted in paley fire,
That shimmer like the moon-shine frost,
Now embound in flaky gyre
Of eddying flame, whose high career
Whirls them round with waftage loud—
While through its bickering volumes still,
Fitful gleam'd the shadowings blue,
In umbered skull, of flamy eyne,
Like steely studs in Morion dun,
Or tombed tapers sapphire sheen,
Or carbuncle in ebony.—

The sight was drear—but Bruno bold
Had deemed it but some pageant strange,
Play'd by the quaint and antic sprites
Through fog and fen that darkling range,
Till 'mid the ghostly rout he knew
The shadowed forms of those he slew.

Stern scowl'd the knight—his rifted mail
Disclosed his body gashed and bare:
Wan gleamed the penitent so pale,
And signed a shadowy cross in air:
And far, far off in cloudy sail
Other and sadder shapes were there.—
Forward—the gasted murderer fled,
Mid horror's pith to plunge his head.
Even in that dread and darkling hour,
His soul's first impulse urged its power.

Forward—his thoughts unbidden tend;
Forward—his steps unconscious bend.—
While as he turned his scared eye,
He sees athwart the reddening sky,
The spectre-cloud, in folding fires
Enwrap his castle's smouldering spires—
Giant-shapes of warlike sheen

Grasping
Grasping what seemed dart and spear:
And sulphurous lightning’s streamy lance,
O’er crested tower their wild forms rear,
And mouths of other than earthly mould
(Gleaming through the casements barr’d,
Or o’er the portal battle-scarred)
Through ebon horns rung war-notes bold—
And every hue and tint so pale
Shone out in that unearthly light;
Shadowy stole and form of mist,
Flar’d like the sunny chrysolite,
Ruby or opals argent mail,
And emerald, and amethyst.—

Onward the ghasted murderer rushed,
Till Shannon’s dark wave checked his flight:
Onward the fiery fabric urged,
And as he turned with hurrying tread,
Still seemed to topple o’er his head,
Still vollying, on the sulphured gale
Came skriek, and gibber, and ghost-like wail
Like stripes, his flying steps that scourg’d.

The river’s depths lay dark in night—
And his broad surface, still and clear,
Gave back no gleam of unbless’d light.
He paused a moment in breathless fear—
Then with a cry, (whose nightly yell

On
Oft sweeps its stream, as legends tell
He plung'd beneath—the winds are whist—
The echoes sleep—and all is hush'd.—

"I confess," said Cyprian, "in these
I find a pleasure, which I seek in vain
amid the sententious and cold concetti of
our poetry. Would I were one of the
Arcadi, or of those whose eminence in
the literary world enables them to extend
their influence to the arts." "Why should
you wish for that influence, and how
would you employ it?" said Ippolito. "I
should wish for it," replied Cyprian, "be-
cause the connexion between literature
and the arts is intimate and inseparable;
I would therefore make each the channel
of reciprocal improvement to the other.
How much more striking would the effect
be, if instead of the stiff figures of our
drama, coming forward in modern habili-
ments to warble modern music, contrast-
ing instead of representing the classic or
romantic characters whose names they usurp
usurp—the bard of those distant days and regions you have described, should appear with the rude and flowing drapery, the harp of bold, unmeasured song, the themes of old and wondrous story; and all amid scenes suited to his character; not among the glare of artificial lights and picturings, but amid rocks and ruins, the murmurs of waters, and the tremblings of moon-light. I have mentioned only one character, but might there not be a thousand others, and all with the appropriate melody of their age and nation, simple, or rude, and wild, as they might be, but all rendered more interesting by remembered and heart-touching association, than the most scientific strains uttered by modern harmonists?"

"And how would you contrive," said Ippolito, "to extend a similar improvement to the department of painting?"

"Oh!" said Cyprian, "that mute language whose powers I am convinced are yet
yet unexplored, that language now only intelligible to the eye, I would teach to speak to the very soul. Instead of copying the colouring of one artist, the design of another, the trees, and the sun-light, and the ruins, that are handed down from age to age, with mechanical improvement and imitation that excludes originality— I would have the painter look around life, and within himself; I would have him copy from nature in a state of motion, from existing life; from those forms and shades of manner and feeling, which are in a perpetual state of animated fluctuation around us, more numerous, more varied, and more vivid than they could have been, from the unimproved state of society, in the time of the elder masters: I would make all my figures, characters, and all my groups circumstantial and narrative. But for sensible representation, it is better to furnish example than argument. I saw a painting by an obscure master,
master; the subject was common; it was the interment of a corse; it was the moment after the vault was closed: from the devices I conjectured it was the burial of a young person, and from the countenance of an old man (who assumed no particular attitude) I was convinced it was his only child. Over the face of the priest was spread a chaste and holy sadness, such as men may be supposed to feel, to whom the fixed hope of a better life, have made the inflections of this of light and trivial avail. But the wretched parent was bowing to the priest, for having performed the last rites; was thanking him with the humility of courteous misery, for having for ever removed from him his last earthly stay and hope. There was something in the expression of the old man, thus trying to work features, convulsed with anguish, into a gentle smile, to blend the duties of the moment with the wrung feelings of the parent, and not
forget the decencies of grief, amid its stings and bitterness—I cannot express myself, but I looked at the other contents of the gallery with sufficient tranquillity. Such are the subjects I would introduce or search for, in every effort of mind or of taste; and to every subject, mental or artificial, I would attach its appropriate features of scenery and character.”

“And with the present scene, what group would you associate?” said Ippolito. Cyprian paused. “What if I were to take the pencil from you, and become an artist in your new school. I feel the inspiration coming: let me try—shall I sketch a little, friendly, monitory sylph, soliciting with gentle art, a giddy, graceless wanderer, from a vitiated sensibility of pleasure, and recalling him to those pure and innocent enjoyments which he blushes to have forsaken so long.”

“Oh, my master, my beloved master!” said Cyprian, “look forth, and wonder that
that you ever forsook them. This dim light that veils from us the forms and colours of the earth, gives to the sky a dense and sombrous majesty, which I love better than the bright blue of noon, or even the amber-glow of sun-set. See the high arch of heaven, above our heads, how vast, how spacious, without a star, and without a cloud. There is something in its aspect of calm stability and immutable duration. It stands in its strength, and its silence tells of eternity."

"And see far off, just over Capri," said Ippolito, "where the sky is of a paler blue, one little twinkling star of silver fire; and above it, the moon, with her slant crescent, slowly coming up. Does she not seem like a bark of pearl, floating on the deep, dark blue ocean. And see, while we speak, ten thousand stars are bursting into brightness. There is my natal Saturn—just where I point; how wan he looks to-night; oh, for a mental telescope
telescope to read the characters inscribed on that dark speck!" He mused, and Cyprian observed with anguish the change on his countenance. "Observe," said he, recovering himself, "in this deep silence of the night, the distinctness of the most faint and distant sound. Listen to that bell from the city; I think I could tell the very convent from which it sounds: how solemn it swells on the air—it is a death-bell."

"Peace to the parting soul—oh, it gazes on this scene with other eyes," said Cyprian, crossing himself.

"Yes, in a moment, how changed its views, its capacities, its range of existence and motion," said Ippolito, "from the dark, narrow bed of suffering, where all of nature that was admitted, was the sickly light that struggled with the watch-taper—in a moment, to see with a spirit's bright and boundless view, all nature, with her worlds and her systems, her laws, her causes,
causes, and her motions; yea, and the mighty Mover himself! Oh, wonderful!"

"And thither shall we follow; though not now, we shall be there in a space, which to the duration of that world, is as a moment," said Cyprian, "and be assured, that these cool and healthful moments of reposing thought, snatched from the fevering turmoils of the world, will have an effect that shall not be unfelt or forgotten there. There the best hours of our lives are numbered and valued, and the best of our hours, I believe, are passed amid the stillness of nature, and the silence of thought."

They descended, and returned to Naples.
CHAP. VII.

The influence which in these conferences Cyprian had obtained over the mind of Ippolito, was singular and powerful. The obscurity of his introduction, the peculiarity of his manners, gave even a hovering shade of awe to impressions, of which the character had otherwise been faint and fugitive. Not of a sex to inspire love, and still too female-like for the solid feelings of manly friendship, Cyprian hovered round his master, like his guardian sylph, with the officiousness of unwearied zeal, and the delight of communicated purity.

On
On their return to Naples, Cyprian observed, that a length of time elapsed before Ippolito joined him, though they had quitted the carriage together, and when he did appear, that his aspect was strange and altered. It wore an expression of ghastly wonder. His lips were white, and his eye vacant. He addressed abrupt inquiries to the servants, with the air of a man who wishes to satisfy his curiosity, without betraying the object of it; but from them he learned nothing. They "had seen no shape," they "had heard no sound," and Ippolito's inquiries seemed suddenly checked by something more than the difficulty of satisfying them. Shortly after, Ippolito retired to dress for an assembly, and Cyprian to his closet, where, in his master's absence, he was constantly employed in writing, and where (some whom the prying habits of an Italian servant had induced to watch him, declared, that) he gave himself up to emotions so terrible,
terrible, they wondered so delicate a frame could support them.

When Montorio returned, his valet was summoned to attend him alone. His cabinet was contiguous to Cyprian's, who obeying an impulse, which his concern for his master justified to himself, listened at a partition, in a state of solicitous feeling, which the low, broken sounds, that issued at intervals through it, irritated instead of appeasing.—At times, the words "strange"—"fearful"—"terrible"—and every expression of painful wonder met his ear. Some observation was then made by the servant, of a tendency apparently palliative or explanatory, to which Ippolito answered with solemnity: "Impossible; if I have life and sense I saw it—three times to-night, distinct and terrible."

A sentence followed from the servant, which, partly from the stretch of most painful attention, and partly from the answer, Cyprian conjectured to be an inquiry
inquiry about some form or shape. It was followed by some imperfect answer from Ippolito, but of which Cyprian could not discover whether the imperfection arose from the form being too obscure or too horrible for description.

The conference ceased, and Cyprian had scarce time to sit down to his papers, which he turned over with shaking hands, and a vacant eye, when Montorio entered the room. He stalked about for some time gloomily, then like one who wakens slowly from an oppressive dream, he gazed around him, and sighed heavily. Cyprian, who wished to ascribe to himself the uneasiness that prevailed, lest he should irritate a disturbed spirit, said timidly, "I have been writing, since you told me of the English poetry, and this has been the cause of all this foolish embarrassment; I was anxious and ashamed to shew it to you." He held out a paper, which
which Ippolito took with a listless hand, and while he read it, Cyprian watched his countenance with an emotion, the fate of his poetry did not excite.

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**The Lady and her Page.**

**I.**

It was a sweet and gentle hour,
'Twas the night of a Summer day,
When a lady bright, on her palfrey white,
Paced across the moorland grey.

**II.**

And oft she checked her palfrey's rein,
As if she heard footsteps behind,
'Twas her heart of fear that deceived her ear,
And she heard but the passing wind.

**III.**

There trips a page, that lady beside,
To guide the silken rein,
And he holds up there, with duteous care,
Her foot-cloths sweeping train.

**IV.**
IV.  
And that page was a knight—who in menial plight,  
For love of that stately dame,  
Long served at her board, though a high-born lord,  
And a foe to her father's name.

V.  
Across the haze, there streamed a pale blaze,  
And the page's cheek blanched with fear;  
"Oh, see, lady, see!—at the foot of yon tree,  
The blue fire that burns so clear.

VI.  
"'Tis the prince of the night, 'tis the elfin sprite,  
With his ghostly revelry:  
Sweet lady stand, with this cross in thine hand,  
Or thou and I must die.

VII.  
"For as legends tell, an unseen spell  
Doth screen him from mortal wound,  
Unless the steel be dipped in a well  
That holy wall doth bound."

VIII.  
Sad was her heart when she saw her page part,  
And she feared she would see him no more,  
For in secret long, her soul was wrung  
With a love that ne'er trembled before.
IX.
Oh! what is the sound seems to come from the ground,
And now sweeps along on the air——
She dared not to look, for with terror she shook,
And she tremblingly murmured a prayer.

X.
And o'er the dun heath, a balmy breath
Stole like roses and violets sweet,
And the lavender blue, all dropping with dew,
Strewed the ground at that lady's feet.

XI.
"Fair maiden come, to our twilight home,
Where we'll sport so merrily;
The glow-worm by night, shall lend us her light,
As we dance round the grey ash-tree.

XII.
"Or with unwet wings, we'll sport in the springs
That roll far beneath the sea;
Or to the bright moon, we'll fly as soon
If my love thou wilt deign to be."

XIII.
Askance she gazed—and her eye she raised—
A youth stood timidly nigh,
And of a truth, 'twas as lovely a youth
As ever met maiden's eye.

XIV.
XIV.
His tresses brown, that came mantling down,
Seemed his snowy neck to veil;
And with chrysolite eyes, his wings' crimson dyes
Were starred like the peacock-tail.

XV.
His eye was bright, as the north-streamers' light,
But his cheek was sad and pale;
And the lines of care that were written there,
A spirit might read and wail.

XVI.
But his sky-tinctured vest to his eye-lids was prest,
And his heart seemed bursting with woe,
And the white, white rose that wreathed his brows
Seemed pale and paler to grow.

XVII.
"I've watched thee late and early,
I've watched thee night and day,
I've loved thee, lady, dearly,
With a love that can never decay.

XVIII.
"I've heard thy sleeping sigh, lady,
I've heard thy waking prayer,
No mortal foot was nigh, lady,
But I was weeping there.

XIX.
FATAL REVENGE; OR,

XIX.
"With an eye that no thought can deceive, lady,
I've seen love-sweetly stealing on thee;
I know that young bosom can heave, lady,
And shall it not heave for me."

XX.
The lady stood—and her unchilled blood
Gave her lip its warmest hue;
But the cross to her breast, was fervidly prest
And still her heart was true.

XXI.
"Yet rest thee here, oh! lady dear,
And my minstrel spirits gay,
With harp and lute, and fairy flute
Shall play thee a roundelay."

XXII.
All was hushed and still, on the elfin hill,
All was hushed in the evening vale,
Not a whisper was heard, not a footstep stirred,
Not an aspen-leaf shook in the gale.

XXIII.
Then soft and slow, a note of woe
Came far on the breathless air;
'Twas wild as the strain of the mermaid train,
When they're combing their yellow hair.

XXIV.
THE FAMILY OF MONTORIO.

XXIV.
'Twas wild as the dirge, that floats on the surge,
The mariner's lonely grave——
All-while mortals sleep, they sing and they weep,
And they glide on the moon-light wave.

XXV.
Then it rose rich and high, like the chaunt of joy,
That breathes round the hermit-bower;
When cherubim bright leave their mansions of joy,
To soothe his dying hour.

XXVI.
Oh! how the heart beat of that lady sweet,
But her heart did not beat with fear,
The strain so wild, her senses had guiled,
And she loved though she trembled to hear.

XXVII.
But who is he that flies, with his soul in his eyes,
Wide waving a faulchion of steel?——
By the flush on her cheek, ere a word she could speak,
A nursling babe might tell.

XXVIII.
('Twas an urchin-sprite, in the guise of her knight,
'Twas a wile of the elfin king,
And the vision so quaint, in form and in teint,
Her soul to her cheek did bring).

XXIX.
XXIX.
“Hushed, hushed, be your fear, for your true knight is here,
With the brand that his patron saint gave,
No elfin wight may dare its might,
For ’tis dipped in St. Angelo’s wave.

XXX.
“And the cowled friar, and convent quire,
Are waiting our nuptials to say;
Haste, lady, haste, for the night’s fading fast,
And the eastern cloud is grey.

XXXI.
“But give me the cross that’s hid in thy breast,
And give me the rosary too,
And I’ll lead thee o’er the perilous moor,
On the faith of a knight so true.”

XXXII.
Oh, she gave up the cross that was hid in her breast,
And she gave up the rosary too—
As he grasped them, he frowned, and he smote the ground,
And out rushed the elfin crew.

XXXIII.
And the goblin rout gave a maddening shout,
And danced round them in many a wild ring,
And
And the slender waist of that lady chaste,
    Was clasped by the elfin king.

XXXIV.
All loose was her hair, and her bosom was bare,
    And his eye it glared fierce and bold,
And her wan lip he pressed, and her shuddering breast,
    And he grasped her locks of gold.

XXXV.
But instant a blow made the caitiff forego.
    His gripe of that victim fair,
And deadly he groaned, as he shrunk from the wound,
    And phantom crew vanished in air.

XXXVI.
"I've saved thee, my love, by help from above,
    I've saved thee from mortal harms,"
And no word she spoke, but she gave him a look,
    And sunk in her true-knight's arms*.  

* This poem was communicated by a friend.

Signor Ippolito,
Ippolito, though he perused these lines with the apathy of one occupied by other thoughts, still seemed anxious to escape from them, by tenaciously seeking employment. He snatched up the papers that lay before Cyprian, and vehemently began to peruse them. Cyprian, all agitation, rose, and besought him to restore them.—"They are not to be read."—"You increase my anxiety to examine a composition that is written—not to be read," said Ippolito, with a languid smile. "They must not be read by you—to you they can afford no pleasure; they are a simple tale of woman's love, and we men believe that women cannot love; it is a tale not to be told in an hour of levity, or when an intercourse with the light, cold characters of the world has hardened the heart, and made it slow to believe, that there are beings, who only live to feel, and who have died of feeling. Choose some other hour, and bring with you another
another heart. I shall make no demands of outrageous sympathy, for I know that the subject is removed too far from the world's line and topic of feeling, to expect it. Nor do I think that real suffering ever sought relief, but in the patience of unanswering belief. This is all I would ask, but this I fear I would ask in vain at such an hour from you."—"Cyprian," said Montorio, touched by his words, "the frivolity in which you see me immersed, is artificial and irksome; I have a heart capable of passion, but the object capable of inspiring it, I yet seek in vain. It is but a little while since I entered society, with feelings ardent in youth, and exalted by hope—those feelings are repelled, crushed, almost extinguished. I submit to a pitiful compromise with the depraved system of society; I trifle with the triflers of the day, and languish even for the refreshing hope of imaginary excellence. All who are beautiful, I can admire.
admire; her only, who can love, can I love."—He clasped his hands, and threw up his dark, ardent eye to heaven, and stood with the look and energy of inspiration.—"If such a being ever existed," said Cyprian, "there is her history."—"And is she yet alive," said Ippolito, "and is she to be found?"—"No; she lives no more, she has passed away, as few have perished, without note, and without remembrance. All that loves to cling round the image and memory of the dead, has forsaken her; she perished without a tear, without a memorial, without a grave!

"This is a narrative of thoughts, not of circumstances—no ear heard, and no eye saw her sufferings; and never did the subject of her sole thought enter into the thought of another. It is necessary before I begin to read these fragments, to mention to you, that the writer was young in years and in sentiment; the very
very child of simplicity and enthusiasm; an union not impossible in young minds. She entered into the world, she was surrounded, dazzled, and confused. But her feelings expanded, as the eye becomes accustomed to the glare of recent light. In the tumult of new pleasures, she saw an object, on whom she gazed with the smile of new-born love; it was her last, last smile.—He was indifferent, because he was unconscious; she never told her love, till its posthumous disclosure was no longer a crime in a vestal."

Ippolito prepared to listen, though it was now late, for every object combined to soften him to attention; the chaste and mellowed light, the quiet apartment, whose floating perfumes just stirred the sense, the soothing pensiveness of Cyprian, who concealed his face with his hand, and who reads with the voice of one who fears to trust his own emotions, as he reads.—"The first fragment," said he, "describes
It is midnight—all is silent around me—not a breeze, not a murmur, above, below. And I, amid this stillness of nature, how and what am I?—What is this feverish tumult of mind and sense that contrasts and deepens the silence around me? Whom have I seen? I know not; let me not speak his name; I will not think who he is; I am most happy. My feelings dwell in silence on their inward treasure. The gladness within me is still and balmy, like the morning-sun of a vernal day. There is no being blest as I am this night, except him; he must be happy, he is so beautiful. How is a tumult so wild, a calm so deep, as I feel to-night, reconcileable?—My spirits are agitated but my mind is still.
April 7th.

The costly dullness, the cold faces, the heavy feasts of supercilious grandeur—All are vanished—All that is tedious, has ceased to be felt. What matters it where I am, when he is with me every where? A single spell of thought, an unuttered wish, a moving of the mental lips, brings him to my mind. There is a precious store of pleasant thought which we love to dwell on in solitude without communication, and without suspicion. This with me, is the thought of him.—

There comes to me amid crowds a mental and inaudible whisper of his name. I think of him, and happiness steals over me like the silent perfume of evening; like music trembling over a length of moon-lit waters.—

April 9th.

For hours to-day have I sat, without the consciousness of thought, yet without vacancy;
vacancy; his image fills up the mind as if by fascination. Many passed me; I heard their steps, without feeling their presence.—Is not this like love?—Impossible; a vestal cannot love;—no, my happiness is unmixed with a lover's misery; no restlessness, no jealousy, no torture of impossible hope, no anguish of disappointment.—No; I may indulge these dreams without danger, and without fear; for I cannot love;—It is not of his beauty I think, 'tis of himself; yet I remember well his heavenly form, his sunny cheek, and the ringlets of his brown, brown hair; yet I do not think of them; I need not; they are before me for ever.—

* * * * * * *

April 20th.

Whence is this new wish to mingle in the world? Can it be a wish to see him again? Why should I see him?—Those who have watched the showery scintillation
of the meteor, and gazed upon the glorious vision with uplift hands and eyes, do not wait for its return; why should I waste away life in gazing! I have no other hope. What am I doing? Where have I wandered? hope and he—It is sometimes dangerous to think of danger.—

April 30th.

I think too much of him; what I once thought impossible, is certain; I think of him too much. And must I lose that cherished thought; that charm, whose silent agency opens a glimpse of mental fairy land? Who would rob the poor hermit of his only treasure, the lovely face of his Madonna, that only smiling face he is ever permitted to see, and to which he turns in the hour of solitude and vacancy, with devotion animated, not extinguished?

Such I had hoped his image had been to me in the vigils of the dark hour, in the
the loneliness of my cell—and must I resign it?

* * * * * * *

At this moment, several servants entered, with each of whom Ippolito successively whispered, and after listening with much perturbation to their answers, he rushed from the palace, to which he did not return till late the following evening.
CHAP. VIII.

Gaudet imagine rerum—

Rejoices in the pictured forms of past events.

The Castle di Muralto, the residence of the Montorio family, was totally unlike the modern mansions of the Italian nobility. Very few vestiges of Gothic architecture yet remain on the Continent in a tenanted state.

The style of their palaces is marked by elegance, lightness, and novelty. Their polished structures are composed of marble.
ble, mingled with materials which are reckoned precious in more northern climes; they are beautified with all the orders and ornaments of architecture, and present images the most remote from gloom and solemnity. The castle had been built in the time of the Norman kings of Sicily; it possessed all the rude and massive characters of that age, darkened by the injuries of time, and the gloom of antiquity. The ramparts, like piles of rock, the deep length of windowless wall, the turretted and embattled angles, the narrow-arched doors crested with the defaced arms of the house and its alliances, some bearing the pedestals, and some the remains of the gigantic statues that once frowned over them; and whose huge fragments obstructed the approach of those their hoary grandeur invited to examine them; all these seemed to realize the descriptions of Gothic romance, and fill the mind with melancholy awe, and wild solemnity. It
It stood on an eminence of the rich Campagna, near the foot of the mountain; and amid a country luxuriant with cultivation, and sparkling with palaces, the castle reared its scathed and warlike front; seeming to enjoy a sullen repose from the wounds of war and time, and to tell the grandeur of those ages that beheld it in its strength. Such was the castle, of which it was necessary to tell thus much, to give clearness to circumstances, which would appear obscure and strange if related to have passed within the walls of a modern palace.—A few days brought another letter from Annibal.—

* * * * * * * *

——— I had before apprized Michelo of my intention to visit the apartments so long shut up. He had again recourse to dissuasives; but contradictory dissuasives defeat themselves, and I was only confirmed in my pursuit, by his telling
ing me at one time, it would lead to no discovery, and at another, that the discoveries I should make, would prove a source of lasting inquietude. I was vexed that the old man should thus treat me as a child, who was only seeking to gratify a childish propensity, and could be diverted from it by childish arguments.

I entered on a vindication of my motives, and as the sudden flash of zeal often discovers what was concealed from ourselves, I involuntarily detected an earnestness and solemnity in my purposes, of which I had not hitherto been conscious. I desired him to consider me not as gratifying a vague and puerile impulse, but as pursuing a definite object, of obscure but real importance, and if real, demanding all the zeal, the energy, and the capacity of the most powerful mind.

"If my presages are just, Michelo, I shall enjoy the highest honour allowed to man,
man, that of confirming the evidence, and fulfilling the purposes of divine interposition, and if they are not, I shall at least relieve myself from doubts and fears that are becoming intolerable; I shall probably detect and punish fraud, and certainly possess a resource against future imposition.” As I said this, I turned my eye on Michelo, but his countenance was unaltered. I have indeed no reason to suspect him. I now declared my intention to visit the apartments that evening, and inquired whether he would be able to procure their keys? “I have kept those keys for many years, Signor; I enjoyed in my youth extensive trust under your uncle, and still there are some employments which my lord your father would not willingly trust to others, and which I am therefore still permitted to discharge.”

Michelo, I find, is one who tortures his hearers by perpetual allusions to secrets, of which nothing more than the hints are ever
ever suffered to escape him; who awakens expectation to a painful state of suspended existence, and leaves it there gasping and unsatisfied; and this not so much from malevolence, or casual indiscretion detecting itself, as from a perpetual struggle between a mind pressed with a burthen too great for its powers, (and therefore anxious to relieve itself by communication,) and the monitions of conscience, which tell it is not right, or of fear, which whispers it is not safe to disclose it.

I have therefore become accustomed to his manner, and forborne to importune him. In the dusk of the evening he promised to attend me. But by the beauty of two succeeding evenings, my father was induced to order ices and refreshments to the pavillion of the fountain; we were obliged to attend him. There, amid the indulgence of every wish, and every sense; music and fragrance, flowers and
and feasting; perspectives, through the foliaged lattices, of luxuriant gardens, warm with the brilliant amber of sun-set, which played on the limits of the view, in a quivering flood of indefinite brightness: of waters and woods, among which distant melody floated, breathing a low and dying note, so sweet, it seemed caught and echoed by the shells of listening spirits. Amid such scenes we sat in sombrous state, the mute, sad libellers of nature and enjoyment, more like statues that decked the feast, than human beings, partaking its pleasantness.

The third evening I awaited Michelo, in my apartment, and he arrived at the appointed hour. It was the dusky stillness of twilight; all was tranquil in the castle, and the grey light that came paler through the casements, seemed to promise quiet and obscurity. We passed hastily through the vaulted cloisters that lead to the lower stories of the tower; and then
then opening a door, that led to a long passage, we seemed to enter on a new region of the castle. Here all signs of life and habitation seemed to cease; the walls appeared never to have enclosed a human habitant. The very echoes had a strange hollowness, as if they were for the first time awakened by the tread of a human foot. We reached another door, which seemed intended never to open; Michelo applied one of several keys which he now produced, and I was obliged to assist him with my utmost strength before it yielded. I now discovered the foot of a stair-case, which wound beyond the sight, and on the ballustrade of which Michelo paused to take breath. I ascended the stairs, they were dark and narrow, and conducted us to a door which required our united strength again, to open. Michelo, who had exhausted his in the effort, feebly staggered onward when it yielded, and sunk into a seat. I followed,
I followed, gazing round me; it was a spacious apartment, apparently heaped with faded furniture, but of which nothing could be distinctly seen, for the light that broke through the dismantled case-ments, and torn tapestries of the windows, could only discover its size. Michelo falteringingly withdrew the drapery that obscured one of the windows. I now looked around the apartment; the decay appeared to proceed more from neglect than from age; Every thing was covered, and almost consumed by dust: all the furniture of a sumptuous chamber was there. The bed stood under a canopy, dark and defaced, but still retaining its draperies, its pillars, and its plumage. "This was the bridal apartment of the Count Orazio," said Michelo; "here the Countess passed most of her melancholy life; and here"—he turned away.

I inquired why these apartments had been shut up, and why the costly furniture,
that might decorate the most modern apartments, was here suffered to decay in obscurity.—"They would perhaps have revived painful recollections," said Michelo, falteringly; "when my lord therefore returned to his castle, I received orders to remove hither the furniture of those gay apartments, and then to close these doors for ever; an order which I lament I have been tempted to infringe." Again filled with wonder, which the circumstances of the place, and these dark suggestions inspired, I renewed my importunities to Michelo, to finish the tale he had begun in the turret-chamber.

He heard me with increasing anguish of perplexity, but with unyielding resolution. His eye wandered round the apartment, as if he dreaded that even the broken and unmeaning words he uttered were overheard; "I cannot, I dare not, you know not how I am straitened;" (he wrung his hands, and whispered in the struggling tones of misery)
misery) "a strong arm is stretched out upon me; it deals with me darkly, but feelingly; no, I cannot, I dare not." An impulse of inquiry struck me that moment, which I indulged, though I could not account for.—"Michelo, is this mysterious silence, connected in its cause, or its object, with the confessor Schemoli?" I shall never forget the look which he assumed at this question; his countenance expressed the most exquisite pain, as if for danger I had incurred by the question, while rising on his feeble feet, and pressing his whole hand on his lips, he conveyed in the strongest manner by his attitude the dread of being overheard, though where we were it was impossible for human listeners to penetrate.—I was so confounded by his aspect, that I forbore to renew my question, and a long pause followed.—"Do you wish to see the other apartments Signor," said he; I followed him with that sullen silence, with
with which we comply with the proposal of one who has recently disappointed us, and from whom we wish in our spleen, to conceal that the remainder of his information has interested us.—We entered the other apartment—when I write these words, I pause in thought; I recollect how important in the account of life, that moment will be: and I wonder that even unconsciously I approached it with so little emotion. This apartment was like the other, dark and decayed. The light that streamed through dim discoloured windows, the last faint ray of evening, accorded well with the objects it disclosed. The silent mouldering of decay, the dusky stillness of desolation, and the old pensioner of memory, pointing with withered hand, to the images that supplied her morbid and melancholy pleasures.

He proceeded to display the pictures: the first was that of the Count Orazio. I think
I think the painter to whom he sat, must have trembled to raise his eye to him; he must have felt as the prophet did, when he beheld steadfastly the countenance of Hazael, and foretold the sufferings of his country. It was one of those faces which tells the character at a look; the bold, thoughtful front, the dark brows that almost met, the strong curve, and prominent lines of the nose, the proud curl of the upper lip, of which even the smile seemed to hold alliance with contempt, the rich, dark, sanguine complexion, which seems to be the shade the stronger passions love. From such a character I would expect the fiercest bursts of passion; the proudest sternness of heroism; soarings of super-human virtue, or sallies of outrageous depravity; the impassive brightness of an angel, or the potent and glaring malignity of a fiend.

Michelo supported this picture with an averted eye, and as he replaced it, shook in
in every limb—"And this," said he, displaying another, "is the portrait of the Countess Erminia; when I look on that picture, twenty years seem to pass away, and I feel as I did when I first saw her; such she was, with that gay air of careless loveliness; yet even then there were some who spoke of a melancholy, a dejection, that they said was discoverable through all her beauty and splendour. I could not see it, she was so lovely, that to me, she ever appeared to smile." He continued to speak, I believe; I heard him not; yet the murmur of his praise dwelt on my ear, as something that accorded with my own feelings, and that was pleasant, though not distinct to me. I remained in the mute trance of admiration; I knelt without a breath, without a sound, almost without a thought before that picture. It was the first time I had ever beheld beauty, ever knew what was love: I will not call beauty, that assemblage
blage of colours, to which the cold eye of judgment gives the praise of harmony, and quits it;—no;—it is the communication of unknown pleasure; it is the discovery of that unexplored chord of mind, which is touched for the first time by the hand of harmony: it is the realizing those forms which float in the morning's dream, in the musings of twilight: it is the picture of Erminia. In a space which appears as a moment, I had experienced every emotion that accompanies the varied character of passion; the delicious anguish, the painful joy, the fear sweeter than hope, the hope sweeter than enjoyment; the visionary existence, the pictured dream of thought, the high and super-human tone which this passion alone gives to the feelings and the character; in a moment I had lived the whole life of a lover; it was no longer a picture before which I knelt, I was convinced the original yet existed. It seemed to me more probable that
that the sun should be blotted from heaven, than that such a being should be permitted to quit existence, without trace, and without resemblance. There was a reality in my feelings, a fixed persuasion of her certain existence, which I know not what to ascribe to, except the living loveliness of that form. Brows that thought; eyes that spoke; lips that smiled; smiled mutably with living and sensible change; hair, of which lest I should disturb the gauzy waving, I held my breath as I gazed. She stood as in her days of early happiness; the scene and attitude were sylvan; a fawn was flying from her, to whom she held out her hand; mine was extended too.—And her hair;—it is that dark brown, whose deepening waves, and tendril ringlets, have a sunny and burnished brightness, that resembles the foliage of a bower, tinged with the rich varieties of autumnal light:—but oh, to play with those ringlets, to look in those living
living eyes, to kiss that breathing neck—You think me mad—I may be so—was I so, when kneeling and attesting the lovely form itself, I vowed to pursue the original through the world;—to preserve my affections for her with vestal-sacredness; to make life a long pilgrimage of love; and never to know peace of mind or body, till I discovered and possessed her.

Whatever may be thought of such a resolution, I at least experienced from it, what I expected;—it composed my mind; it exalted and gratified my feelings; from its bold impracticability, I actually derived an inviting omen. It seemed worthy of the dignity of my passion; it seemed to promise that no difficulties should obstruct that pursuit, which had set out by daring all.

The light was now declining fast; an hour had elapsed since I entered the cabinet; my original purpose had been utterly forgotten; but another resource was suggested.
ed to me, as I was quitting it, and the thought made me bless my happy facility in designing. I took out my tablets, and before the beam that seemed to linger on her countenance, like my own gaze, had died away, I sketched a likeness with such fidelity as convinced me the original inventor of painting, was love. I continued to compare it with the original, by a light which none but the quickened eye of passion could have distinguished any thing by; and the sketch so perfect at first, seemed to want a million of touches, when held to the picture. I continued to add them, rather with the pleasure, than the hope of amendment.—But Michelo, terrified at my delay, supplicated me so earnestly, not to expose us to the danger of discovery, that reluctantly, at length, I quitted the apartment. It was late when I regained my own, which I did however in safety, and obscurity. When I was seated at my lamp, I reflected (and you probably have anticipated...
anticipated me) on the views with which my pursuit had commenced, and the visionary indulgence by which I had suffered them to be suspended. The being who goes forth in the doubtful confidence of a supernal summons, and the shadowy dignity of an agent of heaven; armed with all the powers of his nature, and dreading a demand for more than all; and who, when arrived, employs the hour of his trial in kneeling before a picture, and pouring out passion to an insensible representative of the dead; certainly presents no very consistent image of human resolution. While occupied in these sage thoughts, my eyes glanced on the picture in my hand, and I forgave myself.—The remainder of the night was passed not in self-reproach, and resolutions of future fortitude, but in finishing and colouring it. I now mix with the family, with the picture of Erminia in my bosom, and feel, like one who has found a treasure, which
which he smiles to think those around him are ignorant of; like one who carries about him an invisible talisman against care and pain, against the apathy of unawakened feeling, and the vacancy of an unemployed life.
CHAP. IX.

Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius, ima dehiscat,
Vel pater omnipotens adjat me fulmine ad umbras,—
Ante pudor quam te violo, aut tua jura resolvo.

Virgil.

But oh! may earth her dreadful gulph display,
And, gaping, snatch me from the golden day;
May I be hurl'd by heaven's almighty sire,
Transfixed in thunder, and involved in fire,
Down to the shades of hell, from realms of light—
Ere, sacred honour! I betray thy cause
In word, or thought, or violate thy laws.

Pitt.

In this letter, romantic as it was, Ippolito discovered strong traces of real passion, such as exists under the most unexpected circumstances, and contends for its existence
istence with difficulties which any other passion would decline as impracticable. But for light subjects of thought, he had now no leisure, and no wish. One object, dark and bewildering, filled all his thoughts. Since the night he had betrayed so much agitation on his return from an excursion with Cyprian, he had never recovered his tranquillity. He appeared either in contemplation, or in strong mental debate; perplexity and fear were in all his movements, and these had become so irregular, as to suggest he was engaged in no ordinary pursuit. The day he usually passed alone; about midnight he quitted the palace, and passed the remainder of the night, where no one followed, and none could conjecture. At this change, his gayer acquaintance laughed, his friends wondered, and Cyprian wept. But silence and wonder were all the resources they had; his silence remained impenetrable. Sometimes he mingled
mingled in society, and laughed and fluttered with the eager gaiety of one who is resolved to snatch a respite from pain:—but however pleased, or pleasing others, the clock striking twelve, dissolved the spell. Beyond that hour neither pleasure nor importunity could procure his stay. He rose abruptly, dismissed his servants, nor was visible till the morning, when he returned alone and slowly through the Strada di Toledo. Sometimes, he admitted Cyprian, and listened to a continuation of the fragments, because he was not interrupted by demands for comment or approbation; while Cyprian, ignorant of any thing that held alliance with art, read simply on, hoping that attention was included in silence, or even when he discovered negligence, compromising for the pleasure of being admitted into the presence of Ippolito.

May 7th.
May 7th.

This perpetual struggle is worse than either alternative.—To do all I dread to do:—to see him again, were only the guilt of a moment; would it not be better than to waste life in this misery of uncertain debate, which neither possesses the resolution of innocence, nor the enjoyments of guilt:—what if I see him no more—But why not see him, ever present as he is to my thoughts;—is he not perhaps more seductive, more fatally lovely, to the eyes of imagination, than of sense? Yes, I will see him, I will gaze on him, I will discover how unlike the object of my thought, the image of this dream he is; and then I shall cease to think of him.

May 16th.

I have again seen him;—I am yet breathless;—I cannot yet look into my mind; yet let me think—yes, I have thought enough now for life. I shall think my live-long
live-long convent hours away.—Oh, he is gloriously beautiful. What thoughts hover around his image; like music streaming before the approach of aerial visitant; like the clouds of amber and rose that invest and mingle with the form of some fine creature of the elements. In such a gay blaze of mental brightness he burst upon me.—When the tints of the evening gathered round the group on the Corso, I hoped, I dared to hope, he might pass—in the obscurity he might pass without seeing me—my sigh would be unheard, my burning cheek would only be felt by me—I might see him, I might even touch him as he passed. Among a group near me, I saw a plume that overtopped the rest—it advanced—oh the tremulous pant, the suffocating swell of expectation;—I could not believe it for very excess of joy—he approached; I saw him not, nor heard him; it was all mist and darkness with me then; but I felt—
felt—it was he; and I felt he was gone. His departing was like the dying away of a scented gale; rich, languid, overpowering; from that moment there was a delicious sickness in the air; there was a soft oppression at my heart; I could not speak, and had any one spoken to me, I feel I must have answered with my tears. All night have I sat, repeating to myself at long intervals, "I have seen him."—Morning is now dawning through my chamber, yet still is evening and the Corso with me.—

May 20th.

Can I remain in this state of dotage? Yet dare I look into my heart, he is food and rest to me;—yet I say I do not love; he is thought, and dream, and vision to me;—yet I say I do not love; my prayers are offered to him;—yet I do not love. Oh, whither shall I turn? I am sore beset. Let me fall into the hands of him whom
I have offended; rather than that heart which has betrayed and destroyed me. What shall I say "I have sinned?" Must it, must it then be a sin to love?

May 27th.

And this was love; darkly I floated on; I never felt the tide; but when the light breaks, I am on the ocean waste; alone, frozen, aghast.—Had I heard of a tale like this in my days of innocence, how had I condemned the self-deluding, self-betrayed wretch? Oh ye, who boast of virtue yet untried, who defy temptations that mercy yet has spared you! I was once pure like you; like you I was proud. But I have strayed from the fold, I have wandered in the wilderness. The servant of the Lord hath forsaken her first love, the guide of her youth, and gone after strangers.

June 3d.

It is neither light nor darkness with me now;
now; I am in a mixed and twilight state, would I could sleep. Oh, for a deep, still slumber such as I slept, when I dreamt I did not love; and oh for such dreams that lit that slumber—for those bright bursts of vision, that had drank the meteor's light, and were the forms of heaven.—They are gone—

* * * * * *

They talk of going to Rome: let them carry me where they will: whence is this passiveness?—He has quitted Naples—I smite my breast, but my heart continues to beat there still.—

July 7th.

What have a few, a very few months made of me! Oh, heaven! I was so happy, it was a sin to make me miserable. I was absorbed in divine things, dead, though in the world, to the things of the world; alive only to the objects of that where I believed
believed my heart and treasure were. Mine were the pure pleasures, the hallowed hopes, the calm, corrected mind; a light that flowed from heaven shed a glad and quiet brightness around me, and I rejoiced to walk in that light. The morning awoke me to prayer; at night I paused upon the blameless day, and sunk to sleep in prayer. I reckoned that every day should be like the last, as free from guilt, as far from pain; that I should float on their equal motion, as on the wings of a cherubim, to that place of which I believed my enjoyment certain and near. Is it so short a space? And am I so already lost? Am I already this feverish, distracted, guilty being, who ventures every day a more daring length in indulgence, a length she would have trembled at the preceding one, and while she measures with miserable and reverted eye, the distance she has strayed from the path of peace, feels also that it has brought no
no nearer the object for which she has wandered till she has lost herself?

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_July 15th._

It came to me cherub-smiling; it rose on me like the morning with her hundred hues and shapes of brightness; joy, and beauty, and splendour, all that is gay and rich in life, all that can seduce the senses and the heart, danced around it in fairy-vision. I looked, and listened, and was destroyed; and this was love. In the smiles of its birth, in the cherub-dawn of young passion, who thought of groans and anguish?—Yet let me acquit heaven; from the first I trembled and I feared; I touched the cup with a faltering lip;—but oh the sweet, sweet draught.—

_July 27th._

And I took no warning from my distracted devotions; from my long voluptuous day-dreams; from my coldness to better
better thoughts. Oh! if these sufferings would make me hate their cause. If these anguished and consuming hours could make me impatient or resisting, there might be hope; but, oh! not tears flowing for ages, could wash away the characters his first and single sight wrote on my heart.

Day and night my mind seems to hang over that with silent and helpless contemplation. Nothing rouses me, except to an impatience of disturbance. Guilty I cling to it. Miserable I cling to it. Self-condemned I cling to it. I have sunk into a dull and lethargic passiveness, and the reproaches of conscience sound like the storm in the ear of sheltered dotage, vexing his deafness, but not disturbing his sluggish comforts.

July 21.

I pray—while a lurking hope tells me my prayers will not avail; I vary their form;
form; I seem to redouble my earnestness, while something dares to whisper me, I would recal them, did I fear they would be granted.

I determined on some occupation for the day, to hide from myself how it is always occupied; and while I think I am engaged, a consciousness that to think of him will be its only employment, seems to mock at my efforts, and I feel it without emotion—without a wish to resist, or a fear to yield. Resolutions formed with a consciousness they will not be kept—the purposes of life maintaining a faint war with its employments. Tears, stifled by indulgences, from which their feeble remonstrances take away pleasure, while they leave the guilt; and prayers contradicted at the moment they are offered up, by the whispers of a rebel heart.—

Such am I become!—object of fatal passion—come and see what you have made me?—No.—Come not to see me rejoice
rejoice in my guilt—come not to cast away compassion on sufferings whose enumeration only gives me a strange and dreadful delight.

_July 23._

'Tis in vain—I resist no longer—I cannot live, and not be this being—or to cease to be guilty, I must cease to be—Nor dare I wish that; nor do I wish it—This misery is but too precious to me—all that I have ever tasted of pleasure should not purchase from me, love's lonely, bitter, midnight tear. And dare I call this suffering? Oh, no.—No, no. His smile; his wicked, witching smile, upbraids me when I do.

His eye is on me, it seems to ask me, Do I complain?—Strange and wondrous being, what hast thou done with me?—His image comes to my soul like the moon in the night of storms. Amid the dark masses—amid the billowy ridges—
amid the mixed and angry streaks—she bursts in brief and rejoicing splendour, and gilding their thwarted and fighting forms with beauty, while the vexed traveller looks up and blesses the sight for a moment.

*July 25.*

And is it a crime to love?—Have I changed the passion, or the name?—In my childhood, I *loved* the light of the setting sun—the gush of the twilight breeze—the pale and wandering moon—glossing with her light the fleecy fretwork of a summer sky. I said I loved them, can I not love him, as I loved them—with sinless, placid, untroubled love! Is he not the work of the same hand: were they not both formed to be loved? Is it my curse, that *I* must mingle guilt with the feelings which all others indulge in innocence? Can I not think of him as of them—bright, beautiful, distant, impassable?
able? Can I not sit and gaze life away, without a wish to soar upwards?—No, no. These words fall from my pen, they come not from the heart.

The wild and lawless thought, the wish of the dream, I dare not tell myself of, teach me a vestal cannot love a human being, as she loved a moon-beam in her childhood.

**July 26.**

There are a thousand ebbs and flows of feeling, known only to the mind that loves; but which make me tremble every moment, lest my perturbation should discover them to others. His name I hear without emotion, when any other member of his family is mentioned by it—but when applied to *him*, when *he* is talked of by the most careless speaker, my frame thrills, my eyes grow misty, ruined as I am, my mind smiles with a sad and guilty joy at that name—

His
His name I scarce ever dare pronounce. my throat swells when I would breathe it; but how I delight to hear it uttered, and how many wretched pretexts of subtlety I employ, to introduce a conversation that will involve the mention of him; and when it succeeds, and when his name is mentioned, do they not see how I pause, and how I tremble! Alas, what if they do? Am I not beheld by an eye, to shrink from which, the detection of a world would be well exchanged? • • • • •

My sufferings are very great; who but me has known misery without relief; who but me has known despair without hope: we deceive ourselves with sounds: when we talk of despair, we mean not, that relief is impossible, but that relief is distant or doubtful. • • • • • But whither shall I turn—is there one speck in my horizon? No, no, no. Dark and deserted, I wade through floods of desperation. I struggle without vigour. I rise
rise without consolation. I sink without hope. In those hours of intolerable anguish, when the mind, wearied with suffering, and stung to frantic energy, is driven, like the importunate widow, to knock loud and eager at the door of hope. In those hours, I have said to myself—who or what shall aid me? Shew me difficulties to be overcome—shew me sufferings to be endured. Give me to contend with all earthly and possible things; and I will do it. What will I not do? But I am as dust in the whirlwind. I am as a leaf in the torrent, that has swept away the forest. The force and current of things bear me along. To please me, the order of nature must be inverted. The Deity must change. The woman must seek the man, and be accepted. The vestal must be perjured with impunity, therefore I turn to hope, I turn to time, I turn to space: I turn to self, (for to self, endless in resource, and exhaustless in consolation, we turn
turn and cling last), and all is despair.—But shall I dare to say so? I have made my purchase—yes—I have sold my soul for a smile—I am betrayed with a kiss.—Oh! my love, my love—hast thou not asked too much. Oh! look not on me with that smile of innocent loveliness—Glance not on me that fatal, fatal eye—Move not before me, with that witching form. Do not, or I shall think all, all too little. But surely thou hast asked much, my love....

July 27.

Of the moon—I sometimes think he gazes on it when I gaze, and then a gush of tearful pleasure fills my eye, and I wipe it away to catch the moment of simultaneous gazing. Of the breeze—I guess it is cooling him, and then I spread my parched and pallid cheek to it, to taste pleasure with him.

But my supreme delight is to breathe his
his name to the ear of midnight, with ideot-stealth; in the deep and silent hour, when the night-vapour, fine as an infant's breath, stands in the air—when the leaf of the poplar and the aspen is unmoved—when there is a hissing in the ear for very stillness—then I love to lean from my casement, and utter his name—once and softly: then swift, and bright, and thronging myriads of images, float in glittering play around me.

Then the early morn, the tepid glow, the vernal birth of cherub-passion, rushes on me. The first meeting—the rapturous flutter of young alarm—the expansion of a new sense—the opening burst of a world of pleasure. These are with me—his name makes them present. I am absorbed in them, I rush on with their unconscious flow. Some image of new and daring indulgence arrests me—I start, I recoil—but I only recoil to see I have gone so far. 'Tis less impossible to go
too far, than to return. I hesitate—I am lost... when I recover, I am weeping: thinking I ought to shed the tear of penitence, and feeling it is only the tear of passion.......

July 29.

And is it a crime to love?—I cannot unite the thoughts of guilt and him—when I bend over my mind—when his image smiles on me—when the gush of early pleasure fills my heart—I am no longer guilty—I am no more wretched—I am only the happy visionary, who has given up life for a dream of joy.......

Yet, sometimes, I am sorely smitten with fear and perplexity. Sometimes I would give worlds to know if I am thus utterly lost—if there is no hope for one who has dared to love. I have leant from my window in the anguish of my solicitude—I have gazed on the stars walking in their brightness—I have asked them,
Is there any hope? I determined to decide it by the first I should see fall to the right—and I dared to dream, that he who regulates the sparrow's flight, might direct the fall of the meteor for good to his waiting, trembling creature. I lingered, and there fell one to the right—and then—I felt it gave no ease to me.

Returning through the portico this evening, I met a dog, who looked wistfully at me—the mute, melancholy eye caught me—I attempted to go—he continued to gaze on me—In the importunity of my misery, I said—art thou a spirit—and hast thou a power to serve me?—I tore myself away in time to save my reason.

"And was there such sensibility," said Ippolito, bursting out; "and was it suffered to pine to death? Was there such a heart? And was it permitted to break? Oh thou lorn and lovely trembler! had I been the object of thy affections, strong and gentle as they were, how would I have
have sought, how I would have soothed thee, how would I have kissed away the precious, precious tears, and looked in thy timid eye for the first beam of restored hope?"—"These are but sounds of softness," said Cyprian; "alas, what could you have done for one whom nature and society condemned."—"Nature," said Ippolito, "is no enemy to love; and for society, I would have borne her in my arms through the world, while one remained for me; I would have resisted every person that opposed; I would have fought with every man who dared to asperse her; I would have borne her to some quiet retreat, hallowed by solitude and love; for her I would have despised and relinquished a world that could neither understand nor taste such enjoyments as ours; and in the breathing pause of quiet delight, smiling I would have asked her, had love no counterbalance for his pains?" "Dreadful, delicious, maddening sounds,"
sounds," murmured Cyprian; "they had undone her; blessed be the saints she heard them not; shame was not added to her sufferings; she died by draughts of slow and cruel poison; but not the maddening cup of feverish impurity: of love she died, but pure and penitent. Had she heard such sounds, even dying she would have felt the racking wish; the luxurious tumult; the groan of death had been mixed with the sigh of desire; you could not have kept the sinner on earth; and you would have rent a penitent from heaven. But no, no, no; she slumbers in the dark bed; she cannot hear those sounds, her ear is as dull as the dead." — "Boy," said Ippolito, "it would have saved us both; she had not died of disappointed passion, and I had been spared many a dark and feverish hour. — But I wander; I was not the object of the passion you describe." — "You, and you alone;" said Cyprian, with
with a burst of feeling—"You she loved; and by you was she destroyed. For you she tempted the dangers of guilty pleasure; for you she dared to wish, to hope, to madden; for you she trembled, she sorrowed, and she wept; will you believe she loved, Montorio, she died for you."

"For me—for me," exclaimed Ippolito; while his frame quivered, and a glow of lovely shame suffused his cheeks and forehead; "why then did she not live for me? Cyprian, you only mock my vanity."—"No," said Cyprian, who had risen, and whose whole form mantled; and was buoyed up with sudden animation,—"no, I deceive you not; her spirit hovers near us, to attest the truth; to witness the avowal. Hear me, Montorio, would you have loved her?"—"You but mock my credulity;" said Ippolito, smiling;—"No, by her presence, by her near presence, which I feel this moment, I mock not. Answer my question, could you have loved her, Montorio?"
Montorio?"—"Could I?" replied Ippolito, darting his eye to heaven, "if her spirit be indeed present, it is satisfied with the homage of my heart." "It is present," said Cyprian, eagerly, "it is present, and it must hover near us, till it be absolved."—"Enthusiast, what would you mean, what would you ask?"—"Imagine me her for a moment," said Cyprian, sinking at Ippolito's feet, and hiding his face—"Imagine me her; give me one kiss." "Enthusiastic boy." "Give me but one, and her spirit shall depart, pleased and absolved." "Visionary, you do what you will with me; I never kissed one of my own sex before; but do what you will with me;" half blushing, half pouting, he offered his red lip, Cyprian touched it and fainted.
Letter from Annibal di Montorio.

I have been so tossed with doubt and distraction, since I wrote to you, that, I have been unable to form one sane reflection, or to divide events from the feelings that accompanied them. I deferred the continuance of my letters, therefore, in hopes of writing them at length in calmness, and in ease. The hope has been fruitless. The extraordinary circumstances in which I have been engaged, have deprived me of all distinct powers of discrimination
discrimination and reflection; they are so woven into my habits of thought, that I feel myself able to do little more than to describe them; and even that, not as a spectator would, and as a philosophic mind would wish to do, but with all the confused perceptions, the superstitious minuteness, and the weak amplifications of real and present fear. I know not whether you will prefer this to a more composed account or not; but if you do not, you must compound with necessity; for it is the only one my present state of mind enables me to furnish you with.

The night was approaching, on which I had determined to re-visit the apartments, and to suffer Michelo to tell his tale. I remembered how I had once been overpowered by fear, and once by pleasure; and I now determined to collect every power, and confirm every resolution that could preserve me from the influence of weakness or of deception.

I even
I even perused some of the old legends of our library, that abound in adventures similar to mine; I endeavoured to act a personal part in the narrative, and to shun the weakness, or acquire the fortitude, which their various agents exhibited. I passed some time in this mental disciplining; but I find ineffectually, if its influence was to have preserved me from fear.

As the hour approached, my wish to view the spot I was to visit so soon became irrepressible. I ventured on the terrace that leads to the tower, and I found myself under the walls of the apartment; its appearance without resembled that within, dark, lonely, and deserted. I saw a range of windows, which from their direction, I conceived lit the long passage through which I had been conducted by Michelo. They were narrow, and dismantled, and at a distance from the ground, but many cavities in the walls, together with fragments of the battlements
battlements that had fallen on the terrace, assisted me to climb to their level; I now looked round me with security; I had taken a time at which the servants were engaged in a distant part of the castle; and I enjoyed the leisure of full gratification. I looked through the window, it lit the passage as I had imagined; the passage appeared, as on the night I had visited it, damp, and dusky, and solitary; but, as, by holding my face parallel to the window, I looked down its deep length, I imagined I saw a figure issuing from the wall at the other end, and approaching with a slow, unsteady motion. That it was a human figure, I could only conjecture from its loose garments; of which, the darkness still prevented me from distinguishing the shape or habit.

It advanced—nor was it with a pleasant emotion that I recollected it must pass by the window at which I hung. It advanced, its head was covered; one arm was extended
tended, and the dark drapery which hung from it, shrouded the face. I was so absorbed in wonder and curiosity, that till it drew within a few paces of the window, I forgot my station would discover me; I relaxed my hold, and concealed my head under the large pediment of the window. It passed; and though I felt through the shattered casement-pannels, the air impelled by its approach, its step gave no sound; I raised my head, it had passed; and I saw it floating away in the distant obscurity of the passage. I lingered long under the casement; but there was neither sound nor object. Of what I had seen, I knew not what to think; that it was not Michelo, I was certain; and no other being had means to enter those walls, except by such means as I was almost impelled to believe that form was master of. I loitered in vague and unsatisfied conjecture, till the hour at which Michelo had promised to attend me; when that arrived,
arrived, he joined me, and employing the same precautions, we reached the apartments unobserved. Michelo again paused, to recover himself from fear and from haste; and I examined the apartments, with more leisure, and a better light than the last evening had allowed.

"Signor," said Michelo, recalling me, "I have led you hither that I might mention without interruption, and without fear, what in any other part of the castle I might not safely mention, not even in my own remote turret, at midnight; I came hither to shun the suspicions which I fear are already excited; those observations which I dread our frequent conferences may suggest, and which it is impossible to exercise here." Of this position I felt not quite assured; but concealing what I had seen, desired him to proceed.—My attention was that moment excited by a strange appearance on the floor. "Can this, Michelo, be the effect of the shade
which these closed windows throw on the floor?" Michelo was silent. "See where it spreads in long, and dusky streaks, and ends just beside that door."—"It is blood," said the old man, shivering.—"Blood!" I repeated; "this stain that overspreads half the room! impossible; to produce this there must have been a massacre, not a murder in this apartment."

"It is blood," said the old man, rising, and feebly following me, as I examined the traces—"here it fell; and here, splashes of it are on this wall, as if it had been forced out by violence; and at this door, all appearances of it cease."—I paused; all those dispersed causes and appearances, that had hitherto floated vaguely in my mind, exciting only a partial and unproductive emotion of fear, or wonder, or anxiety, now rushed on it with collected force, and produced one appalling conviction. "Here has been murder, Michelo; and you who know in whose veins
reins this blood has flowed; you who were perhaps present at that hour, a witness to that deed; you preserve an obdurate silence; though perhaps your strange sufferings are owing to the visits of the victim; though perhaps it lingers near this spot, where its blood was poured, unabsolved, and unrequired; though perhaps its shroudless form was seen to-night, wandering in the passages of this chamber."—"Pursue your path," said the old man, with solemnity, "whether a hand mightier than mine seems to conduct you; I can lead you but a little way; my time is brief, and my task restrained; I would willingly have followed on, but a power, I may not resist, withholds me."—Pursuing the traces, we had reached the other apartment, here they had ceased; but in my impatience of discovery, I again adverted, to the jarring looseness of the floor, and the damp and death-like steam that floated through it. I strode
I strode across the room, it shook under me; frantic with impatience, I resolved to rend the boards asunder; a task my strength would have been easily equal to, and which would probably give some relief or object to my mind, which now could scarce support its feelings, wrought up as they had been to a pitch, solemn, severe, and terrible.—"Forbear, forbear, Signor," said Michelo, "solitary as these apartments seem, there is one who visits them; the Count, your father, I have too sure proof, repairs, at the appointed time, to these chambers; oh, fear his vengeance, should he discover that other feet beside his own, had trod these bloody floors, his vengeance is terrible!"—"Twice," said I, eagerly grasping at his words, "twice, Michelo, have you uttered these words; that they have a meaning beyond common fear, is evident; and whatever that meaning may be, I will know it before I quit this spot: what have you
you known or felt of his vengeance?"

"His vengeance is terrible," said a voice, deep and distinct, beside me. "Again you have repeated it," I said, for impatience had confused my perceptions. "I spoke not, I breathed not," said Michelo, aghast, and clinging to me; "a voice issued from the wall; quit this spot, for holy St. Gennaro's sake, quit this spot, if yet we may quit it alive."

I was not, like him, congealed and rendered helpless by fear; but I suffered perhaps more from the keenness and strength of my own perceptions. Resist it as we may, the presence, or the fear of the presence of the dead, is almost intolerable. We endure it in a tale, because it is a tale; and the consciousness of fiction produces a balance with the pain of credulity. But I was oppressed by evidence that appeared irresistible, and I felt the natural fear, which I have in common with the peasant, and the child.
and which my improved perceptions perhaps magnified with many an unfelt and subtle circumstance of addition. I deliberated a moment; a gush of visionary heroism came to my mind, and I resolved to examine the flooring, when Michelo, unable to speak, grasped my arm, and pointed to the opposite wall. My eye followed his involuntarily; they rested on the figure of an armed man in the tapestry, whose bold and prominent outlines rendered it even strongly visible in that dim light. A weapon which it held, was pointed in the direction I was about to explore; the head was thrown back, and the features of a strong profile were fixed on the same direction. As I gazed on it, the large eye appeared to live; it moved; it looked at me; it turned to the spot, to which the arm pointed, and the arm vibrated with a slow and palpable motion; then all became lifeless and discoloured and dead, as an artificial form.

What
What I had seen and heard, was enough for me. I became inflamed, impelled, exalted; a certain supernal dignity mingled with my feelings, I felt myself the summoned agent of destiny, yet not the less did I feel that I was surrounded by horrors; that I was treading where the living inhabited not; that I was called by voices nature shudders to hear. But they appeared to me the instruments by which I was appointed to work out some great purpose, and I grasped them with a convulsed but daring hand.

I began to examine the apartment. In every part of the wainscot under it, pannels had been detached and shattered by age and neglect. But they only betrayed the solid wall. One that appeared less impaired than the rest, I examined therefore more closely. It resisted; but strength, such as I felt at that moment, was not easily resisted; and I soon wrenched it from the wainscot. The cloud of dust that followed, was soon dispersed,
dispersed, and I discovered steps rugged and unequal, and feebly lit, winding within it. I addressed a few words of comfort and courage to Michelo, who leant exhausted against the wall, and prepared to descend them. He attempted feebly to dissuade me; I heard him not. The stairs, down which I attempted in vain to descend steadily, appeared from the roughness of their formation, to have been scooped out of the wall; a discoloured light seemed to stream on them from a grating which appeared at a vast height in the roof above me. The dust that rose under every step, scarce permitted me to distinguish them; and the heavy steams I had observed in the adjacent chamber, seemed to constitute the very atmosphere of this passage.

The steps, descending for some time, terminated in a door which no key could open, and no effort could force; and Michelo, who had now followed me, declared he knew not,
nor could conjecture from his knowledge of the castle, where that door conducted. Here all progress seemed to be suspended; and I looked around me with a desponding eye. That some secret was within my reach, I was convinced; and to lose its knowledge, after so much expectation and toil, appeared insupportable. My very exertions reproached me with my want of success. The very dull and murky stillness of the place seemed to offer a mockery to my inquietude.

Reluctantly as I returned, still examining every object, I observed a part of the wall, where there seemed a regular fracture, running through the stones in nearly a square direction; I applied my hand to it, it shook under the pressure, and a large portion of detached rubbish fell at my feet. I felt inspirited; with the assistance of Michelo, I soon discovered, under a thin coat of plaster, that mouldered at the touch, a door, that had nothing else to conceal or
to fasten it. I dragged it open, it discovered a dim cavity, barely wide enough to admit me. I entered it, stooping and contracted, and from its narrow dimensions (partly by feeling, and partly from the pale light the grating still afforded me,) soon discovered a kind of rude chest, disjointed and ill-secured. With an impatience which urged me to violence, I endeavoured to rend it open. From the loose and lumbering rattle of its contents, I had a shuddering suspicion what they were. I yet persisted; Michelo, who appeared animated by a sudden impulse of his own, endeavoured to assist me. With the feverish strength of eager weakness I succeeded. The decayed pannels gave way. Ippolito, oh Ippolito!—my hand touched the mealy and carious bones of a skeleton! the dry limbs clattered as the pannels fell about. The light fell on the head, as it lay, and gave a deadlier hollowness to the cavities of the mouth and eyes. Panting and pale, I staggered
I staggered back; the heat of exertion and pursuit was over; I had reached a terrible point of proof; the mute and ghastly witness before me spoke. Murder hurtled in mine ears, as I viewed it, yet still I was uncertain and disquieted. The crime was revealed, but the object and agents were still unknown.

Meanwhile I saw Michelo bend over the corpse, and examine it with attention; I saw him shudder, and clasp his hands. There is a state of mind, in which we only converse by actions. I hastened to him, and entering the den, surveyed the skeleton again. Michelo, with strong and speechless expression, pointed to one of its wasted arms; the hand had been severed from it. We looked on each other as conscious that each was brooding on his own convictions. At length I spake, and felt myself articulate with difficulty. "Michelo, does your knowledge of past events, suggest any thing that might explain this spectacle?"
If it may, oh forbear to wrong your own soul, and the soul of the murdered, by longer concealment." The old man smote his breast, and crossed himself. "I am innocent," he murmured, "I am innocent; but this object brings to my memory a report I had long forgotten, and which, when I had heard, I considered but as some tale which ignorance had invented to dissolve the mystery of that terrible night. It was whispered by many, that, on that night, some one had been privately brought into the castle, murdered, and interred in some unknown part of it; who he was, and for what cause, or by whom he was dispatched, none pretended to tell."

This account, though it increased my suspicions, did not diminish my perplexity. That some unhallowed deed had been done on that night, so often referred to, seemed certain; the hand that had done it, appeared shrouded from all human view or inquisition.
tion.—"Michelo!—one question more, and I shall cease for ever to importune you: Do you believe this to be the body of my uncle, of Count Orazio?"—"From many circumstances, Signor, I should have been led to fear, this was the body of the late Count; but others would seem to contradict it.—But why should I wish to suggest to you, that he was murdered?"

"Here, it is said," he continued, "bells have tolled, and forms have moved.—Sometimes, long processions, with blazing lights, have been seen gliding past the windows; and sometimes a burst of voices, of no human tone, have been heard chanting the funeral chant." "These are tales, Michelo, told and believed promiscuously every where by the vulgar and the timid."—"Aye, but Signor, I myself have seen"—"What have you seen?" "Things, Signor, that prevented my being much surprised at the discovery we
we have recently made. I have seen lights moving, and heard sounds issuing from those apartments, at a time when I knew no human cause could have produced either." "Were the appearances you mention, similar to those that occurred in the ruined chapel?" "Ask me no more, Signor," said the old man, "as far, and farther than was in my power to gratify it, your curiosity has been satisfied: let us quit this dismal place."

His words seemed to awake me from a trance. That momentary courage, which the emergency had invested me with, seemed suddenly to desert me. I looked around me; two lonely beings, shuddering over a discovery which conveyed nothing but terror to them, by the dim evening light, in the remote and long-deserted towers of an ancient castle, far from the comfort of human aid or presence, and feeling that they were unable to encounter an additional circumstance or ob-
ject of fear, yet dreading lest, while they lingered, some other would overtake them;—two such beings I felt myself and Michelo to be, and started at the conviction. The confidence of the delegate of heaven was over: I felt myself a timid human being, encompassed by things, and the fear of things, which nature shrinks from; and only anxious to escape by a blind and hasty extrication from them;—like a child, that by shutting his eyes, and walking speedily past some spot of terror, imagines itself to be safe.

I turned from the revolting spectacle before me: I looked along the dim and narrow passage; I wondered at my own temerity in exploring it. A few moments past, and I felt as if nothing could check my progress; at the present, nothing could impel me to pursue it. For a moment I wondered at myself, and almost ascribed the change to an influence that made part of the wonders of
of the place. But the lassitude that mixed with my timidity, dissolved the wonder. I discovered it was only the natural remission of over-stimulated feeling; and that if heaven was pleased to employ my agency, it would prevent the confidence of its instrument being inflated by presumption, by leaving him at intervals to the infirmities of his nature, to his common habits of impulse and cessation, to those usual ebbs and flows of mind, which prove to us, that our best frames are of imperfect influence, and interrupted length.

I assisted Michelo, by the light that yet remained, to fill up the cavity with the stones and rubbish we had removed from it, and then prepared to quit the stairs. As we returned, I endeavoured to forbear looking at its dark and silent walls; at the roof, where the light appeared so pale and so distant, it reminded me of that which streams on the hollow eye
eye of a captive, through the bars of his dungeon. Nay, on the rude, uncouth steps themselves, that seemed just fit to be pressed by the assassin, stealing to the bed of sleep, or bearing away his prey to deposit it in some den such as we had discovered. But, wherever I looked, I found some food for sombre thought. I quickened my pace.

In our hurried passage through the cabinet and the chamber, we walked with silent and breathless fear, grasping each other, and endeavouring to fix our eyes on the floor; yet feeling they were every moment involuntarily raised to meet the approach of something we did not dare to intimate to each other. We had now reached the stairs, by which we were hastening to descend, when we distinctly heard, in the apartment we had just quitted, the loud tread of a foot that seemed to be pursuing us. Michelo, stupefied by fear, was lingering at the top of the
the stairs; with a desperate effort, I dragged him along with me, and hurried down.

The tread came yet louder and quicker behind us; I dared not to look behind; I rushed on with headlong blindness, dragging my breathless companion with me.

The foot came nearer and nearer; I could feel the stairs bending under its pressure behind me; every moment I dreaded to feel the indenture of its "fiery fang." But we had now reached the door communicating with the passage—I dragged it open, and with that involuntary provision, which fear often makes against its objects, with averted head, I drew it after me, and locked it, while I thought I heard the murmurs of a voice within, but whether its tones were those of pain or terror, I could not discover. Whatever might be the power of our pursuer, he then ceased to exert it; no sound pursued us,
us, and we encountered no object. We made a hasty and silent progress through the passage, and regained the inhabited part of the castle without observation.

By these events, I have neither been enlightened nor assured; I have been only perplexed and terrified. I have reflected, but without attaining conviction. I have debated, but without forming a resolution. Sometimes my exertion appears temerity, and sometimes my supineness cowardice!

Am I the agent of heaven, or the dupe of fear and deception?—Was the voice I heard, intended to summon or forbid?—Has the arm been bared to beckon or to repel?—Shall I pause, or shall I proceed?

In this dark and turbid state, I look at the picture of Erminia—and taste a momentary, a delicious calm. Adio.
CHAP. XI.

Ut assidens implumibus pullis avis
Serpentium allapsus timet
Magis relictis; non, ut adsit, auxilii
Latura plus præsentibus

Horace.

Thus, if the mother-bird f.ake
Her unfledged young, she dreads the gliding snake,
With deeper agonies afraid,
Not that her presence could afford them aid.

Francis.

By the time this letter had arrived at Naples, Ippolito's habits of gloom and abstraction had increased. The scenes of passing enjoyment, he had some times permitted to checquer that gloom, he had now
now relinquished; and except the hours that he attended that summons, his whole time was occupied in feeding gloomy thought with solitude. When this letter arrived, none of the servants would venture to disturb their once-undreaded master; and Cyprian, who heard them debating, seized the opportunity of venturing into his presence. Ippolito had been for some hours alone in his own apartment: Cyprian, with the letter in his hand, knocked at the door; a voice, of which the tones had never been harsh before, demanded, "Who was there?" "I am afraid to answer to that voice," said Cyprian, "speak in another tone, and I will say, 'tis Cyprian." "You may enter," said Ippolito. Cyprian approached timidly. His master was extended on a sopha; his eyes were shaded by his hand; his attitude bespoke a wish to counter-balance mental inquietude with bodily ease. "This is a letter
letter from your brother," said Cyprian, offering it with an unnoticed hand. After a moment's pause, he left it down, and placed himself before the sopha with folded arms. "Why do you wait?" said Ippolito, in a hollow and languid tone. "I know not why I wait," said Cyprian, whose anguish now burst forth in tears, and who hurried towards the door—"I know not why I live; there is neither joy nor use in me now; I know not why I live." Blind with his tears, he endeavoured in vain to open the door, when Ippolito, starting from the sopha, intercepted him. "Pardon me, Cyprian, I knew not it was you; I heard the tones of your voice, but I felt not you were near me. Pardon me; Cyprian. For many days past, my senses have been dull and distempered; the vigils of my nights have disturbed them. Even now, while I gaze upon you, you seem to me not as you ought; and should you
you change while I look upon you, to
some strange shape, such as I have lately
seen, I could scarce feel surprise."

"Oh, do not talk thus," said Cyprian,
"what shapes and what sufferings are these
you talk of? What dream of visionary
anguish pursues and preys upon you?
What invisible arm has torn you from life
and enjoyment, and chained you down in
a prison-house of pain and solitude? Are
you persecuted by the power of the living
or of the dead? I am importunate, perhaps,
for I am fearless. Two days—two dreadful
days, I have been deprived of your sight;
your sight which is the very food of my
existence. A thousand times in that pe-
riod have I approached your door—list-
ening for a cheerful sound or motion to
courage me to enter: with a breaking
heart I wandered back, for I heard only
your heavy groans. But I am so miser-
able; all fear of your displeasure has
ceased;
ceased; I will even support that, if you will not drive me from you; chide, and look sternly on me, if you can, but let me be near you: the sound of your voice will repay me for any thing it can utter. The image of your anguish, when absent, and imagined, is a thousand times more terrible, than present; or perhaps the sight of you, makes all suffering light.”

“You would be near me,” said Ippolito, appearing to collect with difficulty what had been said; “You do not know, then, that misery is contagious?”

“Misery!” echoed Cyprian, “whence, oh! whence, is this perverse repining of self-inflicted suffering? If you murmur, who shall not be suffered to groan? Oh, too lovely—too brilliant—too bright, as you are—more like the gay phantom of a youthful wish, than a human being, the destined partaker of infirmity and suffering—you seem almost without a wish, as without
without a fear. What is this sirocco of the mind, that bursts forth in the summer-
noon of life, and blasts the freshness of its enjoyments? Why need I enumerate bless-
ing you cannot be blind to—for of the distinctions of nature none are forget-
ful? Why need I remind you what, oh! what you are?” “You need not remind me what I am. I know, I feel it but too well. I am a pursued, a haunted, a per-
secuted being. The helpless prey of an invisible tormentor. Cyprian, a cruel, an inward fire consumes me. The springs of life, the sources of enjoyment, are dried up within me. I feel the energies of my mind seared and withered by the contem-
plation of a terrible subject, as the eyes would be, by being fixed on an object of intense and scorching heat; yet I cannot withdraw them. One subject, one only subject is involuntarily present with me—wherever I turn I behold it—whatever I do
do it is mingled with. Nay, when from the weariness of over-wrought suffering, I become almost vacant of thought or feeling, a dumb and sullen sense of pain mixes its leaven with those moments of unconsciousness.

You have wrung this from me, Cyprian, by your cruel pity, superfluously cruel to yourself and to me. Your sufferings may be increased by the communication of mine; but mine cannot be diminished by your participation of them. I bore the storm long to shelter you; now you have exposed your feebleness to it; and I can no longer enjoy the dignity of solitary suffering, or the aid of valid support."—"Oh, no," said Cyprian, "you know not the power and office of strong affection; it loves not to mix its beam with the summer-blaze of joy; to add its note to the choral song of flattery and pleasure; it reserves them for the dark,
dark, disastrous hour, when the amazed sufferer looks round on a desert world; when, what he thought he held, is dust within his grasp; when, what he hoped, to trust to, is a reed under his steps. Then is the power, and the hour of strong affection; then it rushes to him; it grasps him by the cold hand; it speaks words of comfort in his stunned and frozen ears; it clings to him with all the strength of its being, with powers stronger than suffering and death; it abides the conflict of the dark hour; and enters the valley of the shadow of death, with its companion. For such is its true nature and power; such emergencies only develop and realize them; among such only it expands its powers, it feels its existence; nay, it seeks its reward. Tell me not therefore of sorrow or of suffering; 'tis therefore I seek, and will not leave you. Something whispers me, this is an hour of confidence, not of de-
jection; that I can do much to serve and to save you; that I can perform something that will make men wonder at the energy of zealous weakness. Montorio, I love you, I love you; and to that name nothing is impossible. Montorio, I will examine your heart; and you will confess the cause, when I have discovered it.’’—“Forbear, my gentle, my darling boy, forbear; you spread your little slender branches to the storm that heeds you not; in passing it will lay you in the dust, and rush to me unobstructed. Cyprian, I have had a sore struggle; the enemy has assailed me with terrible strength once and again; my strength and my defences are declining; and he will yet prevail; yes, he will prevail, and have me yet in his dark thrall.’’

“Oh why do we thus magnify the trivial distresses of life,” said Cyprian, “with words of such melancholy and mysterious import, that while we listen to
to them, we almost persuade ourselves we are suffering something humanity never suffered before, and claim such dignity from their support, or such wonder from their confession, that at length we begin to find a delight in misery. You have perhaps encountered some common evil, some visitation of human infirmity, or of youthful deviation; your mind, generous, noble, and fostered by long luxury, starts from the prospect of pain, or the recollection of error. But fear not yet; yours must, must have been a venial one; and if your own reflections have anticipated the censures of society, you may listen to them with the calmness of re-established rectitude, nor suffer them to interrupt the even direction of the mind, that has regained the path of right."

"And do I hear Cyprian," said Ippolito, "confounding the complexions of good and evil, and teaching an honourable mind to forego that susceptibility of praise from which
which it derives its best security, as well as its highest reward? Is this my monitor?"

"Oh forgive me, forgive me," said Cy-prian, "for your own sake; 'tis you have corrupted my judgment and my heart. My love for you has made me almost annihilate the distinctions of good and evil. When I look on you, Montorio, I cannot believe you guilty, your mind I cannot think less perfect than your form; and the dreadful deception practised on my own judgment, I endeavour, with guilty fondness, to extend to yours. How have I laboured to restore you to the paths of purity and peace, from which your lavish youth, and glowing temptations had caused a noble heart to deviate! How have I watched and warned! How have I toiled and importuned! How have I trem-bled and prayed for you! This one great point and object of my life, what could compel me to counteract? What, but the strong affection that compelled me to undertake
undertake it. I find I cannot bear to behold you suffer. I saw you erring, and I hazarded life; yes, hazarded life, to recal and reclaim you. But when I saw you suffer, I could only weep, and be guilty; I forgot the great purpose of my mission; I forgot I was your monitor; and remembered only I loved; forgive me, Montorio, for your own sake forgive me.”—“I will forgive you every thing, Cyprian, but this waste of lavish love, on a wretch whom it wounds but cannot profit”—“Oh yet, do not say so: I have great resources; more than of hope or of advice; substantial resources.

What is this heavy load of mind? Montorio, I have marked your nightly wanderings. Have you been seduced to the feverish vigils of the gamesters? Have you become the wretched thing of calculations and chances; the agitated sport of knavish skill; the ruined dupe of confederate deception? Oh thank the blessed saints for the wholesome lesson
of your ruin. In that dreadful pursuit, to succeed is certainly to be lost; though to be ruined, is possibly to be saved. Be not yet dejected; the riches of your house are immense, and your father, though I have heard stern and severe, is proud, and will not suffer the honour of his family to be impaired by debt: or should your losses not require the fortunes of a house to repair them, I have resources, Montorio; resources, happily stored up against this hour of pressure; take them, my beloved, take all."—"Forbear, Cyprian, forbear; your conjecture is erroneous: mine are not the vigils of a gamester: miserable as I know them to be, I could almost wish they were."—"Oh what is this," said Cyprian, distressed and amazed, "what is this more terrible than misery and ruin? Do I read another cause in your pale and listless lip; in your darkened cheek; in your fixed eye? Such, they say, are the looks of those who love. Do
Do you love, Montorio? Alas, is it possible you can love, and yet despair! Oh, no, no; too happy woman! too happy, methinks, for the indulgence of allowed caprice; too happy, for the petty, prescriptive triumph of her disdain; she cannot have punished herself to give you pain; or if she has, let her behold you now; now in this seducing shade of melancholy beauty; and she must—she will—oh why that groan, Montorio? Can you, oh can you be the victim of love, of lawless passion? Alas, what shall I say! I have heard of wretched, wretched women, who can love for gold; who would take deformity and decrepitude to their arms, instead of even you, if they could outweigh you in the price of their body's and soul's perdition; for such you cannot long languish: alas, what am I saying? Oh spare me, spare me, my beloved; make me not the reluctant agent of pollution; tear not from my agonized affection,
affection, its long, its last, cherished integrity. Alas, alas, such is the madness of my guilty love; I can bear to see you criminal, but cannot, cannot bear to see you miserable.”—“Perplex yourself no more with this mental casuistry; torture yourself no longer with the superfluous remorse of imputed guilt; I cannot give you the consolation of thinking mine is a case of common suffering, or within the reach of ordinary relief; would, oh would I were the subject of any, or all the sufferings you could name, *rather than what I am.*”

Cyprian was silent from the perplexity of severe dismay. At every gradation of their conference, he had drawn closer to Ippolito, and now pressing his hand, he murmured feebly, “If that last, and dreadful guilt, the brand of civilized society, the dreadful imposition of an arbitrary phantom, be yours; if you have hurried from earth, and from hope, your rash,
rash, offending brother; and if for a crime man could not forgive, you have sent him to answer for all before the Judge; his course unfinished, his task unfulfilled, his soul unabsolved, his salvation unobtained; if you have found that what society can palliate and pardon, conscience cannot; oh yet is there a dawn of hope! If the agents of justice or of revenge pursue you, let us fly, oh let us fly, this land of perverted and bloody manners; where the sore alternative of infamy or guilt, urges the revolting hand of virtue, to deeds, its praise cannot purify, nor its sanction expiate. Oh, let us fly, and the prayers of good and holy men shall be with us for good: there is a blessed virtue in those, and the offices of our holy faith, to obtain peace and remission for the soul so sore beset.”—“Can murder then be forgiven? and if the bare crime, under strong temptation, and most urgent cause, hardly dare plead for mercy; what shall
shall be said for murder, impelled by no motive, justified by no pretext, sheltered by no confederacy? For guilt, laborious, determined, inveterate? And this, oh all this is nothing to the shades of this dark vision."—"I understand not this terrible language," said Cyprian, who looked aghast. "If you have any thing to disclose, tell it quickly, for my senses are dull, and I am wearied with pleading." "I have a tale to tell, but it is not for your ears;" he rose hastily, he grasped Cyprian's arm, "wretched boy, why have you allied yourself to me, why wilt you cling to me with this helpless force? I am hunted and hard-pressed; every night, listen, Cyprian, every night a fire is kindled in my heart; a dagger is put into my hand; the midnight ministers of destiny are round me; they urge—they impel, me, onward—onward:—all around me is still—the stillness of dreadful preparation. My approach cannot be calculated; my blow
blow cannot be averted; my victim cannot resist; my associates cannot betray; yet I linger—yet I would shrink—yet I would retreat: but my fate cannot be resisted.—No, no, no; my fate cannot be resisted.” Cyprian listened in helpless horror.

Ippolito approached the window; he leant against the foliaged lattice; the breeze of evening blew back his dark hair. Cyprian gazed on him with that mingled pang of anguish and love, of which the bitterness is more than of death. In those visions in which the mind wanders for relief, under the pressure of suffering, but finds it only deepened and refined, he imagined he beheld those rich locks rent in distraction; that yet glowing cheek hollow and pale; that noble form wrecked and defaced by suffering; he felt a pang that must not be told; and scarce suppressed the cry that darted to his lips.—Ippolito leant against the casement; it looked into the garden of the palace;
the breeze that breathed over groves of rose and orange, played on his cheek; the setting sun sent his beams through the twinkling foliage; they tinged with ruddy amber, they fleckered the waters of a fountain, that gurgled among them, and whose basin where the waters, that played in silver showers in the centre, lay still and deep, gave back the bright and lovely blue of the heavens, without a spot, and without a shade.—Ippolito remained silent long; at length, "I behold all this," said he, "joyless and unmoved; the burthen that sits so heavy on my soul, has oppressed my senses too. Or is it that I am already become a disastrous, discordant atom amid these elements of harmony and love. And am I already at war with nature? Oh how dreadful to be an alien from our own system and species; not to be able to drink the evening breeze; or glow with the setting beams of the sun; not even to know the pleasure those insects are tasting in
in his rays. To wish in vain for the quiet life of the fountain that flows, of the leaf that falls. But no, no, no; to be forced to agency; to be invested with dreadful responsibility; to hew out with groaning toil, the weight that is to crush me to atoms; is there no other task for me, amid the thousand, thousand lines of human life, branching and intersecting in endless motion, and infinite directions? Is there not one for me but this? And for me, whose heart never harboured a purpose of enmity to living thing; who knew not what men meant by hatred? In my days of childhood, Cyprian, I have been born to disturb the insect that fluttered round me, to crush the reptile that crawled beneath me; and I must—must—and is there no repeal? And is there no retreat? Author of my being and of my fate! hear my groans! hear my despair!—Father, they are not the groans of a rebel heart! it is not the despair of daring outrage!
but spare me; spare me.”

He rent his hair by handfuls, he cast himself upon the ground. Cyprian, terrified, but unrestrained, fell beside him, and attempted to raise and to sooth him. In a few moments, he sprang from the ground; he stood erect, but tottering; his hair was dishevelled, his hands were clenched, his eyes were inflamed and wandering, his face was varied by a thousand shades; but a fixed and burning spot of crimson tinged his cheek. “Whither do you go,” cried Cyprian, grasping him as he endeavoured to rush from the apartment. “To the theatre, to the gambling-house, to the brothel,” he roared, “to floods of wine, to songs of madness;—this cannot be borne; off, release me, or will you accompany me, Cyprian, to dissipation, to frenzy, to ruin.”

No prayers could pacify, and no struggles could withhold him: he seized his sword and cloak, and rushed from the palace,
lace, madly calling on Cyprian to follow him. The unhappy Cyprian paused; this moment seemed to him the critical one of his life and happiness. To be seen in the streets of Naples, was to encounter a certain and terrible death. He had so long considered life merely as a medium of service to his master, that this consideration would scarce have detained him to examine it. But what hope in pursuing the career of a maniac? What profit to Ippolito in witnessing those orgies he could save him from no longer? He lingered a moment; strong affection triumphed, and he felt the danger of exposing himself, and the despair of serving his master, vanish before that sad and nameless pleasure, which we feel from the simple act of clinging to the persons of those we love; even when aid is impossible, and consolation fruitless. He followed Montorio, but he followed him with tottering steps; nor could the impassioned strength of his feelings
feelings resist the shock he felt on being for the first time on foot, and unprotected in the streets of Naples. Feeble and terrified, he yet tried to keep up with the hurried pace of Ippolito; who, with that lightning-burst of generous feeling, that blazed even through the storm of his passions, turned to him, spoke some consoling but incoherent words, and then supporting him with his arm, hurried on. From time to time of their progress, Cyprian endeavoured to breathe a few soothing sounds; but the anguish with which the sight of Ippolito's fevered cheek, and fixed eye struck him, drove them back to his heart; or if uttered, they were so inarticulate, that Ippolito was insensible of them. They proceeded with astonishing rapidity, but without any apparent object, till Cyprian, with the provisional caution of fear, tried as he passed, to distinguish the windings of the streets, among which he feared, he might shortly be left deserted
ed and alone. They reached in a short time the extremity of that part of the city where the Montorio palace stood; they entered a dark, lonely inclosure. Ippolito who appeared to have been lulled into vacancy by the hum and concourse of the streets through which they passed, now paused and looked around him eagerly, as if struck by the stillness and solitude of the place. "Why have we wandered here?" said Cyprian, timidly; "Because," said Ippolito, in broken tones, "because it is wild, and dark, and deserted, because it is meet for the unt of ruin, and wretchedness. I love to gaze on this stilly gloom; to hear the hollow wind that stirs the trees:— would, the evening-shades would settle on this spot for ever; would, I could dose away being and consciousness here in stunned and stupid listlessness."

He leant against one of the trees; his cloak folded on his arm. Twice with a full heart, Cyprian tried to speak, but could
could not form a sound. Ippolito heard the murmurs of inarticulate distress near him. "Are you there still, Cyprian, will you still cling to me? Leave me, oh leave me to myself; to the dark fight I must encounter alone. Cyprian, you might as well attempt to stop the progress of the night that is spreading round us, as of that darker and portentous gathering that involves me; go from me, and be safe; why should I destroy you; sweet and innocent boy, approach me not, love me not. But for me, you might have flourished in stainless and joyful purity; but you would tempt the fate of a ruined man; you would go side by side with me in that dark untravelled path, which we must tread in suffering, and terminate in despair. Go from me, while I yet can warn you, yet can commiserate, yet can pity you; a moment longer, and I shall be wild and wreckless as the hunted savage that rushes on the weapons of his persecutors, and grinds them with his tusks."

"And
"And is this then, indeed, our last hour of peace and goodness!—Is agonized affection summoned to her last trial-task? Will you indeed be Ippolito no more?—I have no more then to say, no more to suffer.—But with my dying hand I must hold you; I must cling to you with that strength which overcometh all things, with love, which is stronger than death!—I know not the fate which awaits you; it comes in mist and cloud; nor am I anxious to unfold them, to behold it. Suffice it, it is yours. Therefore, by strong necessity of love, it must be mine. Of my brief and unhappy life, the only object has been you—for you I have lived—and I must, must, die with you."

Blind with fears, stifled with convulsive sobs, he grasped Ippolito, who, breaking from him, with a wild unmeaning laugh, hastily rushed towards a building, which was recently lit up, and to which numbers appeared to be thronging. Stupified with astonishment,
astonishment, Cyprian beheld this change, but the instinctive fear of desertion impelled him to follow. When he entered the building, not even his ignorance could preserve him from discovering its destination. It was a gaming-house, apparently of the lowest description, numbers were already engaged in the pursuit of the evening; and Ippolito mingled among them with a bold and vivacious eagerness, which his companion beheld with additional anguish. His flushed and impetuous manner, his vociferous impatience, his noble air and figure—while they awed the majority, allured a few wily prowlers, who believing him to be disarmed by inebriety, marked him for a sure and profitable prey. Cyprian, aghast, alone, unnoticed, stunned by the lights, the confusion, and the jargon, objects as new as revolting to a mind of vestal purity, and almost vestal seclusion, yet retained his observation, which was only preserved by the strength of
of those feelings, that had exposed him almost to lose it. From these violent vicissitudes he collected, not that Ippolito's sufferings were too great for the powers of his reason, but that they were too great for the powers of resistance in a mind which, though not destitute of natural strength, had been so long accustomed to artificial resources of pleasure and consolation, that finding itself unable to adjust its present grievance, by the usual balance of extrinsic relief, it writhed under it in convulsive despair, and produced those throes of grief and fury, of gloom and madness, which had been almost as terrible to the witness as to the sufferer himself.

He had no long leisure for recollection, for Ippolito, whose success had been as rapid as it was unexpected, sweeping together the money which poured in on him from all parts of the table, scattered it among some Lazaroni who loitered round the
the door, and with a shout of triumph, flew from the gaming-house.

Cyprian pursued him with all the speed fatigue and fear had left him, but in vain; he called on him, but received no answer; he attempted to follow the direction of his steps; but found he was only pursuing a stranger. Then fear and anguish came on him;—a wanderer in a populous city, timid, alone, and exposed to greater dangers than he appeared to be threatened by, for one moment of his life he felt a pang in which his feelings for Ippolito had no share. He hastened on with faint and terrified speed through many streets and avenues, with a blind satisfaction in the thought of proceeding, yet with increasing alarm at every step, till he found himself again in the neighbourhood of the Montorio palace. Ippolito rushed on his mind—further pursuit of him was impossible, yet it was equally impossible to Cyprian to desert him. He suddenly
suddenly bethought himself of going to the Alberotti palace, which he knew to be at a small distance, and of which he also knew the possessor to be Ippolito's uncle, of informing him of the late events, and imploring his interference. Wild as this scheme was, and obviously involving the dangers attendant on Cyprian's being recognised; he sprang forward, with new and eager strength to execute it. But on reaching the Alberotti palace, he found the avenues obstructed by carriages, and the portico blazing with torches; there was a conversazione, at which the greater part of the Neapolitan nobility were assembled; among whom, detection was unavoidable, and death was therefore certain.

From this last resource, he turned away, weary in mind and frame; he attempted to totter a few paces homeward, but the thought of Ippolito, abandoned to dissipation and depravity, stung through his heart
heart; his limbs failed, he sunk on the steps of an adjacent house, and burst into that helpless flood of anguish, which bespeaks us equally unable to restrain, or derive consolation from them.

The sudden emptiness of the street, the mildness of the night, tranquillity, silence, and subsiding emotion combined to soften him into a kind of placid imbecility. The thunder-burst of passion was over, and he wept a soft and heavy shower of tears. Too much exhausted for acute or agonised feeling, the images that had passed before him, shed over his mind a gleam of melancholy sorrow, not the glare of madness and despair. Every image of former tenderness or brightness, every dream that had once dressed the thought of Ippolito in the tints of attraction, or the beams of splendour, now awakened with cruel contrast the sense of his present state; low in vice and in wretchedness, the abasement of his own feelings thrilled
thrilled to his heart, and he felt the difference between those which accompany the tear of rapture, and the tear of humbled regret; between the being he almost bowed to worship, and the being he pursued to rescue, and stooped to raise.

He wept and was refreshed; he rose calm and sad, and endeavoured to return to the Montorio palace, with the feeble hope, that some intelligence of their wayward master, might have reached the domestics. As he turned the corner of the Strada di Toledo, a lamp burning before the image of St. Gennaro caught his eye; and with a smitten eye he turned to pay his passing devotions, where he was conscious the perturbed state of his mind had too often withheld him from. As he approached the lamp, the figure of a man, muffled and moving hastily, passed him. But no disguise could avail.—"Montorio, oh Montorio!"—he almost shrieked;—he flew from the saint, and pursued the figure.
figure. It moved with a speed that defied pursuit; and the utmost exertion of Cyprian's could only keep it in sight. It followed a direction far from the palace, and Cyprian at length beheld it at some distance enter a spacious house, that appeared filled with company. Cyprian paused and doubted the evidence of his senses; he might be pursuing a stranger, and pursuing him where to follow was dangerous. He had acquired a kind of local courage in these frequent emergencies.

He saw at a distance two cavaliers of sober demeanour, he approached them, and in a voice of which the tones were like those of a wandering cherub, seeking the way to a purer region, demanded whose house it was, into which the cavalier who had passed them, had entered. The elder of the cavaliers looked at him for a moment—"Perhaps, Signor," said he, "I should, from principle, decline to satisfy your inquiry, but as your youth and appearance
pearance prompt me to hope 'tis not urged by a personal motive, I shall inform you, that is the house of Nerina di—— the most celebrated courtezan in Naples." They passed on, and Cyprian remained alone. Stupified by the last intelligence, he had yet heard every syllable of it, and retained its full meaning.

Montorio, in the house of lewdness and shame; the last object of life frustrated; its sole hope extinct:—but though the prospect of good was lost, the fear of evil yet remained; the danger of his entering the confines of vice could not be averted, that of his remaining within them still might; yet Cyprian hesitated to follow him. But the delicate gloss of his feelings was now worn off; the shock of encounter had diminished the danger, or, when compared with Ippolito's, all danger seemed to disappear.

From the first moment he had fatally beheld Montorio, he had never been him-
self. He had patiently and successively assumed the complexion which Ippolito's character and fortunes had given him; his smiles or his sufferings were the uniform and necessary echoes of his master's; he had been the passive dependant of his attachment, whose happiness external circumstances might controul; whose fidelity, none could, ever. By pursuing him to the verge of ruin, he seemed to be only pursuing the course appointed to him; in plunging with him, from its final point, he appeared only to be fulfilling the severe, but absolute task assigned him.

These reflections rushed through his mind in a moment, and almost unconsciously, he found himself in an apartment of the house. To his inquiries for Montorio, no attention was paid; every one was busied in something that appeared remote from the purpose which had brought him there. Sick, faint, and terrified, he wandered from room to room, still calling, still inquiring;
inquiring; the house was loud, festive, and tumultuous. His heart was oppressed, his senses ached, his limbs tottered. Half insensible, but still exclaiming, he rushed against a door, which opening discovered Montorio surrounded by some of the most licentious of the young nobility, revelling, shouting, drunk with licentiousness, and dissolved in wine. Among such a group, Cyprian, (whom some of them had seen at the Montorio palace) was beheld with delight, as an object of mockery and persecution. They surrounded, they overwhelmed him with derisive congratulations; they contended for the distinctions of doing the honours of the revel to him.

With a strength of mind and frame, which we sometimes owe to the partial absence of reason, Cyprian brake from them, and staggering to the seat where Ippolito reclined, clung to him, exclaiming, save me, save me; save your own soul alive—take me from this house of sin, or I die at your feet.”

M 2

Ippolito,
Ippolito, starting as if from a trance, protected Cyprian with his arm, and repelling his persecutors with a fierceness which awed even the rage of drunkenness, rushed from the house bearing his breathless preserver with him. They were pursued by the unheeded roar of dissolute malignity, but in a short time it was unheard, and they drank without interruption, the dewy freshness of the breeze of night; they saw the chaste and silent brightness of the stars; they caught that deep and stilly humming, so pleasant to the ear, that loves to listen by night.

They reached the Montorio palace in silence, and Cyprian with joy perceived Ippolito preparing to enter it.—They had now reached the portico, when the clock in the great hall was heard to strike "twelve." Ippolito started and paused, and by the lamps of the portico, Cyprian saw his eye roll fearfully.—*He turned—"Whither, oh whither do you go?* Have I sought
I sought, have I saved you for this?" cried Cyprian, clinging to him, with renewed and impatient anguish. — "Off, release me, I may not be held; longer than midnight I must not delay; there is no danger; whither I go, human good and evil cannot come; virtue and vice are negative things: at this hour, I am no more a mortal agent; — release me; my hour is come, I may not be delayed."

"These are words of madness," said Cyprian, struggling, though hopelessly, to hold him; "whither have I not followed? and wherefore must I be repelled? Fear, nor danger, nor sin have deterred me! Oh let me not be left behind! What can I witness worse than I shall fear! What can I suffer so terrible as your danger?" — He pleaded in vain. Ippolito was gone with a speed which the fatigues of the night had rendered marvellous, and Cyprian entered the palace with a freshness of anguish which its sufferings had not exhausted.

CHAP.
Letter from Annibal di Montorio.

Tum demum horrisono stridentes cardine sacrae
Panduntur portæ. Cernis, custodia qualis
Vestibulo sedeat.

Virgil, lib. vi.

Then of itself, unfolds th' eternal door:
With dreadful sounds the brazen hinges roar.
You see before the gate, what stalking ghost
Commands the guard, what centries keep the post.

Dryden.

Whatever be the termination of these researches, I already lament the effects of their progress, nor can I review the circumstances I am about to relate, without many
many reproaches on my timidity and more on my obduracy. The feelings of doubt and uncertainty which had been suggested by my late visit to the apartments I communicated to Michelo, who, eager to adopt any thing that promised a remission of the task imposed on him, avowed it his belief, that the tenant of that tower had signified his displeasure of our intrusion by the signs we had witnessed, of which he declared our further misconstruction might expose us to dangers he dared not to name. I took counsel of his fear, unhappily for both, and believing, or compelling myself to believe, that one avenue was rendered impassable by a strength it would be impiety to resist, I resolved to repair at midnight to the chapel, and visit the tomb of Count Orazio, where the appearances, I determined to examine, were more frequent and obvious, and where therefore, some suspicion of their being produced by
by an agent such as myself, qualified the fear which in the tower I had found insupportable without such relief. Michelo, who had become as weary of deprecating, as I of importuning, made no resistance, and when (to compensate to myself for the timidity that had mingled in my design of omitting the tower) I determined to visit the tomb on that night, he promised to attend me.

He was to procure the keys, for he declined with so much terror the subterranean passages by which we had once resorted there, that I declined the proposal. Our few preparations were soon adjusted—long cloaks—a lamp carried in a lanthorn—and I determined to bring my sword. These arrangements were made with the whispering caution of fear, and we separated. During the remainder of the day, I felt myself involuntarily shunning the eye of Michelo, from a lurking apprehension that every glance we
we exchanged was observed and interrupted.

The night at length arrived; our dull and regular household dispersed; I retired to my apartment; my thoughts were occupied by the purpose of the night, and I endeavoured to banish from my recollection the circumstances that had attended my last visit to the chapel. They rose before me in strong shape and clearness; I saw them on every side, as I stalked across my chamber. I felt them, as I endeavoured to heave them off my breast, pressing on it, a thick and impalpable weight. With them came many a disastrous presage of uncertain evil. The whole ghastly troop seemed to be arraying for the encounter at midnight, in the tomb. My terrors increased, and though I felt that Michelo's arrival was but the signal for those terrors to commence, I yet longed for his approach, for the presence of a human being.—This struggle
of involuntary meditation was interrupted by a noise at the door; it was Michelo.—"Hush, Signor, it is I; are you prepared?"—"I am."—"Then come, Signor, but speak and tread softly."—"Why this caution, have not the family retired?" "All, Signor, but the pages who are now assembling to watch in my lord's chamber. But then, Signor,"—"What then, why this hesitation?"—"There is one in this house," pushing his pale face close to me, and whispering, "one who never sleeps, or if he does, can do all the actions of of a living man; yea, and more, while he would seem to sleep."—"Absurd, Michelo, banish these dreams of fear." "Nay, Signor—but I am silent,—tread softly, however, Signor."

We proceeded through the gallery with cautious steps; we had now reached the stairs, when a distant sound was heard; "Hark," said I. Michelo turned round, and started on observing we were near the apartment
partment of Father Schemoli. He communicated this in a whisper. "Proceed," said I. "I saw the confessor retire to his apartment an hour ago."—"Yes," muttered Michelo, "but heaven knows what apartments inclose him now."—We descended the staircase, muffling our lanthorn, and starting as the wind shook the casements, and the steps creaked beneath our tread. We reached the great hall, and stole through it almost without touching the pavement.

The deep and midnight silence, the dampness and dull echoes of the marble floor; the huge and dusky height of the walls and roof, over which our single lamp shed a dull, unpiercing gleam, made our passage appear like a progress through a vault. Michelo applied the key to the great door, and I wrapped my cloak about the lock to suppress the sound while he turned the key. Wonder not at this feeble minuteness; I cannot think of myself, creeping
creeping along in silence and in fear, without wishing you to accompany me; for sufferings, whether voluntary or not, we always expect some compensation, either of participation, or of pity.—We issued into the outer court, and I felt refreshment in the air of heaven, though it blew damp and sultry.

We now entered the chapel, and having reached, through many ruinous obstructions, the tomb of the late Count, we concealed our lamps, muffled our cloaks about us, so as to conceal as much of the human form (if seen) as possible; and lurking behind a projecting pediment of the tomb, awaited the event in a state of feeling difficult to describe.—There was nothing to relax its intense and severe control. There was no external sound; no light, no motion. It was one of those nights, in which you feel, from time to time, a hot blast hissing past you, that sinks again into silence. A night, in which
which the dark and heavy clouds seem to be working with inward tumults; in which, from expecting a storm long, we begin almost to wish for its approach.

The moon, often struggling through the clouds, tinged for a moment their sombre and surging masses, with a bright and sudden light that vanished in a moment; and the night-dews fell with almost perceptible damp and heaviness. On the dubious features of the structure, tombs and monuments, windows dusky with foliage, and arches shapeless in ruin, these bursts of light and darkness played with such shadowy influence, that he must have had senses not easily deluded, who could be convinced he saw nothing more there than might be seen by day.

I, however, felt that my situation required me to collect firmness, not to dissipate it, and I attempted to converse with Michelo.
Michelo. "Tell me," said I, "why, when the vaults of this chapel were already numerous and spacious enough to contain the remains of our family, why was a monument erected for Count Orazio, for one too, whose end, I have reason to believe, was obscure and tragical? And why, above all, was it erected in this ruinous and deserted pile, instead of that within the walls of the castle, which is still frequented by the family."

"There is a strange report, Signor," whispered the old man, "concerning this tomb, and the reason of its being built. Many things had concurred to drive it from my memory, but your inquiry has recalled it. It is needless to remind you, Signor, how much all your illustrious family have been attached to secret studies. But of all, the Count your great grandfather was most engaged in them. He devoted his entire soul to them; nay, some said so in such a tone, as if they wished
wished to be understood literally. But, oh! Signor, what am I saying—rest his bones, they lie within a few steps of us.'" "Why this interruption, Michelo?"—"Is it not fearful, Signor, to speak of the dead, when we feel them to be so near us!" The effect of this observation on myself, I endeavoured to conceal, by urging him to proceed. "Well, Signor, (lowering his voice as if to deceive the dead,) be that as it may, no power could drag him from these studies; and at length it was said he had invented by his art, a glass, that could shew him every event and person he wished to see. It is certain, that after his decease, my Lord, your grandfather, spent many days shut up in his father's closet—examining and destroying his instruments and books; and 'tis said, strange and doleful sounds were heard to issue from the room while he was thus employed. But the task was an involuntary one, for I have heard the Inquisition
tion were beginning to consider his proceedings as offensive, and had actually dismissed their ministers to examine into them, and to search the castle.

"A little before the old Count's death, he is said to have discovered by his wisdom, that there was a spot in the circuit of the castle, which would be the seat of calamity and destruction to the family. He immediately set himself to discover where this spot might be; and I conclude, that, if it required so much skill to find out that it did exist, it required still more to discover where. However, your great grandfather was in no wise dismayed, he pursued his point resolutely, and at length discovered the fatal spot to be the very one on which we now stand."—"What! the spot on which this tomb has been built?"—"The same, Signor. I have heard that the Count apprized his family of this circumstance, but the discovery slumbered unnoticed, till your uncle, Count Orazio, hearing of it,
it, and being, as I have mentioned, much versed in those studies himself, ordered a monument for himself to be erected on the spot, hoping by this means to fulfil, and yet to avert the prediction—to defeat, yet not appear to defy it."

Few that connected what I had witnessed on this spot, with what I now heard, could blame the emotion to which I yielded for a moment. But, though the denunciation was terrible, there is a solemnity in whatever we suppose to be connected with our fate, that divests it of the hideous ghastliness attending other subjects of supernatural aspect, and that marks the bounds of awe and of horror. — Under a decree, the mind bends in controlled and gloomy passiveness, appalled but not convulsed—without the reluctance and revoltings of visionary terror. As the attempt to relax my feelings had been so unsuccessful, I turned for relief to silence and to meditation.—The bell tolled twelve.—

Michelo
Michelo now, eagerly, but still whispering, said, "Look, Signor, look, through this chasm in the wall you may see—nay Signor, lower, yet lower—you must bend, Signor,—now do you see, Signor, a fragment of the castle, just above the great stairs?"—"I do see that part of the castle, which I believe to be adjacent to the great stairs."

"There, Signor, is Father Schemoli's apartment; that part of the tower, and that narrow window, in which you see a light burning, belong to his oratory:—now Signor, every night his lamp is to be seen in that window till midnight, and ever when the bell tolls it is said to disappear; nor, from that hour, can he be found, nor can it be conjectured, where or how he is employed:—this only is known, he is not to be found in his apartment. But his friends, it is said, are at no loss to find employment for him. Sometimes he holds a feast with them in the
the vault—and sometimes he mixes in procession with them, through that tower, and sings in their unholy mass at midnight.”

“What words are these, Michelo, and what is their import?” “Heed not me, Signor, mark the lamp; see, Signor, see, it grows dim, and more dim, and now it is gone—Holy Peter—it will be with us momentarily.”

The emotion with which I had watched the extinction of the lamp, I endeavoured to resist, as the cause was utterly inadequate to excite it—“And what are we to infer from this, Michelo? The Confessor may be permitted to extinguish his lamp at midnight?” “Ah! but, Signor, (depressing his voice to its lowest tones,) 'tis from that moment, that strange appearances at this tomb are said to commence.”—“Of the truth of that, we shall then soon be enabled to judge,” said I, endeavouring to derive fortitude from the intelligence. The expectation which it suggested, scarce permitted me to draw my
my breath. I continued to gaze vacantly, but fixedly, for I knew not in what direction to expect the approach of this visitation. "Look, look, Signor," Michelo exclaimed, "look yonder,—now, Signor, do you believe, now do you behold!"—As he spake, a light resembling that we had once before seen, a pale, dull light, appeared moving along a passage, which opens by an arch into the east wing of the chapel. In amaze I observed it issue from the lower end, where I knew there was neither door nor aperture.

I marked its approach, for it was slow: it seemed to have proceeded from the ground, gradually arising and advancing, and looking dim, tremulous, and sepulchral.

Michelo, leaning across the angle of the monument, grasped my arm; there was no sound; the very wind was still; I heard the beating of my heart. At this moment, the moon riding over the billowy clouds,
clouds, poured a broad and sudden light through that passage. It played uncertainly through the rifted roof, and fell full on the arch communicating with the chapel. In that instant I beheld a figure standing beneath the arch; a dark gigantic figure; its form and attitude I could not discover; the light was brief and sudden, and the vision confused and imperfect; but I discovered, that, as if folded in its vesture, it held the light we had seen, and which, in the moon-shine, was diminished to a small, dull twinkle. I pressed Michelo’s arm in token of observation, he returned the pressure; neither of us spoke;—all was dark—even that pale light had disappeared.—“He has seen us,” murmured Michelo.—“Hush,” said I, “let us await its approach in silence.”—“Something is near,” said the old man, “I feel the ground near me pressed, as if by feet.”—“Hush,” said I, “all is silent, a body cannot move without..."
out sound.”—“There is something near,” whispered he again, “for I feel the air driven to my face, as if some one passed me.”—“'Tis the bat,” said I, “that whizzes past you, or the wind that waves the ivy; I have heard, or felt nothing yet.”

“Oh no, Signor, there is a strange motion in the air; a rank and stifling chillness, as if something that was not good, breathed upon us.”

There came indeed a blast across us, not like the blasts of that night, loud and feverish; but cold and noisome, like a charnel-stream. We shuddered as it passed; I felt some effort necessary, to resist the palsied feeling that was stealing over me: “Michelo, let us not be baffled a second time. This form, whatever it be, is probably approaching; before it oppress us with some strange influence, I will rush forth and meet it: and be they favourable or malignant, I will know its power and purposes.”

Michelo's
Michelo's faint voice of dissuasion was lost in the wind that sighed hollowly through the aisles. I clambered out from my lurking place, and endeavoured to feel my way in the direction of the light and of the figure; for the central aisle was now totally dark. I advanced a few paces, I felt something rush past me—not with the distinct and alternate step of a human foot, but as if it glided above the earth, and was borne on without effort. I paused, and extended my arms—they encountered something that felt like a human hand, raised, and extended, and as it were, pointing onwards; I now called aloud to Michelo to turn the lanthorn, and to guard the door of the vault. By the noise that followed, I conceived he attempted to obey me, but at that moment a cry of horror burst from the tomb; the light disappeared, and the door of the vault, closed with a thundering crash.—All remained in silence and
and darkness.—I stood petrified; I called on Michelo, and shuddered at the echoes of my own voice—I attempted to move, but felt as if a step beyond the spot on which I stood, would be into a gulph. At length I broke from this trance of fear; I felt my way to the tomb—I called on Michelo again; believing him to have swooned. I felt all the pavement and pediments with the hilt of my sword—Michelo was not to be found; the tomb appeared to have opened her mouth, and swallowed him up. I applied my utmost strength in vain to the door of the vault, and though I almost expected it to burst open, and disclose a sight that would sear the eye, or unsettle the brain—I yet persisted to struggle with frantic force: no success attended my efforts, no sound encouraged them. Once I thought I heard a low and feeble moaning—but it was lost in that confused and humming sound, with which the effort to listen intensely, filled
filled my ear. Fear and shame, and impatience distracted me;—to force the wretched, reluctant, old victim, to a pursuit from which he recoiled; to betray him into the very grasp and circle of it; to leave him expiring amid horrors, of which even to think was not safe; to do this, was to me impossible.

The being, at whose approach I had shuddered, I would at that moment have encountered and grappled with, to rescue his miserable prey; but there was no hope, and no power of assistance. I could not rend open the vault, and to alarm the castle, would be to draw on us from my father's resentment, consequences as terrible as any power could menace us with. More than an hour was spent in fruitless efforts and expedients; at length, I conceived it possible to rouse some of the servants who were lodged in an adjacent wing of the castle, and by rewards to secure their silence with regard to the ob-
ject for which their services were required.

It was when I moved from the chapel to execute this purpose, that I felt terrors of which I had been before insensible. Alone, at midnight, among the dead and their mansions, and probably near to some being, whose influence and image were the more terrible, because they were undefined and unimaginable; because they hovered, with a dim aspect of uncertainty, between the elements and agency of different worlds; because they could not be referred to any distinct or sensible point of fear, nor admitted of any preparation against them, such as men can always make against a human foe, and sometimes against an invisible one.

Haunted by these feelings, I yet moved on. The night was now still and dark; and in the massy line of shapeless darkness, which the castle spread before me, I would have given half its value to have discovered
discovered one spark of light; there was not one. In that deep stillness (which made the echo of my steps seem like the tread of many) the slightest sound was not lost. I had almost reached the castle-terrace, and was debating which wing to approach, when the hoarse and heavy grating of the door of the vault reached my ear.—I paused—I heard it close. Doubting, fearing, yet with a vague expectation of relief, I hastened back.—

A light breeze waved my hair as I passed, and the volumes of cloud and vapour, floated back from the east, like a dark curtain-fold, and the moon stood calm and bright, in a deep azure field, tinging the fractured and shifting masses with silver as they retired. I blessed it, and wondered how often I had beheld that lovely light with apathy, or with pleasure, in which sympathy for the benighted whom it cheered, or for the wanderer whom it succoured, had no share.

n 2 I sought
I sought the aisle again. The moon poured a light as broad as day; through the windows. I saw the tomb of Count Orazio. I beheld a figure seated on it; I advanced in hope and fear. It was Michelo—he sat like a mariner, who leans on a bare and single crag, after the tempest and the wreck; he was haggard, spent, and gasping.—I rushed to him, but he appeared not to hear my moving; his head was raised, and his look fixed on the arched passage; the moon-light poured a ghastly and yellow paleness on his still features. I looked in his eyes, they were hollow and glazed; I touched his hand, it was cold and dropped from mine. I shuddered, and scarce thought him an earthly man. A moment reproached my fears, and I tried to address some words of comfort and inquiry to him, but I was repelled by an awe in which I scarce thought Michelo an agent.

"Woe, woe," groaned the old man, with a voice
a voice unlike a mortal sound, his arms raised and outspread, his eye wild and dilated, his whole form and movement rapt into a burst of prophetic ecstasy. I involuntarily retreated from him: "Alas, how is it with you, Michelo! let me conduct you from this spot; never will I forgive myself for having forced you to it. Haste away with me; my father may rouse in the night, the domestics may be summoned to attend his vigils in the chapel, and we shall be discovered; hasten back with me, Michelo."—"Woe, woe, woe," said the old man again, and bowed his head, and fell on the pavement.

I bore him from the chapel in my arms; tottering, for the weight of age and insensibility is heavy. The air seemed to revive him; and I saw, by the moonlight, something like colour, come to his dead face again. As I gazed on, and spoke to him, a shadow stronger than the waving of the cypress-boughs, crossed the spot. I look-
ed up, I beheld issuing from behind the buttress, against which I leaned with my burthen, the dark, and shapeless form I had beheld.—(The moon disappeared.)—It passed me, and proceeded towards the castle. I gasped, but could not speak to it—I stretched out my arms, but had no power to pursue it—It floated onward, and with these eyes I beheld it enter the wall of the castle. It was at the solid buttress angle of a tower, whose strong line was visible in the shade; there was neither door nor aperture, but there was neither obstruction nor delay. The moon burst forth again as it retired, and Michelo unclosed his weak eye on its beam. He rose tremulously; I supported him. We proceeded towards the castle; neither of us spoke, but he moaned heavily, and closed his eye from time to time. We reached the great hall, the door of which we had left open; all power or wish of inquiry died within me.

When
When we heard our steps on the pavement of the hall, and felt we trod in the house of the living, Michelo with a faltering hand made the sign of the cross, and swooned again. I had much difficulty in bringing him to my apartment, and often I thought I heard sounds that passed me, and felt a motion in the passages other than what myself occasioned; but I was in a state of mind in which it is difficult to avoid the illusions of fear. When revived and recovered, he implored to be led to his own apartment. His eye was yet wild, and his words were incoherent. I hesitated, but yielded to his earnestness.—"Lead me, Signor," said he, "to my turret, other hands shall bear me from it; lead me to my bed, a better rest than it shall give me, is near."

I attended him. I had forborne to importune him, but the wild resolution, the mystery of his silence, wrought with my abated fears of his safety, to excite a solicitude
cititude I could not resist. I seated him in his chair, I trimmed his lamp, and departing with a reluctant step, asked, "Michelo, what have you seen?"—"The secrets of the grave," said the old man, without a pause, and without a whisper. His boldness emboldened me. "And dare you relate them, Michelo?"—"And dare you listen to them, if I dare?" said the old man, fixing his eyes, which shone with strange light, on me. "I dare—so help me heaven, and all the saints, as no weak, personal concern or fear mingles in the spirit with which I await the development of these mysteries."—"No more to-night, Signor," said the old man, relapsing into weakness, "leave me to-night, leave me to silence, and to heaven. I have need of prayer and of preparation; my time is brief, and my task terrible. But come to the turret, and knock to-morrow, and if I be alive, I will answer you."—He fell before a crucifix, and prayed
prayed fervently. The lamp shed its light on his white temples and closed eyes. I retired, and when I closed the door of the narrow turret-room, I felt as if I had closed the door of a tomb.

* * * * *

The preceding lines were written in the remainder of that disastrous night, which had left me too much agitated for sleep; I have forborne to send them that I might add to them an account of our—

* * * * *

Ippolito, I am distracted with shame and contrition. Michelo is indeed dying. The first domestic whom I saw this morning, told me, (what I endeavoured to listen to, as unexpected,) that Michelo was ill, and that he had sent for a monk of St. Nicolo, in Naples, to attend him. "Strange, Signor," said the servant, "that with
with so pious a confessor as Father Schemoli in the castle, he would prefer sending to the monastery of St. Nicolo."

I endeavoured to reconcile myself to this intelligence, that though Michelo might suffer by the shock he had received, it was unlikely those sufferings would be long or severe, far less mortal, and I determined to visit him in the evening, when delay would disarm suspicion, if any existed. But what was my consternation, when I heard the family physician declare that his patient would not probably outlive the day. The vital system, he said, had received a shock he could neither discover nor remove. "Michelo is neither dying of age, nor of disease, but he will not probably outlive the day." I have heard it whispered in the castle that my father, on this intelligence, desired an interview with Michelo, which was determinately declined. Strange condescension, and strange refusal! Twice to-day
to-day have I endeavoured to see him, but his confessor has not yet left him; they have been alone for hours. Hark! I am summoned—he will see me now. The monk has left the castle abruptly.—My spirits are solemnly touched. A moment ago, they were agitated, but this summons, and the expectation it has breathed through me, has hushed them into a severe stillness. Amid all my regret for this unhappy old man, whom I have killed as surely as if I had thrust my stiletto into his heart, there survives an impression of solicitude, of doubt, and of awe, which I am anxious to feed with strange intelligence. The hour, the place, the purpose, are most solemn; it is night—I go to the bed of a dying man, to learn the secrets of the grave!... *

* * * * *

I am
I am returned, and the impression I have brought with me, what shall efface? My mind is so completely filled, that I feel as if no other subject would ever occupy it, and I write, almost as I think, involuntarily.—I found Michelo in his narrow bed. A pale and single lamp lit the room, he held a crucifix in his hand, to which he raised his dim eye from time to time. There was another person in the room, whom, when I became accustomed to that faint light, I discovered to be Filippo, the nephew of Michelo.

"Signor Annibal," said the old man, "draw near, I have many things to say; but my last hours are under that dark control which has held them long, and till a certain moment I can utter nothing of import. Signor, you see me dying; this is the reward of my long and guilty silence. Alas I flattered myself, that silence was not participation; but a death-bed convicts all self-deceivers. The holy monk
monk is now in possession of my last declaration; prepare you, Signor, for its consequences. You have sought a discovery, which will anticipate your efforts. Even I who would have concealed it, by partial communications, and pacifying expedients, am made an instrument of its disclosure. I see its approach, with the indifference of a man who has no more part in this world; but you, oh you, how shall I prepare you, young, noble, and impetuous, how prepare you for it! *The House of Montorio must fall!*

Indignation and amaze kept me silent a moment; the dying man before me was no object for the former; but I fervently wished those words were uttered by some other mouth, down which I might thrust them with my sword's point. "'Tis well for him," said I, "your intelligence came from no living man; but even from the dead, I will not believe it true." The old man kissed the crucifix. "So may He to whom I am hastening,
ening, receive my soul." I paused, and trembled, and signified by a motion to him, to proceed. "Not yet, not yet, Signor; my hour is not come; and till that arrive, I cannot be released: but many are the signs that tell me it is near.

"I shall not linger long, Signor, tell me the hour, and tell me the moment." "But five minutes more," said I, "and it will be eleven." "Five minutes," repeated he, "it seems but a short space to one who has seen sixty-five years; yet I would they were over.—Look still, Signor, and count to every moment as it passes." I did so. The old man repeated the numbers as I told them. "And now, Signor, now," said he, "is the last arrived?" "The hand is on the last stroke; now it reaches it, and now—hark to the bell."—"It is eleven—Filippo leave us." Filippo retired. I drew nearer the bed.

The old man spoke feebly, and with many
many pauses. "I draw near the hour of my dissolution.—What I have known, or what I have concealed, will soon be published. That the disclosure will probably affect the fortunes and honours of your house, I presage too well. To prepare you for it, Signor, shall be the task of my last hour.—There is a being—he is no living man; his thoughts and movements are beyond our knowledge; yet he passes before your eyes, and moves, and speaks, and looks with a show and form of life. This being, I dare not name his name, has held me long in his control. I dared not to speak or move, but as I was bidden, for he held power which man might not resist. But I am now released, for I am dying. I shall soon be as he is, and shudder not to meet him. But while I yet speak with a human voice, let me warn you of what impends over your house, Signor. He is the evil genius of it—he is the very power commissioned to act
act and to witness its destruction.”

“Who is this of whom you speak?” He crossed his brow. “I may not name his name; all that rests is to tell what he has told, and what he has told, shall surely come to pass.

“Many a night have I dimly beheld him—many a night have I felt his hollow whisper pass into mine ears: but, last night, I saw him—I saw him,” said he, shuddering, “face to face!” “Whom?—where? delay this terrible intelligence no longer; what have you seen, and what have you heard?”

“I was at the door of the vault,” said he, faltering; “you left me, and wandered up the aisle—I felt that unearthly thing approach; you called to me to expose the light; I tried to do so; but I was grasped by an influence that froze me up. The cold and bony hand was on me; the blood in my veins thrilled and crept like the cold motion of a worm; the door of the vault was rent open; I was dashed down
down it, as if by a whirlwind.—The door was closed on us, and I felt as if I was no more a human being.—I did not lose my reason; I knew I was among the dead, and with one I feared more than the dead; but I had a kind of ghastly courage. I felt as if the touch of that hand had made me like him that owned it. I was able to look around me. The moon-light broke through the rifts of the vault. I saw his form moving among coffins and bones; and in that dim, and shuddering light, it appeared to mix with them: then it seemed to sink into the coffin of the Count Orazio; and from thence there came a voice to me that said”——. I listened with all bodily and mental ear—

“Woe and death,” murmured a voice from beneath us. It was not like a human tone; it was like the moaning blast of midnight;—like the deep, long, hollow murmur of a distant sea; but the sounds it bore, were distinct and clear.
The old man's hair rose, and his eyes glared. "What did you hear?" said he. The truth was too near and terrible to be denied or concealed. "I heard a voice," said I, "that said, 'woe and death.'" He smote his hands, and sunk backward. "My repentance is too late:—that was the spirit's death-cry.—And I must die, and leave it untold; and I must die, and leave it unexpiated."

He fell—he gasped—he blackened. I knelt beside him in terrible enthusiasm. "Speak, I adjure you, while a breath is spared—while a moment is allowed you. Speak, as you would depart in peace—as you would go to glory." There came only a hollow rattle from his throat. I bent over him, agonizing for an articulate sound. He muttered deep and inward, "It is too late—Erminia—Orazio," (he added a name I could not catch) "murdered, murdered.—Their forms are before my eyes; their blood is on my soul."
soul." He shook; he was convulsed; he expired. I called Filippo to my assistance; but assistance was fruitless—Michelo is no more!
Tempus abire tibi est—Horace.

'Tis time for thee to quit the wanton stage.

At the Montorio palace all was confusion and riot. All the influence once obtained, and the concessions once exacted by Cyprian, were scattered and lost by this new sally of riot.

Ippolito returned to his former pursuits, with an avidity that promised to compensate for his short abstinence from them. His days were days of pleasure; his evenings,
ings, evenings of revelry; but his nights, remained nights of mystery. Every day he became more enflamed, more restless, and more intractable. His sense of internal anguish appeared to be more intense in proportion to his efforts to deaden it. And often, while he shook the dice, or swallowed the wine, his haggard countenance betrayed a heart far from holding alliance with a thought of joy or ease. The fatigues of his revels and his vigils combined, the fatigues of a mind that sought tumult even in pleasure, and banished ease from its very relief, preyed rapidly and equally on his frame and temper.

The high, romantic spirit, the vicissitude of tender and of lofty feeling, the carelessness of happy vivacity, the play of unlaboured mirth were gone; and, in their place, intervals of gloom and of fury, of spirits stimulated to unjoyous and fierce excess, or sunk to sullen dejection. His beauty only remained; for, whether
whether flushed by the dark, fever-glow of riot, or pale with the gloomy weariness of his nightly watchings, he was ever most beautiful.

At such moments, Cyprian beheld him with that piteous and painful delight, with which we see the dim and altered face of a native dwelling, or the scarred, and dismantled branches of a tree, that has delighted us with its beauty, and refreshed us with its shade.

On one of those nights, that Cyprian, left to utter solitude, felt it only embittered by the thought of him who had once filled and delighted all solitude, he was informed that a stranger of rank demanded to see him. The demand was unusual and alarming; and Cyprian was at first about to decline complying with it, but his ever-wakeful solicitude suggested that the purport of this visit might relate to Ippolito, and he desired the stranger to be conducted to him. He entered.
entered. He was a Spanish officer, about the middle of life; the bold and imposing air of his profession was mingled with the stateliness of his nation; and he saluted Cyprian with that ease which bespeaks a familiarity with many modes of life.

"Signor Cyprian, I presume," said he. Cyprian bowed. "I am not ignorant, Signor, of your character and attachment to Count Montorio; my confidence in your zeal has been the motive of this visit. I myself know, and regard him; he is a young nobleman of worth and honour, otherwise," said he, touching his whiskers, "a Castilian could feel no interest for him."

Cyprian, warmed by Ippolito's praises, listened with a pleasure he had long been a stranger to. "It is therefore," said the Spaniard, "that I feel myself deeply affected by the state in which I see him plunged;—but first permit me to inquire, whether
whether his domestic habits have undergone the same perversion with his social ones. You, of course, are well acquainted with them, and can pronounce whether he appears at home, restless, perturbed, and unequal; or whether those appearances are only the consequence of the excesses in which he is immersed when abroad."

"Alas, no, cavalier;" said Cyprian, "a new and dreadful revolution has convulsed his whole frame of mind; it affects him at all times, and everywhere; he enjoys no repose at home; he is no longer Ippolito di Montorio."

"The change is as violent as it is extensive then;" said the Spaniard, "he plays for stakes at which it would be madness to take him up; he plunges into frequent inebriety, a vice rare in your climate: he seeks every abode of licentiousness in Naples; his whole effort seems to be, to extinguish his reason, and to consume his health. Yet all this appears to be the
the result, not of a rage for pleasure, but of an impatience of pain; these excesses appear the dreadful alternative of anguish that is insupportable. Such vices," said the liberal soldier, "as I have described, might be forgiven in a young man of sanguine constitution, and splendid rank, but never should any excess lead a nobleman to derogate from his dignity, and the stateliness of high-born demeanour, and mix levity with licentiousness." Cyprian had sufficient knowledge of mankind to discover, that the motives to rectitude will always vary with the character and habits of the mind that forms them; though, therefore, he revolted from the distinctions of this worldly theory, he adopted the consequences drawn from it.

"I, at first," said the Spaniard, "believed this to be only a sally of sudden impetuosity, the consequence of some casual disappointment of his views or his passions;
passions; but recent circumstances have induced me to think, that a mind of such noble and energetic powers could be perverted by no trivial cause; and I am confirmed in my suspicions by the event of last night." "Suspicions of what? What do you suspect?" exclaimed Cyprian, rising in agitation. "Suspicions," said the Spaniard, in the deepest tones of his deep voice, "of his being engaged in some bond of connexion, either hostile to his soul's or body's welfare, from which he tries to extricate himself, but tries either too late or too faintly. Were I less acquainted with Count Ippolito's honour, I should fear him to be associated in some dark design against the state; as it is, I believe he pursues some object of private hostility, yet often recoils: sometimes deterred by the magnitude or invidiousness of the enterprise, and sometimes by the danger of the means he must employ to accomplish
accomplish it.”—“Impossible!” said Cyprian, with the most animated action of enthusiasm, “impossible, that Ippolito’s mind could embrace an object of guilty or obdurate rancour; or if he did, that danger could ever deter him from its pursuit.”

“I was about to inform you,” said the Spaniard, “of the circumstances that led me to that conclusion; they were his own words, sometimes dropt unguardedly, and sometimes extorted by a sudden pang; but they at best, are but inconclusive. I hasten to inform you, therefore, of the fact of last night, for I need not remind you, Signor, that no Castilian ever draws a rash or hasty conclusion.”

Cyprian felt he had offended by his abruptness, but the emotion that had caused left him also unable to apologize for it.

“Last night,” said the Spaniard, “a large party of us had assembled in a casino
near the Corso; there was high and general play, and several strangers were mixed through the company, who were, several of them, as usual in masks. Count Ippolito was among the rest, in that perturbed and feverish frame we have lamented. He played for immense stakes, and stimulated his spirits by incessant draughts of wine. His vociferation, his eagerness, and his air and figure, which exhibited a kind of splendid and dissolute madness, had drawn all eyes on him. But they were diverted by the appearance of a stranger, whom I can no more describe, than I can define the impression his presence appeared to make on the company and on me. He was clothed in a long, loose, dark cloak, that completely concealed him. He wore a mask, over which the dark plumage depending from his hat, hung so as almost to hide it. He moved along with a slow stride, appearing to know no one, and to be
be known by none. His presence, though it did not suspend amusement, appeared to suspend all the spirit of it. The loud and eager voices of the gamblers were gradually softened almost into whispers; the loiterers deserted the places he drew near, and one old knight of Malta told me, he felt the air breathe a strange chilliness, as this person past him.

"I should not have given credit to such effects attending the presence of a single, silent, solitary man, had I not felt myself, a strange sensation which I cannot describe, and do not wish to recall; a sensation, such as I never felt in the battle or in the breach. This person, after many movements, at length placed himself at the table at which Count Ippolito was playing, and stood, in a fixed attitude, directly opposite to him. I was near them—a superficial observer would have imagined, from the Count's manner, that he was insensible
sensible of his presence, but from the increased loudness, eagerness, and careless desperation of his manner, I at once drew a contrary conclusion. The eyes of all were fixed on that table. The stranger, after standing some time in silence and motionless, began at length to make some strange and unintelligible gestures, which were evidently directed at the Count. The only notice the latter took of them, was hastily to call for and swallow more wine, and to double his stake. The stranger then slowly raising his arm, and extending it from his cloak, pointed it full at the Count, it was naked, bony, and gigantic; some said it was spotted with blood; I saw none. The Count, bending over the table, furiously bid his antagonist, who had paused aghast, to attend to his play. They pursued it. The stranger spoke not; but drawing out a watch, held it opposite the candle which stood by the Count—
the light fell on it—the hand pointed to twelve. Many, who stood on the other side, said that the reverse was inscribed with strange figures—I could not have seen them, if it had. Montorio eagerly pushed away the light. The stranger retreated, but all eyes followed him. He stood still opposite to the Count—he appeared to feel in his garment for something: a suspicion that he was an assassin, now arose in the casino, and there was a slight murmur heard. But it was quickly hushed by amaze. The stranger, drawing forth a dagger, marked with many a stain of blood, held it up, and waved it with a slow, but menacing motion at Montorio. At that spectacle his fierceness forsook him; he gazed a moment, then exclaiming, in a tone between a shriek and a laugh, 'Hell has triumphed,' rushed from the table. The stranger, concealing his dagger, slowly retired from the room, at,
at every step turning and beckoning to Montorio, who followed him with faltering steps, with straining eyes, and with a shivering frame.

Such is the fact, witnessed by several of rank last night, in a crowded casino. They, who witnessed it, did not choose to follow; and when inquiry was made of the attendants, they acknowledged they had seen them pass—but had immediately lost sight of them.”

Cyprian listened in sore and fearful perplexity. “After consulting with some of Count Montorio’s friends, we agreed that the circumstances we had witnessed, could only be ascribed to one of the causes I hinted at. We therefore determined to inquire whether the same change had been observed by his family, and if it were, to recommend the expediency of some steps to be taken, to discover and remove the cause of it. Your attachment, and the benignant influence you are said to exercise on the
the Count's habits and dispositions, pointed you out as the most proper object for this disclosure. With you, therefore, I leave it—and leave it also with you, in your discretion, to decide whether an application to his family, or to spiritual advice or authority, be most expedient on this emergency."

The acknowledgments Cyprian was preparing to make for this communication, were interrupted by loud clamours from the portico. "It is the Count returning from the Corso," said the Spaniard, "with some of his noisy associates. I was engaged to sup with them here, and took advantage of the invitation to introduce myself and information to you." "Stay then, I conjure you," said Cyprian, "stay with him this night, he is so accustomed at this hour to be abroad, that his return fills me with strange presages; perhaps this night he means to break that fearful bond that binds him. Oh, stay with him then,"
and let him not lose himself in the madness of the revel. You are a man of steady mind and arm—a man, such as I would lay hold of in my hour of peril, and bid abide with me. I will be in the adjacent room, and, oh! should anything—only remember me.”

The revellers were now ascending the stairs, the Spaniard retired to join them; and Cyprian hastened to a room adjacent to that where they assembled, where he remained struggling with hope and fear.

But he was soon agitated by feelings less remote:—the conversations of the banqueters soon reached his ear, and he listened with horror, which while it moved him to depart, rivetted him to the spot, to the impurity, the wickedness, and the wildness, that was poured out by those sons of mirth and ease. Gaiety, of which the happiest feature is fantastic lightness, appeared to be industriously excluded by the
the accumulation of every image, whose fulsomeness could disgust, whose depravity could offend, or whose profaneness, terrify. Often he wished for the wand of the enchanter, or the "wings of the morning," to bear Ippolito from pollution, in which his partial hope refused to believe him willingly immersed.

But Ippolito's voice was loudest in provoking, and circulating the frenzy of artificial joy; and Cyprian began to feel little consolation in the thought he had remitted his midnight visit; when, in one of those dead and sudden pauses, fictitious mirth is often compelled to make, he heard Montorio say, "If a stranger were permitted to view this joyous band, what would he conceive of us?" "Explain yourself?" said one of the cavaliers.—"Would he imagine there were among us beings who dared not encounter this hour alone, who rushed to this meeting, not
not for delight, but for shelter?" Of those to whom this question was addressed, many laughed, and all answered in the negative: "Would such a one imagine," continued Montorio, with increased emphasis "there were those among us, who were assembled here to shun a hand which follows, and fixes its grasp on them;—to fly an influence, that even here, extinguishes the lights, and poisons the wines, and makes the flushed faces around me seem as if they were seen through a gleam of sulphur-blue?" "No, no, no!" was again vociferated by the company.— "Would he imagine, that of these rioters, yet a few moments, and every voice will be hushed, and every cheek pale?" The negative was again repeated, but it was repeated by fewer voices, and in a fainter tone.—"Then," said Montorio, "he would judge falsely."—A pause followed this strange remark.—"What do these questions
questions mean?" murmured the cavaliers.
"You grow pale, Count Montorio?" said the Spaniard. "Do I? and wherefore do I?" said Ippolito, in quick and broken tones, "my hour is not yet come, let us be merry till the bell tolls, why do ye sit round me like statues, all silent and aghast?—Let me feel the grasp of your hands, and hear the sound of your voices. Laugh, laugh again: I implore you to laugh: I would laugh myself—but when I try, a raven seems to croak from my throat." He snatched up a guitar, and burst into extempore stanzas, which as he sung, he adapted, to a wild and varied melody:

I.
Fill, fill the bowl, the ills of life
I'll value not a feather,
No cloud shall cross my soul to-night,
Or shade its sunny weather.

I've
II.
I've sorrowed till my heart was sore,
And groan'd—but hence with prosing;
My last care dies upon this draught,
My last sigh's in this closing.

III.
I'll revel with a bitter joy,
And mock at baffled sorrow;
Nor will I wreck how many a pang
Must waken with the morrow.

IV.
'Tis a sweet flower, the late, late rose
That decks the sallow autumn,
And those the dearest beams of joy
That burst where least we sought'em.

He threw down the guitar. "I am all discord—I have neither tone of mind nor of voice—but I must have music. Go, some of you, and call Cyprian.—Let him bring his harp, and hasten to us."

Cyprian
Cyprian, who heard every word, retreated in horror at these, and was hastening from the contiguous room; but the servants who had seen him going there, when the cavaliers entered in that hasty obedience which their master's wayward moods had lately taught them, threw open the door, and disclosed him. Ippolito clamorously called him forward; and Cyprian, whose compliance with that call, was mechanical and unconscious, advanced, though abashed and terrified. Of the cavaliers, many were intoxicated, and all had resumed the obstreperous gaiety which Montorio's questions had suspended. Some were calling for play, and some for more wine; but Ippolito, with lavish and boisterous praises of Cyprian's skill, called for a harp, and insisted on his gratifying the company with his performance. Cyprian, silently but earnestly, pleaded with his eyes for indulgence; but the
the demand grew more vehement, the harp was brought, and he sat down with sad and sore reluctance to an employment remote from its congenial scenery and spirits. He touched it with a trembling hand, its broken tones seemed, like him to mourn their altered destination. The times, when he had hoped the exertion of his talent would have cherished sensibility, and delighted virtue; when the grateful silence of praise struck more deeply on his delicate sense, than the boisterous delight, which rather terrified than encouraged him; when he hoped, the alternate sway of pleasures that refined, and of influence that rectified Montorio's mind, would have divided his life between the exercises and enjoyments of virtue; instead of lulling into vacancy, the intervals of Bacchanalian frenzy, with a despised and prostituted talent;—those times and hopes, struck on his mind, and tears fell
fell fast on his hands, as he hurried over the strings.

But the emotion that shook him, added to the expression, what it denied to the execution, his eye was raised to Montorio, and the inspiration came on. He appeared to him, amongst that rout, like a frail and wandering spirit, seduced by the apostate host, and mingling in sad association; his brightness dimmed, but not lost, his nature "cast down, but not destroyed." The enthusiasm of genius was exalted by the intenseness of feeling, and he poured forth tones, that might have won such a spirit back to its original sphere and glory. All were suspended in rapture; the feast was forgotten; they hung all ear and eye on the minstrel. The clock struck twelve unheard. At that moment, a loud exclamation burst from Ippolito, who started from his seat, and stood bending from it, with arms extended towards the door.
door. Every eye followed the direction of his. The servants who were collected round the door, hastily retreated; while emerging from it, was seen the figure which many of them had seen the preceding evening at the casino.

Its appearance was the same as the Spaniard had described; it was dark, shapeless, and gigantic; its face was concealed in a mask, and its head overshadowed by plumage. The cavaliers stared and murmured; Cyprian pressed close to Ippolito, and the figure stalked slowly into the midst of the hall. An utter silence succeeded; the very rustling of the cloaks of the guests, as they laid down their untasted wine, and turned to gaze on the stranger, had now ceased; and the sound of their shortened respiration, almost came to the ears; when the stranger turning from Ippolito, opposite whom he had planted himself, addressed the
the company—"I am here an unbidden guest; does no one receive the stranger? Then I must welcome myself."—He seated himself near the head of the table, while those next whom he placed himself, seemed doubtful whether to withdraw from him or not;—his appearance had amazed, but his voice had congealed the company. There was something so peculiar in its tone, so hollow, yet so emphatic, so distinct, yet so seemingly distant, that they who heard it, listened not to the words, but to the sound, and hung on its echo as on something that issued from an invisible direction.

Ippolito now sunk slowly back into his chair, with a face still turned, and eyes still fixed on the stranger.—"Pursue your mirth, cavaliers," said the figure again, in a tone that seemed to annihilate all mirth, "my business is alone with the Count Montorio."—"You shall not have me,
me, unless you bear me hence in a whirlwind. From this night no power carries me, willing or alive, to your haunts.”
“‘You know my purpose and my power; delay not, resist not, retreat not.’—‘This is most strange,’” said Ippolito, recoiling in his chair, and grasping the arm of the Spaniard, and muttering in hollow and hurried tones while his eyes wandered eagerly over the stranger; “this is most strange—ye see how he sits there, in strong and visible shape, amongst us; every eye can behold, and every ear can hear him. This is most strange;—the forms that float before us, in our sleeping or waking dreams, or those more substantial ones that mingle in scenes of horror, in the solitude of midnight, in the vaults of the dead, in the chambers of sorcery; these can be banished as they are raised, by local influence, they can be dispersed by light, by human presence, nay
nay by the effort of a recollected mind. But when they pursue us to the very hold and circle of our shelter, when they sit before us, amid our mirth and wine, in the blaze of lights, and the loud and comforting tone of human voices; when they do this, and will not be repelled, what shall we think?"—"Ippolito di Montorio," said the stranger, "delay not, resist not, retreat not; must I speak the words of power, must I produce the seal of your bond?"—" Summon your instruments and your powers," raved Montorio, with a shrieking laugh; "let them bear me off in their visible grasp; shake this house to its foundations, and amid the ruin, bury me, or bear me off; if ye will have me, I shall be no easy prey." The stranger rose, Cyprian shrieked, the cavaliers rose, murmuring and preparing to draw their swords—the stranger waved his arm; "Children of earth," said he, in
in a voice of thunder, "avaunt! For you there is neither task nor summons here; Ippolito di Montorio, I call on you; the bell has tolled; the hour is past. Ippolito di Montorio come with me."

Ippolito remained silent and unmoved. The stranger, as before, produced a watch, it was fifteen minutes past twelve. "Knowest thou this hour," said he, "knowest thou the deed which must be done at this hour? Ippolito di Montorio, come with me." Ippolito remained silent and unmoved. The stranger again produced the terrible dagger; the stains were numerous and livid; he waved it again before Montorio, whose eye seemed to lose all intelligence as he gazed on it. "By this dreadful instrument I adjure thee; by his blood which has rusted the blade I adjure thee; I adjure thee by those who saw it shed, whom thou mayest not deceive and canst not escape. Ippolito di Montorio, come with
with me.”—“Liar—liar accursed,” thundered Ippolito, “he lives, his blood is in his veins—no dagger has ever drained them. Why stand ye all round me in this dead distraction? Seize him, secure him; another moment, and his witcheries will chain you to your seats; or waft ye miles away; seize that dagger—I have discoveries to make.” While he spoke, he and the company had surrounded the stranger; swords were now drawn, and arms extended to seize him—all was confusion and tumult; Cyprian, who had rushed forward, heard an eager contention of voices.—“Seize him!”—“Where is he?” “Here.”—“There.”—“Gone!”

The company gazed on each other with vacant and fruitless amaze. There were only two doors to the apartment; through neither of which had he been observed to pass. There was but a momentary pause, for Montorio exclaiming—“He that is not bereft
bereft of reason, follow me," rushed from the palace. The company, partly in that perplexity which takes its omen from the first voice it hears, and partly in that solicitude to which any new object is a relief, accompanied him, and were attended by the servants, who seemed to have an ominous dread of remaining in the hall; and of the witnesses of this strange transaction, Cyprian alone remained in the deserted apartment.

When the pursuers reached the street, they perceived the necessity of adopting different directions. Among them was a nobleman, who had been intimate with the father and uncle of Ippolito; but whom his riper years had not yet taught to retire from the revels of youth. From the first appearance of the stranger in the hall, he had appeared uncommonly agitated. His attention to the figure, its voice, and its words, had been marked and earnest,
nest, and on the proposal to pursue different directions, he chose one that appeared most remote from the discovery of the object, and insisted on pursuing it alone. These circumstances were however but little attended to, in the mingled tumult of intoxication and terror; and the nobleman was suffered to pursue his way alone.

Two others, who had tried theirs without success, were returning to the rendezvous, when they heard behind the projecting tower of a church, through whose portico they were passing, voices which appeared to whisper, and sounds that resembled a struggle. They halted in that hesitation, in which the senses wish to assure themselves of their objects, and they then heard distinctly, in the terrible voice whose tones yet dwelt on their ears, "Release me, you know not who I am." "Then by these blessed walls," said the nobleman who had gone alone, "I will know,
know, before I release you. Contend not with me, but tell me what you are, your life is in my power, if you are indeed a living man.” A pause succeeded, which was followed by a loud and fearful cry, from the lips of the last speaker. The listeners now rushed, and found the nobleman, alone, and extended on the pavement in a swoon. They heard not the steps, nor saw even the shadow, of him they believed had been with him; but had they, their companion would have occupied their attention more powerfully, as they believed him to be dying.

The others who were dispersed in neighbouring directions, were collected by the noise, and assisted to support the Duke di—— to the palace. Each expected abundant information on the subject of their pursuit, on his recovery, from the report of those who had been in the portico; but that recovery appeared long doubtful; medical assistance was procured, and
and the patient slowly regained the power of speech and motion. But when he did, it was only to aggravate the suspense of the listeners. From time to time, he murmured, "I have seen him, it is he"—and the weakness into which he relapsed, forbid further inquiry. Another object now engaged their disappointed attention. It was discovered by Cyprian's eager inquiries that Ippolito had not returned with the rest, and of the direction he had taken, all seemed to be ignorant.

The Duke was now borne, still partially insensible, to his carriage, and the convivial party separated, aghast, amazed, and unsatisfied. More inquiries, prompted by curiosity than solicitude, attended the bed of the invalid the next day. He continued virtually insensible; to his friends he made no communication, to his medical attendant, no complaint, to his spiritual, no confession. The words, "I have seen him, it is he," were ever on his lips.
He lingered a few days in this partial delirium, and then expired, uttering these words.

The day following the feast, Ippolito returned, as usual, distracted and oppressed, but with unsubdued activity. He that day visited his companions, and solemnly intreated them to conceal the transactions of the preceding night. The request was easily complied with, for they could have told little but their own fear and uncertainty. And Ippolito returned without interruption or interference to his vigils.—In a few days a billet arrived from Annibal, of which the former part seemed to refer to some letter recently received from Ippolito.

**Letter from Annibal.**

*You* are then as *I* am—your letter describes an agency similar to that by which *I* seem to be led; what shall we think?
think? By whom and whither are we conducted? I fear to follow, and I fear to pause; nor do I know whether these corresponding operations should remove or suggest doubt, should confirm the suspicion of deception, or of a power that extends every where, and blends characters and situations the most remote in the completion of its purposes. Either apprehension confirms my intention of pursuing my search and my inquiries; they must eventually lead either to the detection of fraud, or the discovery of truth. How do we flatter our motives. Were mine examined, perhaps, curiosity would be found the principal cause of my visionary heroism; yet I have witnessed things that render curiosity almost a duty. Filippo who has much attached himself to me since his uncle's death, often attends me with a face of busy significance, that seems to tempt an inquiry; but I should only be mocked by the grossness of vulgar superstition; he
he has nothing to relate, which I need wish to know. What Michelo concealed from me, he would not possibly communicate to him.

* * * * * *

Night, 11 o'clock.

The castle is in confusion—some extraordinary intelligence is said to have arrived; there was a messenger from Naples—he is gone; no one knew his errand or his employer. But every thing seems in silent, eager preparation. What may this mean?

Filippo has just been with me. "Have you heard, Signor, of the intelligence from Naples?"—"What have you heard, Filippo, for I perceive you wish to disclose something."—"I, Signor? nothing Signor, I assure you, nothing I can report as certain. Just now, I heard it said, indeed, there was some great visitor ex-
pected from Naples, for whom, preparations were to be made, and whose arrival it was said, surprised my lord, your father extremely. The cause of this visit, Signor," said he, glancing his shrewd, dark eye at me, "none of us presume to guess."—"Do you know who this visitor is Filippo?"—"There Signor, I scarce dare venture my information again; but it is said," lowering his voice, though we were alone, "it is said to be the Duke di Pallerini, his Majesty's confidential favourite; that is, Signor, not his ostensible minister, but as it were, a kind of trusty agent, who is always employed on secret and important services; you understand me, Signor."

The gravity with which I endeavoured to listen, silenced him: shall I trust this man or not? There is a shrewd promptitude about him, I like: will this visit bear any relation to the object of my pursuit? Beset as I am, with perplexity and fear, I lay hold on every thing for relief;
relief; and every thing deserts or deceives me.

Noon.

The Duke has indeed arrived. Have you heard any thing, in Naples, of the purpose of this visit? If it be an object of weight and of secrecy, I pronounce the man, from the first view of him, adequate to the trust. At first you perceive in him nothing but the suavity of the courtier; but a little observation discovers this to be only a veil to the other qualities of that character. His conversation is guardedly limited to indifferent topics, of which the charm of his manners conceals the insignificance. His very words seemed weighed in the balance of diplomatic decorum, yet you see an object ever directing his most trivial movements; he seems to me a mental assassin, who lurks in the shade of his purpose, to spring on the prey. But we often draw conclusions, not
not from what we see, but from what we determine to see. His presence has diffused something like life through this gloomy house. My father, my mother, appear to be gratified by this visit. The rest of the family with myself welcome it as a suspension of dreary monotony.

* * * * *

Filippo has been again with me—there was a secret in his countenance, which he did not suffer to burthen him long. "Does the Signor," said he, "recollect that there are certain apartments in the castle, which are supposed to have been unvisited for many years, and of which my late uncle had the keys?"—"I have heard of such apartments."—"And I have heard; Signor, that since my lord your uncle’s death, they have never been entered, never been opened, never even approached." "That," said I, almost unconsciously, "I know to
be a falsehood."—“And so do I,” returned Filippo, with quickness. “You,” said I, astonished.—“And if my Signor will please to listen,” he added, “he will hear something still more strange. Our apartments, Signor, are situated near that tower; mine is directly under a passage which is said to lead by a stair-case to those apartments; and often when I have lain and listened to the wind as it moaned so hollow down that passage, I have thought I heard other sounds mingling with it. Since a late period indeed, those noises increased, and often have I expected to hear the feet that fell so distinctly in that passage, enter my room and move round my bed, so plain and certain was their sound. But the danger which my mention of the adventure near the old chapel, incurred, taught me silence and fear.

Last night, however, Signor, it was my lord’s order that we should feast the Duke's
Duke's servants, and give abundance of wine to them; such store, Signor, was given out, even lachrymæ Christi was not grudged them;—close knaves they were, and shrewd. The more wine was poured down their throats, the more silent they grew, and at length they all pretended to sleep; some of them did so in reality; and then we saw huge stilettos peeping from under their cloaks. Strange, that one nobleman coming to visit another, should arm his attendants so!"—"And is this all you had to communicate Filippo?" "Pardon me, Signor, I was going to inform you, we separated late, and just as I had got to bed, I thought I heard the door of the passage open—I listened—it was a sound I had never heard before; for though steps had often trod that passage, they seemed to have issued from the wall, neither lock nor door had I heard ever till last night. It seemed to be opened slowly and cautiously, and many steps then brushed
brushed over my head. I sat up in my bed, and looked upwards, vacantly;—but the ceiling is old and shattered, and through the chinks I could see light passing, till it had gone beyond my room. I know not Signor, whether the wine I had drank, gave me courage, but I rose, and leaving my room softly, I went where a few steps lead to the door of that passage—I ventured up them—the door was open, and as I looked down it, I saw distinctly figures moving, and among them, one whose habit resembled a monk's. I staid till they disappeared, and then I heard other doors opening; and all night after I was disturbed by frequent noises in that direction; noises I might have mistaken for the wind, had I not seen what I did. But now, Signor, the strangest part of all, is, that recollecting the events of the night, I ventured, when the servants were in another direction, to examine the door this morning; it was still open;
open. Twice since have I gone to it; it remains open—that is, Signor, closed but not locked: now if my Signor had any curiosity to visit those apartments”—I was struck by the circumstance he related. “You informed me,” said I, concealing my knowledge, “that your uncle had the key of those apartments; who has obtained them since his death?”—“That, Signor, no one knows; nay, no one ever knew, but by conjecture, whether they were in old Michelo’s possession or not. He never owned it; and the servants, would ask him for the keys of the tower, when they wished to torment him.”

I mused for some moments; so many objects, and opportunities, and agents, all contributing their unconscious, but regular operations to the same point, all varying in the means and direction, but all agreeing in the end; all acting involuntarily, yet with an uniformity that suggested
gested the idea of a superior influence; their agency neither obstructed by difficulty, nor deterred by fear; nor, as it should seem, dying with the death of their principal mover. All these struck me with a conviction of fatality, in the direction they pointed out, which I could not resist, and to which if I did, resistance would be vain. I submitted therefore silently, with awe, but not gloom; resigned, but not dejected. "Yes," said I, with an earnestness that appeared to surprise my attendant; "yes, we will visit those apartments; to-night, the servants wearied with attendance, and probably stupified with wine, will sleep sound and deep. Come, after the Duke has been conducted to his apartment, come to mine, and we will visit those apartments." Filippo assented with a pleasure, which flashed in his dark eyes.—Ippolito, I go again to the tower; often disappointed by partial discoveries, and fantastic hinderances,
ces, I go to-night with a solemnity of feeling and purpose, that tell me I shall not visit it in vain.

Adieu.

* * * * *

He went; and, strange to relate, was seen no more by the inhabitants of the castle.
—But let both worlds disjoint
'Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of those terrible dreams
That shake us nightly.

Macbeth.

The cause of the visit alluded to in Annibal's last letter, may be explained by the following one, which had preceded the arrival of the writer one day, and which was directed to the

Count di Montorio.

"His Majesty, the King of Naples, ever attentive to the interests of his subjects, and
and peculiarly zealous of the honour of the higher orders, has received information that induces him to establish an inquiry into some events that are said to have occurred in the illustrious house of Montorio. With a confidence that their representative will completely exculpate himself from their imputed responsibility; and will view, not with resentment, but gratitude, the opportunity allowed him for this purpose by his gracious sovereign.—The Duke de Pallerini, to whom his majesty has been pleased to commit the inquiry into this delicate and important subject, begs leave to point to the Count Montorio, another instance of the royal benignity—the Inquisition is to be private; without the formalities of a court, or the publicity of witnesses and documents. The Duke de Pallerini proposes himself the pleasure of a visit to the Count's castle; from which he expects to return, with full proof,
proof, of the futility of the allegations he is appointed to examine.”

This letter, the genuine production of an Italian statesman, who in the commencement of his letter, disguises the invidiousness of his office, by making the king the principal agent, who conceals the feeble and illegitimate character of the charge, by affecting to deprecate the offensive publicity of a court, and who prevents the possibility of preparation, by the concealment of his object, while he disarms the anxiety for it, by affecting to treat it with levity. This letter was brought by a courier, and presented to the Count; who, on reading it, continued to muse for an hour, and then desired the Countess might be summoned. The Countess followed the messenger; the attendants quitted the apartment, the Count locked, with his own hand, the door of the anti-chamber, and returning, pointed to the letter, which lay on the table,
table; and covering his face, sunk back on his chair.

The Countess read, without uttering a sound, or altering a feature, and then with a movement which caution had made habitual, tore and consumed it. The Count raised his eye slowly, and fixed it on her; his must have been a steady aspect, that could have met it unrepelled; but hers sought and fixed it with a fuller meaning than its own.

"The storm has gathered," he murmured—"Then let it burst," replied the Countess, "what have we to fear, or to provide?"—"What have we to fear?" repeated the Count, "do you speak in despair or in defiance? What have we to fear? They who are compelled to trust or employ human agents, have ever to fear. The impotency of human power confounds and distracts us. The single arm cannot execute its own purpose. From those bold and daring conceptions, that
swell the mind almost with a consciousness of its omnipotence, it must descend to the drudgery of means and agents; it must ask the aid of wretches whom it fears and hates; wretches, who are ever weighing the price of blood in one hand, against the price of treachery in the other. Commit the secret of your guilt to but one human being, let it be breathed but in one ear, ever so remote, ever so secured, ever so unassailed, and—tremble, as I do now."—"And wherefore do you tremble? Have we not secured, by oaths, by bribes, by mutual fear and danger, every being either conscious or partaking in our deed? Is not every mouth stopt, and every hand tied up? Nay, have we not, of some, the final, certain, terrible pledge of silence and safety?"—"Hush, hush, hush;" said the Count, waving one hand impatiently, while the other still concealed his face; "ever—ever those sounds—whatever words I hear, they are mixed
mixed with; whatever object I see, they are written on, and you must goad me with the repetition. Can you not speak without adverting to it; or, if you must, why adverb to it so distinctly? Can you not speak like one ignorant of it; or, if knowing, one who knows it not so deeply? I need no remembrancer—no, I need no remembrancer."

"What is this weak and sickly waywardness, that shrinks not at the deed, but at the name. When the prevention of evil was yet possible, it might have been indulged; now that it is no longer so, exchange it for those views of advantage that prompted you to it. By absurdly inverting the places of desire and remorse, we lose both the tranquillity of innocence, and the enjoyments of guilt. If remorse may prevent guilt, let it precede it; but if guilt promises enjoyment, let enjoyment follow it. Ah! no, no, Montorio, this waywardness is not for us; strange deeds
deeds have made us familiar with strange
language;—we must confer in the cold,
hard terms of necessity." "If we must then—if we must talk like midnight assas-
sins in their cave of blood—if it must be so—sit down by me, close and hushed;
and let us consult from what quarter this danger approaches, and how its pur-
pose and bearing may be discovered."

"There is but one quarter from which
danger can approach us. The woman is
secured, secured by her guilt; but Ascanio, Oh; Ascanio, that business, unfinished,
unknown, unascertained, since we left Apulia, has haunted me with strange
fears; it has tinged my thoughts, my very dreams."

"Would that were all that haunted
mine," said the Count, inwardly. "That
dark story, never fully told, in the wild
fables of the Apulian peasants, I have
often thought there might be some trace
of Ascanio—then the monk of the moun-
tains
tains—the confession—the letters of doubtful menace you received from the prior of the monastery”—“Who is now,” interrupted the Count, “the prior of St. Nicholo, in Naples.” “Is he indeed, indeed, Montorio?” “He is; but why do you tremble?” “It was from that convent, that a confessor came to old Michelo, when dying.” “True, true, he did,” said the Count, smiting his forehead. “Oh, what a chaos here! thought crossing thought, and circumstance clashing circumstance—yet nothing is certain, nothing direct. I have no motive for fear, but the consciousness of guilt. These circumstances might have happened in the common course of things. A maniac might have died—a monk might have attended his dying bed—the prior of a monastery might be removed, without danger or fear to me. But there is a coherence here—a consist-
ency—a seeming order and form; as if some still, slow, invisible hand were busied in unravelling and displaying the train. Or, is it the curse of guilt to believe every common cause and agent in nature fraught with its detection—to see a tempest in the very blaze of noon? It is, it is;—the worm within me never dieth; and every thought and object it converts into its own morbid food,"

"Montorio, have I come here only to hear your complainings? If there be danger, the interval is short, and our preparation must be—Hush!—hark!—What sound is that? Did you lock the antichamber door?" "I did, I did; listen again. We are undone, there is a listener there." "And will you be undone? Have you not a dagger? Possibly there is but one, and he can soon be dispatched."

They had risen; they were rushing to
to the door. "What! more blood!" said Montorio, half recoiling, "must there be more blood?"

The Countess replied but by a look, and an effort to wrest the dagger from him; but the noise was occasioned by drawing back the bolts of another door, that which communicated with the confessor's, who opening it, suddenly entered the apartment. Montorio staggered to his chair, while his wife, with the involuntary movement of fear, held up the light to the stranger's face, to discover if indeed it were the confessor.

The monk spake in hurried and eager tones, but without the eagerness of discovery. "I know ye; I know the secret of your fear;—I know the purpose."—"Whom, and what do you know, and whence this intrusion?" said the Countess, passing with dexterous quickness between the Count and the confessor, to conceal the pale and fear-stricken visage of...

VOL. I.
the former; on whom she cast looks of smothered fury, and muttered, "Shame!—shame!" through her shut teeth.

"It is in vain," said the Count, with a look of anguish and horror, "it is in vain, he knows it all." "I know it all," repeated the monk. "He echoes your words, will you prompt him yourself?—Or if he knows it all—have you not still a resource?" She pointed to his dagger; then turning boldly to the monk, to conceal the movements of the Count, again demanded of him what he knew, and wherefore he was there. The monk laughed.—The blood of Montorio and his wife ran cold to hear his laugh; they almost wished he had told his discovery.

"Lady," said he, "urge me not.—I know the deed—and the time—and the place—and the sign. I can repeat the signal of the secret. I have read the mark
mark on the brow.—Do you remember your miserable agent, Ascanio? Do you remember the monk of the mountains? —the confession—secret—the letters of the prior—and how you trembled at their dark intimations?"

"Who, who is this?" said the Countess, in terror.—"Must I go on, or is your soul shaken yet?—Do you remember Orazio and Eriminia—the betrayed—the distracted—the murdered?"

"Hold, hold, what, oh, what are you?" "Do you remember," said the monk, in a voice that froze them, "do you remember that night, that terrible night, when the thunder roared, and the earth was rent to appal you, in vain? Do you remember the north tower—the narrow staircase—the evening gloom?—Do you remember how your victim struggled?—Do you remember her dying curse—her dying scream?—Six strokes your dagger gave—I feel them all; at the seventh his blood
blood rose to the hilt. You heard him chatter—you saw him convulsed—you felt him quiver—ha! ha! ha!—Go, comfort your pale husband yonder, he seems to swoon."

He released her arm, which he had grasped with violence; she staggered from him, and fell senseless on the floor. The Count remained petrified, holding his half-drawn dagger.

"Look to the lady," said the monk. "I came not to terrify, but to save. You are in danger; I know its direction, its nature—nay its very degree. But fear you not; they can do nothing without me; you are safe from all human power, and all human vengeance. I am your dark, invisible shield. Be bold and reckless of them. Montorio, sad and fearful man, be bold. It is midnight now, and I must hence, on a far and dreary summons. Montorio, be bold and reckless."

He disappeared through the secret door. The Count raised and supported his wife...
She recovered. She murmured, "Are we?"—"Alone," said the Count, "you called no assistance? None saw us."
"None!" "Right, right," panted the Countess, "better death than discovery!"

She rose, feebly leaning on Montorio, the energy of her mind, contending with bodily weakness. She could scarce stand, but her eye and tone were firm.

"What fearful voice was that which spake to me?" "It was no fearful voice; it spake of strength and courage. Aye, and do I feel strange courage and strength within me since it spake." "Are you mad, Montorio? he knows our secret—pursue him, he is unarmed; he has not quitted the passage."

"Woman! woman!" scowled Montorio, "weak and daring;—but now you fainted at the name of blood, and now you urge me to shed it. I will not pursue him. Were he here, and at my very sword's point, I could not thrust at him.

Zenobia!
Zenobia! that man is the very agent of our fate. From the first moment I beheld his dark eye, and heard his deep voice, I felt my mind and genius in subjection to his. At our first conference, he appeared to be in possession of the burden that presses on my soul: and he appeared to possess it, not in the vulgar joy of an inquisitive spirit, but with the deep consciousness and compassion that thinks not of the crime, but of the criminal. He has prayed with, and for me, in fervent agony the live-long night, till the big drops, like those of death, stood on his pale forehead;—but never till to-night did he own the extent of his knowledge, though he must have long been in possession of it. When I talk to him, events the most distant—the most secret—the most minute, seem all perfectly known to him; wherever I have been, he seems to have been—to have seen all I have seen—and to have known all I know.—-
His presence—his voice seem to act on me like a spell. Either my spirit, weary of suffering, sinks into that lassitude, which precedes dissolution; or it bows to its arbiter, with conscious submission, and tells me to rest on him. And even now departing, he bid me be bold and fearless. I will not fear—I will rest on him."

"Montorio, you mistake the amazement of a harassed spirit, for the confidence of a controlled one. This is the monk of the mountains, whom your superstition would transform into the minister of your fate;—he holds the confession secret; which, perhaps, he only awaits the arrival of Pallerini to disclose tomorrow. And will you, will you, see the serpent crawling within your walls, and whetting the sting that is to pierce you, without an effort to crush him?"

"It is impossible to reach him now," said Montorio. "Impossible!" "Yes, when
when he came to reside here, he told me, I must never summon him at night, for every night he said, he had a task, which might neither be deferred nor suspended.”

“'A pretence for an opportunity of prying.”' "No; often in my midnight-visitings, have I sent for him; but never was he to be found. The castle gates are locked every night; but he passes everywhere without noise or obstruction; he knows the secret avenues better than we do. I have seen him appear from walls, where no door was;—I have seen him in the passages of the—the—tower, but never at night may he be found.”

"Your account almost tempts me to your own confidence in him. But what have we else to grasp at, it is the involuntary fortitude of misery, that converts its instruments of suffering, into instruments of relief.—At least, I am content to abide till to-morrow, for what can be done or known till then?" "Yes, to-morrow much
much will be known." "Did you speak, Zenobia?" "No, I was sheathing the dagger you had dropt." "I thought I heard a voice murmur, to-morrow; but I am often so deceived. Good night, Zenobia. Let the attendants return, and look you give orders for to-morrow's preparation with a cheerful tone."

The Countess rose to depart, but as she crossed, he grasped her arm; his eyes were cast upward; their lids quivered; his teeth were strongly shut; his frame rose and dilated with an intense and straining movement; he held her strenuously, but spoke not. "How is this, Montorio? Speak, what do you see, or feel, Montorio? speak to me—must I call assistance?"

"Stir not, speak not," he hissed through his shut teeth. "What, and wherefore is this?" "There—there—there," he sighed slowly, while the influence that held him, seemed to relax. His eyes moved
ed again, and the muscles resumed their tone and direction.

He sunk into the chair, still holding her arm, and almost dragging her with him.—

"So, now, you must not leave me to-night." "Not leave you!" "No; the feeling has been with me; I know its deadly language; it tells me what shall befal to-night." "What shall befal to-night!" "Aye; ever when it comes, my eyes grow dim—my ears ring—my flesh creeps and quivers. Then I know that I shall walk in my sleep that night; and you must abide by me, Zenobia. From the strange looks of those who watch with me, I know I talk in those nightly visitings; you must abide by me, Zenobia; none but the murderess must hear the ravings of the murderer." "Yes, I will watch with you. This is the meed of our daring.—But how know you it will come on to-night?" "Whenever my mind is shaken by the mention of those events, then
then I know it will visit me. I have also a short, convulsive summons that betokens it;—you have seen me wrought by that; but now—prepare for the night, good wife; for what a night must I prepare!'

* * * * *

"How is the night?" said the Count, raising his heavy eyes to his wife. "'Tis almost twelve."—"Then my hour is very near; I feel its summons coming on; 'tis heavier than sleep, yet 'tis not like the drowsiness of sleep."—"Is there no means of preventing or of mitigating it; can you not turn your thoughts in another direction?"—"Can you!" replied Montorio, fixing his eye on her. "Is it not at least possible to repel sleep, and so repel this terrible companion?"—"No, no, no;" murmured he, with the heaviness of reluctant drowsiness. "I have tried a thousand ways, a thousand times, but never.
never could I resist the lead-like weight of that unnatural sleep. Oh it were mockery to tell you, Zenobia, the childish, miserable things I have done to prevent these nightly visitings. I have wasted the day in fatigue, and the night in dissoluteness; but ever when it came, though the sleep that seized me were as deep as death, I rose almost as soon as my head touched the pillow. I have determined to watch at my casements, to mark the moon and clouds, their changes and shapes. I have turned my thoughts intently to one point and object, and still as it stole from my mind, I have tried to recal it. I have counted the sparks in the embers, the figures in the tapestry to force attention to wakefulness; but ever when midnight came on, I sunk into sleep, with all the horrid consciousness that it was not slumber, nor rest, but a living hell that awaited me. I have made my attendants read
read to me, varying their tone and subject, and bid them, if they saw me slumber, shake and rouse me up; but all in vain. When I have started from my dream, I have beheld them asleep with their books in their hands, and when I upbraided them with negligence, they fell on their knees, and declared, they neither could rouse me, nor preserve themselves from the influence that overcame them."—"Merciful heaven, and this, the moment your eyes are closed."—"My eyes never close," said Montorio, with a piteous ghastliness of visage; "on those nights; they continue open during the whole of my wandering."—"It will be a fearful sight for me to behold you."—"Aye; we must bear them though; we must learn to grapple with our fate, and all its terrible circumstance and feature. But mark me—however ghastly the sight, close not your eyes, close them not for a moment; if you
you do, sleep may overcome you; and the prying knaves of the chamber may listen or enter unobserved: no—though spent and affrighted, the wife of the murderer must not sleep.”—“Fear me not, I shall neither slumber nor fear.”—“However desperate my convulsions, my struggles, my sufferings, if my very hair stand upright, if blood gush from my nostrils, if I be drenched with the sweat of fearful agony, yet waken me not, Zenobia; let the vision spend its terrible force; for if wakened in its paroxysm, reason is irrecoverably lost.—Alas, Zenobia, by the light I see your eyes begin to wander, and your voice sounds faint;—rouse, rouse, you must not sleep, Zenobia; tell me the hour, and how much of it has our melancholy conference wasted?”—“The time-piece is beside you.”—“Aye, but I want to see you move, and hear the sound of your voice answering me; tell me the hour, good wife.”—“'Tis but a quarter past twelve.”
twelve."—"But, but a quarter! I thought we had almost dragged out one hour; when by some strong effort, I have resisted its influence for an hour, with what delight have I heard the bell toll one, and thought it was so much nearer morning; that so much of the terrible night was elapsed. But even that miserable respite is denied to-night. I feel that deadly sleep coming on me fast; speak, speak to me, Zenobia; let me feel your hand, or hear you move; no, no, no; all palsied, numb, and drowsy."—"Try to rise, and walk up and down your apartment; I will support."—"In vain, in vain;" he murmured, "I should sleep if rocking on a wave."—"At least retire to bed, before this oppresses you; perhaps you might get some sleep." "No, no; I will remain in this chair; even in my slumber, I feel the horrid motion of rising from the bed."

The last sentence was almost inarticulate; he shivered—he moaned—he fell backward;
backward; his eyes closed for a moment, but opening again, remained motionless, and dead;—his hands moved with a faint tremour, and his heavy respiration sounded like a groan. The Countess, with involuntary fear, caught a cross that hung on her bosom, but dropt it again, while a terrible expression crossed her countenance: "What have I to do with thee," she half-murmured, and half-thought; she then seized a book that lay on the table, and began to read with fixed and vehement attention, studiously confining her eye to the page. She was disturbed by the louder groans of Montorio; she read aloud in the endeavour to drown them, but they became stronger and more terrible; she could no longer hear what she read, the book fell from her hand.

The groans were followed by some inarticulate sounds, and he then began to speak, in tones so distinct, yet so unlike human
human accents, that she thought the groans had not ceased.

"Zenobia, Zenobia," he said in a quick low voice, "where are you gone? What is this melancholy light by which I follow you?—the pale glow of embers!—Nay then, she must be near.—Let me draw the curtains of this bed;—Is this you, Zenobia? Ha!—lightning rive me!—Erminia!—let me, let me fly; no, no, no:—her eye has fixed, her touch has frozen me. Must I stand here for ever; rooted, congealed, gazing, face to face; touch to touch? I cannot move my foot, or withdraw my eye, or think myself away.—Ha, her cold shroud encloses me like a snow-cloud; her dead arms creep round; the icy dart of her eye numbs my brain.—Help, help me, Zenobia! I sink, I sink with her! Oceans of mist and snow! storms of icy sleet and shower! cold, cold; oh, cold."

His teeth chattered with frightful loud-ness,
ness, and the seat shook with his shaking limbs. "Whither, whither now!" he muttered; "aye, I know your haunt; I know, whence this dim unnatural light steals from! ye shall not drag me to the tower; it is in the castle, I know, and not in this misty bay. I will lurk in this gulph, and shun it. Ha! 'tis here; I move without feet, and without change of place; this is witchery! I will pray and cross me, and then no evil thing shall control.—Father Schemoli, cross me on the left breast, there—near the heart, for they say it is troubled and impure; I would do it myself, but my hands are bloody!—Ha! ha! ha! What hand was that which wrote on my breast? I bid it sign the cross—Orazio! Erminia!—Verdoni! in letters of burning sulphur.—Help, here!—Water!—steel! wash it!—erase it!—tear it out!—it eats into my flesh!—it drinks up my blood! Now
Now they surround me!—save me, save me!—I stand their burning food!—Oh, their hot pincer-fangs! they hiss in my flesh!—Oh, rend out my heart, and let me have ease!—see, they divide it among them!—it spreads, it burns, upward, upward! my hairs blaze up, my eye-balls melt!—I burn blue, and green, and red!—I am a hell!—Fire, fire, fire!"

He roared with strong and horrid force, and started from his chair, and spread his arms, with the action of one who struggled with flames. A scream rose to the Countess’s throat, she suppressed it with convulsive firmness. A dead silence followed this burst, and in its pause, the Countess heard the deep and heavy breathing of the sleeping pages in the anti-chamber. She felt there was something extraordinary in their torpor, but the security which it promised, balanced the fearful thoughts it whispered; and she listened to it with delight.

He
He advanced from his chair, with a slow but steady motion; he moved to the door; there he seemed to encounter some object, whom he addressed in low and pacifying tones.—" 'Tis true, my lord, 'tis true, you must be satisfied;—there is reason for it.—Let me have the keys of the north tower.—Filthy knaves, why do you bring them smeared with blood, and twisted with worms?—Take them hence, and—ha! the doors open of themselves: 'tis a good omen, my lord;—enter first, I entreat you; nay, I would, but these old floors groan so under a man's tread, and if I entered first, you might think they groaned, because I trod them."

He went eagerly around the room, touching and pointing to different objects:—the Countess shrunk from every spot he approached. "See, my lord, see,—all is safe. Men will die—and they must be buried—and there will be a death-like steam, and a mist—
mist—a mist, my lord, but these things can be removed, and who will guess them then? Ha!" smiting with fury at the wall, "villains! villains! who has rent open this wall? Who points down that stair? Go not thither, Pallerini; nothing, nothing but a lumbering skeleton. Some dry, decayed bones, a sorry sight of mortality. It can tell nothing. Who has heard the dead speak? Ask it not to write, it hath not the means. See, I will touch it; 'tis a fearful sight, but a harmless one. Now, were I the murderer, the blood would gush from the holes of its skull:—ha! what is that! who raised its fleshless and clattering arm to smite me on my mouth?—again!—again! away—away, where the dead move is no place for us. But you heard yourselves, he did not say I did it."—He paused; he waved his arm with a slow, commanding air. "Prepare the feast—the wine—the music; but look there be no knives like daggers
gers on the table; and let not the attendants wear those murderers' looks. Ho there, let us be merry!

He sunk into his chair, and spread out his arms. "Give me some wine.—Ha! who is this? Ascanio!—Get thee hence, with that grim, sorry face. Ascanio, I have wished to see thee long, but this is no time, no place—avaunt! why dost thou stand grinning at me?—I tell thee this is no time. Noble Pallerini, I pledge you."

He writhed his mouth. "Ha! damned potion—what is this! Erminia's—blood!—Villains! why am I served thus!—and this! What's this before me!—a bloody dagger! Why do you all stare distractedly? Wherefore do you laugh, Pallerini? Ha! hold, the taper's here. Blasting lightnings! 'tis Orazio,—Erminia,—Verdoni, away—break up the feast, the dead are among us. The lights are sulphur; the music is a howl;—away—away;—who nails
nails me to my chair?—The floor sinks under me!—down—down—down. Let me grasp at the air—will nothing hold me?—Sinking for ages—lower—lower—lower. My breath—my sense—my sight are gone!—Oh!—Oh!"

He staggered—he shrieked—he awoke. The Countess hastened to hold him. "Hush, hush, Montorio; all is well. You are alive—you are awake—you are in my arms." He shook and tottered in her grasp. His eyes were fixed on her; but he saw her not. Her voice was mixed with the voices of his sleep. Again she spake, again she soothed him in low, and cautious whispers. "Am I alive?—am I safe?—am I only a murderer still! Thank heaven! my hour is not yet come—my hour of flames and agony."

"Hush, hush, Montorio; be yourself again. Are you unmanned by the fears that visit the infant's sleep—by the fantasy of a dream?"

"And are you without fear or distraction?"
FATAL REVENGE; OR,

do you sleep all the long night? Have you no dark dreams, such as visit not an infant's sleep?" "Often; but I deride them, and myself. Often is my sleep broken with horrid starts of fear. Often do I see, through my curtains, forms with fixed eyes, and forms with none, that glare on me, in their emptiness. Often I hear, around my bed, those low, doubtful, moving sounds, which the ear can neither discover to proceed from itself, nor from outward objects. Then I shake my curtains, or trim the night-lamp, or mock the terrors that come too late for prevention, and too trifling for remorse." "Speak no more," said Montorio. "Words of comfort from the mouth of guilt, are like the prayers of the wizard, inverted as they are uttered. I would not live this life of horrors, but in the hope to compound for their mitigation in another."—

* * * * *

They
They sat in silence till near the morning. A light doze, which had fallen on them as they sat, was broken, by the opening of the secret door. Again the monk stood before them. They looked upon him, with that helpless stupefaction with which we view one who has the secret of our ruin, but over whom we have no influence to secure its concealment. "I have been far distant since," said he. "I have learned much. I would confer with you."

The Countess stared with reluctant amaze; but the confessor heeded her not. He prepared to speak; the Count pointed to a seat. "No rest for me; I would speak, and ye must hear." "Speak, then, but speak low; the attendants are in the antichamber," said the Countess, "and withdraw your cowl from your face, holy father, for my senses are dull and spent, with last night's struggles, and I scarce can hear you." "Wherefore that request?"
quest?" said the monk, "none have ever seen my cowl withdrawn, none ever must, till."——

He paused. The Count and Countess bent forward with concealed faces, and fixed ears. The monk began his communications in a low tone, accompanied by violent gesture, and interrupted only by looks of silent ghastliness, which Montorio and his wife exchanged at different periods of it. The communication lasted till the watch-lights burnt dull and dim in the blue light that streamed through the curtains. The confessor rose from the chair, over which he had bent to whisper. "For this," said he, folding his dark drapery, "your preparation must be instant." "Fear us not; our demeanour shall evince nothing but ease and tranquillity." "Pardon me, lady, I never doubted your power of assuming what form or language you needed, but," said the monk, with unheeded irony, "I speak of another preparation.
preparation. I speak of a place, hard to secure, and hard to conceal: of a place where the search of Pallerini might be directed, and where that search might discover a dumb, but fearful witness of our secret. Know you of such a place in this castle, lady?" "He speaks of the north tower, of the burial-hole, on the secret stair." "Why, why particularize it, with such hideous minuteness? Yes I know it well, holy father; we must anticipate all search there; that body must be removed." "When, and how, and by whom?" said the monk, in a hollow tone. "This following night," said the Countess. "And by you," added Montorio. "By me?" "Aye, by you. Contend not with me, I am a man of wrung and harassed soul. I will not visit those apartments." The few remaining points were adjusted in whispers. The monk retired. The Count summoned his attendants, and the castle was soon employed
in glad and busy preparation for the arrival of the visitor—

* * * * *

A day and a night passed in festivity. “I may expect then to meet you in your apartment, at midnight, Count?” “I shall attend you, Duke.” But on that night, while the family were assembled in the hall, the confessor entered, and whispered the Count, who, startled and agitated, rose, and committing the entertainment to the Countess, retired. “You will not forget your engagement, Count?” said the Duke, as Montorio past him, with a solemnity so brief, it scarce seemed to borrow a moment from the levity of his mirth. “I go to prepare for it,” was the answer. Montorio and the monk retired.

The Countess, who felt the necessary claim on her exertions, redoubled them; though
though she would have almost exchanged her chair of state for a rack, to have learned the cause of the Count's absence. Midnight arrived; artificial levity could exist no longer. The Countess almost talked to herself; and the Duke appeared perplexed and suspicious, when one of the attendants acquainted him that the Count was in his apartment. This was the signal of their meeting. The family separated; the Duke retired to his own chamber, which, when he conceived the castle was at rest, he quitted for Montorio's.

The Count and Countess were alone. The Duke entered, with two attendants, in silence. The faces, the persons, the manners of the meeting, had undergone a sudden and total change. There were no compliments, no gaiety, no polished festivity; the countenances of the group were only marked by different shades of suspicious or sullen gloom, as they betokened
tokened— the varied characters of the inquisitors and the criminals. The Duke advanced. "Is it necessary," said the Count, pointing to the attendants, "is it necessary that your lacqueys should witness this extraordinary procedure?" "I trust," said the Duke, "you will regard the circumstance I am about to acquaint you with, as an additional proof of the consideration for you which is mingled through the whole procedure. These persons are the officers of justice, disguised as my attendants, and appointed to register the minutes of the examination, I am commissioned to institute; others are dispersed through your castle, in the same disguise, ready to execute any orders, which the event of the examination may render it expedient for me to issue. Under these circumstances, Count, you will observe opposition to be perfectly ineffectual, and I trust you commend the delicacy which suggested the expedient." "Proceed to your commission," replied
replied the Count. "Will not the Countess retire?" said the Duke, "this is no place for female presence, nor will the terms and objects of our conference be pleasing to her." "The place where the honour of my family is discussed, is the fittest for the mistress of it," replied the Countess.

The secretaries seated themselves at a low table, in a remote part of the room. The Count removed the lights near which he sat, and the rustling of papers was all that interrupted a long and general pause. "You had a brother, Count." "I had." "He was married, and had children." The Count bowed. "How long is it since that sad and obscure end befel him?" "Twenty years." "And during that long period, has no inquiry been made? no solicitude excited for the fate of a brother?" "Pardon me, there needed no inquiry. I was well informed of its mode and circumstance." "And yet undertook
took no measure for the punishment of the murderer.” “The murderer had punished himself; my brother fell by his own hand.”

“How! this is contrary both to common report, and to the documents now in my possession.”—“My brother died by his own hand, in a fit of despair, on the intelligence of his wife’s death.”—"Her death then preceded his; was it also a death of suicide?”—"No: she was pregnant; the terrors of the last eruption, which was twenty years ago, brought on a premature labour; she and her child perished.”—"This can of course, be easily substantiated, a woman of her rank was certainly, suitably attended?”—"Her danger was too brief and mortal; she was only attended by the nurse of her children.”—"Is she alive?”—"No; she did not long survive her mistress.” “A strange fatality attended all the agents in this affair; the storm of that night had many victims,
victims, Count. But you mentioned children, how did they disappear?"—"They were conveyed that night to their nurse's sister, lest they should disturb the Countess; they died of complaints incidental to infancy."—"How considerate to remove them from the castle on that night! Doubtless their mother enjoyed repose soon after their absence; but, may I inquire, is the woman with whom they died, still living?"—"She is," interrupted the Countess, "she is now living in the Abruzzo; her name is Teresa Zanetti."—"The air of the Abruzzo is favourable to weak, infantine complaints?"—"We have reason to say so," observed the Countess; "our eldest sons, Ippolito and Annibal were nursed by that woman, and in that cottage, and they are strong and healthy young men."—"To return to the Count Orazio," said the duke, "I have heard he perished in Greece; was the suicide committed there, and by whom, if committed
mitted, was it witnessed?"—"A confidential servant was intrusted with the intelligence, but my brother started into madness on hearing it, and dashed himself from a rock, under which he was reposing on his return from a fishing party."

"And of his numerous attendants, (for a nobleman would scarce undertake a journey into Greece alone,) were there none that could prevent this catastrophe?"—

"He went alone, for he was fond of solitary recreation; Ascanio met him alone, and the efforts of madness which often defy numbers, were not to be resisted by a single arm."—"Of course, you soothed your grief for this melancholy event, by a public and magnificent memorial, your brother's remains were brought over, and his funeral solemnized by the family."—

"Ascanio who knew what I would have suffered from the shocking intelligence that the body was so torn and scattered as
as to be unfit for interment, ordered a funeral, and pretended to bury the remains: I have since heard they were so mangled, that was impossible.”—“Did no one but the trusty Ascanio, see those remains?”—“I was not concerned in the inquiring how many savage fishermen gazed on a carcase.”—“You appear then by your own confession,” said the Duke, while the secretaries pens went fast, “to be ignorant whether your brother perished or not; since to prove it, you have only the bare report of a solitary menial, who had neither witness nor evidence for his report, and who was capable of deceiving you in the most material part of the event itself. May I ask whether even this Ascanio is yet alive?”—“He has been dead some years.”—“Did he die in your service?”—“No, he died abroad; in whose service I know not.”—“Strange, the dismissal of a servant so useful, so confidential, so considerate.”—“If you expect from
from me the memoirs of every servant I have dismissed, I fear your commission will prove an unsatisfactory one."

A long pause followed; the Duke whispered with his secretaries. "You declare then you are utterly ignorant of this Ascanio; of his motives for leaving your service; or of any events which may have befallen him since."—"I declare it."—"Count," said the duke, "there are two ways of evading the issue of an inquiry, by partial answerings of an artful structure, or by a sullen and uniform negative; the latter mode is certainly the most safe; for subtlety may be ensnared, and guilt is apt to detect; but an universal disavowal is the shelter of obstinacy. Yet still I fear even this will not avail you; for I have not come unfurnished to this great commission; I have documents, Count Montorio; documents and proofs so powerful"—"That is false," said a voice behind him. The inquirer, the accused, and the attendants,
tendants, stared in consternation. Beside the chair of the former, the monk was discovered standing; his entrance had been observed by none, his face was concealed, and after speaking, he remained so fixed and motionless, that the hearers almost doubted if the voice had issued from him. "Who is he, that is among us?" asked the Duke in a tone that spake the resolution of fear; "speak, whence are you, and wherefore do you come?" "Whence, and wherefore I come," said the monk, without moving limb or muscle, "it matters not; enough, that I know your commission, and your powers to the uttermost; you have no proofs—and he who has them, will not easily delegate them to kings or ministers."—"By what right have you intruded yourself into this presence?" demanded the Duke, "or under what powers do you pretend to dispute the exercise of mine?"—"The power
power under which I act," murmured the monk, "may neither be questioned nor controlled. The power which has commissioned me, does not act with the infirmity of earthly movements; it does not seek to supply a deficiency of proofs by confidence of assumption, nor make an extorted confession a substitute for the absence of witnesses; it does not leave me, as your's has left you, to shrink from a bold inquiry, and be abased by the upbraidings of falsehood; it empowers, as this moment, to acquit the Count Mon- torio, and to pronounce there is against him, neither witness, accuser, nor proof."

"This is an excellent expedient, Count," said the Duke with indignation, "and your confessor, with the assistance of a secret door, plays his part admirably. But your next examination, shall be conducted in a place, secure at least from the intrusion of presumptuous ecclesi- astics."
astics." As he spake these words, his eyes were directed to the Count; but the expression of unguarded astonishment with which the latter viewed his strange defender, undeceived him at once, prepossessed as he was with the belief of some confederacy between them.

"Why will you persist to contend with your conscience," pursued the monk, with dogmatical asperity, "I have told you, you have no proofs; you have none; they are distant, and deep; where, none can reach, and such as none can penetrate."—"You admit then that there are proofs," said the Duke, with the habitual spirit of availing himself of concessions, though hopeless of any favourable issue from this.—"Yes, there are proofs," said the monk; "but they are not for the sight of day, or the knowledge of man; there are proofs, but name them not; for there is a dignity in the supreme of horrors, not to be violated by the tongues of com-
mon men. For, the weak instrument of extrinsic and ineffectual agency, there is also a proof; a proof sufficient, that you have neither 'part nor lot in this matter;' that your time is not yet come, and when it does, it will summon you to no such task; such are only for spirits of high elect class. Follow me, and you shall behold this proof."

The Duke looked irresolute; the Count, and the attendants remained in mute astonishment. "Follow me," repeated the monk; "we must be alone."—There was about this man, a fearlessness, a careless and melancholy confidence, above humanity; he seemed to walk in a sphere of his own, in a cheerless, unsocial exemption from pain or fear, or every thing that can conciliate compassion or sympathy; and never to glance down on the ways or feelings of men, but with contempt for infirmity, or indignation for guilt. He possessed a commanding solemnity that infused
ed enough of terror into his injunctions to render them irresistible; they who listened, could not but follow them; and they who followed, followed with a mixture of confidence and of fear, almost indescribable.

The Duke arose, but glanced at his sword, as if to intimate he was prepared for danger: the wild disdain of the monk's smile was lost in dark folds that concealed his face. The Duke and he passed slowly into another apartment. The emotion with which the Count and Countess had beheld this scene, and now awaited its conclusion, was such as cannot be described. They were restrained from expressing it by the presence of the secretaries, who amazed, and unknowing how to proceed, yet continued in the room. Of the interference of the monk, the motives that prompted it, or the modes which he had adopted to render it effectual, they were utterly ignorant; that he was acquainted
acquainted with their guilt, to them was certain, and it was also certain that he appeared determined to exclude every one else from its knowledge or its prosecution. But in the miserable uncertainty of culprits, they sometimes thought he was only about to make the communication more certain and more terrible, by this mode of disclosure; and this fear, which their looks communicated to each other, as distinctly as language, was rendered almost intolerable by the impossibility of discussing it freely, or concerting any expedient that might delay or mitigate its danger; a glance or motion, indicative of solicitude, would have degraded that port of offended dignity, which they thought necessary to support before the assistants; but they listened, with dreadful intentness, to the sounds which they imagined, issued from time to time, from the adjacent room. This state, which they deemed of intolerable length, lasted but a few
a few moments, for the Duke rushed from the apartment, with horror in his face, and scarce commanding breath to bid the attendants withdraw, made an abrupt and indistinct excuse to the Count for his visit and its circumstances. Every doubt, he faltered out, was removed, every suspicion dispelled, and nothing now remained, but to apologize for the disturbance he had caused, and to retire. This was done on the approach of morning, leaving the Count and Countess in security, mingled with amazement and fear.
"I have brought my harp," said Cyprian, "may I touch it?—Shall I read you those lines we found in the grotto of Posilippo?—I have coloured that sketch of the Castel Novo you praised, would it amuse you to see it?"—A dead silence followed each of these questions. Ippolito, to whom they were addressed, remained with clasped hands, and eyes fixed on a point, in utter silence.

"I am
“I am very wretched,” sighed Cyprian, after a pause, which his companion's absence made to resemble solitude. “That is false,” said Ippolito, “and when uttered he knew it to be so.”—“Alas, what words are those,” said Cyprian, “and to whom do you talk with such fearful earnestness of look and gesture?”—“Did you not say I was a murderer?” exclaimed Ippolito, starting up.—“Blessed Virgin, be calm! no one is here, no one speaks, but me.”—“And is he not here?” said Ippolito, sighing, and gazing vacantly around; “I could have sworn by all the saints, I saw him, and he spoke with me but now. But he is ever near me; ’tis strange, Cyprian, but I see him in darkness, I feel him in solitude; he is ever with me.”—“It may be so, dear Ippolito, our senses, are weak and deceitful organs; mine I believe, are failing too: even while I speak, you seem different from what
what you have seemed to me; your voice
sounds not like what I have listened to, in
dear and other hours.” He wept and sob-
bed with uncontrolled emotion. “It is not
true,” said Ippolito, who had not heard
him, “but let us change the subject. All
power is limited by place and time; and
the change of those may modify that
power. I only say this,—because—if you
should hear of my going to Capua to-
night”—“To-night! to leave Naples to-
night!” exclaimed Cyprian.—“Yes,”
said Ippolito, “to-night, perhaps;” then
added, “if the power that pursues me,
can control the elements; if the hand
that is stretched out over me, can indeed
reach through every part of space; then
I must be as one who can struggle no
longer; I must shrink into its grasp; and
be”—“Oh for mercy, for heaven’s love,
shake me not with these terrible fears;
much longer I cannot bear them; what
would you be, or do?—I will go with
you;
you; if you will fly, let me go with you."—"Go with me! never; so may all the visitings of a dark and wayward fate, be on my head, as your's escape it." He spoke with solemn tenderness, and laid his hand on Cyprian's head. But Cyprian felt his throat swell, and his head grow giddy; amid all his sufferings, the thought of being deserted by him he loved, had never been suggested to him; and when now it was presented to his mind, he felt as if he had never been unhappy before. An incapacity either to plead or to re-monstrate, overcame him; with dim eyes and quivering hands, he attempted to follow Ippolito, feebly repeating, "I will fly with you; you said you loved me; take me with you, I will follow you bare-foot and in beggary through the world! Did you not say you loved me?"—He spoke to the walls. Ippolito was gone; he remained stupified, gasping, and vainly trying to awake from what he felt to be like
like the spell of a dream. But it was soon dissolved; the clock struck twelve. The thoughts of Montorio's engagement at that mysterious hour rushed on him; he knelt on the ground, and prayed with fresh and fervent sorrow for him, for whom he began to fear his prayer was vain.

* * * * *

At that hour—the hour of midnight; in a spot of which no one knew the site or direction, below the surface of the ground, and assembled by signals and avenues not to be discovered, were collected a number of beings whose appearance seemed to hold terrible alliance with the place and circumstance of their meeting. Of their forms many were distorted by those fantastic horrors, that startle the sleeper from his dream, and visit the eyes of the fearful when left in solitary darkness;
ness; and many were involved in a gloom through which the eye fancied it could trace shapes and shadowings of more unimaginable ghastliness, than light could reveal. All were silently and intently employed, but their gestures and movements were so different from life, that how they were employed, might not easily be known. A fitful and unsteady blaze of light played on them as they moved; it issued from a human skeleton, which stood in a recess of the vault, around whose bones a pale blue fire quivered without consuming them; and in whose eyeless sockets burned a deep and sullen flame. In other cavities of the walls, a dim, dull light appeared, supplied by tapers, which were held by shrivelled human hands, whose deadly yellowness became more visible in the light they dispersed. That light showed many other sights of terror; strange forms and cha-
characters were on the walls and roof, over whose dark and measureless extent, the eye sought in vain for a point or limit of distance. Some were in motion with a horrid resemblance of life; others were still, as the grave, from which they appeared to be but lately torn. At one extremity, if that could be called so, which was quite undefined, hung something that was intended as a separation between that and an interior vault, but of which the eye could not discover whether it was a curtain, or a volume of transparent wall, as its massive shadows appeared like the foldings of either. Before it was extended something that resembled an altar, on which a dark cloud brooding, concealed the deed and implements, through it, a dull and ghastly light was seen, across which moved the shadows of things still more terrible; and above it was extended the body of a man, blue, livid, and relaxed,
laxed, as if but lately dead, but the eyes were open, and that glassiness which death only can give, lent them a strange light, like life; the right hand was raised, and the finger on the lips; and this posture, with the glazed fixedness of the eyes, gave a speaking and terrible effect to the corse. On a sudden was heard a sound which resembled what might be supposed to be the effect of a bell, tolled in the air, and heard at a vast distance under ground; suspense and doubt were visible in the aspect of the assembly, as they listened to it. All employment ceased; they looked dubiously on each other, and around them, as the deep tones died away, awaking echoes to a distance, that seemed never to have been visited by sound before. Their suspense was short—another sound succeeded, which was accompanied by the rush of a strong blast; the fires flared and bickered, as it swept them; their strong
and sudden glow, making its noisome chillness more felt. In the dead silence that followed, nothing but the low hissing of the flames was heard; but the next moment, they caught the tread of a human foot, descending steps; it came nearer and louder—"He is ours for ever," exclaimed the band,—and Ippolito rushed into the vault!...

* * * * *

From his short, uneasy sleep, Cyprian had been often roused that night, by sudden noises in the palace; but they were so mixed with those of his sleep, that he believed both to be the same, and tried to compose himself again:—he was awakened from that late and heavy slumber, to which those who pass restless nights are accustomed, by a servant inquiring at what hour he preferred dinner, as it was near
near noon; with some surprise at the inquiry, he referred it to their master. "The Signor is gone," replied the man, "and we are ordered to take directions from you."—"Gone!" shrieked Cyprian, whether!—when!—how!—speak!"—"Whether, or how, Signor, none of us know," replied the servant; "he left Naples about two hours after midnight, attended by only one servant; you might have heard the noise of his departure, for we were all roused on his return; and—but perhaps, Signor, this letter which he left for you, will explain."—"I heard the noise of his departure," exclaimed Cyprian, "I heard, and did not feel he was going;—wretch, miserable wretch!" he opened the letter eagerly; the contents did not contribute to diminish his emotion.

"From a persecution, which, though hopeless to escape, I am yet unable to endure,
endure, I fly, whither I know not, nor does it matter; he that drives me hence, can pursue me every where. I am hopeless of resistance or escape; yet I will fly, for I will be no easy prey. I will run to my chain's full length, and grapple with that, and make it a means of respite if not release. Some dreadful fate will befall me, cut off from the flush and joy of life, which never mortal loved as I did, and dragged to——Oh, that it were possible to compound for the misery and escape the guilt. Oh, that I might be a wanderer and a vagabond on the face of the earth, and never know habitation, or rest, or quiet of domestic dearness, so I might shun but that. I know not whither I go. I will write to you, but write not to me, for I shall probably remain in no place longer than a night. Besides, the direction might betray me. Alas! what does human device avail against him with whom I have to contend? Farewell, beloved
beloved Cyprian, my madness and misery have not left me one tear to shed, one tender thought to think of you. There was a time when I would not—but I am hot, and reckless, and insensate; yet oh! for your patience, your long-suffering love, your submissive and wife-like affection and fidelity, what shall I give you back? I am a heartsmitthen and harassed man I cannot pray; I will not bless you, for I am cursed with a curse!——Montorio.”

The servant, at the conclusion of the letter, informed Cyprian, that by the Signor’s orders, the establishment was to be maintained for him in the same style, and his orders were to be absolute in the household. Cyprian heard him not. The whole of that dreadful day he passed in a kind of stupefaction, that did not yet exclude sensibility of pain. Montorio, his name and presence, had always seemed to him so necessary to his existence, that now
now he was, in his absence, scarcely conscious of life. He wandered from room to room, with a face of busy vacancy, that sought every where for an object, for whose absence it bore an expression of helplessness and dismay inconceivable.

Towards evening, in mere bodily weakness, he sunk on a sofa; and felt recollection return by increasing pain. It grew dark, and a servant entering, announced that a stranger was proceeding to the apartment, without informing any of the attendants of his name or intentions. Cyprian was alarmed, yet too feeble to make any inquiry or preparation, when the stranger entered the room, and motioned to the servant to withdraw. The light was dim, but Cyprian, in his striking air, discovered a resemblance to the house of Montorio. He advanced. "I feel that in this house," said he, "I ought to be secure; yet, I enter it in doubt and in fear." "In the house of Montorio, Sig-
nor cavalier,” said Cyprian, “every man of honour is secure.” “I have claims,” said the stranger, hesitating, “which it were better perhaps to conceal; yet the tones of your voice bid me trust you. This must be Cyprian. I am Annibal di Montorio.” “Annibal!” echoed Cyprian, wild with joy, “Annibal! Oh, fly, follow him, bring him back! Or have you found him? is he with you? Speak, speak, of him!” Annibal started. “Where is Ippolito? I came to him for shelter—where is Ippolito?” “Oh!” said Cyprian, retreating and sick with fear, “is he not with you? I thought—I hoped you had known his movements. You are his brother, and when I saw you, I—oh! do you not know then where he is?” “You amaze me—you alarm me. I knew not of his absence. I fled to him, for refuge, from danger, and extremity. I am scarce safe in his absence. Yet how shall I follow him, when you know not where he is?”
is? Tell me," collecting his habitual caution, "are the present domestics recently engaged? and are they natives of the city? "I believe they are." "Then I am safe, for some time at least. But I am worn and overwatched. I have lurked in the forest all day, let me have some refreshment, and let my own servant only, who has escaped with me, be employed about us; you shall learn all—all I know, and all I fear. My brother possesses unlimited confidence in you." Cyprian obeyed him, trembling with unsatisfied solicitude, and expected calamity.

Refreshments were procured, and Annibal eat his silent meal in secrecy and fear, attended by Cyprian, who could scarce suppress his inquiries; and by Filippo, who could hardly contain his communications, from the joy he felt at his own and his master's escape, as well as triumph in the dexterity he had exerted to effect it.
Lights had been introduced with the same caution, and Filippo had departed. Annibal rose. He examined the room, he secured the doors; he drew a stiletto, from his vest, and laid it with his pistols on the table. Cyprian beheld his preparations with an oppressing sensation of fear. Annibal returned; he traversed the room, listening to the steps of the domestics, as they passed through the rooms. The echo of the last had ceased—all was silence. Midnight arrived; Annibal looked round him with an expression of security, then resuming his seat by Cyprian, and pressing his forehead with the air of a man who struggles through weakness and weariness, to collect facts, whose weight burthened his faculties, said, "My brother's value for you justifies the communications I am about to make. No power but confidence could extort them from me. They are wonderful, dark and perilous; nor do I know what danger you may
may incur by becoming a partaker of them. But by comparing our mutual information on this dark topic, something may be known, which silence would have concealed. Or, perhaps, I am only yielding to the natural weakness of an oppressed mind. A dark and doubtful way is before me. I must tread it alone, without guide, and without companion; and before I go I would willingly leave with another, what my own tongue may never be permitted to tell. I would willingly think, that my memory may not be lost in oblivion, as my life will probably be. I will, therefore, relate the circumstances that have, within the last four months, befallen Ippolito and me. With the latter, he informed me, you were unacquainted; indeed, with both, except those effects which it was impossible to conceal."

* * * * *

Annibal
Annibal had proceeded thus far in his narrative, when he observed Cyprian had no longer the power of listening. In an agony of terror and devotion, he flung himself on the ground, and called on the saints to forgive and to plead for the unhappy wanderer. Annibal joined him with equal, though calmer devotion, mentally mingling his own name in his aspirations. "It is now finished," said Cyprian, as he rose from his knees, "it is all told? is it not?" Annibal shook his head. "Merciful heaven—what! more horrors! worlds would not bribe me to listen to them for another hour;"—"Not more than half an hour has elapsed since I began the narrative," said Annibal. "It has seemed to me a term of dreadful length," said Cyprian; "yet though I cannot listen to more, I can speak of none but him; let us sit all night, and talk where he may be fled."—"Where he has fled," said Annibal,
nibal, it is now perhaps impossible to know. I had proposed, on my escape from the castle, to have come to him, and persuaded him to accompany me to France; the martial spirit of Louis the fourteenth, and of his government, holds out an encouragement to young and brave adventurers; and abroad, if the hand of heaven be not stretched out over us for evil, we might forget our country, our name, and those disastrous hauntings that seem to be inseparable from them."

"And have you then experienced a similar persecution? Have you been driven also from your home? This is most horrible," said Cyprian; "is it a fiend that haunts your house?"—"It is a fiend," said Annibal, gloomily, "whom no power can chase from his prey; whom no exorcist can subdue; a craving fiend, who will have blood!"

He rose, and tossed his arms eagerly, and strode across the room. "Cyprian, horrid thoughts
thoughts are besetting me; yes, I will hasten to France: I have relatives too, there!—my breath is choaked, my heart cannot beat here. But I must at least stay to-morrow; to-day I might say, (for see the dawn has broke upon our melancholy talk,) for I can only travel by night. If you are not yet weary of these things, wild and dark; things that defeat the reason, and make even fancy shudder; I will tell you a tale of such—I will tell you what has befallen me.'—"Go on," said Cyprian, in a voice of hollow strength, "I can hear any thing now."

"No, not now," said Annibai, shrinking from his own proposal; "I will now take a little rest; I will throw myself on this sofa. Lay those pistols near me, Cyprian, and loosen that dagger in its sheath; how you tremble! stay, I will do it myself."—He flung himself on the sofa, but starting up a moment after, asked Cyprian would he not try to sleep."
"I am too anxious for you, to sleep" said Cyprian; "let me go into the anti-chamber, where the slightest noise will reach me, and I can sooner rouse you."—"This is a wretched substitute for sleep, for quiet, unsuspicuous rest, to lie down, pillowed on daggers, and starting up to catch the step of the assassin."—"I doubt nevertheless, my short sleep will be calm and deep; I have a stern tranquillity within me, suited to the time." He permitted Cyprian to go into the outer room, locked the door, and composed himself again to rest.

END OF VOL. I.

ERRATUM.

Page 17, line 16, for diabolone, read a diavolone.