

Count Victor bowed his head. "So," said he. "Perhaps I am too much Quixote, for I saw her but a few times, and that briefly. She was like a—like a fine air once heard, not all to be remembered, never wholly to be forgot. She had a failing, perhaps—the error of undue affection to qualify her for a sinful world. As it was, she seemed among other women some rarity out of place—Venus at a lantern feast."

"And ye would send this man to hell that he may find his punishment in remembering her? If I thought so much of vengeance I would leave him on the earth forgetting."

"M. le Baron, I make you my compliments of your complacence," said Count Victor, rising to his feet and desirous to end the discussion. "I am only Victor de Montaignon, poorly educated in the forgiveness of treachery, and lamentably incapable of the nobility of the heart that you profess. But I can be grateful; and if you give me the hospitality of your house for a day or two, I shall take care that neither it nor its owner will be implicated in my little affair. Touching retirement"—he went on with a smile—"I regret exceedingly an overpowering weariness. I have travelled since long before dawn, and burning the candle *par les deux bouts* is not, as Master Mungo hints, conducive to a vigorous reception of the Macfarlanes if they feel like retaliating to-morrow, and making your domicile the victim of my impetuosity and poor marksmanship."

Doom sighed, took up a candle, and led the way into the passage. A chill air was in the corridor, that smelled like a cellar underground, and as their footsteps sounded reverberant upon the flags uncarpeted, Doom Castle gave the stranger the impression of a vault. Fantastic shadows danced macabre in the light of the candles; they were the only furniture of that part of the rough dwelling that the owner shuffled through as quickly as he could to save his guest from spying too closely the barrenness