

but the remembrance wakes no glow of passion—would that thy feelings towards me might have no warmer character! And yet this change is unaccountable to myself," he continued, musingly. "It cannot be that one so far inferior in personal charms could have touched my heart—no—no—impossible! and yet how to account for it!"

He arose and paced the room with hurried step, when a servant announced Captain Lacroix. A muttered execration escaped the young man's lips, but with an effort he composed his features, and bade the captain "good morning," with a tolerably cheerful air.

The officer who now entered, was a rosy-faced, bustling little man, who appeared on the best possible terms with himself and all the world. He was, moreover, just the sort of person whom you would suppose likely to mind the affairs of every one else as well as his own. He had a restless pair of small gray eyes, which seemed ever occupied in examining all around. This personage then approached the young man, with whom he warmly shook hands, and then without more ado seated himself near the fire.

"And so you've got back from Russia, eh?—cursed affair that same campaign. You've no right to complain, however, De Lorinval! since you're here once more safe and sound, while so many of our poor fellows are lying unburied on the snows of Russia. I see you're a good deal the worse for wear; considerably reduced in bulk and so forth—but, hang it, man! you're by no means alone in that—why, the Emperor himself is looking as bad and worse than you are—so, cheer up, comrade, there are, I trust, better days before us all!"

It was with difficulty that De Lorinval could attend to the garrulous captain, which the latter was not slow to perceive. A gentleman so well informed in all the gossip of the day, could not fail to guess, at least, at the cause of the other's thoughtful mood.

"Oh! by-the-by, De Lorinval, a rumour has reached me that you are to be married, soon to a certain fair lady who brings you a still fairer estate in the provinces. It is confidently expected that the union awaited but your return from Russia—eh! Is it so?"

"I really am not so intimately acquainted with my own affairs, it would seem, as the Parisian world is," replied De Lorinval, in a tone of vexation. "I must confess myself highly honored by their bestowing on me a fair and wealthy bride!"

"Then you are not to be married?" inquired Lacroix, eagerly.

"Stop there, my good friend!" exclaimed De Lorinval, laughing. "You can draw no such inference from my words; I merely say now, that you have been so very fortunate as to arrive first with the news. I give you joy, Captain, you have certainly won the race!"

This was said in a tone where contempt involuntarily mingled, and the captain was at first somewhat disconcerted. He speedily recovered, notwithstanding, and continued to rattle on during the remainder of his visit, talking to his almost silent auditor of every one and every thing—affects both public and private—nothing escaped him. At length he took himself off, to the no small relief of De Lorinval; and the latter, wearied and exhausted, threw himself on a couch, not to sleep, but to give free course to his interrupted reflections. There was one portion of the letter which had cast a gleam of sunshine over the darkness—his mother was about paying him a visit—nay, she even proposed spending the remainder of the winter in town.

"And after all," he mentally concluded, "even if I do not marry Eulalie, and consequently am to lose that property, why we can still live; my mother has her jointure, which, small though it be, suffices to place her above want. I have still my little patrimonial estate, and this together with my pay will support us; our habits are happily not very expensive, so that if I can only convince my mother that with my sentiments I cannot marry my cousin, all will go well."

Poor De Lorinval! He was then about to sacrifice a fair prospect of even splendid happiness, to a dream as shadowy and unreal as ever crossed the mind of the sleeper. In fact, he himself had scarcely any defined idea of the cause which induced him to take this line of conduct. Had he known the priceless value of the prize which he thus wantonly resigned—the innumerable virtues and simple graces of her, who, in her remote and quiet home, had grown up a fair and modest flower, unknown to the world, but filling the hearts of the few who surrounded her with the perfume of her gentle kindness and innocent gaiety; then indeed would he have given up the faintly defined shadow which filled his mind, and have flown to the place where Eulalie reigned a feudal baroness, as it were, in the lonely grandeur of her old *château*. Had he known, above all, that his image still remained impressed upon her heart—that for his sake she had rejected the proposals of more than one individual of rank and station, then would his heart have returned her love, shamed