

ood of Terni abounds. His acquaintance was usually made by Theresa and the family during his sojourn in the valley. Her beauty speedily captivated his ardent imagination—whilst her gentleness and winning simplicity, ere long, made a still deeper impression on his heart.

Hitherto accustomed to the confinement of a studio, the far-famed beauties of his native city had passed him in his hurried walks, not, perhaps, without many an admiring gaze, but certainly without having inspired any tenderer sentiment.

This was the young artist's first peep beyond the gates of Rome, and who could wander, at such a season, amid that land of beauty and brightness, without feeling himself elevated and inspired by the very air he breathes? Its evening concerts, amid perfumed groves and falling fountains—its marble terraces and falling fanes, hung with the richest and freshest wreaths of spring—all nature appeared to poor Valentino decked as for a jubilee, and the lovely valley of Terni reflected in the mirror of an imagination lighted with the ardour of first love appeared to realize all his idea of an earthly paradise. Days and weeks he remained as if were spell-bound to the spot, forgetful alike of the time allotted to him for his sojourn abroad, and of the day fixed for his return to Rome. He took views of the falls in every varying point, and under every diversity of shade and colouring which that glowing climate exhibits. Morning, noon, and eventide, might he be seen stationed with his canvass and palette, the gentle Theresa by his side, sometimes lost in wonder and admiration at the tints produced by his hand on the glowing canvass, at others listening with enthusiasm to his description of the Eternal City, its palaces and monuments, and feeding with silent rapture on his promises to bear her thither at no distant date, the bride of his heart, and never, never more to separate from her, and as the shade of evening beckoned them homewards, with what rapture was the canvass thrown aside, to linger through the maize of that sweet valley with his fond and gentle companion, there to speak of future bliss, and repeat their oft-told vows of everlasting affection in all the eloquence of their own sweet language, by the light of a lovely moon, and amid groves spangled with fire-flies.

Alas! hours like these were too sweet to last—too bright to be registered in the calendar of time's dull round. Valentino roused at length from this dream of life and love, by a

second and more peremptory summons from his master to resume his place and functions, under penalty of sacrificing at once all hopes of future encouragement and promotion, took, one bright summer morning, almost insensibly, his pensive way through the valley, undecided what steps to adopt, or how it would be possible to impart to his betrothed Theresa the startling intelligence of their approaching separation—yet, to delay was to lose all hopes even of the means which might enable him to support and cherish her.

Thus painfully pre-occupied, he seated himself almost mechanically on a projecting rock, near their favourite bower of myrtles, and, concealed by its position from the pathway which leads through the valley, believed he could in solitude and silence, give vent to his painful reflections, and decide upon some plan for the future. Suddenly, however, his ear was startled by a cry of terror, and, believing he recognized in that cry the voice of his beloved, with the velocity of a startled deer he sped towards the spot from whence the sounds proceeded. Just at that moment, his Theresa, breathless, and fallen amid the tangled roots of a large ilex, overcome with terror from the pursuit of a wild boar, long an object of terror to the inhabitants of a neighbouring valley, and whose hiding-places had hitherto been so secure and secret, as to defy all efforts towards its destruction, appeared in sight.

The creature, which was now only a few yards distant from the object of its pursuit, made a momentary pause on the approach of Valentino, as if to consider whether attack or retreat would be safest. Probably aware however, that he had wandered too far away from his strongholds to escape any regular attack made by numbers, and perhaps deceived and intimidated by the reverberation of Valentino's shouts, repeated with remarkable clearness from the opposite cliff, the animal suddenly made off, with all possible speed, among the rocks and underwood.

No means of defence being within his reach, having left even his walking club, the only warlike weapon he possessed, on the spot from whence he had sprung on the sound of Theresa's cries, Valentino beheld, as may be supposed, with no small satisfaction the departure of this ferocious intruder, with whom he had anticipated, a few moments since, a close and deadly combat. All his cares were now directed to raise and reassure his fainting fair one; but what was his dismay, on lifting her gently from the spot where she still remained extend-