

"We can never be united," replied she; "it were wrong to delude ourselves with vain hopes."

A dreadful thought struck Milton. Perhaps, thought he, they are forcing her into the arms of another—perhaps, without her consent, bargaining her over like a piece of merchandise into the keeping of one, whom, loving another, she cannot but abhor. It was the woe, he had heard, of these continental climes.

"Do you see the glorious verdure of these plains?" she said, "and the golden fruits of these lovely woods? Do you see that turf, starred with young blossoms where the cigalas sing and butterflies wander, like the shreds of broken rain-bows. And yet, in a few weeks, all will be silence and darkness. I never loved the beauty of nature as I do now, nor loved as now to linger amid the summer glories of this green and golden world, for I feel that it is for the last time, and that I shall behold them no more."

Milton looked earnestly, at that calm, child-like face.

"In the name of Mercy, said he, "tell me what you mean!"

"Listen then—I am dying!"

"Ah! folly! dreams! illusions!" said Milton with a sort of desperate mirth; and well might he say so, for no trace of ill health appeared in that round, youthful face, with its expression so full of affection, and eyes that shone like the celestial star—it seemed more like immortality than death. Never did that spiritual cast of loveliness which captivated him at first sight, appear so apparent as now—as if its possessor was destined for some brighter world than this, and ripening for the spirit land.

"It is too true—they all know it. Feel here,"

said she, seizing his hand and pressing it strongly against her heart—"are you not now convinced?"

He felt a wild, irregular flutter, which convinced him but too truly; but he said nothing.

"Will you not allow me to attend you?" said he. "I shall never leave you—in life—or in death."

"No! it were wiser not. To-morrow they are going to take me to the shores of Parthenope, with some allurement of hope from the Baïan breezes and Calabrian skies;—yet I feel it will be in vain!"

"Then I must not accompany you!"

"No; but look," said she, pointing to a blue butterfly which soared above them through the azure air, to the skies—"we have seen that once before. Did it not then speak of love beyond the tomb?"

One wild embrace, and they parted; while he

threw himself on the turf, and wept floods of tears. Milton then watched not the butterfly, nor did he think of the hopes which it inspired. His heart was too full of his misery; and he felt as if the atmosphere were darkness, and the whole earth a place of graves; and that he could be happy no more. Ah! human grief! that even in a mind like his, familiar with all that we know and adore of the visible and the invisible worlds, and at home amid the marvels and glories of the universe, art still the little hand which can obscure the sun!

It was early winter, but the balmy climate of Italy brought with it little frigidity for the air, a token of decay for the still green and smiling world. Milton still lingering in Florence, was one day surprised by a hasty summons to Portici, in Calabria; the object of which he too well guessed; and set forward on his journey as if on wings. He arrived the third day, and found himself at the entrance to the city, towards the close of a dim day of misty sunshine, when the sun shining faint and red through vapours, diffused a subdued radiance on the landscape, and a soft languor on the soul. The violence of his grief was now gone, and he walked on in that sort of tranquil melancholy, which falls like dew on the spirit, after the scorching traces of passion; and was leading his mule, with his mind full of the approaching interview, with her whom he was now to see for the last time—one whom he had known, indeed but for a brief period, but whose influence upon his destiny, was, he felt, greater than any other object either could or would attain—a lovely flower that had crossed the current of his existence, and mingled with it for a few moments, yet as if by some magic had left the reflection of its beauty for ever mirrored there.

Approaching by a lane which led from the suburb of Portici, he saw a train principally composed of young men and maidens; but, whether its object was solemnity or mirth, he could not at the distance it was removed from him, divine. A sad presentiment struck him, and he murmured: "Too late, too late!" Soon there remained little to doubt, for in the midst of a troupe of girls, bearing flowers, was borne high upon the shoulders of young men—a coffin covered with a white pall, on which was engraven in front, in large golden letters, the name of

GIULIA RENDI.

Milton followed at a distance towards the cemetery, in the direction of which they were going, and concealed himself while the ceremonies of interment were being performed. When the