

only light of the apartment. She turned her head slowly round as if to see if any one was a listener to their interview. On perceiving that they were alone, she laid her hand gently upon his arm. He shuddered from some indescribable emotion, as he felt the touch, but spoke not. There was a silence of some moments.

"I have come to keep my promise," said the mask, in the same low voice in which she at first addressed him.

"What promise have you made?" said the emperor, agitated: "I can bear this no longer."

"Stay! stop!" cried she gently; and the voice in which that word was uttered thrilled to his inmost heart: it was a voice well known, but long forgotten.

"To keep a promise am I come. Bethink thee, is there no debt of uttered vows unpaid then? Have you all now you ever wished for—ever hoped?"

He groaned deeply.

"Alas!" he exclaimed involuntarily, "that I could be spared the thought! I do remember one; but——"

"Then hear me, false-hearted! She who once loved thee, loves thee no more: her vows are broken—broken as her heart. She has redeemed her pledge—farewell!" and the voice with which the word was uttered faltered and died away in almost a whisper.

He stood entranced. He spoke not—moved not. The hand which leaned upon his arm now fell listlessly beside him, and the mask made a gesture of departure.

"Stay!" cried he. "Not so. You leave not thus. Let me know who you are, and why you come thus?" and he lifted his hand, to withdraw her mask by force. But she suddenly stepped back, and waving him back with one hand, said, in a low and hollow voice:

"Twere better you saw me not. Ask it not, I pray you, Sir; for your own sake, ask it not—my last, my only prayer!" and she again endeavoured to pass him, as he stood between her and a small door which led towards the courtyard.

"You go not hence till I have seen you unveil," he said, in a voice of increased agitation.

The mask then lifting the lamp which stood by, with one hand, with the other threw back the hood which concealed her face. He beheld her—he knew her—she was his own, lost, betrayed Adela—not as he first found her; but pale, pale as the marble by which she stood—her lips colourless; and her eye beamed on him lustreless and cold as the grave, of which she seemed a tenant. The heart which was proof against

death in a hundred forms, now failed him. The great king was a miserable heart-stricken man—he trembled—turned—and fell fainting to the ground!

When he recovered, he threw his eyes wildly around, as if to see some one whom he could not discover. He listened—all was silent, save the distant sounds of festivity and the hum of gladsome voices. Pale and distracted, he rushed from the spot, and summoning to his own apartment a few of his friends, he related to them his adventure from its commencement. In an instant, a strict search was set on foot. Many had seen the mask, though none spoke to her; and no one could tell when or how she had disappeared. The emperor at last bethought him of the carriage which stood at the door—it was gone. Some thought it had been a trick played off on one so celebrated for fearlessness as the emperor. Accordingly, many took the street which led from the court-yard, and terminated in the Augustine church and monastery. This way only could the carriage have gone; and they had not proceeded far when the rattling of the wheels met their ears—they listened, and as it came nearer, found it was the same carriage which stood at the portal. The driver was interrogated as to where he had been. He told them that a mask, dressed in black, had left the Saal, and bid him drive to the church of the Augustine, and that he had seen her enter an hotel adjacent.

The emperor, accompanied by two friends masked, bent their steps to the hotel. He inquired of the inmates, and then learnt his vicinity to his noble and ill-requited Hungarian host, and his loved and lost Adela. Few, however humble, would at that moment have exchanged state with the monarch of Austria and Hungary; for remorse bowed him down like a stricken reed.

"Lead me to the baron," he cried hastily, unable to bear the weight of recollection.

The man shook his head.

"Noble Sir," said he "the baron lies on a bed of sickness: since this morning he uttered no word; I fear he will never again."

"His daughter; lead me to her—quick!"

"Alas! Sir, she died this morning!"

"Liar! slave!" cried the emperor, in a paroxysm of grief and astonishment; "but an hour since I saw her living! Dare not tamper with me!"

The man stared incredulously, and pointed to the staircase; and, taking a lamp, he beckoned him to follow. He led the way in silence, up the broad staircase, and through the corridor, until he stopped at a door, which he gently opened, and, making the sign of the cross, entered the