

in a peasant's costume. Arriving at one of the nearest seaport towns, and with the help of second-hand European clothes and a grey beard, I managed, the next morning, to get unperceived on board a French trader, and, taking advantage of the bustle occasioned by the lading, preparatory to weighing anchor, I concealed myself. I thought the vessel never would be set in motion; at last, to my relief, we sailed, satisfied that there were no Japanese on board. I emerged, and deprecated my presence to the captain as best I could, relating my story, which he at first, I saw, discredited, until I showed him the jewelled dagger, when he became interested, promising secrecy and before the voyage was over, help. On landing, with his assistance I made my way to Paris, where I sought my old tutor, who, in spite of my disguise, instantly recognised me by my voice, and a peculiar opal ring which I had forgotten to remove from my finger. Through some influential friends of Monsieur de L'Aunier, my case was made known to the Emperor, from whom I received every mark of sympathy that his really awakened interest in me could suggest. The dagger had attracted great notice, and I was enabled to sell it for a fabulous price. At Court I became acquainted with Monsieur Madison, who prevailed on me not to quit Europe without visiting England, and gave me the letter which was the means of conferring upon me at once the greatest happiness and the deepest misery. I now go to join the Emperor's troops in Algiers. Forget that I had ever the presumption to love, and remember me only as the most unfortunate of men."

He left me, and I returned to Anna in a thoughtful, distressed mood. Much as I liked "the Prince," I yet felt that I could scarcely encourage so strange a lover, encumbered with such an extraordinary tale. I determined to tell her all about it after his departure, for which I soon found rapid preparations were being made. Anna appeared somehow to divine this; a presentment of hopeless separation was too potent for her to succeed in restraining her emotions, now too plainly shown by her fast-falling tears. But she instinctively checked her sobs upon hearing the sound of his footsteps upon the little staircase; as he reached the last step she stood, her eyes riveted on the door, her hands pressing her bosom, which, by the fluttering of the muslin bodice, I could see was beating wildly. She held her breath as he passed by our room door hurriedly and left the house. She sank down by the window, partly concealed by the muslin curtains. Hurrying down the gravel path, "the Prince" opened the little gate. As he turned to shut it Anna leaned forward; their eyes met, and the tale they told must have been a sad one. Another instant, and he was gone—for ever. "Cruel! wrong! to leave me thus," cried the poor girl. "To go away without a word!" Then, suddenly changing, she sank upon a chair, weeping freely. I allowed her grief to indulge itself, nor did I break the silence that seemed to fill the room; the monotonous stillness was rendered more oppressive by the buzzing of a bee, which having entered at the open casement—attracted by some wall-flowers in a vase upon the table—was busily but vainly striving to free itself at the window-pane, struggling, like my poor child, against hard fate. I rose to release it; would that I could as easily have restored to her poor fluttering heart the freedom it had lost, and peace again to the young life once as joyous and unfettered as this bright happy insect! I must trust to time, the great healer; a girl of eighteen, of such an impressive nature, would more easily forget than one whose fancy might have been less readily impressed. And now—back, as soon as possible, to town; bidding a long farewell to Mrs. Matthews and Herne Bay, that most communicative of women having confided to me that the foreign gentleman had gone away like one distracted, and had eaten nothing for several days; but had paid his bill all the same, and made such handsome compliments, bowing as usual on the stairs, and, indeed, whenever she had looked at him. "And as to his packing, 'twas conducted queer. I went on begging of

him to let me put his things together, but, bless me! he shovelled them all in, one on top of the other; those fine cambric-fronted shirts of his, with an ink bottle with the stopper half out next; and last of all a pair or two of boots!—ramming all down together. I was fit to cry over the shirts; a pretty state they will be in when they come to hand again, if they ever should. When the porter came to fetch his luggage he stared wildly at him, exclaiming 'I will go to mount your back, my fellow,' meaning, I suppose, with the portmanteau, though he didn't explain."

I was soon immersed in my client's business, and my special pleading was, I was told as effective as usual. Poor Anna, too, made great efforts to be cheerful, entering more than ever into society after a time. She gave away her vivarium, and, a year after, married the Guardsman. But the sea-side was not chosen for the wedding trip, and I married nobody, and gave away the paper-knife, that it should never recall painful remembrances of the Jewelled Dagger.

A TURKISH TRAGEDY.

I HAD taken up my quarters at Emir Keng, a village about midway between Constantinople and Barossa. Foremost amongst those who loaded me with civility and kindness, was Sahir Agha, the principal personage of the place, who, greeting me with more than courtly grace, insisted on my transporting my scanty luggage from the *gahvé* at which I had dismounted, to his own abode, vowing in his expressive dialect that the house was not his, but mine, so long as I condescended to remain in it.

Sahir Agha, who must have numbered some seventy or seventy-five winters, was one of the most patriarchal figures I had ever seen, majestic to a degree unusual even in that majestic race, the Turks of Anatolia. In height he was upwards of six feet, and though so advanced in age, he was erect as the tall cypress of the adjacent Mezalig (burial-ground); a little inclined to *embonpoint*, just enough to impart an air of additional dignity to a man of his years. His dame, some fifteen or twenty years his junior, hospitable as her lord, was moving quickly about, superintending the completion of the arrangements in the room destined for the *musafr* (guest), and ever and anon pausing to ask some questions regarding Stamboul, or to express her surprise at the acknowledgment I had been compelled to make, that I had never become acquainted with, or even met, her son, who was "reading" there; while at each recurrence of such expression of wonderment on her part, she would incur a bantering reproof from her amiable old spouse.

"These foolish women," he would say to me, by way of explanation, "cannot form a conception of the immense size of our Stamboul; they think it is like their own villages, where every individual is the neighbour of the other and of all. My wife has never had the good fortune to behold the pomp of the city, or the majesty of our lord the Sultan, on whom be the glory of God and salvation. But, Inshallah! when you go back will you do me the favour to bear a letter from me, and a present from his mother to our son; and certainly you will look upon no common man. His native village may yet have to boast of one who will throw dust in the eyes of the very masters of science of our days; had he been born in the olden times, I verily think that he would have sat not far from the side of our lord the Sultan in his Divan. Inshallah! he will be a great man yet. He has now been reading in the College for three years, and we never see him except at the Ramazan, when he comes to bring joy to our hearts, and new light to our old eyes."

Four days of peace and tranquillity did I pass in that still and beautiful village; forgetful of turmoil and the crosses, the struggles, and the bitter disappointments and heart-burnings of the busy world. Reclining luxuriously on the soft rugs spread on the flooring of the *parmaylig*, gazing on the lovely landscape of the verdant plain below, the calm, bright Marmora beyond,

and in the further distance the mountain-peaks of Roumelia, how contented could I have imagined myself, thus to dream away the few remaining years of my earthly pilgrimage in that peaceful abode, and to bid a long farewell to the petty pride, the cold selfishness, and the heartless etiquette of "Frangestan." These fanciful reveries were occasionally interrupted by the master of the house, who would place himself by my side, and question me for the hour together about the war then being waged with Mehemet Ali, and the unfavourable state of affairs at Stamboul, pathetically lamenting the distress of the peasantry, the burden of the heavy taxes, and the depopulation of the country arising from the drain of all the village lads for the army and the fleet.

The dame would sit and listen in silent admiration to these political disquisitions of her lord, but after awhile she would generally change the topic of discourse by reverting to her son, and wishing he were back again in their tranquil village, cultivating the paternal acres, instead of wasting his life over books that were of no use to anyone, and she would end by imploring me, as I "loved God," not to fail to go and ascertain if he were in good health, and to tell him to leave all and be at home again before the next Bairam.

Ere I quitted Emir Keng I availed myself of any stray opportunity to make enquiries among the villagers regarding Sahir's son. I found that different reports and opinions prevailed: some said that he was too proud for them, that he held them vile; others declared that the young man did well to read and study, that he would become one of the luminaries of the faith and "one of the men of the age," but all agreed that he was too delicate in body and too refined in mind to be aught but a student. Some, again, foretold that his end would not be happy, and that his horoscope would prove an unlucky one.

On my arrival at Constantinople, I lost no time in calling on Latif, the son of Sahir, but I was informed at the door that he was engaged in his studies within the mosque of Mehemet Pasha. I sent to him the letter with which I had been charged, adding a request that he would favour me with his company outside the building as quickly as possible. I had not long to wait, for no sooner had he discovered, not only that the epistle was from home, but also that honourable mention was made therein of the bearer, than he hurried out, and invited me to his house—a small, but very neat and even luxurious one, hard by. Sipping my coffee, I had leisure to survey my host, his attention meanwhile being wholly engrossed by the contents of the letter, which he pursued with evident delight and avidity. The *tout ensemble* of the man before me was certainly the most peculiar and the most striking I had ever seen. In age about six or seven-and-twenty, he was rather above the middle height, his form verging on slenderness, but compact, and evincing by the depth of chest a great degree of bodily strength and muscular power; his hands and unslipped feet were exceedingly small and delicate, the former, indeed, more resembling those of some fair damsel than of one of the rougher sex; his features were of wonderful beauty—the eye of his native land, large, soft, and black, the complexion brilliant, and the nose and mouth so finely chiselled, formed a whole so passing fair that only the bushy, curling, dark beard, and the long moustache that shaded it, relieved his face from an unpleasant taint of effeminacy.

Having finished the letter, and paid me a few conventional compliments, he made numerous inquiries respecting his parents and different members of their household, and also asked for some of their neighbours; questions which were put with a simplicity and an earnestness almost boyish in their tone. Then, for a few minutes, he fell into a deep reverie, during which a change so entire and startling overspread his countenance, that I could hardly believe in his identity with the placid and somewhat feminine-looking student, who had but just before welcomed me so gracefully to his house. The brow contracted and lowered until it all but hid from view the