

he thought she had retreated—searched through every arbor, winding, and recess, and at last, despairing of a rencounter, was about to return in the direction of his dwelling without paying his respects to the princess, for he was too much agitated to take a formal leave. Instead of pursuing the ordinary path, he thought of finding his way into the city from the back part of the gardens, which led through some romantic pleasure grounds belonging to the palazzo. As he proceeded he was not sure of his whereabouts; but the path was beautiful, conducting over green turf and through groves and glades; and he was just in the mood for solitude and wandering. Suddenly he came upon a spot which he thought not unfamiliar to him; and on looking round—lo! the old ilex tree and the fountain, which were the scene of his never to be forgotten dream! But the spot was not deserted now; for seated under the tree, on the moss, as if from weariness, was Giulia Reni. No trace of her late illness appeared, except a greater degree of paleness than usual. She coloured in the faintest degree possible, upon perceiving him, but greeted him with a smile which showed him that he was not unwelcome. Indeed her whole manner and bearing towards him seemed changed in a manner that appeared a little unaccountable.

"I have been looking for you everywhere," said Milton; "but scarcely expected to be so fortunate as to find you here."

"I often find myself here," replied she "for here it was I first saw you."

"And it was you then, who left that distich in this spot, which has so influenced my destiny, and I feel will ever influence it hereafter."

"You must think of that no more," replied she; "it was a piece of girlish folly—an idle joke. Believe me, I had no idea we should ever meet again. In rambling here one forenoon by myself, the forenoon of the day on which we met at the Palazzo Orfino, and I felt I was recognized by you in a manner that seemed to me unaccountable—I saw you asleep under this tree, contemplating you for a moment, and originated the verses which you read. Though tempted to leave them behind, I had no idea you saw the writer, nor should ever recognize her again."

"Dreaming, and in profound slumber as I was," said Milton, "you could not think that any sleep of mine, your spiritual presence could not penetrate; nor that the eyes of a dreamer could contemplate these features and not remember them again even at the end of a thousand years. However unaccountable, I saw you then dis-

tinctly as I see you now, and thought to hear your voice recite these words which you left behind on the scroll, and which I shall ever cherish as one of the dearest of my remembrances. Accident soon brought me into your proximity, and my heart taught me to pursue earnestly what chance had begun. But with diligent endeavours, and a soul that exerted every faculty to attain its goal, I found that I made no progress in your esteem, and knew myself in a position that hardly even dared to admit of a hope. Then I determined to fly from you, and in pursuits once habitual and genial, to find a distraction from the haunting presence of an image which pursued me, like some mocking, tantalizing, beautiful dream. Yet still I lingered—and pardon me if I dream wrong—yet I thought to day to discover a ray of light upon my destiny, that this has not been wholly in vain. Ah, Giulia! Is there no possibility—no hope—can you not love me?"

Giulia seemed much agitated, and tears filled her eyes—whether from sadness or happiness he could not divine; but she shook her head mournfully and made no reply.

"It is impossible then; you cannot love me."

"I said not that!" she replied in a low hesitating voice.

Milton appeared animated by a new life or some sudden transport. He did not observe the hesitation and despondency that clouded her features.

"A thousand, thousand thanks," cried he, "and nothing now shall separate us—no misunderstandings—no differences—why have we misapprehended each other so long?"

A deprecatory movement on Giulia's part caused him to hesitate for a moment.

"Talk not of obstacles," said he; "differences of country, of religion, of habits, I know you are thinking of—yet you shall come with me to my own island, our beautiful England, and be consoled by the virtue and high-heartedness there prevalent, for the beauty and luxury of a sunnier clime. There, amid the ocean breezes, you will perhaps find that greater vigour of health and bloom which a balmier atmosphere has failed to impart. Or if you love not that, and to be an exile for my sake, shall I not be one for yours? Every land shall be my home where you dwell with me. Talk not of obstacles—affection makes rough paths smooth, and difficulties only surer avenues to happiness."

"Yet it is quite impossible," replied she.

"Why, wherefore?" said he impetuously. "In the name of marvel, why!—Girl, I do not understand you!"