

fectly understand each other, and your warning is superfluous."

Falconcourt smiled, but dropped the subject, and applied himself with considerable relish to the task of entertaining my lady's companion.

As long as she could see his grace, the duke, and Lady Juliana amicably promenading, or revolving in each other's arms, she spoke well and admirably, but the instant that they parted, she became quiet *distracted*, and nervously dreaded the appearance of the duke.

So agitated did she become with this threatened return before her eyes, that her face became white as chalk and her tones husky and indistinct.

"Excuse me if I leave you," she said, at last, desperately.

"I may return, if I overcome this faintness."

She had just sufficient strength to slip through the outer door, of the cloister into the cool hall, and to make her way to a balcony, where night breezes swept crisply over her, and the upper edge of the round, red moon smote her face with the glow of one of Raphael's angels.

There she stood, gazing down upon the dark trees, her heart a chaos of troubled reverie.

"On the first of September, at the battle of Chantilly, it is feared."

Voices of men in eager colloquy; two figures lounging on the terrace steps beneath.

"Where did you see it?"

"In the last *War Gazette* — Colonel Brand's company almost cut to pieces, and the colonel killed.

"Poor fellow! Do they know it here?"

Margaret turned and walked with a steady step to her own room, stabbed through the heart with this sudden dagger.

On the first of September!

The tidal swell of memory broke over her reeling senses with a dull admonition of something more dreadful than death.

It was not a gallant death in the midst of battle she had to mourn; it was not a brave end to a brilliant day of heroism. No — by the murk of that ghastly vision, by the shadow of the skulker among the dead, it was murder!

Late at night she was disturbed in her chamber by a visit from her Lady Julie.

"I want to say a few words to you, Miss Walsingham."

Margaret looked at the flushed face, the unsmiling lips, with wonder.

"I have been listening to an extraordinary list of your perfections from the Duke of Piermont," she commenced, trembling, "and I find from the intimate terms in which he

mentions you, that you are no strangers to each other. As I never anticipated the possibility of being rivaled by my companion, I wish you distinctly to understand that I intend to brook no intermeddling of any one of that class. You came between me and my betrothed before, and drove him to his death; you shall not mar my prospects again for want of a distinct understanding on the subject. If I had known that Miss Blair was the woman who had come into possession of St. Udo Brand's property, no inducement would have betrayed me into taking her as my companion, and thus laying myself open to her machinations a second time."

"Lady Julie," said Margaret, whose face had grown terribly pale, "I am not worthy of these ungenerous imputations. Reconsider what you have said and treat me more justly."

"Did I bring you here to be my mentor?" cried my lady. "Did I ever suppose that you could meddle with my destiny? Here is the Duke of Piermont, who was ready to kiss my footprints, openly setting me aside and searching for a woman who acts as my private attendant or companion, and raving over her perfections. Have I employed you here to be my rival, Miss Walsingham? Have I set you over myself?"

She stood confessed at last; her grudging and jealous soul looked forth from her sapphire eyes, and recognized Margaret Walsingham as her mental superior, and consequently her enemy.

No twinges of gratitude deterred her from her jealous rage; no love, begot by her patient Margaret's goodness and devotion, stirred her small, chill heart.

The spiteful blow was struck upon the woman who had saved her life.

"As long as I could be a solace or a help to you, Lady Julie," faltered Margaret, pale as death, "I wished for no greater happiness than to be with you, and to serve you faithfully *faithfully*, my lady, whatever you may in your anger say; but now, I see that my influence has passed away, and my duty is to leave you."

"You leave too late," cried my lady, tauntingly. "You have caught your fish and can afford to leave the fish-pond now, I suppose. Really, I think it no bad thing for a sea-captain's daughter to become the Duchess of Piermont and the mistress of Seven-Oak Waaste."

"Lady Julie! Lady Julie!" cried Margaret, turning away with an unutterable heart-pang. "I have loved you well, and should not be treated thus. I desire to be neither the wife of the Duke of Piermont nor the mistress of Seven-Oak Waaste."