

he had a sort of sympathy for me. His friendly demonstrations, however, troubled and annoyed me a hundred times more than ill-treatment would have done. Ere day began to break he wished me good morning, at night-fall he never failed wishing me a long list of blessings ; in the midst of a sound sleep he would waken me to ascertain whether I was sufficiently covered. I desperately resisted all his friendly overtures, being by no means anxious to shake hands with a man upon whose death I had decided. As far as possible I hesitated to act treacherously, and wished to put him on his guard by my hostile and threatening demeanour. All this time I carefully watched my opportunity for escape, and here his friendship, more powerful than hatred, added to my difficulty.

What distressed me most of all was his confidence in me. One day I expressed a desire to examine his weapons, and he instantly placed his dagger in my hand. I drew it from its sheath, felt the point on my finger, then directed it against his chest, selecting the proper spot between the fourth and fifth ribs. He smilingly said : " Do not bear upon the blade, else you will kill me and lose your guardian ! "

I could not have murdered him under such circumstances—it would have been impossible to stand his last look ; better strike my blow at night. Unfortunately instead of secreting his weapons he placed them ostentatiously between his bed and mine. Finally I bethought me of a method of conducting the preparations for my flight without either waking or killing him. On Ascension Day I had observed that Vasile was fond of drink, and that it soon got into his head. I invited him to dine with me, which token of goodwill greatly overpowered him. Ægina wine did the rest.

Although I was no longer honoured by visits from Hadgi-Stavros since I had lost his esteem, he yet treated me generously ; my table was better supplied than his own, and

I might every day have consumed a leathern bottle of wine and small cask of *rhaki*. Vasile commenced his repast with touching humility, keeping three feet from the table, like a peasant invited by his lord ; by degrees the wine brought him closer. At eight o'clock he began explaining his character ; at nine he related his youthful adventures ; at ten he became philanthropic, his adamant heart was dissolved in *rhaki* as the pearl of Cleopatra in vinegar. He swore to me that it was for love of humanity that he had turned brigand, that he was desirous of making a fortune in the course of ten years, with which to found a hospital, and then to retire himself into a convent on Mount Athos. He promised to remember me in his prayers. Soon he lost his voice, his head rolled from side to side, he stretched out his hand, and in the act of grasping mine fell down in a sleep sound as that of the Egyptian sphynx.

I had not a moment to lose now : taking his pistol I hurled it into the ravine, but retained the dagger for use. The hands of my watch pointed to eleven. I extinguished the fires that had served to illuminate our table, fearing they might attract the king's notice ; this done, I turned all my attention to my work. The night was fine, and although there was no moon the stars were numerous and bright. My plan was, by building a temporary dam, to turn the waters of the rivulet into what must have been its original bed, and thus leave the waterfall course dry and free for my escape. By careful examination on a previous occasion I had discovered that the chamber where we were lodged was nothing else than the bed of a dried-up lake. It was an easy matter to cut strips of turf with which to build my dam, and soon I had prepared a sufficient supply. Novice as I was, the stream was stopped in the space of twenty-five minutes. It was now a quarter to one. The noise of the waterfall was followed by a silence so profound that I was seized with