

Making one or two sudden turns to baffle pursuit, he found himself by the high walls that enclose the buildings and garden of the Ursuline nunnery, and with a single leap, placed himself within the forbidden enclosure. In a moment he heard the voices of his pursuers, evidently at fault, and deciding that no one without aid could mount those walls. After the danger was past, Dimon took a turn or two in the flower-bordered avenues, and as the moon had not yet set, he threw himself beneath a cluster of trees to wait until deeper darkness should enable him to leave the spot without notice. Forgetting the difficulties that might ensue, should he be found in that situation, he fell asleep; and, lulled by the whispering boughs, and fanned by the breezes of a beautiful evening, he slept until the mat-in-bell had called the inmates of the nunnery to prayers, and the green hills and towering spires of the island of Montreal and the broad streams that surround it, were glittering in the morning sun. Instantly rising he was making his way to the wall, when his progress was arrested by a vision of surpassing interest, and which drove from his thoughts all sense of danger or of place. In the most retired part of the enclosure, beneath a cluster of tall sweet brier and wild vines, on the green turf, a young and beautiful girl was kneeling before a small silver crucifix, and so deeply engaged in devotion, that the step of Dimon, though at the distance of a few feet, was unheard, and partially hid by the branches, he remained unseen, although she was directly before him. Dimon was fixed to the spot as if by enchantment: he gazed on the beautiful creature as if spell-bound, and felt that he would not lose a tone of that low, sweet voice for the universe. She appeared to be about sixteen; of middling stature, and with a form of the most graceful and ethereal kind. The spotless dress she wore—emblem of purity, though perfectly plain, to Dimon appeared to enhance her loveliness. The dark eyes of the fair one was raised to heaven; the pure air and warmth of a summer morning had given a soft rich tinge to her dimpled cheek; her hair, which had disengaged itself from the ribbon that confined it, flowed in waving luxuriance around the most beautiful neck he had ever seen, and the gentle heavings of her young bosom, as she uttered her petitions for the vile and wretched, spoke of nothing but unsullied innocence and spotless truth. Dimon had never listened to the devotions of a mortal with such interest, and when they were closed he felt half ashamed to find there were tears in his eyes. As she rose from her knees, Dimon, while a glance of his keen eye around, told him he was unobserved, gently pushed aside the branches, and stood before her. The first slight exclamation of surprise was instantly hushed by Dimon, who, placing his

finger on his lip, respectfully motioned her to silence.

"You are undoubtedly surprised at seeing a stranger like me in this place," said Dimon in a low tone, "but be assured, it is not with any intention to injure you, or such as you, that I am here."

"It can be of no consequence to me to learn the motives that brought you hither;" said the fair girl, "but I must inform you, that by remaining, you will incur the most imminent danger."

"To that I am accustomed; yet I cannot believe that you would betray one who, like me, had taken refuge here as a sanctuary," replied Dimon to her remark.

"No: but remember, there are others within these walls besides myself, and that I must leave you."

"Not yet;" said Dimon, taking her hand in his, "you have prayed that the wretched and the vile like me may be forgiven; but you have not yet assured me that such are forgiven by you."

A thousand wild conjectures, which ran over the mind of the beautiful girl, as she withdrew her hand, prevented her replying. "I see I have offended beyond hope," continued Dimon, as he stood motionless before her, "can it be that you have desired heaven to accord that forgiveness which you yourself are unwilling to grant?"

"Heaven knows where pardon is required, I do not; but if, as your words imply, you are guilty of crime, may you be forgiven of heaven as freely as you now are by me."

The blushing devotee would now have retired, but Dimon contrived to detain her. Perhaps she was flattered by the attention he so well knew how to bestow; perhaps her heart plead for a few minute's interview with one who had so deeply interested her young feelings in his favor: certain it is, that when she left him, she had promised again to meet him in that same place, and is equally certain that the appointment was punctually kept by both of them.

Leaping from the wall, Dimon traversed the street fearless of detection, and the fair nun, hurrying to the convent, found that a subject of thought, new and engrossing, had taken possession of her pure bosom. Roger Dimon had never seen a person so lovely as Annette Girard; nor one who had awakened so deep an interest in his heart. Many that were beautiful and fair had crossed his path; but if they were noticed at all, it was a notice that left them like fair flowers crushed to the earth, despoiled of their purity and innocence, and left to perish broken-hearted. Placed in a nunnery in her earliest years, Annette's affections, those rich and hoarded treasures of woman's heart, which she fondly hoped and intended should all be given to heaven, had nev-