

might have been seen to pass over her countenance, and there was certainly a slight accession of gayety in her manners—so thought Catherine—when directly afterwards she invited him to accompany her to the apartment of the young Prince. Henry immediately sent to assure himself that Prince James was in his own room, and then, instead of visiting his infant son as was his custom at that hour, he took opportunity to speak to Sir Anthony Darley relative to the prisoner, and caution him to keep a strict eye upon his movements.

Several evenings afterwards, as Joanna Beauford was passing from the Queen's apartment to her own, she was met by a person whom she did not recognize by the imperfect light, who in passing her slipped a piece of paper into her hand. When arrived at her chamber she found it was a note addressed to herself.

"If the benevolence of your heart has led you to feel the least interest in the fate of the unhappy Prince who is a prisoner in the castle, repair at eleven o'clock to the little wood, which skirts the royal gardens on the east.—Lady Hester Darley, wife of the Prince's keeper, who will not betray the confidence reposed in her, is willing to accompany you, and will wait at your apartments for that purpose at the hour proposed. Think of the eighteen years which he has passed in captivity and exile, and your heart will not permit you to refuse."

Trembling with agitation, which had in it more of pleasure than of pain, she seated herself by the table, resolved to consider the matter coolly and deliberately. But how could a young and lovely girl think thus upon a subject which afforded such scope for imagination, romance and sentiment, when her love and her were already so warmly enlisted as regarded the Prince. Every objection which presented itself to her mind was overcome by these powerful pleaders and before the arrival of the special hour, she had fully resolved on repairing to the wood. Entwining a few roses which had been kept fresh in a vase of water with her beautiful hair, she awaited the arrival of Lady Hester Darley. Soon a light was heard at her door. It was Lady Hester, and slipping on a short silk cloak with a hood, which she drew over her face she gave her hand to her conductor, and they proceeded with hasty and light footsteps along the corridor. At the extremity of which Lady Hester unlocked a door which admitted them to a more private passage, and here not a solitary lamp was burning to enlighten their way. Did they dare to take one? but it should not come through some crevice or flash through the window or door. But they were too

familiar with the way to be bewildered, and in a few minutes they found themselves in the open air. Although the beams of an unclouded moon lit up the heavens with a brilliancy little inferior to the light of day and wreathed with silver the ripples that broke over a small, irregular lake, which formed a beautiful boundary to the garden for a short distance; the shadows of night lay heavily on each leaf-embowered covert and flowery recess, so grateful during the noontide heat. Often did they cower in the deep shade of some coppice as they mistook the breeze murmuring among the leaves for the whispers of a human voice, and more than once they shrank back with terror as some bough swayed by the wind cast its shadow across their path. As they entered the wood, Joanna drew more closely to her companion's side, who led her to an opening. A man muffled in a cloak advanced to meet them. As he drew near he suffered the folds that shrouded his face to fall, and at the same time taking off his cap he revealed the features of the Minstrel. The moonbeams fell brightly on his high and noble brow, round which his dark and waving hair luxuriantly clustered, and the somewhat haughty expression of his handsome mouth was now softened by one of the most melancholy and winning of smiles. As she listened to his deep musical voice breathing eloquence and poetry of passion, she remembered not that he was a captive; she forgot even, that could he by any chance regain his liberty, he might claim a crown—she beheld only one of the most fascinating and noble of men, to whom she felt, a pride in yielding the whole treasure of her affections. The Prince raised his eyes to the sweet blue sky, which seemed spread like a banner of love over the opening where they stood, which at this hour was as silent and appeared as lonely as if in the heart of a deep forest. It was the first time for many, many years, that he had stood in the open air with none near to guard him, and by their presence remind him of his bondage. Calmer and more reflective thoughts succeeded the delirium of joy which he felt at finding that his love was returned.

"To what end," thought he, "should I seek to link the destiny of this lovely and innocent girl with mine, save to make her feel the weight of the chains which are daily dragging me to the earth?" and he offered to release her from the promise which he had sought to obtain with so much ardor.

She replied—"While my heart is yours, my promise remains. When I take I seek the one,