

Jougleurs and their trashy songs ! he exclaimed, "they have got nothing to do but wander about the world and turn girls and boys' heads with their songs. I'll have no more of them here ! So the baron turned all poets and musicians out of his chateau, but he could not turn love and romance out ; the young heart of Clemence was their impregnable citadel, and then they held their ground against all the baron's assaults. Four years went by, Clemence was pining away with grief for she loved her father and she loved her lover ; at last her love for the latter prevailed and trusting to win the old baron's forgiveness afterwards, Clemence fled from the Chateau with the young Count de Regnault. Baron de Regnier was a man who, when moderately irritated gave vent to his wrath in angry words, but when deeply wounded he was silent ; and here both his pride and his affection had been wounded most deeply.

He signified to the guests at the castle that they might depart ; he closed the grand halls, keeping near him a few old servants ; dismissed his chaplain whom he suspected, though falsely, of having married the runaway couple and who had been their messenger to him begging for his forgiveness and permission to come to him ; closed his chapel doors, and shut himself up gloomy and alone, in a suite of rooms in a wing of the chateau. Many loving and penitent messages came to him from Clemence. At first he took no notice of them ; at last, to one he returned an answer—"He would never see her again."

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II.

THE summer came and the winter, and many a summer and winter passed, and the dreariest domain of all France was the once merry Chateau Regnier. Year after year, the old man brooded alone. If friendship or chance brought friends to the chateau, they were received with stately formality, which forbade their stay ; rarely did a stranger pass a night within its walls. The retainers kept their Christmas holidays as best they might ; no great hall was opened and lighted, no feast was spread. They wondered how long the baron would live