

awake to their guilt and folly, in daily pouring forth such libations to the devil. Why, Lawrence, half the crimes which fill the world with misery, are instigated by strong drink. Waters of life! Ha! ha! The man that invented that name for this infernal beverage, knew well that it would kindle, not extinguish, the flames of hell! But to my tale.

"Many days elapsed before the castle was clear of guests, and many insults did I receive from my cousin, during that period. Christiana, too, looked sad and grave, and appeared to receive with pleasure, the attentions of Count P. He was an only son; handsome, clever, and engaging. His father was the possessor of large estates, both in Norway and Denmark. In every respect, he was a very desirable husband for Christiana. I felt indignant at the preference she seemed to give to him; and, in spite of the kind interest he had taken in my misfortunes, I imagined that he looked upon me as an inferior, and I shunned his society, and remained during the greater part of his sojourn at the castle, shut up in my own room, brooding over that deed of horror.

"At length, an opportunity offered. My cousin, in order to divert his dullness, after the departure of all his guests, himself proposed to hunt among the hills. I appeared rather reluctant; talked of the weather as being unfavourable—the hounds out of practice—and took good care, in the presence of my aunt and uncle, to raise a thousand frivolous objections. As if bent upon destruction, he condescended to use entreaties, and asked me as a great favour to accompany him and Christian. I at last consented, yawning very heartily, and rising unwillingly from my seat.

" 'If Fredwald does not wish to go, Adolphus, why should you force his inclinations?' said my uncle.

" 'Oh! it is all laziness,' returned Adolphus. 'I am in such spirits to-day, I am sure we shall have luck. I am always lucky when Fred goes with us.' * * * * *

" 'He is going!' I exclaimed, breathlessly, to Christian, as I rushed into the stables; 'shall it be to-day?'

" 'Aye, the sooner the better. I wish it were sooner.'

" 'Ah! so do I. I feel that it must be. But it lies like a load of lead upon my breast.'

" 'It will lie heavier to-night,' said the huntsman; 'but away with womanly fears. Prove yourself a man, and leave the rest to me.'

" 'We set out in high spirits. The Countess alone seemed foreboding and sad. She ran twice after us to kiss her son, and bid him good-bye, telling him to avoid danger. Christiana sniled

mournfully upon us, as we passed her window. I dared not look her in the face, lest my treacherous countenance should betray the secret pent up in my heart—I touched my cap, and merely murmured, 'Farewell, Christiana!'

" 'For some time we pursued our diversion in the forests, stretching along the base of the hills; but without success, until Christian cried out:

" 'What think you, my young masters, of trying the hills above the Descent of Odin? When the sun clears away the mist, we cannot fail of finding our quarry there.'

" 'No, no,' I said; 'I hate that frightful place. Let us go round the other way—'

" 'For shame, cousin Fred! You a son of the hills, and shrink from a mountain path. Go on, Christian; I will follow you if it leads to hell!'

"How that thoughtless word made my flesh creep. Up, up we went, toiling along the steep face of the hill; I feigning fatigue and panting for breath, and the daring, doomed victim, turning every moment to call to me, and boast his superior prowess. Often did Christian stop to take deep draughts from his brandy flask. The accursed spirits were nerving him for the fatal deed, and once or twice his young companion held out his hand for the same stimulant, and, mad with the recklessness of youth, made the wild hills ring with the gay tones of his voice:

" 'The hills! the hills! the glorious hills!
O'er which the red deer fearless bounds.
The rocky heights, the foaming rills,
The deep voice of the gallant hounds,
Which in the forest solitude
Awaken echoes strange and rude:
I love them, 'tis a song of glee,
The huntsman's bugle rings for me!
Tira tira lu, tira tira la!'

" 'We were already upon the summit of the dizzy ridge. A path, in a half-circular direction, of solid rock, but not more than two feet wide, led round to a pine forest, which crowned a higher, but more gradually sloping hill. This solitary mountain generally abounded with deer. A loud crackling among the branches on the opposite side of the precipice, seemed to raise my cousin's spirits to an intoxicating height; and whilst I sat down upon a piece of broken rock, feigning fatigue, he sprang past Christian, holding his favourite hound in a leash, and began the perilous ascent. At that moment Christian turned, and looked at me. I raised my hand, and slowly pointed forward. In another instant, the hounds he held fled back to me, and he was grappling with his young and beautiful adversary. Poor Adolphus seemed to comprehend his fate in a moment, while I would have given worlds to have retracted that fatal signal. For a while the strong-