

"She is dead," replied Montbelliard; "she died of fear that night! your presence cut the bonds of life asunder——"

"Dead!" reiterated Victoria, and her cheek became pale and bloodless, and her large dark eyes fearfully expanded.

"Yes; you are avenged," replied he; "and the traitor, who doomed you to death, shall not long outlive his guilty paramour!"

"Montbelliard," said she, "I am already deeply avenged. The guilty woman, who seduced the affections of my lord, has paid the forfeit of her crimes, and now I can forgive him. Plead then my cause with him," and she threw herself at his feet. "Tell him that I was innocent——"

Montbelliard smiled sarcastically. "You would sacrifice yourself and me—Victoria, you are dreaming! He was weary of you, and when love once dies in the breast of man, it never blooms again. You would betray me; but you shall not, madam! I have my revenge to gratify, even if you are desirous to forego your own. The wrongs of years—the cruel blight of early days! And shall I forego that for which I have watched and laboured through sleepless nights and weary, painful hours—~~because a weak and wavering woman loves an~~ ungrateful man! You forget, Victoria, that you are mine—bound by ties as strong as love and vengeance ever fashioned!"

She started from her knees, a single burning spot tinged her cheek, and her downcast eye was veiled by its long lashes; but even they could not hide its shame.

"I was mad!" shrieked she, "and I sought revenge, and with revenge you tempted and undid me! Reproach me not with my sin, for my brain is burning, and the evil spirit is stealing over me, and whispering tales of murder and horror in my ear. The ocean looks calm and placid, and sometimes I have thought I could rest in its placid bosom, and find there forgetfulness and peace!"

"Indulge not such vain and gloomy fancies, my adored Victoria," replied he; "but rather rejoice, that your false friend has not gained the guerdon of her treason. Be composed, and I will bring your child; but no, that is not possible, unless you resume your male attire and Ethiop complexion."

"My fame is black as night," said she, wildly regarding him; "nothing will ever wash that white again—what need of unguents for the skin, when the dark despair of my sad heart should blacken it more than the negro dye?"

"Do you remember how your voice startled him, when first you assumed the oriental hue and

dress?" said he, artfully turning her words from herself to St. Amante.

"Twas well you did me from his presence, or I had discovered all! His soothing voice made a coward of me!"

"How conscience shook him on the banquet night—that eye, whose pride never bent to man, quailed beneath his injured wife's wild glance. Last night, his guilty cheek grew pale—his half uttered vows were choked by terror—and his features were convulsed like his unhappy and expiring partner's. Oh! how he weeps for her; what bitter drops fall from his eyes as he deplores her death!"

"He never wept for me. No, no! though I forsook a court for him," muttered Victoria, relapsing into her own language, and speaking quick and indistinctly; and then suddenly becoming silent, she relapsed into a sort of lethargy, from which Montbelliard did not attempt to rouse her, but hastily quitted the apartment.

The sound of his departing foot-steps had an instantaneous effect on the Spanish lady. "He is gone," cried she, "and I breathe more freely. This man's presence haunts me; sometimes I wonder why I hate him so, and then at other times, I think he is the tempter—the evil enemy of souls; at least, I feel he has murdered mine! Would I had never desired revenge—never become his slave—his tool—his victim! Ah! wherefore did I quit my father's palace to wed an outlawed traitor! Sometimes I have thought that could I view my native Spain once more, peace would return again, and this fierce fever of the brain would cease! this warfare of the soul would end! When last I slept—but that is many, many nights ago—I dreamed I saw my cousin; and methought he led me to a pleasant place of flowers and sunshine; the air was full of song and sweetness, and clear fountains murmured harmony and music to my ear. Among the trees, bright forms were gliding, and the golden gates opened to let us in. He entered—I was following, when I felt an arm repel me back; that glorious garden vanished away, and I was left alone in darkness,—with ghastly shapes and forms, to weep and wail for evermore,—and with the horror of that thought, I awoke, and found it but a dream. 'Tis strange that I have never seen my cousin's face since the dreary hour in which we parted. Perhaps he perished in this grave of souls—this island home of sin and sorrow! Sometimes I have thought his presence was a phantom of the brain; but no; his plumed hat still lies within the hut, and there his rapier is rusting—once it was bright like my fame, while yet I dwelt