

if such property, obtained in such a desperate way, and squandered in such a reckless manner, can ever be depended upon for an hour together. The present was all that we could call our own, and we made as much of it as we could.

"I was now five and twenty, in the very pride of youth and strength—fond of action and enterprise, and quite devoted to the wild life I led. Its dangers and excitements drowned thought, and I was beloved by my mad commander, and a favorite with the crew.

"At this period a deep anguish for a few months nearly eat out my heart; and I sought systematically to get rid of a life, which had been preserved through so many dangers.

"Our ship was riding gently at anchor in Drontheim bay, under Dutch colours, and I had gone on shore for a spree, with two or three mad comrades like myself. Whilst we were sauntering down the principal street, a lady and gentleman passed us on horseback. Years had fled away, but time had never been able to efface her image from my heart. It was my cousin Christiana and Count P—. Often and often had I wondered what had become of her. I had flattered myself that she had not survived my loss—that when time, and my absence, had rendered the probability of my having died with the other unfortunates no longer a matter of painful speculation, but certainty, that her heart would have broke with grief. Imagine then, my disappointment, when upon enquiry I found that she had been for the four past years Countess P—, that my aunt was dead, and my uncle, as old Peter predicted, had married again, and was the father of two sons, the elder of whom, by way of penance, I suppose, bore my name.

"That Christiana, my beautiful, tender-hearted Christiana, should not only be able to exist without me, but live for so many years very happily as the wife of another, cut me to the soul. I felt that I still loved her—that I must see her—must speak to her again. I hurried back to the ship, distracted with evil passions, and told Stavers, who was acquainted with my previous history, that I had seen my first love, the only woman I ever looked upon in that light; and that she had been for several years the wife of another.

"'It is unfortunate,' he said, 'that she should have chosen the only man who treated you with kindness, when in your uncle's house of bondage. But if you wish it, I will assist you in carrying her off.'

"'No, no,' I exclaimed impatiently, 'I must see her, and reproach her with her forgetfulness; but bad as I am, I never will share the woman I love with another.'

"'Nothing can be gained by this pursuit, re-

plied he. 'In a few days we shall sail for England. The first pretty blue-eyed Suffolk girl will make you forget this poor lady, who, I doubt not, after mourning you dead for a reasonable time, married to relieve her own dulness.'

"I was shocked at the profanity of his language towards my idol; but he never had loved any particular object in his life, and only thought like most sailors that women were all alike; that one might be prettier or younger than another, but, in moral qualifications, they would all rank the same.

"After several days indefatigable enquiry, I discovered that the Countess was residing for a few months at an old fashioned hunting lodge, about ten miles from Drontheim, for the benefit of the country air, as she had been for some time in a declining state of health. That when I saw her she was accompanying her husband as far as the town, on his way to Denmark, whither he was going on business of some importance. She was then alone. But how could I gain access to her? Stavers and I thought over a thousand plans. At last he proposed that I should dress myself as a Jew pedlar, and, under this disguise, there would be little difficulty in obtaining an interview with the lady of the house, as there are few women capable of resisting their natural love of ornament.

"I had in my possession a box of valuable trinkets, which we had taken from a son of Israel in one of our piratical excursions; and when I opened the box to see if there might be anything likely to tempt a lady's eye, I was satisfied that the blaze of tastefully set, and beautiful gems, would ensure from mistress and maid the most favorable reception.

"It was one of the hottest days of our brief, but glorious, northern summer, when I mounted a horse, and, with the box strapped across my shoulders, proceeded to the lodge.

"I found, as I had anticipated, no difficulty in being admitted to the presence of the countess.

"She was lying upon a sofa, dressed simply in a white muslin wrapper. Her beautiful light brown hair, parted upon her forehead, flowed over her neck and shoulders in long silken ringlets. Her figure, no longer that of an unformed girl, was exquisitely moulded, and though she looked pale from recent indisposition, her appearance was elegant and charming in the extreme. For some minutes I stood at the door gazing upon her without having courage to advance. The agonizing thought, that she had once been mine, and was now lost to me for ever, the beloved wife of another, the mother of his infant children, so completely overwhelmed me, that I felt the tears gathering in my eyes.