

"But hear me, I pray ! If you go back there, you hazard your life again."

He touched his sword and dagger, which he had girded on in the bedchamber. "I still carry these," quoth he ; "and I must thank you for recovering them."

"Nay," said she, blushing again ; "the sword never left your hand. There was but your dagger to seek. But go not back there, I beg of you !" She could scarce conceal the depth of her solicitude.

"Why, why, mistress, fear not for me. There is no danger."

"I entreat you not to go."

"Nay, the more you concern yourself for my safety, the more am I bound to go and serve you."

"Take men with you, then."

"Nay, your uncle must keep his men here to protect you. But one to show me the way, — the old beggar that summoned your uncle last night, — perchance he came hither with us."

"No, he stayed with his comrades ; my uncle paid him for his service."

"I must e'en thank your uncle for that ; and for his care of me."

"I will take you to him, and my aunt," she replied, eagerly, seeing a chance of delaying his departure and gaining time for dissuasions.

But he seemed to read her thought ; he took a