

"Say not so, Mr. Arlingford. 'Tis well, at least, to know my friends from my enemies, that I may bestow on those dear to me, all, every particle of the affection that might else be wasted on others. Ah! the more warily my heart clings to those who have earned my affections, the more irrevocably, the more totally, does it turn from those who have crushed and trampled on them!"

"Eva!" exclaimed Mr. Arlingford, as he drew her gently towards him. "Do you believe in the doctrine of that Saviour, who prayed on the cross for those that persecuted him, even unto death?"

A long silence followed, and then Eva's rigid lips spasmodically quivered, and bowing her head on her companion's shoulder, she whispered in accents almost unintelligible from emotion:

"Yes, I do believe, and as He forgave them, so do I."

"That is not enough, Eva. You must love, or try to love them."

"Oh! Mr. Arlingford! Be merciful. Think; think of my weakness, my misery!"

Her sobs were becoming more violent, and her companion, fearful of adding to the emotion that was already terrible in its passionate intensity, soothingly rejoined:

"Well, dear Eva, perhaps I am too exacting. I will only ask you now, to listen to me, whilst I relate a passage of my life, which has never been told to other listener save yourself. 'Twill be a painful task to me, yet willingly do I perform it; for it may afford you a useful lesson. If you do not yield then, I will press you no further. Nature, though bountiful in her other gifts, Eva,—for I had friends, wealth and station,—had not endowed me with the precious treasure she has bestowed on you—a gentle, patient spirit; and I, to whom years and sorrows have imparted the necessary lesson of curbing my rebellious passions, was cursed in youth with a dark, revengeful spirit, that rendered my name of Christian a mockery. Had I struggled against the unholy passion that mastered me, had I prayed for grace to conquer it, I might have done so ere it had wrought much misery to myself and others; but, alas! no; I was its slave, and instead of blushing for my degeneracy, I openly gloried in it, or rather in the high, lofty spirit, I madly thought it indicated. Well; I had a brother, my senior by two years, an impetuous, but noble, warm hearted being, and as we had none to share our mutual love, except our widowed mother, we were inseparable. Companions in play and in study, not a joy or a sorrow but was held in common, and yet our sky was not entirely unclouded; for Florestan's boyish vivacity, his ardent temperament, would often hurry him

into uttering things in jest or hastiness, he afterwards bitterly regretted. Whenever I was the object of his evanescent anger, I bridled my temper at the time, and listened in silence, returning neither his taunts nor reproaches; but then, my turn came, and no blinded pagan, taught to worship revenge as a virtue, ever cherished his feelings of vindictiveness with more determined obstinacy than I did. It was only when he humbled himself to me again and again, when my mother had joined her entreaties to his, that I ever condescended to a reconciliation. We advanced rapidly towards manhood. Already, my brother had attained his nineteenth year; yet still our pursuits were as boyish, our affection as frank as ever. One evening, I remember it well, a beautiful midsummer eve, we were standing with a number of young companions on the lawn in front of our mansion, exercising ourselves at archery. Florestan prided himself and with justice, on being an excellent marksman; but either through carelessness or impatience, he missed three times the mark I had with unusual good fortune each time successively attained. Irritated by his failure, he threw down the weapon and flung himself on the grass, the others speedily following his example. Whilst we lay there, carelessly conversing together, a little spaniel, of which I was passionately fond, burst into the middle of our circle with a joyous bark. Florestan, who had not yet recovered his customary good humour, called the intruder to him; but full of mirth and waywardness, she headed him not. Again the call was repeated with similar success, and with an angry ejaculation, he stretched over, and grasping the animal by one of its long silken ears, dragged it towards him. I remonstratingly requested that he would leave the dog alone? He muttered in return some hasty, irritating speech. On hearing my voice, the cries and efforts of the little creature redoubled, while its captor's grasp became doubly rude and painful. Again, though my tones trembled with anger, I repeated the request, calmly enough too, and again received the same ungracious reply. Mastering the passion that was boiling up within me, I rose and approached him.

"Florestan, for the last time, I quietly ask you to give up that animal!"

"Quietly then I will not!"

"I will take him by force!"

He replied by a scornful laugh, and I knelt down to enforce my threat. Goaded to sudden fury, he raised his hand and struck me violently in the face. It was the first and last blow I ever received from mortal being. Sudden cries of "shame! shame!" resounded on all sides, but I