

governor was surprised at his agitation, but encouraged him with a few kind words.

"Joachim Montbars!" he then said, "you here publicly assert that you have not retained for your own use any portion of the spoil?"

"I do," he firmly replied.

"And further, that you have not willingly concealed the value of any object, or the name of any prisoner?"

"Dare you assert this?" whispered a voice in the young man's ear.

He raised his head, and meeting the glance of Michel le Basque, returned a look of defiance, and exclaimed aloud,

"I do!"

"You may retire," said M. du Rossey; "Leopard! call another."

As Joachim returned to his former place, Michel le Basque kept by his side.

"Do you hope to save this woman—she who has just treated you with such contempt?"

Montbars started at this intimation that Michel had discovered Donna Carmen through her disguise; but he made no reply.

"I too have recognised that Spanish girl," continued Le Basque, "I have yet a vow of vengeance to fulfil."

"Be silent!" cried Joachim, fearing that these threats might reach the ear of Donna Carmen, near whom they had now arrived. "If you seek a quarrel, you shall not seek in vain; but first let the partition of the spoil have an end."

"What madness is this?" replied Michel aloud: "do you not know what awaits you, should you endeavour to snatch this Spaniard from our hands?"

"He will have the glory," interrupted the monk, who had lent an eager ear as they approached—"of saving the victim and disappointing the executioners."

"Not so," replied Michel, sternly; "but the disgrace of being regarded by his brethren as a forsworn traitor."

"Let him fly with us," continued Fray Eusebio, "and he will have riches at his command, without having to rob or murder for them."

"Let him try it," rejoined the buccaneer, "and the Brethren of the Coast will pursue and punish him as a base deserter—a *maroon*!"*

"It is never too late to forsake a life of crime," replied the monk. "Joachim! save Donna Carmen."

"There can be no excuse for treachery," said Michel. "Montbars! be faithful to your engagements."

Joachim turned his eyes towards his uncle, whom all the adventurers seemed to regard with a sort of veneration; and Michel, noticing the direction of his glance, continued:

"Your uncle would renounce you—he would be inconsolable for your disgrace."

The monk saw that he was losing ground.

"Consider, Joachim," he said, "that all these pirates are condemned both in this world and the next, and that it is only by abandoning them that you can avoid their fate."

"Think what would be your own fate," rejoined Michel Le Basque; "the little children at Rancheria would salute with stones and hootings the lion who had allowed his claws to be cut—the slaves would avoid the company of the renegade—the rich planters would stare at you haughtily and contemptuously when they met you, and if you did not get out of their way quick enough, have they not their hunting whips to hasten your speed? Yes!" he added, with a savage laugh; "on that point you have the benefit of my experience."

Joachim listened to him with a bitter smile, and when he had finished, he indignantly addressed the monk and the buccaneer:

"You must think me weak and despicable indeed, since you thus, in my presence, dispute possession of my will—of my very soul. You have spoken long enough, my masters! it is now my turn. I would sooner have imposed silence on you, but that you have thus unwittingly revealed to me your designs. You, Fray Eusebio, have dared to think that a foolish and dangerous enpity would engage me to rescue Donna Carmen; and you, Michel le Basque, have thought me base enough to be deterred by puerile fear from thwarting your revenge. Ah! did the dangers of such an attempt threaten myself alone, the more terrible they were, the more eagerly I would court them."

"Well, Montbars! what is your intention?" said Michel, impatiently. "Decide at once, for my name will be called immediately."

The young man racked his mind for some expedient to save the poor girl from her threatened lot, but he could seize none which presented any chance of success. He was like one pursued in a dream by some savage beast, using his utmost endeavour to escape; at each new effort his step becomes weaker, his breath more exhausted; at each bound of the approaching animal, his nerves become more powerless, till at length his knees sink beneath him, and he feels the fiery breath of his pursuer scorching his frame.

"Should the name of Donna Carmen be once

* This term, derived from the Spanish word signifying "a wild beast," was applied to a servant, or slave who fled from his master and sought refuge in the woods.