

of the unsuspecting St. Amande himself. The secret that covered the breast of the Spanish lady, made her fear to meet the eyes of her lord, and covered her with confusion and blushes. Her silence surprised and mortified him—he could not guess the cause of her unwonted reserve, and when he motioned to Montbelliard, to attend him, and give an account of all that had happened on the island during his absence, the traitor found him in the very frame of mind to listen to his calumnies.

It was night, but a brilliant moon-light rendered every object distinctly visible; and Hector Montbelliard could trace in the convulsed features of St. Amande, the fearful workings of his soul. The Exterminator—the dread of Spain—the terror of the New World—whose flag had once waved its folds in the heart of the Spanish fleet, through which his frigate had passed openly and unmolested—now threw himself on the ground, and writhed beneath the crushing agony of that blow, like a wounded and mangled reptile. At length he raised himself a little, and dropping his aching head on his shaking hands, said in an agitated and faltering tone: “Words, Hector, words might be mistaken. I will not deem her false on such slight grounds.”

“Unhappy Henri. Here is fatal proof,” and Montbelliard produced the picture. The Buccaneer started at the sight, as though he had been stung by a serpent. “Know you locks like these,” and he held up to the view of the miserable husband, the long black ringlet, that was stained with the heart’s blood of the unfortunate cavalier.

St. Amande groaned, and murmured to himself: “The traitress! Yes, I well remember that one of these long ebon ringlets, that shaded her ivory neck, was gone. Wretched husband! lost, undone, guilty woman!”

“Yes, Henri! I saw him sever that lovely tress, while she hung upon his bosom all in tears, lamenting that the parting hour had come. Forsooth they were a noble pair—each other’s counterpart—the cavalier all dignity and grace—the lady fond and fair as Helen’s self!”

St. Amande started up, and uttered an exclamation or execration between his shut teeth; but his voice was inaudible with passion. He snatched the portrait from Montbelliard’s hand, and flinging it on the ground, stamped on it till gold, ivory, and painting, became an indistinguishable mass; and then tearing the black ringlet from his false friend, scattered it to the winds of heaven, and broke out into a wild horrible laugh, that sounded, as it rang among the rocks, like the yell of a demon. The vengeance he had wreaked upon

these inanimate objects relieved his overwrought heart, and he uttered in a low and almost inarticulate voice:

“Hector, how came you by these baubles?”

“I took them from his bosom after I had slain him,” replied Montbelliard; “the ball passed through his very heart, for my aim was near and deadly.”

“Why did you spare the adulteress?” rejoined the Buccaneer chief, in the same gloomy stillness of tone.

“Oh! she was young—and fair withal; and then his seeking her in the midst of danger might easily win a fickle woman’s heart. Then they had been previously affianced.”

“Distraction! you excuse her guilt,” exclaimed St. Amande; “but, Hector, she shall die!” and he grasped the arm of Montbelliard with violence.

“Be not rash, Henri; first examine the evidences of her guilt. The Senora Guarda is in her confidence; question her respecting her lady’s conduct during your absence. Clear up every doubt before you throw your wife, your bosom friend, far from you.”

“Bosom fiend!” retorted the miserable man. “Go quickly; I will speak with this Almeria. Nay, delay not, I am well; and mark me, Hector, tarry not by the way; for suspense is worse than all the torments the Spaniards could inflict upon me, were I in their power.”

Montbelliard obeyed his commands, and quickly returned with Almeria. He then withdrew to a little distance, to allow them time and opportunity for unrestrained parlance.

Whatever were the facts elicited by St. Amande from the friend and confidant of his wife, they were such, it would seem, as confirmed him in his belief of her guilt, for he staggered towards his false friend, and with white convulsed lips, articulated, with a strong effort, the words—“Slay the traitress!” and rushed from the spot with the rapidity of lightning, and was out of sight in a moment.

Montbelliard smiled grimly as he traced the path of the distracted Buccaneer by the agitation of the branches of the almost untrodden thicket through which he forced his way; and in whose deep and unfrequented solitudes he plunged to hide his grief from every eye.

“Revenge! revenge, thou art sweet!” exclaimed he; “yet this is but thy first fruits, thy full fruition will be sweeter still. Ha! I forgot—his commission must now be fulfilled—I must decoy her to the cave—and then, methinks, he takes a long, long farewell of peace. Sleep never more will visit his sad eyes,—nor will he ever love again,—for never will