

The Earl then conducted her to another room, where he used every means to calm and tranquillize her, but for some time without much success; she continued gazing on him fixedly, until he became alarmed.

"Speak to me, Amy, my sweet sister," he said—"do not look thus, for it distresses me; soon will you be restored to all you love, never to be torn from them again." He endeavoured to draw her attention to each one who he knew was linked in her young affections, mentioning all their names; this at length produced a violent burst of tears, which happily relieved her—and burying her face in the cushion of the sofa, she wept and sobbed like an infant.

Mr. Martyn had, in the meantime, knelt by the bed-side of the unfortunate Father Anselm; his Christian spirit groaned within him on beholding a fellow creature on the brink of eternity, so totally unprepared for the awful change; he felt how hopeless was the attempt, but he would not refrain from making one; and he spoke to him in a strain of meek piety which must have penetrated any heart not quite closed to good impressions. He pointed out to him the extreme sinfulness of harbouring angry and revengeful feelings, and strove to lead him to repentance; that even in this eleventh hour a gracious God was ready to pardon him, for his dear Son's sake, if he would only cast away every other false prop, and trust in His all-sufficient atonement for salvation.

"Avaunt, fiendish tempter, with your damnable heresies," cried the infuriated monk, tearing open his vest, and showing a hair shirt, with small pointed wires, which penetrated the flesh—"behold, and tremble! will not this expiate crimes darker than hell itself?—aye, you may well start; away, and torment me not."

"Alas, my brother! trust not to such a refuge of lies," said Mr. Martyn, clasping his hands together as he gazed in pity amounting to horror on the deluded being, whose life was ebbing fast away, "but cast down the unhallowed idol, and worship the true God; can the self-punishment of sinful man expiate crime in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?—for what did Christ suffer, if so dreadful a sacrifice were incomplete?—cast away that cruel vestment, and put on the garment of righteousness, the robe without seam; stand forth in the merits of thy Saviour—turn to Him while there is yet time—turn in penitence, and cling to the Rock of Ages; behold yon flickering lamp—it blazes for a moment with increased splendour, ere it sinks for ever—such a light is yours; it may dazzle man with its vain show, its outward brilliancy, but it is all hollow, all false; thy agonising and unnecessary penance cannot pluck one sin from thy heart—the tear of contrition is far more acceptable to our Heavenly Father, who wills not the death of

a sinner, but who, in the words of expostulation, has said, 'turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?'"

The monk cast on the kneeling minister a look of ineffable hatred and scorn. "Madden me not in this hour with your heretical doctrines," he hoarsely cried. "Manfredonia, listen to me—devote thy wealth in masses for my soul, and thou thyself become one of the holy brotherhood of my convent. Spurn from thee the base scion of a hateful race, and see her no more. Let my remains be conveyed to my own country, and interred in the monastery at Palermo; if you disobey me in one instance, my spirit shall return to haunt you till your dying day."

"My word is pledged to fulfil your wishes, my father," replied the Duke, bowing in deep solemnity.

Mr. Martyn now rose from his knees, and retired to a distant part of the room, where he remained for some time in earnest, fervent prayer. The lamp waned lower and lower in the socket; it shot up one lurid flame, which shone on the distorted features of the dying monk, then sank for ever, and left the chamber of death in total darkness.

Lord Blondville had become anxious at the lengthened absence of his friend, and was on the eve of returning to enquire for him, when he entered the room, strongly agitated.

"Is it all over with that unhappy man?" enquired the Earl, in a low tone.

"Alas, yes!" replied Mr. Martyn, with deep feeling, "many a death-bed scene have I witnessed, but one so hopeless, never—and it has stricken me to the heart; but let us depart," he continued—"where is my child?—doubly mine now, that her natural guardian has forsaken her;" and Amy was fondly pressed in his embrace.

"Can we be of no use to the strangers?" asked Lord Blondville, as they were leaving the room, "it is painful to me that the father of Amy should remain in so comfortless an abode as this."

"I offered your castle to both the Duke and Mr. Denison, as I knew I might venture to do so," replied Mr. Martyn; "but the determined manner in which the former opposed any conciliatory advances, silenced me. Mr. Denison I found more reasonable, and he has promised to call on me tomorrow."

Amy was now lifted in a very exhausted state into the Earl's carriage, which immediately proceeded homewards—it was midnight when they drove over the drawbridge and re-entered the courtyard of the castle. The Countess, Ursula, and Mrs. Bennet were all waiting in anxious suspense, when the sound of the carriage met their eager, listening attention. Tenderly did Lady Blondville receive the beloved Amy, from the arms of her son—and many were the prayers of grateful joy, and of tears, shed by good old Ursula, when she once more held her darling to her bosom in safety. A composing draught was administered, and Ursula remained