

eve, when the Lady Gonsala was aroused from her reverie, by a gentle tap upon the shoulder, and looking up, beheld a light and airy female figure, arrayed in all the blooming loveliness of youth, and whose loose and flowing drapery, floated majestically upon the gentle breeze that wantoned amid her tresses, decorated with a profusion of exotics of the richest colour and perfume, and her brows were encircled with a coronet, on which the richest gems of Golcondar blazed in many a glittering wreath. Gonsala bowed her face to the earth before the lovely vision, whose large blue eyes were fixed upon her with a look of exquisite tenderness, whilst strains of heavenly music were heard floating along the air, and added an impressive solemnity to the scene. "Child of mortality (said she) attend to the words of Him, before whom the universe bends, and before whom the princes of the earth are worms! The great Alla hath beheld, with pleasure, the virtues of thy life, and hath sent me to speak comfort to the afflicted Gonsala. The wicked shall not always triumph: the day of retribution will arrive. Afflictions gather, like the Arabian pestilence, around thee, but the task be thine to bear them as becomes the faithful, till the blessed Alla calls thee to the green bowers of the blessed. Almanzor will return, but—the darkness of futurity hides the rest. The strength of the children of the Prophet will fail, and a stranger worship at his shrine. Farewell, and Alla be your guide!" "Pleasant to my soul as the bowers of paradise are the words of the Prophet," said Gonsala raising her bended head, but the vision was fled, and all around was still and lonely.—Springing upon her feet she cast a wild and keen eye along the broad avenue of venerable trees in front of the castle by which she expected the return of her Lord. She indistinctly beheld at a considerable distance a figure approaching the castle at full speed; and, as it came nearer,

she plainly distinguished the eagle-plumed helmit and silver studded shield of Almanzor. How quick is the transition from female sorrow to female joy,—all these dark and undefined forebodings which a few moments before had occupied her mind, now gave way to gladness and rapture; and dashing away the big tear that still trembled on her dark eyelashes, and flinging her loose and dishevelled ringlets over her neck and heaving bosom, flew with a thrilling rapture, known only to those whose hearts are linked in one eternal chain of love, to welcome her warrior from the field of blood. Slowly and wearily he descended from his steed, and she heard his steps upon the staircase, but they were lagging and heavy.—"It cannot be Almanzor!" she was about to say, when he appeared, and her arms were already stretched to enfold him to her bosom, glowing with a heavenly fervour, seldom known to the beauties nurtured amid the gaudy and unchaste seclusion of a warmer clime: but he eluded her grasp; and pointing to a deep gash in his bosom, from which the blood trickled in a red and oozy stream, upon the light and crimsoned robe that wrapt his manly form, suddenly plunged amid the darkness of the adjacent corridor, and disappeared from her astonished view. "Fallen! fallen! thou art fallen, Lord of Arragon! and the manly strength of Almanzor hath failed! Who now will protect the lonely and expatriated Gonsala from the tyger love of Alboacen!" she exclaimed, with such a loud and yelling laugh of despair, as is heard from the evil destinies of mankind, when the powers of Alla blast their baneful rage, and sank senseless into the arms of her attendants, whom the cries of distress had brought to her assistance. By the timely application of proper means, she was at length restored to animation; but the dreadful apparition recurred every moment, to her imagination, till her mind was wrought up to a state of horrid phrenzy, and in