

destroy her still. *Senorita*, listen to me!" he added aloud, with a dark smile, which went to the heart of poor *Carmen*, as she caught it by the dim blaze of the torches.

"Ah! *Joachim* is dead!" she cried, "since you smile thus!"

"No!" replied the monk; "he is alive, *Donna Carmen*! but he is still a condemned prisoner, bound on the chariot of death, in the square of *San Isidro*."

"Hush, babbler!" cried one of the adventurers; "or this staff shall teach thee silence!"

"On! on!" exclaimed *L'Olonnais*, "every moment we remain in this pest-stricken city may be fatal to us."

The party resumed their march, and *Fray Eusebio* could only add: "You alone, *Senorita*, have the power and courage to save him."

As they moved away, he saw *Carmen* proceed towards the square, as rapidly as her weak limbs could convey her, and he murmured, with a fiendish smile:

"Yes! my brother, *Don Ramon*, shall be revenged—revenged on both; for she will perish by him and with him!"

LV.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

DONNA CARMEN meantime advanced through the deserted streets, pale and trembling, towards the place of execution. She remained for a moment struck with astonishment at the singular spectacle presented by the square, illuminated as it was by the glare of the still burning torches, yet deserted and silent as the grave, save that the solemn toll of the bells fell heavily and unceasingly on the ear. When she saw, by the fitful light, *Joachim* bound to the waggon, the only living creature in that vast square, so lately filled with the crowd that pressed to see him die, she could scarcely believe it aught else but the mockery of a dream.

"Can *Fray Eusebio* really have told me the truth!" she murmured, as she paused within ten paces of the waggon. "Can he really have escaped the doom for which they destined him! *Joachim*! *Joachim*!" she exclaimed aloud.

"Who calls that unhappy man?" cried the prisoner, painfully raising his head.

"Do you not know me, *Joachim*?" she cried, with transport, stretching out her arms towards him.

"*Donna Carmen* here!" he exclaimed; "snatched still living from her sepulchre! A thousand blessings on you, my brave companions! you have fulfilled your promise."

"And as soon as free," she replied, "I have come to you, *Joachim*!"

"You have not then forgot me, *Donna Carmen*!" returned he, in a voice full of sweet emotion. "But stay!" he added, as she drew nearer; "advance not! approach not this fatal waggon!"

"Why so?" answered *Carmen*; "shall I live, and leave you to die? Could you think me capable of so doing?"

"Ah! but you know not the events of the last hour," returned the adventurer; "you know not that these two men, my brethren, have been stricken by the yellow fever—that I singly have instilled mortal terror into the hearts of all the Spaniards of *San Fernando*. Oh! fly, *Donna Carmen*, fly! for my face shall soon be as horribly livid as those of my companions; I feel already a cold sweat bathing my forehead."

Donna Carmen approached still nearer. She shuddered at sight of the corpses of *Pitrius* and *Jean David*, but the force of affection overcame this instinctive terror.

"*Joachim*!" she calmly said; "what did you love in me? Were I no longer fair—should suffering bedim mine eyes, and furrow my countenance, would you abandon me? Would you love only the happy and smiling girl?"

"Can you really ask it, *Carmen*?" cried the young man. "To me, you are life itself. It is not *Donna Carmen de Zurates* that I love, but you. Were you a queen, I would dare to love you; were you the lowliest peasant girl, it would be the same. A love like this, is a continual aspiration after all that is noble, and great, and beautiful. When I examine my thoughts, I find but your image on my heart, and your name on my lips. This hour, fatal as it may prove to me, is the happiest of my life, since I dare unfold to you the secrets of my inmost heart. It is like a ray of the sun piercing the dungeon where the long-pent prisoner is gradually languishing away. Let death come now when he may; better to die thus, than pine away in hopeless separation from you."

Donna Carmen, without reply, advanced to the waggon, and placed upon it her wan and slender hand.

"But the death I spoke of was not for you," pursued *Joachim*, with eager haste. "I wish not to wind you in my shroud, like the miser that hides his treasure in the tomb; I love you not with so base and selfish an affection. Could I with indifference see you suffer through me—me, who would yield my life to spare you a tear or a sigh? Could you condemn me to the torture of seeing those bright eyes grow dim, those exquisite features contracted with pain, that lovely form shaken by the convulsions of the yellow fe-