

one man, and why I feel so deep an interest in Rosalie, whom I am resolved never to see sacrificed, as was her mother, at the shrine of Mammon."

"Thou hast deserved a happier destiny than this, my kind friend," said the artist with feeling; "I would my Rosalie were indeed thy child; yet shall she be to thee as a daughter, and it shall be my joy to render thee the duty and affection of a son. I had heard before somewhat of this passage in thy life; but I knew not how much of fiction was mingled with the truth, for to me it seemed too great a mystery, if such things were, that thou couldst go beneath thy roof, and treat with Christian courtesy a man who had so deeply injured thee."

"It was for Rosalie's sake that I did so,—there was a solace in watching over the orphan of her I had so fondly loved, which I could not deny myself, and of serving her, should occasion offer; and so I put restraint upon my feelings, and have frequented the house, and sat from time to time at the table of a man, whom I despise too much to hate."

"It is well for me that thou hast done so, and mayest thou meet the reward which a forgiving temper merits. And now, my friend, wilt thou replace this gold in thy cabinet, and suffer it to lie there till this affair is decided, for at present it belongs not to me."

"But wilt thou not take a moiety of it? To that thou surely art entitled."

"Not a solitary crown. I need it not, for my wants are few, and the harvest which I reap by my pencil, abundant. Nay, at this very moment, I am engaged to paint a piece for the Prince De Ligne, at a price named by himself, that will make me rich. So, my good friend, put thy mind at rest on my account, for if I am in any strait of mind or body thou art very sure of knowing it. And now I perceive I have trespassed on thy hour of business, and craving thy forgiveness, I will begone."

And so he departed, leaving his friend to plunge into the busy vortex of active life, while he sought his solitary studio, there to brood over the bright prospects of love and fame that were unfolding to his view, and to employ his pencil in embodying new forms of ideal beauty, over which he shed the radiant light of his creative genius.

In the meantime, the saloons of the Count De Clairville were thronged with the elite of Paris, who came to view the splendid Guido that had recently enriched his collection, while he, the happy possessor of the coveted gem, displayed with the pride of an amateur its various points of beauty and perfection, and discoursed, with an acumen that astonished the unlearned, on the various kinds of style that characterized the celebrated masters of the art. So a week or two passed on, and then a whisper obtained circulation, that the piece was not a Guido. It reached the ears of the Count and troubled him, and he spent hour after hour in studying the Magda-

len, and comparing it with an undoubted Guido that adorned his gallery. Then came another rumour, ascribing the painting to Pierre Mignard, and as the Count listened to it, other feelings than those of fear for the genuineness of his Guido, arose in his bosom.

He remembered the promise he had made to the artist, safely as he then thought,—but if Mignard had fulfilled the condition on which he was to receive the hand of Rosalie, how could he on his part, refrain from the performance of his voluntary promise? It was impossible for him to evade it consistently with truth and honour. The picture had been pronounced a Guido by competent judges—he, himself, had believed it the work of that great artist, and if Mignard could now prove it to be his, what became of the splendid alliance he was on the eve of completing for his daughter with the Baron Desmonville. Ay, but could he prove it so? The Count was willing to believe it impossible,—as for himself, he would not be convinced on slight testimony, and the mere word of an almost unknown individual, could not be expected to weigh aught against the merits of a painting, that would bear comparison with some of Guido's best.

Still the Count was uneasy, and knew not what course to pursue. He wondered within himself if Rosalie was accessory to the secret, if indeed any secret existed—and he more than half suspected that she was—for since the arrival of the picture, her whole air and manner had undergone a change. She had recovered her wonted buoyancy of spirit,—the voice of song was again upon her lips, and light and joy beamed from her eloquent eyes. Quietly too, and in the absence of other observers, she hovered round the Magdalen, or standing apart from the group of amateurs, who met to discuss its merits, she drank in each word of commendation, with an intense delight, that revealed itself in her changeful and expressive face.

The Count communicated his doubts and fears to his son-in-law elect, whom he also found in a state of nervous anxiety on the subject; for, though, as yet, the Baron had striven vainly, to excite an interest in the pre-occupied heart of Rosalie, he still persevered in his suit, encouraged by her father, and trusting that his devotion would at length win its merited reward. The new aspect which affairs had suddenly taken, however, caused him the liveliest alarm, and though not destitute of generous feelings, he was so desperately enamoured, that he yielded without hesitation to the Count's proposal for an immediate marriage, to be brought about by persuasion if possible, and if not, by the force of parental authority.

But this was a task of no easy accomplishment, for Rosalie, with a tact often possessed by her sex, evaded rather than resisted her father's importunities, and still managed to retain her freedom without declaring her determination never to relinquish