

ed, almost in a state of insensibility, to find the blood flowing profusely from her forehead.—In the deepest alarm, he called upon her by every endearing epithet to answer, and convince him of her existence. Then, aware of the necessity of procuring instant relief, he bore her quickly to the borders of the neighbouring stream, and laying her gently on the soft and shaded turf, took off her little white apron, and embruing it in the refreshing waters, endeavoured, by repeated efforts, to stop the flow of blood, and restore animation to her pallid cheek.

Finding his attempts at length happily successful, and that she opened her large dark eyes upon him once more, he lost not a moment in carrying his precious burden to her father's cottage. The poor old man, her sole surviving parent, was reposing on his usual rustic seat, beneath the shade of his own vine and fig-tree, her two little brothers mending their barbarous fishing-tackle, when Valentino entered the porch, bearing the flower of their rustic dwelling in his arms, her garments stained with blood, and her cheek pale as the lilies at the door.

"Holy Virgin!" exclaimed the old man, rising more hastily than he had perhaps done for the last twenty years, and following him into the house: "Mother of Mercy! Tell me, I say, in the name of all the saints, what has happened to her; and tell me truly, or you leave not this house alive?"

At this moment he grasped convulsively the arm of Valentino, who, having laid his still helpless burden on the nearest couch, (that identical couch upon which we beheld her last remains extended,) hastily commenced an explanation of the terrific scene which had passed during the morning. The old man gradually relaxed his hold as the incidents, by their clear and simple narration, found ready admittance to his heart, until he concluded by throwing his arms around Valentino's neck, and blessing him as the deliverer of his child from the most horrible of deaths.

Towards evening, to the delight of all her friends and neighbours, the poor girl revived; opening her eyes and looking round her as for some desired object, with an expression of the deepest anxiety, when, catching the sounds of her lover's voice in the portico in conversation with her father, she exclaimed, "Holy Mother! he is safe! and my father loves him for Theresa's sake." Then, passing her hands to her head, as though the retrospection of those fearful scenes of the morning were too

much for her, she relapsed into a dose which lasted some hours. Valentino in the meantime, had but too much leisure for painful reflection. Unable to leave the cottage, he seized the opportunity now opened to him of declaring to her parent, Antonio, his position and his hopes, more especially the one then dearest to his heart, that of calling him father.

"With all my heart," replied the old man proud of the rising hopes of the young artist, "but first of all obey thy master's summons; get thee to Rome and there establish thyself as becometh thy talents and conditions. Return quickly to our valleys and then thou shalt become the possessor of the loveliest flowers that ever bloomed amongst them."

The young man's gratitude was overflowing and he promised willingly what he had little doubt his love and his exertions could enable him to perform; but time pressed, and how could he at such a moment, break the news of his departure to his Theresa—the effects might be dangerous in the extreme. His resolution was at length taken, to depart that very night, having previously made a confidant of the old woman who attended her, who, it was agreed when her patient next revived and inquired for Valentino, should calm her by the assurance that he was absent in the neighbourhood, on some necessary errand connected with his profession, until, arrived in Rome, he would himself make known to her his hopes and prospects.

The village clock struck twelve, whilst the distant convent bell commencing its monotonous but not unmusical chimes, rung mournfully in the ears of Valentino. Still, alas! a stranger, he stood beneath the vine-clad lattice which opened upon the little portico, from which he was enabled to gaze on the sleeping form of Theresa, without being himself observed within.

The silvery and placid moonbeams fell softly on her couch, and perceiving her to be apparently in a profound sleep, he stole softly into the chamber. With real anguish of heart did he gaze at that moment on her lovely and unconscious form, then plunging into his bosom a little ivory crucifix which lay beside her, as though already foreseeing the need of such a talisman amid the frailty and caprice of human hope and promises, he imprinted a parting kiss on her flushed cheek, and dashing the falling tear from his eye, hastily quitted the cottage.

Sad and gloomy were the thoughts of poor Valentino as he pursued in sorrowful rever-