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Horatio and Camilla; OR, THE NUNS OF ST.
MARY. A TALE OF THE FOURTEENTH
CENTURY [Transcript]

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Horatio and Camilla;
OR, THE
NUNS OF ST. MARY.
A TALE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.
There, kneeling at yon altar's marble base,
(While tears of rapture from thine eye-lid steal
And smiling Heav'n illumes thy soul with grace)
Pronounce, the vow thou never canst repeal.

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HORATIO AND CAMILLA;
OR, THE
NUNS OF ST. MARY.

HORATIO was the son of the Marquis de Cattavio, a nobleman of immense wealth, but excessive ambition: he had entered into a contract with the Count Le Roffe of a marriage between Horatio and Lavinia, the Count's daughter: this the young couple had signed, as yet they had not felt the power of love; they appeared agreeable to each other's eyes, and without reluctance obeyed the commands of their parents. As their nuptials were not to take place for three years, the period of Horatio's coming of age, Lavinia went to the Convent of Saint Mary; till that time, the Countess being dead, her father judged that the most proper asylum for the daughter.

As she was allowed to see Horatio at the grate, he went often by the Count's permission to visit her.

On these occasions she was usually accompanied by a young novitiate, of the most charming air: the pensiveness on her brow served but to heighten her beauty. Her captivating sweetness prepossessed Horatio in her favour. He could not help deploring that fate which was to deprive the world of one of its ornaments, by immuring her in the gloom of a cloister.

One morn Lavinia came alone to the grate: Horatio ventured to ask after her fair friend, and the reason of her joining the sisterhood. "The history of Camilla is but short, and the reason of her taking the veil but too frequent, and much to be lamented among the nobility of small estates or fortunes. To aggrandize his son, and prevent his daughter from degrading herself in marriage, as he meant to give her no portion, he has placed her in this convent, where she is shortly to take the veil. But, alas!" sighed the fair Lavinia, "Camilla approves not this choice, and sighs for liberty; often does she wish for a cottage, and to toil for her daily subsistence. I have now left her weeping in her cell." After a short conversation Horatio took leave, his mind filled with the most excruciating sensations. He now for the first time lamented the family contract—a thousand times did he wish he had never seen Camilla, to whose

interesting charms he was sensible his heart was captive; but honour bound him to Lavinia, whose affections now seemed rivetted to him, whom she justly considered as her future husband. The agitation of his mind threw him into a delirious fever, and his life was despaired of—the Marquis was inconsolable, but youth and a good constitution enabled his recovery.

As soon as the physicians allowed him to go out, he went to the convent—he asked for Lavinia, he was informed she was gone to the chapel to assist in the ceremony of veiling a nun.

Horatio could scarcely recover himself sufficient to ask her name. “Camilla de Torra,” answered the lay sister who attended; “you may go to the chapel, Signor, all strangers are admitted this day.”

He desired her to conduct him, which she did, through the interior of the convent. On his entrance he perceived Camilla kneeling at the altar; the priest had just then put on her veil, the choir was singing hymns of congratulation, while the trembling victim of ambition and parental cruelty, appeared ready to sink on the ground; a murmur of pity was heard from the spectators, as the priest led her to the abbess, who waited, attended by the nuns to receive her, and led her with two candles and a coffin sprinkled with dust carried before her, to put her in mind of her mortality, into the convent, and shut the gates.

Horatio stood for some time fixed to the spot immovable—all happiness seemed banished from his breast; he thought only on Camilla, the lost Camilla.

Near a week elapsed before he could gain resolution to go to St. Mary's: he abhorred the name of the place at times; then his wavering mind would look upon it as containing all that was sacred and dear to him. When Lavinia came to the grate she appeared greatly displeased at his absence, and would answer him no questions that he asked concerning Camilla, and soon retired.

Horatio could not guess the cause of this coldness; he gave no one reason to suspect his unfortunate attachment, much less Lavinia, as he flattered himself; but in this he was mistaken; love is, though pictured blind, often quicksighted. Lavinia had perceived an alteration in his behaviour, and was not long finding out the cause; his eyes soon betrayed the secret when in company with her fair companion; his illness in her opinion confirmed the suspicions she entertained: she had fixed her eyes on him in the chapel, and had marked his agitation. Though her rival was for ever out of the power of Horatio, her pride revolted at the idea of his affections being estranged from her, and she resolved to treat him with contempt, till she was fully assured of the truth of her conjectures.

The embarrassed behaviour of Horatio, and his kind inquiries after Camilla, settled the remaining doubt, and she retired to her apartment overwhelmed with grief.

Camilla perceiving her friend in tears, intreated her with earnestness to relate the cause. Lavinia answered her with abruptness, that she wished to be left alone undisturbed. The

fair nun made an apology for her intrusion, and retired with surprise indicated on her countenance.

Lavinia could not help reflecting on the unkindness of her behaviour to the innocent Camilla. She hastened to the cell, and intreated forgiveness of her injured friend; this was instantly granted with that sweetness of disposition which so strongly marked her character. "Tell me, my dear Lavinia, the cause of your uneasiness: is the Count le Roffe ill?" "No, my father, thank heaven, is very well." "Blest as you are, my dear friend," said Camilla, "in so indulgent a parent, and a lover like Horatio, what cause can you have for grief?" "Suppose my lover is false," said Lavinia. "He would not tell you so—you see none but him and the Marquis; if he was faithless you must be ignorant of it." "No, I have been eye-witness: to it." "Impossible!" exclaimed Camilla. "It is by no means so impossible," answered Lavinia. "Suppose you are the object of his love." "Are you in your senses?" said the astonished nun: "indeed, Lavinia, you astonish me; you make odd conjectures—nor am I pleased." "I mean if Horatio—but it cannot be." There was so much embarrassment in her manner that she could not find words to speak her meaning, at last tears came to her aid, and they flowed precipitately down her cheeks.

"I am sorry to distress you, Camilla, nor did I expect this sorrow. We are all unhappy." "No, Lavinia, you will be the happy wife of Horatio, while I shall be—O dismal perspective. — Happy is a monastic life when choice leads, or when it is sought by the unfortunate who are tired of the world; but it has sealed my unhappiness for ever. But yet, my friend, I should have been far more content had I never seen Horatio." The bell now rang for prayers, and the ladies parted.

Horatio came to the grate the next day, and taking a respectful leave of Lavinia, informed her by permission of his father, he was going to the Continent for a few months to reestablish his health. Lavinia shed some tears at a parting which she took as an evasion to avoid her company, and she resolved if possible to conquer every prepossession she felt in his favour, as she determined never to be his, without he appeared on his return to have banished all traces of Camilla from his mind.

As the sisterhood in general were elderly women, the society met with an agreeable companion in a young novitiate, who was now introduced, of the name of Honoria: she was tall and well made, and seemed to possess an agreeable fund of vivacity and good humour; she immediately attached herself to the young friends, from whose society she was seldom absent.

She became the confidant of their unfortunate love for Horatio, and sympathized in their griefs. Some weeks had now elapsed, and Lavinia had received no tidings of her lover; as she lay one night reflecting on this circumstance, which gave her no small uneasiness, she heard a great bustle in the convent; presently the alarm bell rung violently: the terrified Lavinia flew to the hall, where she met the abbess and several of the sisterhood. The abbess, in a tone of great displeasure, demanded of her whether she knew any thing of the elopement of Camilla and Honoria, and threatened her with confinement if she made any concealments. Lavinia protested her innocence and astonishment at the intelligence.

“There is no doubt but they will be overtaken,” said the venerable sister Agatha.

“For pity's sake, tell me the meaning of all this,” said Lavinia, as she followed one of the nuns to her cell. “My dear girl,” replied Bertha, “a friar of the Benedictine monastery passing by the door of the garden on his return from a dying person, to whom he had been administering the extreme unction, perceived a post-chaise at a small distance; while he was ruminating who this could belong to at such a late hour, the door opened and a nun was led out by a young gentleman, who handed her into the chaise: the friar on attempting to stop them was thrown on the ground by the gentleman, and the chaise drove off; he then alarmed the convent, and along with the gardeners was gone in pursuit of the fugitives.” “But what has Honoria to do with this?” “Too much I fear,” answered the nun; “we have reason, from searching their cells, to believe, that we have been imposed on in the person of Honoria, whom we are assured was some base villain, the companion, of her disgraceful flight.”

The thoughts of Horatio now crossed Lavinia's mind; she wondered she had not before remarked the resemblance between him and the nun; nor had she the least doubt of its being her faithless lover. She hastily retired that the nun might not see her confusion.

Fearful of the consequences that might result from, their being brought back, she heartily wished their flight might be successful; but this hope was soon frustrated; Camilla was brought back by the friar, who informed them the gentleman had escaped in spite of all their endeavours to detain him.

The abbess was quite enraged at the escape of the perfidious villain, as she termed him,, who had brought such disgrace on their order. She endeavoured by every means to extort confession from the distracted Camilla, but to no purpose. She remained obdurate. She would neither mention the name, or any particulars of the circumstances of her flight; she was ordered to be confined in a cell under ground, till the further pleasure of the abbess, who assigned her a very scanty portion of bread and water. Lavinia's heart revolted at this cruelty; she considered the unhappy situation of Camilla, and Horatio, her declared lover, suing at her feet for to fly with him from the drear abode, where she had been so unwillingly constrained to take her vows of celibacy. She could not blame her; she was sure, in that case, she should have acted the same.

She intreated to see the fair prisoner, but was refused. A few days after it was reported through the convent Camilla was dead.

The next evening, as Lavinia was pensively walking in the deep shade of a filbert walk, she perceived some of the Benedictine friars, whose office it was to inter the deceased nuns of St. Mary's, bearing along the coffin of the beautiful Camilla. Lavinia, through the intervening foliage, observed the ceremony, which was attended by some of the senior nuns, and then mournfully retired to her chamber to weep her unfortunate friend, whom she sincerely regretted.

From this time the days of Lavinia passed in a mournful solitude, there were none of the society that she wished to cultivate a particular friendship with; no! Camilla was gone; her amusement was chiefly in writing poetry, and her melancholy ideas inspired the following lines:

MARIAN'S DEATH.

O come, my Marian, let us stray
Where flow'rets sweet are springing;
O come, my charmer, haste away,
While goldfinches are singing.

Oh, no! Oh, no! I cannot go;
I'll stay and weep, my love;
I'll twine this rue into a wreath,
And wander through the grove.

O come, sweet Marian, to my cot,
It's vain to mourn the dead;
The nuptial joy awaits my fair,
Then haste and let us wed.

Tho' he is lost, and in his grave,
Yet I will mourn with truth,
Until I share his silent tomb,
Dear lov'd lamented youth.

O come, my Marian, lovely fair,
O dry those pearly tears;
Thy sad lorn looks my soul affright,
And give a thousand fears.

The mournful maid sunk on the turf,
While sighs oft heav'd her breast;
Death set her struggling spirit free,
She flew to join the blest.

A twelvemonth elapsed, and yet no tidings of Horatio, for whose absence his father was almost distracted; he had sent to every place that reason could suggest, but could gain no intelligence. Lavinia never betrayed to any one the fatal secret of his being in the convent, and was thankful it was not suspected. She began in some measure to regain her usual tranquillity, when she experienced a most severe stroke of fate in the death of her father, who expired suddenly as he sat at table in the midst of a splendid company that was assembled at the Castle de la Roffe. On opening his will it was found Lavinia was left sole heiress, except a few trifling legacies. In case she did not fulfil the contract with Horatio, she was to forfeit thirty thousand pounds to that young nobleman; and he ordered that she should remain at the convent

till the three years were expired. This will had been drawn up on the day the contract was first signed, by the desire of the Marquis de Cattivio, who performed the same act on his part.

There were but a few months wanting to the time, which soon elapsed, when Lavinia, now Countess le Roffe, took possession of her estates, and went to reside at the castle, which was contiguous to the Marquis's.

Her mansion soon became the resort of the rich and gay nobility. Numberless were the suitors that strove to gain the hand of the fair heiress, among them was the young Marquis de Torra, who, the same as Lavinia, had lately come to his title on the death of his father. When his name was announced, Lavinia had nearly fainted, it brought the remembrance of his dear sister so fresh to her memory; but if she thought Camilla handsome, how much more fascinating appeared the manly graces of Henry; his features were like his sister's; but instead of her enchanting softness; he had an air of agreeable vivacity diffused over his countenance, and his large black eyes shone with admirable lustre.

He pressed his suit with so much energy, that the Countess soon owned a prepossession in his favour. Her love for Horatio had been more from considering it due to him by the injunctions of her father, than from any innate emotions of affection.

She acquainted Henry with the contract, and his mysterious absence, without unveiling he was the supposed Honoria; for the Marquis had such exalted notions of honour, and had always, though he regretted her death, expressed such great indignation at the apostacy of his sister, that if she had revealed who was the author of it she had reason to fear the most fatal consequences.

Henry despised the contract, as he was assured Horatio was not deserving the hand of the fair Lavinia, nor did he appear to claim it.

Their nuptials were soon after solemnized with great splendour, to the extreme rage of the Marquis de Cattivio, who had long looked upon these extensive domains as an assured acquisition to the wealth of his family.

The Marquis de Torra sent a note to that nobleman to acquaint him that as Lavinia had forfeited the stipulated sum by her marriage, he had placed it in a banker's hands against Horatio returned from his travels. To their great surprise, in a few days a letter was delivered to the Marchioness from Horatio, which did not appear to have been brought from any great distance, as it was dated the same day, expressing his pleasure of the choice she had made, with his sincere wishes for her felicity in the connubial state, and inclosing the contract, expressing his hopes that they had never entertained a thought so mean of him that he should have wished to take the advantage it meant to give. The Marquis was charmed with his noble behaviour, and eagerly inquired for the man who had brought the letter: the page informed him that the messenger had rode off immediately from the gate without waiting for an answer. The Marchioness had always made it a rule to go to confession every month, to the prior of the Benedictine monastery, ever since she had resided at the castle. On this occasion she went unattended, and her carriage waited for her at the end of a long avenue. As she was returning

from the confessional through the chapel, an aged monk advanced towards her with a low bow, and slipping a note into her hand, instantly retired. The Marchioness was anxious to see the contents of this note so mysteriously delivered; as soon as she was in her carriage she opened it, and read as follows:

Father Pedro takes the liberty of soliciting the Marchioness to come to his cell in the evening of the next day, as he has a circumstance to unfold of the utmost secrecy and consequence to the De Torra family.

Convent of St. Bennet's.

The Marchioness was lost in conjectures on the subject, and anxiously awaited the arrival of the appointed time. The Marquis was fortunately absent; Lavinia slipped on her pelisse and hood, and, unnoticed by her domestics, crossed through the park belonging to the castle, and soon arrived at St. Bennet's. She knocked at Pedro's cell, which he instantly opened: the Marchioness begged to know the occasion that had made him solicit her attendance that evening.

“That I may not wound your tender heart with too quick a disclosure of the hapless story I have to relate, I must inform you, it is in your power to alleviate the sufferings of a fair lady that is allied to you by very near ties, and it is for her I now plead.”

“Allied to me, good father; I have no relations, nor has the Marquis any but——”

“Pardon me, lady, you have,” answered Pedro, “one who deserves your utmost pity, and is waiting anxiously to know whether you will receive her as such.”

“Conduct me to her,” said Lavinia, “I am impatient to behold her.” “Softly,” said the friar, “I will fetch her as soon as the bell has rung for vespers, and the rest of our community is in the chapel.”

The monk retired for a short time, and Lavinia amused herself with a small book of poems which she had in her pocket. She met with one that entertained her very much.

FAIR EMMA

Down in yon vale fair Ernma dwelt,
Of all the fair the village pride;
Her father in his country's cause,
Heroic fought, heroic died.

This sad event, with streaming eyes,
The lovely maid in sorrow hears,
She knelt to heaven with uplift hands,
Her fervent prayer she thus prefers;

O let me to the throne of grace,

My humble supplication make,
 Thy gracious favour condescend,
 O guide my steps for mercy's sake.

For here an orphan child forlorn,
 Without a parent or a friend,
 O hapless day that I was born,
 O God! when will my sorrows end.

For, Oh ! I fear that Edward's slain,
 And all my youthful joys are fled,
 Say, can my throbbing breast contain
 A husband and a father dead!

But soft, a footstep now she hears,
 'Tis Edward bids her grief be o'er,
 To lull her sorrows, dry her tears,
 And gently bid her sigh no more.

She had just finished this poem, when Pedro entered with a lady veiled and habited as the nuns of St. Mary; she trembled violently, the Marchioness took her hand, and led her to a seat.

After a short pause, as if to gain resolution, the nun flung aside her veil, and presented to the view of the wondering Lavinia the features of Camilla, pale and wan.

Though the friar had intimated something that prepared her for a surprise, yet her spirits were not equal to the shock, and she fainted; on her recovery she found herself in the arms of Camilla, who seemed to stand in need of the assistance she was affording herself.

Father Pedro now left them that they might converse more free.

Camilla began her narrative in these words:

“My dear Lavinia has no doubt often accused me of duplicity in respect of Horatio, nor do I attempt to clear myself of the charge, but I hope you will believe that I was innocent of the disguise he had assumed till a long time after he was in the convent, or be assured I would never have encouraged such an impropriety; he never revealed to me his disguise, till in the course of the conversations which we all had together he had gained the secret of my love: then tell me how I could recede—fears for his life, which I knew to be every hour in danger, for if he was found in our convent in that habit, I knew death was the inevitable consequence of his impiety.—Love got the better of my anger; he vowed he would not leave St. Mary's without I accompanied him, which in a fatal hour I consented to. He had, by the assistance of a friend that was concerned, procured apparel and a postchaise in waiting. That we might be in no danger of suspicion on the road, Horatio put on his uniform, while I dressed myself in a green riding habit that had been sent for me; from a waistcoat and some other articles as was left

behind in our haste, I had no doubt but they would find out the whole deceit that had been practised.

“When we arrived at the garden gate, we thought all our difficulties were at an end, but to our utter confusion we were observed by the friar, who instantly gave the alarm; he tried to detain me, but I was rescued by Horatio; we jumped into the chaise, which drove off with rapidity, but we were too quickly pursued to escape; Horatio overpowered, was obliged to yield me up. I was put into the chaise, and conveyed back, where, to my great happiness, I heard my lover had escaped, breathing revenge if I was treated with any indignity. I was ordered to close confinement, and bread and water; but this was not enough for the abbess, who was an inveterate enemy to me—whom she knew was such an unwilling victim to my vows. Three days after she came to my dismal cell; by the light of a taper which she had brought with her, she gave me a letter to read, and then left me: it was from the Cardinal de Cafraro to the Abbess, to inform her private intercession had been made to the Holy See for an apostate nun, whose interesting story had won his heart to pity her distress; that I was to be permitted to join the sisters directly till farther orders, and enforced her to strict obedience, ending, with rather an insinuation, that she did not properly conduct her charge. The prospect of liberty made my heart thrill with pleasure, the nunnery, which had before given such pain to my mind was a paradise to the dungeon in which I was confined, and I waited with impatience for the return of the abbess, to conduct me from that wretched place.

“I had no reason to doubt Horatio's safety, as I was sensible I had no one else to intercede for me; this was a source of extreme felicity. I longed to meet you and weep on your bosom, as I knew the state of your affections, and the little you once had for Horatio was gradually declining, I was sure you would forgive.

“The taper had been extinguished some time, and I remained in gloomy darkness, impatiently waiting for to catch the sounds of her approach to my cell; at last she came attended by Agatha, with my monastic dress, for I had been all this time in my green habit; I arrayed myself immediately, and then followed Agatha: the abbess ordered her to conduct me where I was to pass this night; when we came to the door of the chapel she opened it, and pushed me in with rude violence, and then turned the key. The chapel was lighted with three dismal tapers.

“In the middle aisle stood a coffin—I shuddered with horror; at length I took courage to go and read the inscription, to see which of the sisters we had lost. I could scarce credit my senses when I beheld these words, Camilla de Torra, of St. Mary's; what could this mean, surely they would not destroy me. I went to remove the lid, but it was screwed down, I threw myself on the ground and lamented my hard destiny. O! my father, I exclaimed, could you now behold the hapless child of your dear Emily, and see her sorrows, how would your heart relent for the woes you have made me suffer. I ceased this apostrophe with a deep sigh, it was answered with a groan that made me start from the ground, all was silent. I thought it must be the effect of a disturbed imagination: I went and lay at the foot of the altar in hopes to obtain an interval from sorrow in sleep, for a great heaviness came over my eyes. I instantly dozed, but in a few moments was aroused by a second groan, more heavy than the first. I knelt—I prayed—I was agonized—again it sounded on my ears—the image of the Virgin shook violently—the tapers fell from their sockets—all was wrapt in darkness; a small blue

flame wavered about the aisles; it gradually increased, and the chapel was illumined with a supernatural light; I sunk on the ground, and wrapt the veil close round my face; a deep voice pronounced ‘Camilla!’ I did not dare to raise my head: ‘Camilla! look up my child; heaven will protect you.’

“The voice struck me: it was my father's: I turned my eyes that way the sound proceeded: his image stood before me. My father! I exclaimed, and sprang towards him. Alas! it was but a shadow: it vanished as I approached, and said, ‘Fear not!’ The blue flame remained a few moments, and then died away.

“I took this as a presage of my approaching dissolution; but, alas! Pedro has informed me that about that time the Marquis de Torra expired.

“At break of day came the abbess: she grasped my arm. ‘Base girl,’ she exclaimed, ‘do not think you shall triumph over me: in spite of all the Cardinals I will be mistress of your fate. You shall not thus escape: this coffin will be interred, you will then be lost to the intercessions of your vile associate, and at my disposal.’ In vain I implored for mercy: she was deaf to all my intreaties; indeed she had gone too far to recede from her cruel intentions. She bade me follow; I reluctantly obeyed. She went through the cloisters, and opening a small wicket, descended the winding stairs: they led to a miserable damp cave: here was a crucifix, with a small lamp before it, which she lighted, and left me to my reflections, which were not of the most pleasing kind. Some time after Agatha entered with a small mattrass and a blanket, and a small basket of provisions, and oil for my lamp. From this time I was never visited but once a week, when the abbess or her confidant brought my food.

“On these occasions, they kept the most obdurate silence. In vain I asked about my relations or you, my dear Lavinia; they never opened their lips; it was some time before I could have sufficient spirits to explore the place of my perfidious confinement. I went up the mouldering stairs, but they ended at the door which we entered, which was fast secured—so no hopes of deliverance arose from that quarter—I turned my steps, and again descended to the cave, which appeared to have been an abyss formed by nature, being in the midst of a hard rock, on which part of our abbey was built, and had been converted into a prison for some infernal purpose. There was a small aperture, through which I determined to make a search that might inform me the extent of my bounds; it was extremely dark, but I resolved to venture; I took my lamp and proceeded with difficulty through a long winding passage, but just wide enough for one person to pass; and the loose stones that were interspersed, made it very dangerous. I had proceeded a good way with great caution, but a vapour that arose made my light burn very dim, and dazzled my eyes, that I did not observe a steep descent before me, and I fell near five feet with a sudden force, and extinguished my lamp; my head met with a violent contusion, and I was otherwise so much bruised that I was scarce able to crawl back to my dungeon. I was without light for four days, till Agatha came as usual. She observed my veil and face had a great deal of blood on them, and sternly asked the reason: I told her I had fell on the ground, but did not give her any reason to understand but what it had happened in the cave.

She rebuked me for my carelessness, and left me; she returned in the evening with some balsam, with which she dressed the wound; she informed me she had performed this act of charity

unknown to the abbess who had strictly forbade me any relief: I tried to gain her to favour me yet further, but she was obdurate. I enjoyed more sleep now than I had done for some time; I awoke much refreshed, and resolved to venture once more down the subterraneous passage.

I found several declivities in my road, like the one that had occasioned my misfortune, which I now fortunately avoided: it was of an amazing length, and I began fervently to hope that I should escape, when it terminated in a small place, being filled up with a brick wall of great antiquity, as it was much decayed, and in some parts seemed very loose; I returned, being much fatigued, and laying on the mattress, planned the scheme of making an opening through this wall, by gradually working at it. I found a small piece of iron in the cave, with which I toiled every day in loosening the bricks. I had been so long inactive, that this exercise gave me both health and spirits, in hope of deliverance. The wall was very thick, but yet I had the happiness to make a considerable progress. In a few weeks I had made a place large enough to creep through. When I began, I expected to have found an opening into the country, but I soon found my mistake, for it continued in a long passage: this part, I supposed, belonged to some other domain; nor was my conjectures wrong; it led directly to the cellars belonging to St. Bennett's, and doubtless, in times of persecution or civil wars, had been the means of communication between the two houses.

“From one of the cellars there was a flight of steps that led into a shady grove near to the house. The sun was shining in its meridian: a sight I had not beheld for near sixteen months. I forgot for some time my miserable situation, in the beauty of the surrounding scenery. At last, fears recurred for my own safety: my unfriended state now rushed on my mind, and I was almost tempted to return. I knew not where to go, yet liberty was dear. I was revolving what course to take, when some one touched my arm. I turned round: it was one of the friars: I screamed, and dropt on my knees. ‘Do not betray me, good father!’ I exclaimed, ‘but deign to listen to my mournful story.’

“He looked at me with astonishment, for I was covered with dirt; neither my face or hands had been washed the whole time of my confinement, nor my robe or veil changed. That my appearance was truly deplorable, some part of you may guess by the tatters of my garments, of which it was not safe for me to get a change while I remained here. The good man conducted me to his cell, where he made me relate all the past events of my unfortunate life. The tears ran down his cheeks, and he sympathised in my distress. It is almost unnecessary to add, it was Pedro who thus befriended me. He informed me of my father's death, and that my brother had married the heiress of the Count le Roffe. O what joy did I feel in hearing that the sweet Lavinia was my sister! To you I begged Pedro to apply, for he has kept me concealed in a remote apartment with great difficulty; and, as to-morrow is the day in which Agatha pays her weekly visit, it will cause great alarm if you will not give me an asylum; I must, for fear of worse consequences, return to my cave, and end my days in misery.”

“Oh, my dear Camilla! can you doubt for a moment I would hesitate? No, my dear sister! you shall be all my care and study, till I can reveal the affair to your brother, whose influence, I do not doubt, will set all things to rights.”

The marchioness ordered Pedro to bring Camilla to the terrace of the castle exactly at midnight, where she would wait for her arrival, and returned home. On her arrival she was

quite surprised to find the marquis, who had returned, by reason of a slight indisposition, three days before he had appointed. Though she welcomed his return with sincerity, she was an utter stranger to dissimulation, and could not avoid appearing confused. This the marquis did not interpret in a favourable light, neither was he pleased at finding her absent on his return; though he knew not how to accuse of a fault that might dwell only in his imagination. Lavinia perceived these thoughts, but did not think proper to enter into an explanation at that time. They sat discoursing on different subjects till the clock struck twelve. In a few moments the marchioness went to the terrace, and found Pedro and the trembling Camilla waiting her approach: she put a gold snuff box into the hands of the monk, and bade him a good night. She led Camilla up the back stairs to a small neat apartment, where, there was a fire and proper refreshments placed ready. The marchioness was now obliged to leave her, and, after, an affectionate embrace, they parted.

Lavinia could not rest the whole night for revolving in what manner she should disclose the affair to the marquis, without mentioning the name of Horatio, till a proper eclaireissement took place. Some company coming in to breakfast, prevented her speaking on the subject so near her heart. The marquis went out a shooting, and Lavinia went to comfort her fair friend.

She assisted her to dress in some proper apparel. She had always thought her extremely handsome in the dress of a nun, but now her heart acknowledged her as the most perfect beauty she had ever seen. Soon as the business of the toilet was over, they retired into Lavinia's chamber, to converse on the past vicissitudes. Camilla began with the subject always uppermost in her mind—her dear Horatio. Lavinia much alleviated her sorrows by showing her the letter he had sent on her marriage. This assured them of his safety, but could not form any conjecture where he could reside.

They were attentively watching the avenue for De Torra's return, as Camilla might go back to her apartment, when the door suddenly opened and the marquis entered. "I beg your pardon, Lavinia: I thought you were alone, or I would not have obtruded. I hope my fair friend will forgive my rudeness. I rather hurt my foot, and returned home a nearer way." They neither answered him, or turned towards him. The astonished marquis was about to retire, when Camilla, whose senses were overpowered, uttered a faint scream, and fell on the floor. "Oh, my Camilla!" uttered the marchioness, and flew to raise her from the ground. Henry stood aghast: he thought his visionary powers deceived him: never was there a more interesting meeting.

Lavinia undertook the recital of her friend's sufferings, which she painted in such strong colours, and pleaded in her defence with so much energy and sweetness, that the marquis, who was overjoyed to find his sister alive, freely forgave the apostasy of her vows, and entered into their schemes of getting a releasement from her vows by the pope. The marquis accordingly set off the next day for Rome, where he gained an audience with his Holiness and Cardinal Capraro, who granted his request most graciously, exclaiming against the vile method of enforcing vows. The Abbess of St. Mary was suspended from her office, and ordered, along with Agatha, to become lay-sisters in a convent of the Carmelite order.

Henry, overjoyed, returned to the ladies, and a grand ball was given on the occasion, to which a number of the nobility was invited. Among the rest of the company was a gentleman

in a Persian dress and black mask, who solicited the favour of Camilla's hand in the dance; but this she declined, and chose the Marquis de Torra for her partner the whole of the evening. At supper, the gentleman placed himself next her, and behaved with the most assiduous politeness. The company did not retire till a late hour, after an entertainment of the utmost festivity and harmony. They rallied Camilla much on her conquest, but her heart was not to unison with their mirth; her health had been greatly impaired by confinement, and the anxiety she now endured for Horatio did not a little retard her recovery.

Lavinia had never been to Montpellier, where there was at that time a good deal of company; and the physician giving his opinion that the air would be of service to Camilla, they intended to go and pass the summer at that place. On the morning that was to begin their intended tour, the Baron de Crass was introduced, and was instantly known by his air and dress to be the same as had appeared in the Persian habit at the ball. He came to offer Camilla his hand, and the disposal of his fortune, which was immensely large. She refused, with politeness, but mixed with so much steadiness that gave no room to hope. He appeared much hurt at her refusal, and instantly took leave.

They travelled with great rapidity, and in a few days arrived at Montpellier. They engaged apartments at a large hotel, till they could find a furnished house to suit them. As they were at supper, they heard in the rooms above, a soft, melancholy tune. They inquired of the man that waited, who it was that so agreeably entertained them. They were informed it was a gentleman and his servant, who only arrived there that morning, and was going to pursue their journey the next day.

The marquis sent his compliments to desire the pleasure of the gentleman's company; but this was declined. He continued playing till a very late hour the most sweet and impassioned notes.

The Count Lemoine was going to England for a few months: he made an offer of his elegant mansion to the marquis, on condition of his letting a young gentleman remain in one apartment, who was of a most eccentric character; he avoided all company, and walked in the most retired places. He added, that Signor de Ponte had a servant who waited on him, and he disturbed no one.

The marquis readily agreed to this plan, and the next week they took possession of the house. It was situated in a most romantic spot; it was built in the Italian style, with two detached wings. There was a beautiful lawn before the house: there was an orange-grove on one side, and a myrtle-grove on the other. The pastures and grounds at the back of the house were amazingly extensive, and bounded by a soft, meandering stream. At the end of a long walk there was a shady grot, in which both nature and art were lavish to adorn this cool retreat: there was a little temple, built in the Gothic style, dedicated to Contemplation; there was a few shelves in a recess, that was fitted up with some volumes of choice poetry and natural history; there were several musical instruments, and a few cases of natural curiosities; the seats were made to represent the boughs of trees interwoven together in a fanciful manner; the windows were of painted glass, and the figure of Contemplation, in sculptured marble, leaned on an urn in the middle of the porch.

The beauty of the place, and the charming scenery that surrounded the mansion, gave the most exquisite delight to the marquis and the ladies: it was such a striking contrast to the heavy and sullen grandeur of the castles of Le Roffe and De Torra, that it was quite a paradise to the young travellers. Camilla's health was in a few weeks quite restored, but a melancholy was depicted on her countenance, that gave great pain to Henry and Lavinia.

“My valet informs me,” said the marquis, “that Signor de Ponte spends most of the day in a wood, about half a mile distance, where he amuses himself with his pencil, or in reading. Ambrose adds, that he is very handsome, and the villagers, to whom he is charitable, think he is some unfortunate lover.” Camilla heaved an involuntary sigh.

“I think,” said the marquis, with a smile, “you ought also to go and keep him company: you might establish a foundation of distressed lovers, who might fill these retreats with their sighs. Now, I think such an establishment would be of great use; the mutual disclosure of their griefs, and the eloquence with which they would paint their disappointments, might act as a magic charm, and dispel their fatal remembrances; they might form new attachments, and banish the former ones. Suppose you and Signor de Ponte make the first trial.”

“You are merry on the subject, my dear brother!” answered Camilla; “but if Signor de Ponte is a true lover, he will not exchange the object; if he is a rover, his heart will not be worth acceptance. What say you, Lavinia?”

“According to the circumstances of the case,” said the marchioness, “if his mistress has been faithless, that makes him free from all ties; in no other case would I allow it.”

“Not if his fair one is dead!” replied Henry.

“The heart of them that love can only judge for itself, and all that is said on the subject is to no purpose,” said the marchioness de Torra.

The entrance of some company broke off the conversation, but one part dwelt on Camilla's mind, and again disturbed her tranquillity. Horatio knew not but she was dead: it might now be that his fate was irrevocably sealed with another. He had wrote to congratulate Lavinia on her marriage: he must doubtless be acquainted with the occurrences of the castle—why then could he be ignorant of the change that had taken place, and had been the topic of general conversation? But he might be no more! This thought harrassed her mind so much, that she retired at an early hour to her chamber, but not to rest. The sun arose with uncommon splendour: Camilla knew the family would not be up for some hours; but weary for want of sleep she dressed herself, and descended into the garden. Prompted by the fineness of the morning, she continued the long winding path that led to the left, which was planted on each side with a rose and honey-suckle hedge. She had never been to the extent of the walk, but now she determined to find where it led to. It terminated at the road-side, with a little stile. She sat down some time for to rest from the fatigue of her walk. Not far from where she sat was a small cottage. She perceived the smoke to rise from the chimney, and being thirsty, she resolved to go and ask for a draught of

milk. With this view she arose, and went to the door, which was opened by a decent young girl. Camilla acquainted her with what she wanted, and her request was granted with the most obliging air. She was going to retire, when a decent, middle-aged woman entered, and entreated Camilla to stop and partake their homely breakfast. There was something inexpressible in her countenance that pleased her, and being yet but very early, she accepted the invitation.

This good woman was a widow, and had three daughters, very pretty girls. She had seen better days, but on the death of her husband she retired to this cottage, where their only support was a small vineyard; by the vintage it afforded, and great economy, they supported themselves in a more decent manner than the generality of the cottagers. Camilla was greatly pleased with their neatness and simplicity. She was at this time in want of an attendant, and offered to take Annette to the villa. The mother readily consented, and the young girl accompanied Camilla on her return.

As they were going up the lane, Annette said, “Madam, when you knocked, I thought it had been Signor de Ponte.” “Signor de Ponte, child! do you know him?” “Yes, madam, he is the best of men: my poor mother, last winter, had a long illness, which occasioned a deficiency in the rent. Oh, madam! the good Signor heard of it, and went and paid our hard-hearted landlord, who was going to seize on our little property. My mother offered him the money again, but he would never hear of repayment: he often comes to our cottage, and walks in the vineyard; but he is very melancholy—do not you think so, madam?” “I have never seen the gentleman,” answered Camilla: “he appears to avoid society.”

By this time they arrived at the villa. Her brother and Lavinia were anxiously waiting for her. She told them the adventure of the morning. “I must get acquainted with this De Ponte—he is an amiable character; yet I would wish the meeting to be accidental; he might be offended at a note, and think it proceeded from impertinent curiosity.”

Most of Camilla's leisure hours were spent in the temple, as the marquis and marchioness were very fond of paying and receiving visits. Camilla, who had not spirits to enjoy such a routine of pleasure, frequently retired. It was on one of these occasions that she hastened to her favourite spot. She took the harp, and played the delightful hymn of “Angels ever bright and fair.” She had nearly gone through it, when she heard some footsteps approaching. The door flew open, and four men rudely entering, seized her, and bore her away to the lake, where they placed her in a boat that was waiting, and rowed off with incredible swiftness. In vain Camilla asked whither they were going to conduct her: she could receive no satisfactory answer. In a short time they arrived at the gates of a dismal, mouldering castle, close to the edge of the water. They rang a bell, and an old woman appeared of the most sour and forbidding aspect, who received Camilla from the men, and then closed the gates. She led her to a large, dreary apartment, and then left her, fastening the door after her. The windows were of the most antient construction that ever eyes beheld. They did not front the water, but looked towards a most dreary forest. It was walled and moated round, and a heavy draw-bridge on that side. Around the room were hung family pictures, most of them men in

armour. The hangings of the wall, the curtains, and rest of the furniture, had been magnificent, but now was decaying by the hands of time, and covered with dust.

Camilla had full time to survey all these particulars, for she was near two hours alone in this solitude, when the old woman entered with the tea. Camilla gained courage to ask her to whom the castle belonged. "To the Baron de Crass," answered the dame. "Is it by his order I am brought here?" "Yes, lady, and I expect him here every hour." "What an unfortunate creature I am!" sighed Camilla to herself; "sure some evil genius presides over my fate."

It was not long before she heard the draw-bridge let down, and a carriage drive up the courtyard. The baron and a clergyman entered. He entreated her to perform the marriage ceremony immediately, alleging to the affrighted fair one that her refusal had obliged him to this resource, as he could not live without her. "Never!" said Camilla, "I would die first." De Crass paid no attention to her words, but called to the old woman and a man-servant to witness the ceremony. The priest opened the book—the baron laid hold of Camilla's hand—when the door suddenly burst open, and the Marquis de Torra and Horatio entered followed by a number of domestics. The baron drew his sword, and furiously ran at the marquis, but was soon disarmed, and, with his confederates, was bound and cast into one of the cellars, some of the domestics being left to guard them. "Come, De Ponte," said Henry, "lead the way. Sister, you must thank this brave gentleman for your deliverance." Camilla seemed immoveable.

This the marquis attributed to the fright she had endured. Horatio took the hand of Camilla, and, affectionately embracing her, led to the door next the lake, where their boats were waiting. "Speak, my Camilla! have you forgot Horatio? Am I still dear to you? Keep not this cruel silence, I conjure you,"—"Oh, my Horatio! my heart's too full to allow me to speak the joy I feel at this meeting."

The marquis had now unravelled that De Ponte was Horatio, and Horatio was the lover of his sister, whose name had been so long and carefully concealed. He felt some emotions of anger for the transactions at St. Mary, but presently stifled them: they seemed formed for each other; their sufferings had been great, nor did he wish to damp their present happiness by ill-timed reflections on the past.

When they arrived at the villa, they found the marchioness waiting their return with great anxiety. Annette was with her: she flew and embraced her mistress; her eyes were swelled with weeping: so much grief did this faithful girl feel for her benefactress. Horatio, who had staid to give some necessary orders to the boatmen, now entered the saloon. Lavinia could scarce credit her senses, but, recovering her surprise, she bade him welcome in the most flattering terms. Camilla then entreated to know how they came to be acquainted with the place of her confinement. They informed her that one of the men, whom the baron had employed, struck by the beauty and innocence of her appearance, came to the villa to give intelligence of the vile act his master had been guilty of. The marquis and marchioness being absent, Annette was almost distracted—regardless of ceremony, she hastened to the apartments of Signora de Ponte, and told her distress, beseeching him to save Camilla, her dear lady. "What, Camilla!" said the astonished youth.—"Lady Camilla de Torra, the marquis's sister—I did not know he had a sister living: it cannot be."—"O yes, she is; she was one of the nuns of St. Mary."

Horatio took his sword, and descended the great stairs, a way he used always to avoid with care, and arrived in the marble hall just as the marquis entered. They were not personally known to each other. He acquainted the marquis of the danger his sister was in, and they immediately set off for the castle on the lake, in boats the servants had provided, where they were so fortunate as to arrive in time to save her.

Camilla being fatigued, retired to her chamber. Lavinia took the task of relating the adventures of her friend. Horatio heard with great indignation of the duplicity and cruelty of the abbess, nor did he think the punishment inflicted on her and Agatha half sufficient atonement for the offence. The next morning they met in the temple to hear the recital Horatio had to make of the occurrences since they parted.

“When you was forced from me,” said the youth, “I was like one distracted. I reflected on myself as being the cause of all your sufferings, and had very near put a period to my existence; but then I recollected you: thy image staid my hand. Perhaps, thought I, the intercession of my uncle, the cardinal, may be of use to mitigate her punishments. I had hitherto suffered them to lead me quietly along, indifferent to what became of me; but these thoughts arming me with courage: by a resolute effort, I obtained my liberty. I proceeded to the inn, where the Count Lemoine was waiting for me and my intended bride. It was him that planned and assisted me throughout in this uncommon and dangerous project. He was distressed nearly as much as myself at the failure of our scheme, when so near completion, that we had reckoned ourselves perfectly secure. We proceeded to Rome immediately, never stopping but when we changed horses. The cardinal, who had not seen me for some years, received me with evident pleasure, but remarked the defection of my brow. I acquainted him without the least reserve of my wretched situation, and my fears for Camilla. He gave me a most severe lecture on the offence I had been guilty of, which I acknowledged with great contrition and penitence, and pleaded with such force (for love made me eloquent), that at last tears stole down his venerable cheeks, and he signed my pardon, and wrote that letter to the abbess that Camilla has informed you of, and promised to take further steps in our favour, which the supposed decease of my beautiful nun prevented. Oh, what painful sensations did this intelligence give me! Me, the cause of her death! How did I lament the lovely blossom so untimely nipt! In my paroxysms of grief, how did I call on her name! My father discovered the fatal secret, and behaved in so harsh and unfeeling a manner, that I privately withdrew to the Count Lemoine, that I might be at liberty to indulge my melancholy. My friend, who had lately buried a beloved wife and his only child, a sweet boy of three years of age, was overwhelmed with trouble, and we lived in so retired a manner, that we were unacquainted with what passed in the world. The count's steward having occasion to go to Lausanne, heard of your nuptials on his return. I immediately forwarded that letter to the marchioness. From this time I never heard the name of De Torra mentioned, so unhappily was I entirely ignorant of the addition to the family in the person of my dear Camilla, till the count informed me he had let the villa to the Marquis de Torra. As my apartments were entirely detached from communication with the rest, and I assumed another name. I had no fear of my retreat being discovered; none but the marchioness, I was sensible, knew me personally; and I carefully avoided the possibility of meeting one, whose appearance would renew melancholy ideas not to be borne; and I resolved to seclude myself as much as

possible the short time of your stay. I could almost forgive De Crass's vile attempt, as it has been the occasion of this delightful interview.”

Mutual congratulations passed. Horatio and the marquis, with their attendants, now set off for the castle on the lake, to visit their prisoners, whom they found in the most unmanly dejection. The baron confessed he had followed their route the whole way, but could not meet with any favourable opportunity for to put his design into execution. The marquis released them, and, giving the baron his sword, challenged him to meet him in one of the private walks the next morning, and bring his second. He stammered some reply. The two gentlemen were hastily descending the stairs, when their attention was arrested by a melancholy and piercing groan. They stopped—the groans still continued: they evidently proceeded from a small door on the left hand. Horatio sat his foot to the door, and burst it open. The enraged baron flew after him with his sword drawn, and would have plunged it into his back, had not the marquis prevented it by precipitating down the next flight of stairs.

Horatio found a man lying in the dungeon, famished with want, and wounded on one side of his neck. He had just raised him up, when the clashing of swords called him to the staircase, just at the moment that the marquis dropped on the landing-place, the baron's sword having entered his side. He now engaged with Horatio: they fought desperately for some time, when victory declared for the youth, and the baron fell dead at his feet. The servants, who had been alarmed with the noise, now hastened to his assistance. The marquis was yet alive, but insensible. Horatio dispatched one of the men for a surgeon, while the rest conveyed their master to a bed. He now returned to the wretched stranger, to whom he had ministered some wine and other nourishment, which he made the old woman procure him. The young man revived so far in a little time as to be able to return thanks for Horatio's humanity, who now conducted him to the apartment where the marquis was, that he might have his wounds dressed by the surgeon. As he passed the corpse of De Crass, he made a pious ejaculation to heaven that his enemy was no more. The cowardly priest had flown in the scuffle, and could not be found, though the strictest search was made.

“Pray, my lord,” said the youth, who had a fine figure, and a most interesting countenance, “have you met with a lady confined in this castle?”—“Was she brought here yesterday?” asked Horatio.—“No, she has been here some months: she is my wife. Oh, that these eyes could once more behold her! We had not been long married, before the baron, who was riding by the door of our small dwelling, where we lived in the most perfect felicity, fell, and dislocated his shoulder. We assisted him with every accommodation our cottage could afford. He stayed with us some weeks, and always professed the greatest gratitude for our attention, and promised me, unsolicited, a promotion in the regiment to which I belong. He often paid us a visit, and I felt highly gratified at his friendship, little suspecting the designs he had formed against my peace. The beauty of my gentle Adeline had caught his attention, and he basely resolved to gratify his passion at the expence of our domestic happiness.

“My wife for a long time paid no attention to his flattery, nor suspected his designs till it was too obvious to escape her notice, and she found her delicacy hurt. She was too fearful of the consequences of an explanation, therefore concealed this fatal circumstance from my knowledge, till he had the, audacity to make her an offer to be his mistress, and forsake her

husband, whom he represented by his poverty to be unworthy of possessing such an angelic woman.

“My beloved Adeline, who could not bear to hear the least reflection against me, whom she adored with the most pure affection, resented his degraded offer with becoming spirit. He took leave in a haughty manner, muttering something about me that she could not comprehend. When I returned in the evening, she informed me in as tender a manner as was possible, the affront she had received. In vain did she attempt to calm my rage, which was excessive. I hastened to his lodgings, for his residence in our village was only temporary, for his health.

I was informed he had set off in the forenoon to a large estate he had near Le Roffe castle. I returned disappointed in not finding the miscreant. My wife was highly pleased at his departure: her arguments reconciled me, and our time passed with the usual serenity that always marked our days.

“My duty called me from home for a fortnight, being obliged to attend the colonel of the regiment in an excursion to the frontiers. What joy did I feel on my return! I hastened to the door and knocked; my heart thrilling with pleasure. The maid opened it—I was hastening to the parlour, when the girl stopt me: her eyes were swelled with weeping.

‘Alas! sir, my mistress is not here!’

“How!” said I, “Speak!”

‘Three days since there came a woman, and begged her to come and see the old woman that my mistress had been so kind to in her illness, down in the wood by the side of the lake—that she was dying, and had something of consequence to communicate. She set out immediately. As the dusk of evening came on, I began to be alarmed, as I never knew her to stop out so late before by herself. I went to the cottage: alas, it was all a deception! The old woman was better, and had never sent for my mistress. She sent her son with me, and we went to every place our imagination could suggest; but in vain: we could learn no tidings of her.’

“Though I was greatly fatigued, I set off to the baron's mansion, and travelled day and night. When I came there he was absent: the domestics either could or would not give me any intelligence where he could be found. On my return I was almost distracted: I did not doubt but the baron had got Adeline in his power. Every part of the dwelling she had so lately adorned with her presence, reminded me of my loss. I got leave of absence, and I resolved to make some short excursions about the country, and endeavour to get tidings of Adeline. I got the old woman at the cottage, who grieved terribly for the loss of her benefactress, to let her son accompany me as a servant, and set off with a heavy heart. That the baron should have no suspicion who I was, in case I should be so fortunate as to meet with the place of his retreat, I disguised myself as a travelling musician, placing a patch over my left eye. As I was a proficient in the science, found this scheme pass very well. We travelled without any particular occurrence till we arrived at Montpellier. I staid at the principal inn that night, with the intention of pursuing my journey. The next morning I felt myself indisposed and melancholy. The Marquis de Torra, who was then at the inn, sent to beg my company. As I was amusing myself with an air, that in happier days I had composed to please my Adeline, I

refused, for my mind was not tuned in unison for company. I retired to my bed immediately. I fell into a profound sleep. When I awoke, which was not late in the morning, I did not find myself refreshed; on the contrary, I was too ill to proceed that day, and resolved to abide at the inn for the present. I went, being somewhat better, in the cool of the evening, to the public walks, which were crowded with company, and a number of English people of fashion.

“I had not taken many turns before the baron entered, with a young gentleman. I could hardly suppress my rage; but I knew violence could be of no use to attain the knowledge of my Adeline's situation. I followed him at a distance for near two hours: he remained in the walks till my patience were almost exhausted. At length the baron and his companion joined a party of gentlemen, and adjourned to the inn from whence I came. As the room where they sat was a public one, I entered, and taking a seat at a little distance, seemed intent in perusing the gazette of the day.

“They conversed on different topics for some time; at length one of the gentlemen addressed the baron with, ‘Well, Charles, how come you on with your amours? Have you subdued the heart of your fair obstinate?’

‘No, the fortress is impenetrable; I am almost tired of courting her to compliance, yet I would fain owe my triumph to love; but at present Lady C. takes my attention. I have time to lose with her; the other will do for Badinage at leisure.’

‘So you mean to take a trip to the temple of Hymen?’ said another of these rakes.

‘Why, to tell you the truth, I have had a cursed bad run at play, and, as she will bring a few thousands, it will retrieve my fortune to its usual splendour, besides the honour of the alliance.’

‘But the vengeance of her brother may be dangerous,’ said the one that begun the conversation.

‘There is no fear of that; if once the ceremony takes place; they will be glad to compromise, and the violence of my love will plead my excuse.’

‘Then you must part with your chere amie, Charles.’

‘No, by heaven! I love my little Adeline too well: I shall keep her secreted at the castle that I purchased of the Vicenza family on the lake.’

“I had not patience to hear any more, but walked out of the room with seeming indifference. I went to a small auberge at the other end of the street, not chusing to make any inquiries of my host for fear of giving any suspicion. I met with sufficient intelligence where to find this hated castle. I set out immediately. My ardour was not a little damped by the sight of the draw-bridge, and the tremendous walls. I waited till morning: the baron did not come. I returned: he had stayed all night with his friends, carousing and planning their diabolical schemes. I got my servant to procure me a mean habiliment, and, taking my instrument,

went every night and loitered near the castle. The baron seemed to be engaged elsewhere a great deal of his time. At last he noticed me, and sent a page to desire I would come and play a few airs. You may be sure I gladly seized the opportunity, and followed him into a small apartment; there were some folding doors flung open that led into a large, antique saloon. My dear Adeline was seated on a sofa—her pallid looks alarmed me; and yet I should not have been satisfied had she appeared in a glow of health and spirits. The baron said some words to Adeline, but I was too distant to hear what they were. He sent out the page to tell me to begin. I obeyed, and with a trembling hand touched the strings, and played a few common tunes. I then begun the plaintive air I mentioned to have composed for Adeline. I marked the emotions of her countenance—every nerve seemed in agitation.

Though I had so perfect a view of the fair, excellent charmer, yet in the manner I was seated, she had no opportunity of discerning who it was that performed.

“She hastily arose and came into the room. The baron followed, and tenderly inquired what she wanted. ‘I am going for my music-book; I left it in the library.’ He would not let her go, but went himself to fetch it. ‘I know you, my Adolphus,’ said Adeline; ‘be careful: the baron is vindictive and cruel.’ I embraced her with affection, and assured her I soon would liberate her from the tyrant. We heard his foot-steps on the stairs. Adeline, to avoid suspicion, walked into the next room. She appeared so much delighted with the music, that the baron engaged me to come the next evening, and dismissed me with a liberal gratuity.

“With what impatience did I count the slowly, lingering hours, till the time of my appointment at the castle. With joy I heard the church clock strike eight, and hastened up the dark lanes to the gates. I was introduced immediately to the same apartment as I was in the preceding evening. I had not been long before a note was delivered to the baron: he ordered me to stay till his return, and left the castle. This was a most unexpected turn in our favour. We recounted to each other what we had endured since our unhappy separation. Adeline informed me, that hastening to the cottage, in consequence of the message I before related, as she came to the path that led to the high road, which she had to cross, she was seized by three men, who rudely forced her into a carriage with four horses. They stopped at different inns for refreshment, but she was never suffered to alight: in vain she endeavoured to procure assistance. If any one seemed inclined to listen to her, the men represented her as a lady whose mental faculties were deranged. In this manner they travelled till they arrived at this castle, whose gloomy and mouldering aspect struck her with horror. The baron came to the gates, and led her up the court-yard. Ever since she has been here, she has never been allowed to cross the court-yard, but was obliged to listen to his base addresses with some degree of complacence, for fear of irritating him to rudeness; that lately he had been out a great deal, but, when they met, he was very importunate to her to return his passion. We agreed there was no time to be lost. We revolved many plans of escape, but had determined on none. When we heard the carriage drive up the court-yard, I resumed my seat, and seemed intent upon the music. In this manner I went every evening; but some time elapsed before the baron was again absent, till three nights since I met him as I was going up the lane. ‘Go on to the castle,’ said he, ‘I shall not return to-night, but to-morrow evening I shall see you.’

“I was resolved to delay the escape of Adeline no longer. On my arrival I found her in tears. She explained to me the cause. The baron had informed her he would be trifled with no

longer, and that to-morrow night should seal his happiness. I pulled off the tattered cloak with which I was disguised, and put it on Adeline, who was much of the same height as myself. I took off the patch, and put it on her eye, and my hat. Thus equipped, she took the lyre in her hand, and walked down stairs. The old woman, who is an abject creature of the baron's, attended her through the court-yard and let her out, without the least suspicion.

“I directed Adeline to proceed to a small inn on the road side till I could join her. Here my servant always waited for me, and I knew he would protect her. I had now to escape myself, and that could not be so easily accomplished. In the midst of my deliberations, the old woman entered the room. She shrieked at the sight of a stranger. I drew my sword, and bade her conduct me to the gates. She hesitated, but, alarmed at my threats, she obeyed.

I had no hat, and there was a very heavy rain, but I felt not the least disagreeable sensation. Never was a fabled swain happier in a bed of roses, fanned by the zephyrs. But Fortune (...) this was only one of your delusions: you never meant your smiles for me. I had not proceeded far, when turning round a tree that intercepts the foot-path, I met the baron. What induced him to return I knew not. He knew me that instant, and collared me. I was not slow in returning the compliment. I strove hard to free myself from his grasp, and should have succeeded, but his attendants now coming up, I was conveyed to the castle, wounded in the neck by one of their stiletos. As we entered the gates, the baron told me, in an insulting tone, that he had my wife safe in his possession, and that, my life should be the forfeit if she did not directly comply with his desires.

“No words can do justice to his rage when Adeline could not be found. The old woman told him what had passed in his absence, but neither of them seemed to suspect she was the musician, or how I gained admission into the interior of the castle. She was positive she had not let the lady pass the gates, but she had been seeking her to no purpose. He applied himself to me to elucidate these mysteries. I was not disposed to make any explanation; I did not think it prudent. I was conveyed to that small closet on the stairs, and left without any assistance. How frequently did I pray that my Adeline might not fall into his power, and flatter myself that, perhaps, she might procure friends to release me; but all these hopes vanished the next day, as I heard a great bustle, and the screams of a female. All was quiet for some hours, when they again resounded through the castle; there was a great clamour, and the clashing of swords; and again all was silent until this day.”

Horatio calmed his apprehensions concerning Adeline, by informing him that it was Lady Camilla who had occasioned these terrors.

The surgeon informed them, that the wound of the marquis was not so dangerous as he first expected, and he did not doubt his recovery. He dressed Adolphus's wound, which was but slight. They secured the house-keeper, and leaving proper attendants with De Torra, they set off for the inn where Adeline was to stay. Their meeting was exquisite: she informed him she had in vain tried to raise friends to liberate him, no one believing her narrative, or not chusing to make the baron their enemy.

Horatio would insist upon them going with him to the villa. He broke the unwelcome news out as tenderly as possible to Lavinia, who instantly set off for the castle with Camilla and their new friends.

The next heir to the baron was his nephew, an amiable young man, who had been very treated by his uncle. He did not live but a few leagues off. Horatio ordered the horses and went to acquaint him with the death of the baron, and the circumstances that occasioned it. He came back with Horatio. He behaved with great politeness to Adolphus and Adeline: he would insist upon them accepting the castle on the lake as a recompense for their sufferings.

As soon as the marquis was able to return to the villa, the baron went to take possession of his estates: they parted with mutual professions of esteem. Their happiness met with a pleasing addition by Lavinia being delivered of a beautiful girl. The marquis soon recovered; but they resolved to wait till the Count Lemoine returned from England, as Horatio was unwilling to depart without seeing a friend, to whom he was so much indebted.

He had written to him the pleasing intelligence of Camilla being alive, and freed from her vows of celibacy. It was not long before he arrived, as he hastened his affairs in order to return. They were quite charmed with his company, which

fully justified Horatio's praises. The count was equally pleased with Camilla, and requested the honour of giving her to his friend. When their nuptials took place, she blushed, and referred him to her brother, who had an undoubted right to that office; but he readily gave up the point to the count. He returned with the to Le Roffe castle. A perfect reconciliation soon took place between the Marquis de Cattivio and his son, whom he put in possession of a handsome, independent establishment, and the Marquis de Torra gave Camilla a noble portion.

At the desire of the old gentleman, who wished their marriage to be public, the ceremony took place at Le Eglise de St. Jeans. The Count Lemoine, Horatio, Camilla, and Annette, who was to be the bride-maid, went in an elegant state-coach; the horses' heads were dressed with flowers, and their harness covered with bows of silver ribbands, led by pages in green and gold. In the next carriage was the Marquis de Torra and Lavinia, the young Baron de Crass, and a young lady, to whom he paid his addresses. In the last was the Marquis de Cattivio, Adolphus and Adeline, and a young nobleman of Horatio's acquaintance. In the church-porch was a number of young men and maidens, in their holiday suits, who strewed myrtle and roses as they entered the aisle. The ceremony was performed by the bishop of the diocese, who returned with them. Horatio made a handsome gift to the Le Eglise de St. Jean.

The villagers accompanied them to the gates of the castle, strewing flowers. The Marquis de Torra detained them to partake of a rural fête he had provided for them on the lawn. Nor was father Pedro forgotten. Horatio sent for him, and appointed him as his chaplain. The entertainments lasted for a week, when their guests departed; and Horatio and Camilla went to their own mansion, which was built in an elegant style, and contiguous to the old marquis and the De Torra family. The great

harmony and affection that subsisted among them was highly to be praised, and worthy of imitation.

Annette continued to reside with her beloved mistress, by whom she was highly esteemed, till a neighbouring gentleman, who had long admired her beauty and artless manner, made her an honourable offer, and, to the great pleasure of Horatio and his lady, espoused her, and placed her in a situation worthy of her merit.

FINIS

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