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Naomi appearing to Clodio sitting among the Ruins of the Old Castle.

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TALES of WONDER
CONTAINING
The Castle of Enchantment.
The Mysterious Deception.
The Robbers Daughter.
The Phantom of the Grotto.
The Magic-Legacy &c.

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THE

CASTLE OF ENCHANTMENT;

OR, THE

MYS TERY OUS DECEPTION.

O'N a sultry day, at the beginning of autumn, just as the sun began to decline towards the horizon, a violent tempest surprised a meanly apparelled traveller, in a region to which he was an entire stranger, and compelled him to seek shelter from the storm. The natural obscurity of a thick forest of lofty trees, heightened by the heavy clouds, buried all the surrounding objects in so deep a night, that without the frequent flashes of lightning, he would have been unable to see twenty paces before him. Happily, by this dreadful illumination, he discovered an old half-ruined tower, that rose above some thick wood on a small eminence, and offered him a sufficient defence from the violence of the tempest. This sight imparted a ray of joy to him, that was succeeded by rapture, when, by a flash of uncommon splendour, he discovered that, among the ruins of the castle, three turrets still remained uninjured. "At length," cried he, in a voice of transport, "I have found the termination of my troubles, since it is impossible that Lefarris would deceive me, and this is certainly the spot he has indicated as the period of my miseries." He perceived a narrow path that led through the thicket to the tower, at which he arrived in a few minutes. These three towers were all that the destructive hand of time had spared of a spacious and magnificent castle, the fragments of which, overgrown with moss and shrubs, lay for a vast extent scattered about.

The heavy rain did not permit him to contemplate these awful ruins, and he hastened to gain the interior of the tower, the entrance of which was open, and he found himself in a large vaulted hall, which, at various apertures, admitted the lightning sufficiently to display a winding ascent, that led to the top of the building. His heart throbbed, while he groped his way up to the dark ascent, and
winding thrice round the tower, terminated in a small anti-chamber, so feebly illuminated, that he could discern nothing but a bench of stone placed against one of its walls, and the passage to another apartment, from which issued the little light that glimmered in the former room. He looked through the entrance, and the first glance gave such certainty to his expectations, that he drew back, and feared himself on the bench to recover his composure. He observed the dress, and, for the first time, was struck of his appearance, which was not calculated to justify his intrusion into an apartment like that before him. Recollecting, that by favour of this appearance he had passed unhurt through various provinces and kingdoms, he resolved to proceed a little longer with it, however ill accordant to the magnificence of the apartment he was about to enter.

He stepped in, and seemed to tread in the chamber of a monarch. The floor was covered with cloth of gold, the walls were hung with green silk tapestry, bordered with fringes of artificial flowers, that rivalled the productions of nature. A bed in the form of a pavilion, with hangings of blue satin, stood on one side the apartment, which received all its light from a lofty arched window of crimson glass, that threw a rich glow over the room, at once solemn and cheerful. However unapparent all these particulars in such a wilderness might be, and in a ruined castle, he was still more surprised, instead of the object he was in search of, to find a young man reclining on the bed, who raised himself at his approach, and regarded him with a serious but serene look, without the least sign of alarm at the abrupt appearance of a person, whose figure was so little adapted to impress any one in his favour.

The youth was wrapped in a large scarlet mantle; his eyes were sunk in his head, his complexion was pale and sickly, and on his whole person there was an impression of tender sadness. He began an apology for his intrusion, which the youth did not suffer him to finish. "You seem by your appearance," said he, "little favoured of fortune; if you are unhappy, you are my brother, and welcome to me."

"I am a stranger," answered he, "the native of a distant land. A tempest, that surprized me in this forest, drove me for refuge to this tower, which is the same, that for some weeks I have been seeking in this kingdom."

The youth raised his eyes, and observed the stranger with greater attention; and though his appearance was rather hideous than alluring, the sound of his voice was so engaging, as to gain him the heart of the youth, who strove in vain to reconcile so uncouth a figure with an accent that excited in him such pleasing emotions. He bade the old man lie down on the bed, and he produced some bread and fruits, and a flask of wine. "This liquor," said he, "has remained untouched many days; I cannot expend it better than on thee, who feemt to need somewhat to refresh thee. I have lived for more than a month on bread and water, and shall probably never indulge on better food."
The stranger surveyed his host with a look of pity, and thanking him for his kindness, said, "As a proof of my wish to be grateful, I will show myself in my own form, in which I may be more serviceable than in my assumed one." With these words he directed himself of his dress, and revealed to the youth a young man of own age, and equal to himself in beauty, though he too seemed to have suffered from inward sorrow, as well as from the toils of his pilgrimage.

The youth of the tower gazed earnestly at his guest; when at length, unable to repress his emotions, he threw his arms about the stranger's neck, pressed him to his bosom; and wept with tears.

The stranger, however, affected by this effusion of tenderness, could not but be surprised, and his astonishment was perceived by the youth of the tower. "Thou hast learn the cause of all these wonders," said the latter; "but first swear never to Desert me; but to reside with me here till death shall part us." "I do swear it," answered the stranger. "I vow to quit thee, by the life of her for whom I breathe, whom so long have sought in vain, and expected to have found in this tower."

"In this tower," exclaimed the other; "but I think you have already said so. There is something mysterious in thy discourse, in thy features, and in our meeting in this tower. Tell me, I conjure thee, who thou art, and whom thou fecktest; I will return thy frankness, and confide to thee a secret, that hitherto has been limited to mine, and on which depends the destiny of my life."

"How can I withhold any thing from thee, when I feel inclined to feed my life to satisfy my affection for thee. But expect to hear a strange and incredible history."

"It cannot be more marvellous than what I shall relate, when thou hast satisfied my curiosity."

During this discourse a couple of cavaliers, muffled up to the eyes, arrived at the tower, where they fought the storm. They left their steeds below, and attended the stairs, but before they reached the anti-chamber, they perceived that others were arrived there before them. They stopped therefore, and seating themselves on the stone bench near the door, wrapped themselves in their mantles, and listened with greedy attention to every word that was uttered.

"The place of my birth," said the stranger, "is in Egypt, where Laflris, my father, is chief minister of the Soudan." "What do I hear?" interrupted the youth of the tower; "is Læflris thy father? and thou his son-Omandy?" "How!" cried the other, "and are you then acquainted with us?"

"Forgive me this interruption which shall not be repeated, and proceed with thy relation."

"As you fear not unacquainted with Egypt, it would be superfluous to mention in what manner the sons of our high priests are born."

"But is it not in this manner that you were born?"

"No, I was born in the Syrian desert, and brought hither."

"But do not the sons of Læflris bear the title of Omandy?"
educated. Suffice it to say, that when I had attained my seventeenth year, my father sent me, under the care of an aged priest, to complete my education in Greece, that I might be initiated in the Eleusinian and other mysteries. In this tour I employed two years, and learnt all that the several mysteries could teach me, and returned with the conviction, that I was equally ignorant of every valuable knowledge as at my departure from Egypt. My father received me with great kindness, and, finding me little elated by my acquisitions, converted me very freely on the insignificance of my attainments. 'To what,' said he, 'will all these high secrets avail thee? The true sage is not he who can talk of what few know, and none or wish to be acquainted with; but he who knows how to render his life most agreeable to himself, and most useful to his fellows, who is vered in the powers of nature, and can operate things by their means, that to the ignorant appear miraculous or magical.' By such discourse as this, Laisiris strove to inflame my curiosity, and excite me to diligence, that could alone, as he said, endow me with true knowledge. But fate has cut me off from the inheritance of his wisdom, by subjecting me to a passion, from which all his philosophy did not enable him to release me. This passion (the strongest and most irrational that ever tyrannized over a human breast) mastered me, and destroyed all my former plans of life, frustrated all my efforts to render myself worthy the cares of Laisiris, and chained me languishing and inactive to the feet of a statue.' "A statue?" explained the youth of the tower, in a tone at once expressive of mirth and amazement:  "Hear me out," said Osmand: "After my return from Greece, Laisiris left his apartment at all times open to me, into which, previous to this, I had never entered but at his summons. Adjoining to this chamber was a cabinet, which no one in the family dared to open, though it was generally unlocked, and without any fastening; every one believing that the door was guarded by a terrific spirit, who would flay any one that presumed to invade this sanctuary. On me, a mere prohibition of my father would have been a greater restraint than the fear of this tremendous spirit. But as he had never imposed any restraint on me on this subject, curiosity impelled me to examine the contents of this mysterious cabinet, and one morning, when I was alone in the apartment, I entered it, when the first thing that caught my eye was a virgin of most divine beauty, who was sitting on a couch, and playing with a dove, that seemed to relish in her bosom. She was dressed in a long robe, which hung from her right shoulder, and was bound beneath her half-revealed bosom with a golden zone. Her arms and shoulders were bare, and the light veilment with which she was clothed, though in the Grecian manner, it afforded a complete covering to her limbs, delicately betrayed the beauty of their form and proportion. I was astonished to find so lovely a person in the cabinet of Laisiris, whom his wisdom and his virtue elevated above suspicion; but though I had already seen how close an imitation art is of nature, I was deceived, and did not suspect this beautiful
form of being an image, till her remaining entirely motionless after some time made me suppose it.

Words cannot express what took place in me at this instant, nor can any one conceive, who has not experienced it. I could not doubt that it was a lifeless image, and yet my heart persisted to think that it lived and breathed, and heard what I addressed to it. This delusion was so strong, that I remained a full half hour on my knee before it, uttering all that the most impassioned love could suggest, without venturing to touch it. Certainiy, thought I, she can only be enchanted; she lives, though she does not breathe; she can hear me, though she cannot answer; she will not be ever sensible to the fervent love with which she has inspired me. I will move her by the ardent and confianty of my passion to return it; perhaps it is refused for me to break the charms that confine her, and to become, by her possession, the happiest of men.

"So entirely, indeed, was I absorbed in this strange fancy, that I at length seised her unresisting, but, alas! unapproving hand, and with wild, yet timid transport, pressed it with my lips.

"At this moment my father entered, and surprised me on my knees before the lifeless figure, with my face inclined on her hand. I rose at his entrance, expelling a severe reprimand. "I see that you have become an enthusiast in the arts, Omindy," said he, smiling. "I have never seen any thing in my life so adorable," replied I, blushing. "Adorable! said Laisis, regarding me with attention. "So admirable! I would have said," stammered I.-"That may well be; he returned he; 'tis the work of a master;" and with this he terminated the conversation. However dear to me was the statue, I did not presume to put any question to him; for so great was the awe of him in which I had been educated, that I was never wont to seek more of any subject than what he voluntarily communicated.

"I became every hour more confounded in the opinion, that it was a real virgin under the power of enchantment. This belief fed my passion, and strengthened it to such a degree, that in a few days I was wholly absorbed by the thought of my statue, and was loit to every other idea.

"Meanwhile I conceiv'd, though without discerning any affectation on his part, that my father contrived to leave me no opportunity of entering the cabinet. The consequences of this were so visible, that they could not have escaped his attention. I grew pale and melancholy, lost all appetite, and became quite changed. Laisis did not appear to notice the alteration; but at length allowed me an opportunity of passing several hours alone in the cabinet.

"The rapture with which I fell at the feet of my entranced virgin, when a second time I approached her, how fondly I embraced her, how I talked to her, and how happy I felt myself, he only can conceive who has truly loved.

"This renewal of my pleasure operated so favourably on my health and spirits, that again I appeared another man. Laisis still took no notice of these revolutions; but for the ten succeeding days..."
gave me opportunities to be in the cabinet, where I constantly past one hour at the foot of my adored image. At some moments my infatuation was so entire, that I fancied she appeared affeeted with my addresses, and that her lips moved as if she would have said something to me. My persuasion that she was only under the influence of enchantment acquired by this delusion fresh force, and I could not refrain from declaring this belief to my father, as leaving no doubt in me. Lafsir listened patiently to me, and when I had finished, casting on me a severe look, said, 'There is indeed one enchanted, and that one is thyself. It is time, Onandry, to terminate this ridiculous conduct: what thinkst thou thy love for a statue can avail thee?' 'The violence of my passion now overcomes the restraints which awe of my father had opposed to it; I threw myself at his feet, besought his compassion and aid, and confessed that my love for this statue, however irrational it might be, would decide my life to happiness or misery.'

'Lafris heard me with patience, without being offended by the warmth and freedom with which I addressed him. He said everything to me that affection for an only son could inspire, on the subject of so strange a delirium both of the head and heart.

'After this there was an interval of several weeks before we made any reference to this subject.'

'Lafris appeared particularly intent to seize every opportunity of procuring me the sight of the most beauteous virgins. Very opportune for this purpose occurred the festival of Isis, as on that occasion all the young virgins of the city past richly adorned in solemn procession before me. I saw some who were accounted of extraordinary beauty, though I did not admire, or even notice them. My father, after the ceremony was finished, asked me, 'whether, among all these lovely virgins, I had beheld the original of my admired statue!' No, answered I, not one who appeared to me worthy to be her slave. 'I am sorry for it,' returned Lafris, 'since thou hast seen among them her whom I intend for thy comfort.' My comfort, exclaimed I, confounded at this declaration! 'She is the most amiable of all,' continued he, 'and unless my eyes deceive me she is far more so than the lady of marble for whom thou hast conceived such a fancy.' That, cried J, is impossible! 'And if it were, said Lafris, a rational man is not determined in his choice of a companion by beauty; but as thou art not at present capable of a rational choice, I have employed my reason for thee.'

'This discourse overwhelmed me with fear and grief, and I cast myself at his feet. He listened patiently to me, and, seeing my emotions too violent to admit the operations of reason, left me for a while, deeming me to compose myself; that, when he returned, he might be informed of my determination on this subject.

'No sooner had he quitted the cabinet, than I threw myself at the feet of my beloved image, vowed eternal fidelity to it, though the misery of my life, or even a cruel death, should be the consequence. I now embraced her with the most rapturous passion, pre
fed my heart to her marble bosom, covered her cold cheeks with tears and kisses, and was so little master of myself, as to fancy she acquired warmth and life from my touch.

“When Laiiris returned, he found me still more resolute and inflexible than before. My father, said I, I am convinced that there is something extraordinary in this state. Either it is a real virgin reduced to this state by magic; or, if it be an inanimate maid, there exists somewhere the original of this beautiful form. In both cases my happiness hangs to this image; it will ever remain the idol of my adoration and love; and it will be impossible to tear my affections from it. Oh my father, let me be indebted to thee for my happiness! I am certain that the mystery of this lovely form is known to thee. I cannot longer sustain this state of fulgence and anxiety. Tell me, I conjure thee, what I must do to obtain my beloved, and terminate my life and misery.”

44 Is this thy last resolve?” said my father.
45 “My last,” answered I, unshaken.
46 “Then return to me to-morrow at sun-rise, and hear what I have to say to thee.”

47 Ere the day began to dawn, I repaired to the anti-chamber of my father; but I had yet to be tortured with an eternal hour of waiting. I counted a thousand pangs in every moment, while my eyes were fixed immovably on that point of the heavens where the signal of my happiness was to appear. The sun at length ascended doubly luminous and welcome to me; the door of the apartment opened, and I entered. Laiiris said, in a placid and gracious tone, “Since thou wilt have it so, Osnandy, we must part. A love, violent as thine, must be gratified or eradicated, and one or the other will be done by the means I shall suggest to thee. Dress thyself in these garments, and disguise thy face under this mask. They will give thee the appearance of a needy old man, will protect thee from violence, and procure thee pity and aid wherever thou shalt go. Here is a purse, in which thou wilt find as many ducats as there will be days in thy pilgrimage. Go, my son, and may thy love animate thee to perseverance in thy undertaking. Travel to the north-east till you reach Gaul, and seek for an old castle, of which only three turrets remain undestroyed. There shalt thou find the term of thy wanderings, and the object of thy wishes.”

48 Laiiris aided me to dress, and with his own hands bound on the mask, which fitted so closely, that none would have suspected that it was false. “I see inquiries floating on thy tongue,” said Laiiris, “but ask me no questions, only think thyself to thy destiny. Do not defer thyself; and thy Genius will not abandon thee. My heart forebodes thy success. Farewell, Osnandy, we shall again see each other.”

49 With these words he embraced me, and recommended to me to begin my journey.

“A year has revolved since I left my home. The difficulties and dangers that I have encountered would have probably subdued my constancy, and induced me to return, had I been in pursuit of
a diadem; but what I sought could not in the estimation of my heart be purchased too highly. I should be rewarded by attaining the original of my charming statue.

This morning I had expended my last drachma, and the tower had yet eluded my search. Unexpectedly I lighted on it during the storm, and in it on a friend, whom I had not hoped for; but, alas! the object of my wishes—

"Is nearer, perhaps, than thou thoughtest," interrupted the youth.

At least you have reason to hope so; since hitherto every thing has corresponded to the predictions of thy parent. Would to heaven I had no greater cause for despair than you! Thou canst not be more happy in the arms of thy beloved image, than I have been, and might still be, had not my own folly—for why should I accuse myself?—by depriving me of her, whom alone I love, rendered me the most unhappy of mortals."

Of course was so affected by the grief of his friend, that he forgot his own. He approached him, caught his hand, pressed it with affectionate warmth, and remained sometime silent beside him. The lovely youth did not remain long insensible to the sympathy of his new friend; and he seemed ashamed of his weakness. When Of-course perceived him more composed, he said, "It is sometimes an alleviation for an apprested heart to unloose its cares into the bosom of a friend. If thou thinkest thyself able to sustain the pain of recollection, reveal to me the subject of the sorrow that consumes thee.

"Hear my tale," answered the youth, "and judge if my case be not hopeless.

"Nature has endowed me with a tender and susceptible heart, and an inclination rather to seek my happiness in an ideal world of fancy's creation, than in the narrow circle of human existence. My education fostered this tendency, I was brought up in solitude, and among other consequences, when I arrived at manhood, I took aversion to the female part of the creation. About this time, among a collection of curious manuscripts made by my father, I found some which treated of the inhabitants of the several elements; a race of beings between men and angels, who, when I became acquainted with them, had quite other charms for me than the residens of this gross, impure earth. When I had learnt the possibility of arriving at the child intimacy with this sublime order of beings, was anything more natural than that I should from the resolution (which I had in my sixteenth year) of renouncing all commerce with the daughters of men, and by a consecration of myself, to attain the exalted happiness of being beloved by a Sylvad. My mother, a woman of great beauty and virtue, and my only sister, the exact copy of the former both in mind and person, were alone excepted from my general aversion to the sex. The accounts which I had heard of the depraved manners of the women who resided in the cities around me, nourished my contempt and aversion for the sex, and threw me entirely into the contemplation of the invisible world. My father, when he became acquainted with my equivocal dislike of women,
highly disapproved it, and laboured by every means to overcome it. My father too seized every occasion of laughing at my infusibility; but neither reason nor raffery, effected any change in my sentiments.

Nine weeks have now past since, in a lonely ramble among these regions, a white dove of uncommon beauty stole from a bush before me. Her flight was so swift and low, and she so often suffered me to approach almost within reach of her, that I did not despair of overtaking her. My hopes were continually disappointed and continually renewed, and I followed her till night sheltered her from my views. I found myself in so thick and pathless a wilderness, that, though I was sensible I could not be very distant from my father's house, yet I could not determine its direction. It soon grew too dark for me to think of returning; lest, bewildered as I was, I might probably be much more so, and I apprehended being obliged to pass the night without shelter, when I was led by a sudden light to this tower. I entered; and, by favour of a glimmering lamp, perceived the flourish of azure silk covered her. I ascended it, and arrived at this chamber, where I found a young nymph, who lay mumbling on this couch. A glossy robe of azure silk covered her from the shoulders to the feet. It was formed in the Grecian fashion, and was bound beneath her bosom, the beauties of which shone through a veil of purple.

My instant, and only conception was, that I beheld before me one of those divine beings, whose mere idea had for several years turned all earthly charms into deformities in my eyes, and had rendered the most beauteous of their sex odious to me. The emotions that this heavenly spectacle excited in me, confirmed me in my conjecture. I stood silent, motionless, and hardly daring to breathe before her. I know not how long I was in this trance of admiration and delight; for when the divine form vanished, it seemed to me but an instant.

"Alas, my poor friend," cried Olmandy, "was it then but a dream?"

"Quite otherwise," replied the youth; "she waked, raised herself from the couch, observed me with attention, and then making a motion with her hand, which I did not comprehend, suddenly vanished. I stood in an instant surrounded with the most profound darkness, and seemed as if I should have sunk to the ground had I not been supported by invisible hands. For some moments I left all perception, and when I regained my senses, I found myself on the couch, which had just before been peopled by the lovely nymph. The moon beamed through the window; I looked round, and recognized the chamber; but of its lovely inhabitant there was no trace.

"I left the tower, and returned to my father's mansion. I told how I had been led astray and benighted, and how I had found a ruined tower, where I had sheltered myself. No one knew of such a tower; but all observed an alteration in my appearance, and demanded me with enquiries concerning what I had seen.

"I retired to my room, and passed the day in reflection on my adventure. And at night, instead of seeking my chamber, I hastened to the forest, and endeavoured, as well as the twilight per-
mitted, to pursue the path, by which I had returned from the tower; but the encroaching obscurity would have prevented my continuing any constant road, had I not seen a faint light before me, which I resolved to make my guide. It continually fled, as I advanced, and in a short time conducted me within sight of the tower, which the moon, now rising above the trees, pointed out to me when the light was vanished.

"Think on my ecstasy, when, at the distance of about forty paces, I saw the form, that had so enchanted me the ensuing evening, leaped on the fragment of a broken pillar. Her dress was the same as before; but her veil thrown back, presented me a more lovely face than I could have conceived. She sat leaning her cheek on her left arm, and gazed on the moon, as if she beheld in it the image of her beloved. As soon as she perceived me, she covered herself with her veil, and advanced towards me. "Do you think any one, Cedrio?" said she, in a tone that was echoed through my heart. "Whom should I seek but myself, heavenly bring?" said I. "Is this adulation, or is it the voice of thy heart?" asked she, finning graciously. "I confess I have long known thee, and my friendship for thee is mature." I interrupted her by throwing myself at her feet, and kissing her offered hand with uncontrolled transport. She made me rise, and, as the night was uncommonly warm and fine, led me into the regions behind the castle, which, among all their variety, simplicity and freedom, displayed too much harmony, correspondence, and choice, to conceal the hand of art.

"The varied beauties of this enchanted spot, illuminated by the silver rays of the moon; the odorous gate which breathed from every side; and the presence of my adored nymph, plunged my senses and fancy into a delicious delirium, and I imagined myself transported into fairy land.

"My unknown fair entertained me, as we wandered through this fascinating spot, with such delightful discourses, as gave me the most exalted opinion of her understanding and fancy, and all with a frankness and confidence as if we were brother and sister. The more began to enurple the eastern heaven; she perceived it, and said: "we must now separate, but if my soye has any charms for thee, thou mayest enjoy it every night, by repairing at the hour of twilight to this tower." She then pointed out to me a path on the other side of the ruins, which in less than an hour conducted me to my residence. After accompanying me some part of the way, she disappeared so suddenly, that I proceeded several steps without missing her. I used the permission which my unknown fair had given me, and fortunately not any of the family seemed to view my conduct without suspicion. I paced some weeks in the regular enjoyment of the most fascinating converse with my unknown fair, and I expressed to her all I felt towards her. She confided to me in one of these moments of tender effusion, that from her first sight of me she had resolved to belove on me her heart and person, should she, on examination, find me worthy her choice. She owned too, that my contempt for the earthly fairy, and my love for the more
refined beings of the elements, had raised me in her esteem; but she persisted to make her name and nature a secret to me.

It is now above five weeks since, repairing as usual, full of fervent but respectful love, to our wonted place of meeting, I sought her in vain among the ruins, or walks of the garden; at length I found her on the couch in the chamber, where I had first been blest with her sight. A flight rain which had fallen in the evening induced her to this precaution, as she said, for my health, which might suffer by exposure to the damps of the earth and the night air. I spoke with rapture of the joys of love, and of the blissful hopes she had encouraged me to; and, for the first time ventured to express, the impatient expectations that fired me. She did not relent my boldness, but bade me wait seven days without audace.

Seven days, idol of my heart, cried I, falling at her feet, will be seven ages torture to me. Make my trial cruel as thou wilt, I will endure it without repining; but oh! do not let it be thus eternal.

At length, she was prevailed on to reduce the seven days into three.

"Employ this time," said she, "in examining thy heart, and judging if it be capable of so pure and constant an affection as brings of my nature require. I exist only in thee, but in return I demand that thy heart shall be wholly mine. If thou thinkest me worth this sacrifice, and find thyself capable of enduring the test, return hither on the third night from the present, and we will exchange vows of eternal confinancy. But now let me quit thee! Do not ask it, goddess of my soul, cried I, clasping her with passionate ardour; let me here at thy feet—"

"At this instant, the magic-day that filled the chamber, died into the utmost darkness, and my fair unknown melted from my embrace. In vain I felt for her every where in the apartment: she was gone; and I was obliged to confine myself with the hope of a recompence for my patience at the expiration of the three days.

"The first three days were a calm in my existence. The wished for evening at length came, and I hasted earlier than usual to the forest; but my senses were confused, and I was unable to discover the path, which the nymph had pointed out, though I sought most solicitously. At length I was bewildered in the forest, and was surprized by darkness before I had discovered any signs of the tower, at which I never had been so impatient to arrive.

"At length I perceived a light, and ran towards it, in the hope that it would direct me to my wishes. It led me for some time in a kind of labyrinth, and vanished, having conducted me to the door of a palace, from which, ifued a servant, richly dressed, asked me if my name were Cedro? I had no sooner answered, than he flew into the palace, with an exclamation of joy. In an instant the portals were thrown open, and six virgins, magnificently arrayed, preceded by twelve slaves bearing torches, came out, and took me by the hand, to lead me into the palace. I entreated them to excuse my declining their invitation, said, that I had wandered from my path, that I was expected elsewhere, and could not delay my departure an instant. "Pardon us, my lord," returned one of the
virgins, you are arrived where you have been impatiently ex-
pected. — You mock me, cried I, angrily, I know none in this palace, who could expect me? and am losing here the most precious moments of my existence. With these words I would have quitted them; but the virgins threw themselves on their knees around me, and said, What we solicit from you, generous knight, is what can be effected by you only; it will detain you but a few instants, and it is what no one of your rank and character can refuse to the supplications of the unfortunate. Overcome by their importunities, and seeing no way to disengage myself, I consented to their request, and followed them, though with inward discontent and vexation.

"They led me through a long gallery, splendidly illuminated, and through various apartments, the last of which had no light, but what it received from a dim lamp. At the upper end were folding doors that opened into another room, and before them stood two giants with enormous clubs to guard the entrance. I stopped and turned to the virgins, who were my guides, and told them that I was unarmed; when at that instant a dragon descended from the ceiling with a flaming sword in his mouth. I seized the weapon, and rushed towards the gigantic forms, who lifted their ponderous clubs; but as I drew near, sunk to the earth. I now paused into a hall lined with black, which, from a cupola that seemed vaulted with fire, received a blue fulminating light, that rendered the darkness below more horrible. Beneath the dome stood a bier covered with black velvet, that hung to the ground. Six blacks in yellow habits, with black plumes in their turbans, and scimitars drawn in their hands, stood in menacing attitudes round the bier; but as I advanced with the flaming sword to encounter them, they sunk to the ground and disappeared. Two of the virgins who had accompanied me, removed the pall, and beckoned me to her. I did, and beheld, by the dismal light, a young lady of extraordinary beauty lying in a coffin, with an arrow plunged up to the pinion in her left breast. As I shrunk with horror from this piteous sight, the virgin thus addressed me: You see before you the unfortunate person, whose deliverance from her present condition is reserved for you. This young princess unhappily inspired a powerful genius with a violent passion for her. As he is not less odious than the amiable, her aversion was equal to his love. After having persecuted her with his hateful spite, and finding all his efforts fruitless, he determined on vengeance. He conveyed her by his power to this hall, placed her in the coffin, and plunged the arrow into her breast. For more than a year past he hasvisited her every morn, and drawn the shaft from her bosom. The wound instantly heals, and he urges her the whole day with his abhorred passion; but as the remains inmmoveable in her aversion, he every evening drives the arrow into her breast, places her in the coffin, and retires. Beside the guard of Moors and giants, whom he set over her, he has affixed a talisman to the palace, which renders it invisible; and, if this proves insufficient, he removes it every day to a different place. Yet all these provisions have not
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prevented its being in your power, noble stranger, to terminate the captivity of the princess. A vision informed me, that her deliverance could only be achieved by a young knight, named Clodio, who, guided by superior powers, should elude and vanquish the enchantments of our tyrant. After long expectation, noble knight, you are arrived; and are doubtless the same whom the vision announced. Your discovery of the palace, the magic sword, and, above all, your valour and success, assure us of it, and promise a happy conclusion. No power on the earth, but the Genius and your own, can extract that arrow from the bosom of our unhappy princes: if it succeed, the power of the tyrant ceases. I approached the fair form, whose beauty was so dazzling, that I did not observe her attentively: With mingled expectation and horror I grasped the dart, and with some labour drew it from her breast. Immediately the gloomy light was quenched in utter darkness; a burst of thunder shook the whole edifice; and, for some time, I was wrapped in a thick pitchy cloud. At length it dissipated, and I found myself in a magnificent hall, splendidly illuminated, and hung with blue velvet; the bier was replaced by a sumptuous throne, on which I beheld the fair Diana, in the attitude of one recovered from a long trance. She rose to retire, and, while leaning on two of her virgins, she slowly pulled me, call on me a look of tenderness, that penetrated into my heart. My eyes involuntarily pursu'd her till she left the hall.

Amazed with the succession of strange circumstances, I was some minutes forgetful of the tower, and of my fair unknown: at length I was preparing to depart, when one of the virgins returned, and begged me in the name of her mistress not to leave the palace, till she had expressed her sense of the service I had tendered her.

Painful as this new delay was to me, it seemed impossible to avoid it. They set before me a collation on a table of ebony supported by golden feet. My long wandering in the forest, had so enfeebled and exhausted me, that some minutes repose and refreshment were necessary to me. At length I perceived the morn break, and saw, with inexpressible pain, that the time for meeting my fair unknown was elapsed. The thought of having violated the appointment drove me to madness. What must the conclusion of my love? In this tumult and vexation of spirit, the virgin found me, when the returned to conduct me to her mistress. I followed her with a visible expression of discontent and uneasiness; but the first ray of Diana's eyes, dissipated every shade of sadness and anger that clouded my aspect, and all was serenity and joy. Whatever might be the consequences of this adventure, I could not but congratulate myself on having been, in the hands of a higher power, of such essential service to so amiable a person. My mysterious mistress, thought I, will commend my neglect, when she knows the cause of it.

I found the lovely Diana seated on a sofa; she invited me to sit before her, and thanked me, for the service I had offered her. The sound of her voice strangely affected me; it was not that of my beloved Nymph, but it resembled it; and this resemblance ca-
desire her to me. Her glances were arrows of love, that pierced directly to the heart; but their wounds were too pleasant to be avoided, or counteracted. Imagine a face embellished with every charm; conceive it the impression of the most iniminating sensibility; fancy a gentle, tender smile, floating on the lips and cheeks, that alternately reigned and yielded to the most interesting language; and say, if it were possible for mortal to remain unconquered,"

It was difficult to withdraw the eyes from so amiable a creature; but I did not spare attempts to tear myself from the enchanting pleasure. Her dress was a delightful union of pomp, elegance, and simplicity. Her ebon hair, adorned with pearls, hung like an unroped vine in luxuriant clusters on her ivory neck and shoulders, and her bosom was less concealed than is common to the sex, as if to convince her deliverer, that no ruinous trace remained of the accursed dart. Confess, Ofnandy, that my constancy was put to a fiery test! I felt my danger; and my agitation betrayed more anxiety than tenderness. She enquired about the subject of my unluckiness, and added with a tender sigh, that she should be inconceivable if my generous efforts in her deliverance had cost me a sacrifice greater than she could replace to me. This address threw me into wild commotion; and I had almost invoked my adored Sulpah to sustain my fainting constancy. I renewed in my heart all my vows of fidelity; but every glance at the fair Diana rendered me faithless. I felt that flight alone could save me; and yet was I so infatuated, that I had not the power to fly.

Every moment magnified the danger; and it was by a series of most violent efforts that I was at length able to recove from the departure. I told her, as she was now safe from her persecutor, I would discharge her of my presence; an affair of the highest value to me, requiring my attendance at a place, where I was expected the preceding evening, when accident led me to the gates of her parlor. She said, "she should for ever accuse herself, if by obliging her I could unfit myself the least favour; that what she was already indebted to me, gave her no right to expect new compliances on my part, and if I would gratify her with my company only for the day (she added with a smile), she would surrender me at once to those who had a prior right to me."

In short, I yielded to her entreaties, and, after having suffered her to gain this victory over me, was conducted to a chamber, that I might recrate myself by a few hours repose.

"About noon, I was again invited to the fair Diana, whom I found in a superb saloon that opened to the garden, surrounded by her virgins, and attired in an Oriental dress. I felt all my firmness melt beneath her glance, and could scarcely refrain from throwing myself at her feet. After the repast, which consisted of the richest and rarest fruits, the challenged me to chess; and, if her design were to assail me in a narrow circle with the collected force of all her charms, and thus complete her conquest of my reason, her plan could not have been chosen with more art. You may conceive, how often I was stunned, and will judge, that Diana
had little cause to thank her skill in the game for her success; but the more for this her eyes glittered with exultation at the triumph of her seductive arts.

"The approaching evening invited us to enjoy its beauties in the gardens of the palace, which were of vast extent, and embraced whatever nature polishes of the grand, the beautiful, and fantastic. Insensibly we were left by the attendants, who had for some time accompanied us; the soft perfumes of the gardens, the warbling of the birds, who seemed to chant an hymnical; the love-inspiring whispers of the zephyrs, the sweet confusion of light and shade, which equally conspired to lull us to repose and languor, insensibly I pressed Diana's compressing hand against my throbbing heart; insensibly I imbued from her love-inspiring eyes an entire oblivion of the past and future; and ere we knew where we were, we found ourselves in a temple of white marbles, that stood inclosed with a grove of myrtles.

"I see thou tremblest for me, Olmancy, and I blush to proceed. The lovely Diana fain on a sofa, and I fell at her feet, and was devouring her hand with kisses, when suddenly the whole temple appeared in flames, a loud clap of thunder shook the ground, Diana vanished from my arms, and the voice of my unknown fair, in an indignant tone, exclaimed, "Perfidious youth, thou hast left me for ever."

"Spare me the ret at of my tale, I have not strength to support the renewal of that fatal night; since which I have been the most miserable of men. Alas! but for this, I should have been the most blessed. I am too convinced that it was my adored Sylvia, who in the character of Diana, unveiled herself to me; and by all her charms, of which I had beheld in the tower but a few rays, and by every seduction of time, circumstance, and manner, laboured to render me unfaithful to herself. Cruel sir! how could I expose to my heart such a tear?"

"She will not, she cannot, remain implacable," said Olmancy.

"That the loves that is evident, and——" said the fellow.

"Then doth not know," interrupted the despairing Clodig, "the jealous delicacy of beings of her nature. They are insusceptible to the image of infidelity. Alas! forgiveness of my crime is hopeless. Renouncing all hope of happiness, I devoted myself to lamentation and despair, and shut myself in this tower, which I have never since quitted.

One of the masked personages, who, during all this discourse, had remained in the ante-chamber, whispered these words to the other; "It is now time for us to finish our work and retire." On this the other drew a small flask from beneath his mantle, slid to the upper part of the tower, came down immediately, and with the former, fled away as unperceived as they had arrived.

"I cannot think," said Olmancy, "that your reunion can be so odious, as not to pardon a crime so deeply lamented. But permit me, since you have reminded me of it, to ask the source of
your acquaintance with Lafiris and Osmandy, have you ever been in Egypt?

"Before I answer thee," returned the youth, "let me entreat thee to partake with me of what I can get before thee. We both need some refreshment."—With this he opened the secret closet, and drew from it some fruits together with a dish of wine, which he had not before perceived. "My invisible purveyor," said he, "seems to have reckoned upon my guest by the unusual abundance of the provisions."

"A sudden thought strikes me," said the youth of the castle; "as the gloom of anxiety fell before the cheerfulness of the table: "How say you, if your beloved statue, should be of my acquaintance, and indeed, my nearest relative?—The Egyptian gazed at him with amazement and expectation.—"At least, continued the other, "the idea is plausible, as thou wilt confess, when I relate to thee the origin of my acquaintance with thy family.

"It is now the third year since the death of my excellent mother. My father, though esteemed the wisest of men, found in the whole magazine of his philosophy nothing that comforted him for his loss. He intimated to me and my sister, who was then about fifteen years of age, that we should prepare for a long journey. "I will voyage to Egypt," said he, "and confirm my fortitude in the arms of my friend Lafiris." I learnt on this occasion, that they had known each other in early youth, and during more than forty years, notwithstanding absence and vast distance, had cultivated the closest friendship. We were received by the venerable Lafiris with every testimony of joy. The two ages found in meeting, after a separation of so many years, a renewal of their youth; and their mutual communications were so reciprocally delightful, that my father was easily persuaded to remain a whole year. Thou wert then traversing Greece, and I, entered into the temple of Isis, to be initiated into your mysteries, where I passed the greater part of the time. Thy sister, at our arrival, was with a relation of her mother's, and I had that myself up in the temple of Isis before he returned; so that owing to this, and to my aversion to the less, I have never seen her. But between her and Matilda there grew to warm an affection, that they soon became inseparable, and when a separation began to be feared of, it was found that either Matilda must remain, or thy sister proceed to my father's castle. Thy father consented to part with his daughter, on condition, that his friend should leave with him the statue of Matilda. My father, among various arts and secrets which he possessed, is skilful in statuary, and has discovered a method of tingling marble with hues, that enable it to emulate life. A Grecian artist, who had accompanied him, prepared the work, which my father perfected; and this must be the form that so attracted thy wonder in the cabinet of Lafiris."

Here the youth of the castle noticed a singular incident, which was no less, than that his young friend had not been kept awake by a tale, so interesting to him. This event appeared unaccountably
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to him: but while he was reflecting on it, he himself yielded to the
power of sleep, and sunk unconscious on the couch behind him.

Their sleep continued some time, and both waking about the same
time, what was their amazement and joy, when Dimandy beheld
his beloved statue, and Clodio his adored Sylph. Dimandy beheld
his statue on the same couch, with her dove on her bosom, and
breathing and looking love, as he had to often seen her in the cabinet
of his father. Clodio saw his celestial fair in her azure robe and
purple veil, as she was wont to appear to him in the tower. Both
feared to trust their eyes and their wishes; yet both rushed to throw
themselves in speechless rapture at the feet of their idols, when a
concealed door sprang open, and the majestic figures, Lapis and
Aranez, entered hand in hand, and by their sudden appearance fixed
them in dumb amazement. Aranez seized the hand of the young
Egyptian, and, smiling, said to him, “animate her, if thou canst,
and be happy!” At the same time Lapis led the youth of the
castle to his supposed Sylph, and, drawing aside the veil, said,
“Let your forgiveness be mutual, your mutual offences will but
heighten and confirm your love and felicity.”

The moments that ensued were such as spurn description. Of-
mandy, sinking in the arms of his beloved image, felt with exaltation
her heart, for the first time, beat against his own. Clodio needed
all the fire of love, that streamed on him from the eyes of the tender
Diana, to feel himself in the embrace of his afferre Sylph, without
expiring with rapture. Never had love made four mortals so blest;
and never had two fathers enjoyed to such a height in the transports
of their children, the accomplishment of their favourite project.

The hospitable tower was too confined for so much happiness, and
they descended to the garden, which, behind the ruins, fell by a
gentle slope into the plain. The lovely Naomi pointed out to him
a winding path, leading to the palace of the supposed fairy, which
had been concealed from him in his rambles, by a grove of poplars.

After some time they entered the marble temple, and seated them-
selves on the cushions which were placed around it. Aranez, who
read in the eyes of the young men their curiosity to learn what was
incomprehensible to them in this blissful adventure, began to gratify
it by a full explanation.

The friendship between myself and Lapis was built on so solid
a basis, that never, perhaps, did affection so strongly subsist between
two men. No sooner did we feel ourselves blest each with a son and
daughter, than we resolved, if possible, to unite the two families by
a double marriage. We did not confound your inclinations; we knew
that your happiness would depend on your own hearts. In the late
visit which I made to Lapis, the desire of uniting our families was
sustained with redoubled warmth. But the son of Lapis was absent,
and to Clodio, who from his childhood had nourished such an avv-
ersion to the daughters of the earth, it would have been dangerous to
favour him the amiable daughter of Lapis, though the might inspire
him with an immortal love as one of his fantastic beings. Ommandy

C 3
was suffered to continue his travels, and Clodio was left undisturbed in his whimsical phantasy. Naomi had opportunities of seeing my son without being observed by him, and Matilda needed not the assurance that Ofmandy relented his fitter, to conceive a sufficient partiality for him. However certain we might esteem ourselves of proceeding in our project, we concerted the double adventure, which has terminated so favorably to our wishes. Ofmandy’s affections were engaged to his future comfort as a statue; and Clodio was enamoured of Naomi as a Sylph. The year which you, my son, employed in your journey, gave me sufficient time for all my preparations. The wildest part of the forest near my mansion, was changed into the dwelling of the supposed fairy, and the pavilion, which after thy return was the usual residence of the two fitters, was so situated among the surrounding gardens, that Naomi could perform her double character without difficulty; and thy supposition that a spot like this could not have remained unknown without magic, was confirmed by all the household having the strictest injunctions to profess ignorance, whenever thy curiosity impelled you to make any enquiries respecting the wondrous place. “As for the wine that contained a sleeping potion, was conveyed there by me,” said Naomi, who had arrived with Matilda at the castle in disguise, just after Ofmandy, and heard best part of their discourse. “And that there has been no forcery in the proceedings at the enchanted castle,” continued she, with a smile, “Clodio will be convinced, when he receives this magic feast, together with the Moors, giants, dragons, and other apparatus, which accompany the heart and hand of Diana herself.

THE

ROBBER’S DAUGHTER;

OR,

THE

PHANTOM OF THE CROTTO.

ABOUT the distance of three miles from the Black Forest, in Germany, was once situated a strong free-booter’s hold, which was occupied by a knight named Wilibald; he was the flower of free-booters, and the terror of all who ventured along the roads. The moment his sword was grit about his loins, and his spurs tinkled at his heels, his heart was steeled to bloodshed and to rapine.
He accounted village and plunder among the privileges of his order; so he fell upon the defenseless traders and country people without mercy. At the word, "Willibald is at hand," all was seized with consternation and horror; the peasants flocked into the fortified towers, and the watch-guard upon the tower sounded their bugles, to give warning of the danger.

But at home, this dread free-booter was as gentle as a lamb, the best of mothers, and the fondest of husbands. His wife was a perfect pattern of virtue and good conduct. She loved her husband; and superintended her household with unremitting diligence. She had brought her husband two daughters, whom she instructed in piety and virtue.

At the foot of the castle was a plentiful spring, within a kind of natural grotto, which concealed itself among the tangled thickets. The fountain-head, according to tradition, was inhabited by a nymph of the family of the Naiads. If report spoke true, she had been seen, on the eve of important occurrences, in the castle. Whenever, during her husband's absence, the noble lady wanted to breathe a little fresh air beyond the gloomy walls of the mansion, or stole out to exercise her charity in secret, it was her custom to repair to this fountain.

Once, when Willibald set forth with his little troop, to waylay the merchants, he tarried abroad beyond the time he had fixed for his return. His affectionate lady, alarmed at his unprecedented delay, apprehended nothing less than that he had been slain in the rencontre, or at least had fallen in the enemy's hand. Being no longer able to endure her apportion, she threw her cloak over her shoulders, and stole out at the private door towards the grove, that she might purify her melancholy ideas beside her favourite fountain. Her eyes were dissolved in tears, and her heart, harmonized with the melting murmurs of the rivulet, as it loft itself among the grass.

As she approached the grotto, it seemed as if an airy phantom hovered within the entrance; but she was too deeply absorbed in sorrow to pay attention to the vision; and a transient idea, that it was some illusion of the moon-light, passed half unconceived across her imagination. But on a nearer approach a figure in white was seen to move, and to beckon her into the grotto. The report concerning the inhabitant of the spring, that was circulated, had not failed to reach her ears, and she now recognized the phantom in white for the nymph of the fountain. She concluded that the apparition denoted some important family event; and her husband being uppermost in her thoughts, the infinitely set up a lamentation, "Ah, unhappy day! Ah, Willibald, thou art no more!—Thou hast made me a widow, and thy poor children are become orphans!"

While she lamented in this manner, a gentle voice was heard to proceed from the grotto: "Be not afflicted! I do not come to announce bad tidings: approach without fear; I am only a friend that wishes to talk with thee." As she stepped into the grotto, the inhabitant took her kindly by the hand, kissed her forehead, seated her self close beside her, and spake: "Welcome to my habitation,
beloved mortal, whose heart is pure as the water of my fountain. As for me, the only favour I can confer upon thee is to disclose the fortunes of thy life. Thy husband is safe; the morning cock crows thou shalt fold him in thy arms. Do not be apprehensive of thy husband, for the spring of thy life shall be dried up before his. But thou wilt first bear a daughter. The balance of her face is equally poised between happiness and misery."

Matilda was deeply affected, when she heard that her daughter was to become an infant orphan. She was unable to suppress her tears. The Naiad, deeply touched by her sorrow, endeavoured to compose her mind: "Be not afflicted; when thou art no longer able to tend thy infant, I will discharge the mother's office, on condition, that I am chosen one of her god-mothers. Be careful at the same time to bring me back safe, the baptismal gift which I shall leave with her. This was no offer to be rejected. The Naiad took a smooth pebble out of the rivulet, and gave it to Matilda; charging her, at the proper season, to throw one of her damselfs into the fountain-head, as a summons to attend the ceremony. The mother pointed out that the injunction should be punctually observed, and all three things up to her heart, and returned to the castle. Her patroness stepped into the water, and vanished.

Before a year had expired, the virtuous lady communicated to her lord a discovery, which raised in his mind the pleasing expectation of the arrival of an heir male, when, in a few weeks, she was delivered of a daughter. The father would much rather have taken a boy into his arms; but he steadfastly rode about in high spirits to invite his friends and neighbours to the christening. On the appointed day Matilda called to her one of her truly maid, and charged her thus: "Take this pebble, go and throw it behind you, without saying a word, into the fountain in the grotto: be careful to do exactly as I have directed you."—The maid punctually obeyed the injunction; and before she returned, an unknown lady stepped into the apartment where the company was assembled. When the child was brought out, and the priest had gone up to the font, the highest place fell to the stranger, every one respectfully making way for her. Her beauty, and the gracefulness of her demeanour, attracted every eye. At sight of the stranger Matilda betrayed some emotion:—she probably felt a mixture of pleasure and surprise, at the punctuality shown by the Naiad in the performance of her engagement. The presents now engaged all the mother's attention: a shower of gold was poured upon the nurseling from the liberal hands of its godmothers. Left of all, the unknown lady came forward with her boon. They looked for a present of inestimable value from so splendid a person, especially when they saw her produce, and unfold with great care, a silk cape, which, as it turned out, contained nothing but a milk-bottle, and that not the precious drug, but an imitation, tainted in box-wood!—This she laid very careful upon the cradle, gave the mother a kiss upon the forehead, and then quitted the apartment.

So pasy a present occasioned a whisper through the room, and a laugh of scorn succeeded;—for the festivities of a christening has in

THE ROBER'S DAUGHTER.
all ages been remarkable for its effect in frightening the wit—entertain
ed the guests at the expense of their fair stranger.

For the infant had outgrown the leading-strings, the nymph's pro-
phesy respecting her mother was fulfilled: she was taken ill, and
died suddenly, that she had not even time to think of the mask-
ball; much less could the disposal of it for the advantage of little
Matilda, according to the directions of her patroness. Wilibald
was unfortunately absent, he had gone to a tournament, and was
on his way homeward as this melancholy event happened, with his
heart boundling for joy, on account of a prize he had received from
the hands of the Emperor himself. As soon as the dwarf on the
watch-tower was aware of his lord's approach, he blew his horn,
halting, to announce his arrival to the people in the castle; but he
did not blow a cheerful note, as on former occasions. The draw-
bridge fell; he eall an usher look into the court-yard, where he
beheld the symbol of a dead body let out before the door; and the
window-shutters were closed. At the same instant he heard the
lamentation of the household; for they had just placed Matilda's
corp on the bier. At the head sat the two eldest daughters, all
covered with erape. They were silently yielding flowers of tears
over their departed mother. The little darling was seated at the
foot; she was as yet incapable of feeling her loss, and jo she was
employed in streaming, with childish unconcern, the flowers that
were thrown over the dead body. This melancholy spectacle was
too much for Wilibald's fervency; he fell upon the ice-cold corpse,
beckoned the wan cheeks with his tears, pressed with his quivering
lips against the pale mouth, and gave himself up without reserve to
the bitterness of sorrow.

It has been remarked, that the most violent feelings are the short-
est in their duration. Accordingly our widower felt the load of sor-
row grow lighter by degrees, and in a short time entertained thoughts
of repairing his loss by a second wife. The lot of his choice fell
upon a young maiden, the very quintessence of the gentle Matilda.
The new lady delighted in pomp and parade; her extravagance
knew no bounds; she held banquets and carousals without number;
er fruitfulness peoples the house with a numerous progeny. The
dauhters of the first marriage were disregardead, and they very
soon were put away out of sight and out of mind. The two elder
sisters were placed in a nunnery, and Little Matilda banished to a
remote corner of the house, no more to intrude upon her step-
mother's notice. As this vain woman was utterly averse to all house-
hold affairs, her want of economy rose to such a pitch, that she
found herself frequently under the necessity of defrauding the rep-
sitories of her predecessor. Happening one day to be in great dis-
tress, she rummaged every drawer for valuables; in her search, she
stumbled upon a private compartment in an old escritoire, and, in
her great joy; among other articles, fell upon Matilda's casket of
jewels. Her greedy eye devoured the sparkling diamonds, brace-
lets, necklace, lockets, and the whole treasure of trinkets besides.
She examined article by article, and calculated in idea how much
this glorious windfall would produce. Among other rarities, she was aware of the wooden musk-ball; she tried to uncrew it, but it was settled by the damp. She then pulled it on her hand, but finding it as light as a hollow nut, she concluded it was an empty ring cake, and tossed it as worthlessly Juniper out at the window.

Little Matilda happened to be playing on the grass-plot immediately below. Seeing a round ball roll along the turf, she grasped with a child’s eagerness at the new play-thing. It afforded her amusement for several days; she was fond of it, that she would not part with it out of her own hands. One hot summer’s noon, Juniper, her charge to the gardens for cooling, where she left her, to pick some berries. The child played with the musk-ball, rolling it before her, and running after it: once she rolled it a little too far, and it tumbled into the waters. Immediately a female, beautiful as an angel, appeared in view. The Nymph accosted her in the most engaging terms: ‘Be not afraid, my little deary; here is thy play-thing that fell into the water.’ The sight of it excited the child towards her; the Nymph took her up in her arms, pressed her gently to her bosom, and blessed her face with tears. Poor little orphan! said she, ‘I have promised to be a mother to thee, come often here to see me. Then wilt always find me in this grove to upon throwing a pebble into the fountain. Keep thy musk-ball with the utmost care; he shall never play with it any more, lest thou lose it; for some time or other, it will fulfill three of thy wishes. When thou art grown a little bigger, I’ll tell thee more. She, above all things, enjoyed her glance. Soon afterwards the musk returned, and the Nymph was gone.”

All her thoughts were now turned towards the fountain. Whenever the weather permitted, she proposed a walk there: her superintendent could deny nothing, the grove having always been the favourite retreat of her mother, the gratified her wishes to much the more cheerfully. Matilda always contrived some pretext for leaving away nurse; no sooner was her back fairly turned, than she dropped a pebble into the spring, which instantly procured her the company of her godmother. The Nautilus was not only her companion and confidante, but likewise her instructor in every necessary accomplishment; and she was studious to form her exactly after the pattern of her virtuous mother.

One day the Nymph clasped her charming Matilda in her arms, reclined her head upon her shoulder, and displayed so much fondness, that the young lady could not refrain from shedding tears upon her hand, as she pressed it in silence against her lips. ‘Adonis, my child,’ said she, ‘thou weepest, and knowest not wherefore; but thy tears are triumphs of thy fate. A sad revolution awaits you forthwith. Ere the mower wakes his saw, or the well wind whistles over the flubble of the corn-field, all shall be deloan and Uniform. When this done, let me go forth to fetch water from my spring, and return with empty pitchers, then remember that the calamity is at hand. Preserve carefully the musk-ball, which will fulfill three of thy wishes, but do not leaguer away this privilege heedlessly.
FARE THEE WELl, WE MEET NO MORE AT THIS SPOT." She then instructed her ward in another magic property of the ball, which might be serviceable to her in time of need. One evening, about the lesson of corn herself, the maids that went out for water returned pale and affrighted, with their pitchers empty; their teeth chattered, and every limb quivered as if they were shaken by an ague. "The lady in white," they reported, "is sitting beside the well, wringing her hands in great affliction." Curiosity, carried several out to examine whether the report was true or false. They saw the same apparition; nevertheless they muttered up courage to approach the fountain, but as they came near, the phantom was gone. Many interpretations were attempted, but no one fell upon the true import of the sign: Matilda alone was privy to it; but the hold her peace in compliance of the Näjihad. She repaired, defect to her chamber, where the fate, in fearful expectation of the things that were to come, was pained.

Wilhald had degenerated by this time into a mere woman's tool: he could never satisfy his wife with enough of robberies and plunder. When there was a want of money or provisions, the broad-wheeled waggons and the rich bales of the Venetians, afforded a never-failing resource. Outraged at these continual depredations, the general congress determined upon Wilhald's destruction, since reproofs and admonitions were of no avail. Before he would believe they were in earnest, the burners of the congress were displayed before his castle-gates, and nothing was left him but the resolution to sell his life as dear as possible. The guns shattered the balustrades on both sides, the cross-bowmen did their utmost; a shaft, discharged in a haleful moment, pierced Wilhald's visor, and lodged deep in his brain. Great dismay fell upon his party at the loss of their undaunted leader, and the enemy seized the opportunity for making an assault: they clamoured over the walls, carried the gates, and stormed every living thing that came in their way. With the edge of the sword they did not spare even the extravagant wife, nor her helpless children. The castle was completely encircled, then set on fire and levelled with the ground; so that not one stone was left upon another.

During the alarm, Matilda had barricaded her doors in the bold manner she was able, and took post at her little window in the roof of the house, and, finding that bolts and bars were not likely to afford any security, she put on her veil, and then turned her mill-ball thriceround, and repeated the words the Näjihad had taught her. She now came down stairs, and passed unperceived through the confusion of slaughter. She did not quit her paternal post without deep sorrow of heart, which was much aggravated by her being at a loss which way to take. She hastened from the scene of carnage and desolation, till her delicate feet refused to serve her any longer. The falling of night, together with extreme weariiness, constrained her to take up her lodging at the foot of a little hill, in a meadow field. She turned aside her head to take a final view and to breathe her last blessing on the place where she had paled
the years of her childhood, when, behold, the sky appeared all blood red; from this sign she concluded that the residence of her father had become a prey to the flames; she turned away her face from this horrid spectacle, hastily willing for the hour when the sparkling stars should grow dim, and the dawn peep from the east. Ere the morning had dawned, she proceeded on her wandering pilgrimage, and arrived betimes at a village, where a compassionate housewife took her in, and recruited her strength with a slice of bread and a bowl of milk. With this woman she barrtered her clothes in exchange for meaner apparel, and then joined a company of carriers. In her forlorn situation, she had no other resource than to seek a place in some family; but, as this was not the season for hiring servants, it was a long time before she could find employment.

Count Conrad, a knight of the order of knights templars, had a palace in the city, where Matilda had taken her residence. During his absence Mrs. Gertrude, the housekeeper, bore sovereign sway in the mansion. She raised such an alarm wherever she moved, that the maids dreaded the rattle of her keys as much as children do hobgoblins. Saucepans and heads suffered alike for her illhumors; when no projectiles were within reach, she would wield her bunch of keys in her brawny arm, and beat the fides and shoulders of her suitors in black and blue. One day she had administered her office of correction so rigorously, that all the household decamped with one consent; it was at this juncture that the gentle Matilda approached to offer her services. But she had taken care to conceal her elegant figure, by fastening a large lump on her left shoulder, as if she had been crooked; her beautiful auburn hair was covered with a large coarse cap; and she had adorned her face and hands, in imitation of the gypsies, with juice of walnut husks. Mother Gertrude, who on hearing the bell ring, pecked her head out of the window, was no sooner aware of the singular figure at the door, than she exclaimed, "Who art thou? Whence dost thou come? And what canst thou do?" The supposititious gypsy answered: "I am an orphan, Matilda by name; I am a stout girl; can sing, card, and knit; I can sew, bake, and brew; am honest, and have to serve you." The housekeeper, softened by all these important qualifications, opened her door to the nut-brown virgin, and gave her a shilling in earnest, as kitchen-maid. The new hireling pied her business so diligently, that Mrs. Gertrude, for want of practice, lost her dexterity at hurling saucepans at a mark. She did, however, retained her morose and querulous humour; and was sure to find fault with every thing.

About the falling of the first snow, our housekeeper had the whole mansion put in readiness for the reception of her lord, who soon afterwards made his appearance, followed by a train of servants, a troop of horses, and a loud cry of hounds. The arrival of the Templar raised little curiosity in Matilda; her work in the kitchen had grown so upon her hands, that she had not a moment to gaze after him. One morning, as she was drawing water at the well, he accidentally paused by her, and his appearance kindled sensations in her bosom, to which it had hitherto been a stranger. She beheld a
young man, whose beauty exceeded the fairest of her dreams. The
sparkling of his eye, the good humour that lightened up his features,
his flowing hair, half concealed by the plumes that overshadowed his
soldier's hat, his firm step, and the grace of his whole demeanour,
acted so powerfully on her heart, that the blood moved with increased
velocity along her veins. She now, for the first time, felt the de-
graded station to which an untoward fate had reduced her, and this
temptation was an heavier load than the large pitcher. The handsome
knight hovered before her imagination day and night: she was con-
tinually longing to see him; and whenever she heard him cross the
court-yard, she was sure to discover a want of water in the kitchen,
and ran with the pitcher in her hand to the well; though the cavalier
never once bestowed a glance upon her.

Conrad seemed to exist merely for the purpose of pleasure. He
attended every banquet and rejoicing in the city: but Miss Matilda
had no share in the festivity; she ate all day in the smoky kitchen,
and wept till her pinning eyes became sore, constantly bewailing the
caprice of fortune, which heaps a profusion of the joys of life over
her favourites, while from others she greedily snatchest every infant
of cheerfulness. Her heart was heavy; she knew not why; for she
had no suspicion that love had attended her.

Matilda formed projects after projects, till at last
she fell upon a scheme to realize the fondlest of her dreams. She had
filled her godmother the Naiad's milk-ball fate: she had never felt
any desire to open it, and make an effay of its power to gratify her
wishes. She now resolved to try the experiment. The citizens had,
about this time, prepared a sumptuous banquet, in compliment to
the Emperor, on the birth of his son. The rejoicings were to con-
tinue three days. Each day there was a tournament, and a rich
prize for the victor: each evening the most beautiful damsels danced with
the knights till break of day. Count Conrad did not fail to attend
these festivities.

Matilda had come to the resolution of sallying forth in quest of
adventures, on this occasion. After she had arranged the kitchen,
and every thing was quiet in the house, she retired to her bed-
chamber, and, washing away the tawny varnish, called the lilies
and rose of her complexion into new bloom. She then took the milk-
ball in her hand, and wished for a new gown, as rich and elegant as
fancy could form, with all its appurtenances. On screwing off the
top a piece of silk sufficed out, expanding itself, and rustling all the
while. On examination it proved a full dress, fitted up with
every little article: the gown fitted as exactly as if it had been
cast on her body. Her vanity was fully gratified, as she took a
survey of her dress, and she was perfectly content with herself. Ac-
cordingly she did not defer a moment longer the execution of her
stratagem. She thrice whirled round the magic ball, saying, "Each
eye be drowned in sleep." Instantly a deep slumber fell upon the
whole household, not excepting the vigilant housekeeper. Matilda
glided in a moment out of the house, pulled uneven along the streets,
and stepped into the ball-room with the air of one of the Graces; and the charming new figure raised great admiration among the company. Among the noble knights, who crowded to take a peep of the unknown damsel, the Count was far from hindmost. He was nothing less than a woman-hater; and, though an exact connoisseur in the sex, he thought he had never beheld a sweeter person. He approached, and engaged her to dance. She modestly presented her hand, and danced with enchanting elegance. Her nimble feet scarce touched the floor, and the wine and gracefulness of her movements set every eye in rapture. Count Conrad paid his heart for his partner. He no more quitted the fair dancer. He said as many fine things, and pushed his suit with as much zeal and earnestness as the most enamoured of our heroes of romance. Matilda was as little mistress of her own heart; she conquered, and was vanquished in her turn. Her first essay in love was crowned with success equal to her fondest wishes. It was not in her power to keep the sympathy of her feelings concealed beneath the cloak of female reserve. The enraptured Count soon perceived that he was no hopeless lover; his chief anxiety arose from his entire ignorance of his charming partner; and how to prosecute his suit, unless he could discover where she lived. But on this subject all enquiries were in vain: she eluded every question, and after all his efforts he could only obtain a promise that she would make her appearance at the next night's ball. He thought to outwit her, in case she should forfeit her word, by placing all his servants on the look out to dog her home.

The dawn had already peeped, before she could find an opportunity of slipping away from the knight, and quitting the room. But no sooner had she pulled the door than she turned her musk-balls three rounds, and repeated her spell; by these means she got to her chamber, in spite of the Baron's night-birds, who did not catch a glimpse of her, though they were hovering in every street. No sooner had she shut the door behind her, than she locked up the fitten apparel safe in her box, put on her cook's dress, and resumed her ordinary occupations.

Never had any day appeared so tedious to the knight, as that which succeeded the ball. Every hour seemed a week: his heart was in perpetual agitation between longing impatience and apprehension, lest the intractable beauty should fall in her engagement. As the approach of evening he equipped himself for the ball, with greater magnificence than the preceding day. He was the first at the rendezvous of pleasure, where, having stationed himself so as to command the entrance, he scrutinized every one who came in with the keenness of an eagle, expecting with all the eagerness of impatience, the arrival of his duchess. The evening star was already advanced high above the horizon, before the young lady could find time to retire to her chamber, and consider what she should do, whether she should extort a second with from her musk-ball, or refuse it for some more important occurrence of life. The faithful counsellor, Reaton, advised the latter; but he enjoined the former with such impetuosity, that dame Reaton was quite silenced. Matilda wished for a
dress of rose-coloured satin, so sumptuously bedecked with jewels that a princess need not be ashamed to wear it. The complaisant,麝香球 exerted its powers; the apparel exceeded the lady's expectation; she performed, in high spirits, the rites of the toilette, and, by the help of the tailor, arrived at the spot where she was so ardently expected, without having been beheld by mortal eye. She appeared far more charming than before. The Count's heart bounded for joy at the first glimpse of her person. A power, as irresistible as the central attraction of the globe, hurried him towards her through the vortex of dancers; and as he had now almost given up all hopes of seeing her again, he was unable to flammur out the effusions of his gladness. In order to gain time to recover himself, and to hide his confusion, he led her out to dance, when every couple immediately made way for the charming pair.

At the conclusion of the dance, Count Conrad conducted his weary partner into the contiguous apartment, under the pretext of offering her some refreshment. Here, in the tone of a well-bred courtier, he said a thousand flattering things, as he had done the day before; but the cold language of politeness insensibly kindled into the language of the heart, and at last terminated in a declaration of love. "Consider well what you propose," replied Matilda, "let repentance overtake you. Those who marry in haste, have commonly leisure to repent. I am an entire stranger; you know nothing of my rank or station; whether I am your equal in birth and dignity, or whether a borrowed luster dazzles your eyes. It is unbecoming a man of your rank to promise anything lightly; but a nobleman's engagements should be held inviolable." Here Count Conrad seized her hand, pressed it to his heart, and in the warmth of his affection, exclaimed, "Yes, I pledge my knighthly honour, and engage my soul's salvation to boot, were you the meanest man's daughter, and but a pure and undefiled virgin, I will receive you for my wedded wife." On this he pulled a diamond ring from his finger, and gave it her as the pledge of his truth; and took in return the first kiss from her chaste untainted lips, and thus proceeded: "That you may entertain no suspicion of my proposal, I invite you three days hence to my house, where I will appoint my friends, knights, and nobles, to be witness of our union." Matilda replied this proposal with all her might; she was not satisfied at the galloping rate at which the knight's love proceeded; and she was determined to prove the constancy of his affection. He did not cease to press her to consent, but the still neither No nor Yes. The company did not break up before the dawn of day. Matilda vanished, and the knight, who had not enjoyed one wink of sleep, summoned the vigilant housekeeper betimes and gave her orders to prepare a sumptuous feast on the day appointed.

Matilda had so many fowls to pluck, draw, and stew, that she was obliged to give up her night's rest; yet she did not grudge her labour, well knowing that the banquet was all upon her account. The hour approached; the cheerful host flew to receive every guest.
as he arrived, and every time the knocker sounded, he imagined the beautiful stranger was at the door. Though the guests were assembled, the fewer lingered long before he served up the dishes. Conrad still waited for the charming bride; but at last, when she did not appear, he was reluctantly obliged to give the signal for dinner. When the guests were seated, there appeared one over too much; but no one could guess who it was that had dishonoured the knight's invitation. The founder of the feast loft his cheerfulness by perceptible gradations, and in spite of all his exertions it was not in his power to enliven his guests with the spirit of mirth. The musicians, who had been summoned for the evening ball, were discharged; and for this time the banquet ended without one tuneful sound, in the house that had always before been the mansion of joy.

The disconcerted guests stole away at an unusually early hour: the knight longed for the solitude of his bed-chamber; he was impatient for an opportunity to ruminate at liberty on the tickleness of love. While his reflections were engaged by this melancholy subject, he toiled and tumbled to and fro on his bed with the most intense exertion of thought, he could not determine what conclusion to draw from the absence of his mistress. The blood boiled in his veins; and ere he had closed an eye, the sun peeped in through his curtains. The servants found their master in a violent paroxysm of fever, wrestling with wild fancies. This discovery threw the whole family into the most violent consternation.

For seven long days did secret chagrin gnaw Count Conrad's heart: the roxes of his cheeks were all withered, and the fire of his eyes was extinguished. Matilda had perfect intelligence of everything that was going forward within doors; and it cost her a hard conflict between head and heart, reason and inclination, before she could firmly resolve not to hearken to the call of her beloved. But on the one hand she was desirous to prove the constancy of her suitor, and she hesitated on the other to extort its last wish from the gentle knight: for she considered that a new dress was necessary to the bride; and her godmother had charged her not to lavish away her washes thoughtlessly. Nevertheless, she felt very heavy at heart, retired to a corner, and wept bitterly. The Count's illness, of which she easily divined the secret cause, gave her still greater concern; and when she heard of his extreme danger she was utterly incomparable.

The seventeenth day, according to the prognostication of the physicians, was to determine for life or death. In the morning Matilda waited, as usual, upon the housekeeper, to receive her instructions respecting the bill of fare. But Mrs. Gertrude was in too deep tribulation to be capable of arranging the simplest matter; much less could she regulate the important affair of dinner. Big tears rolled down her leathern cheeks: "Ahh Matilda," she sobbed, "we shall all be forced to budge; our good master will not live out the day." These were sorry tidings; the young lady was ready to sink for sorrow; the soon, however, recovered her spirits, and said, "Do not despair of our lord's life, he will not die, but recover; this night I have dreamed a good dream." "Let me hear thy dream, that I may..."
interpret it," said she, "I thought," replied Matilda, "that I was at home with my mother: the good woman took me aside, and taught me how to prepare a broth from nine sorts of herbs, which cures all sickness if you do but take three table-spoonfuls. Prepare this broth for thy matter, and he will not die, but get better from the hour he shall eat of it." "Thy dream," she said, "is too extraordinary to have come by chance. Go this instant, and make ready thy broth, and I will try if I cannot prevail on our lord, to taste of it." Matilda prepared an excellent restorative soup, with all sorts of garden herbs and costly spices, and when she had stidled it, she dropped the diamond ring, given her by the knight as a pledge of confidence, into the basin, and then bade the servant carry it up.

The patient so much dreaded the housekeeper's boisterous eloquence, that he constrained himself to swallow a couple of spoonfuls. In stirring his meal to the bottom he felt a hard body, which could have no business there. He fished it out with the spoon, and beheld, to his astonishment, his own diamond ring. His eye immediately beam'd life and youthful fire, to the great satisfaction of Mother Gertrude, and the servants in waiting, he emptied the whole basin, with visible signs of a good appetite. They all ascribed this happy change to the soup, for the knight had taken care to keep his ring concealed from the by-standers. He now turned to Mrs. Gertrude, and enquired, "Who prepared this good soup for me, that restores my strength, and calls me back to life?" "Do not give yourself any concern, good sir, Knight, about the person who prepared the soup; God be praised that it has had the good effect for which we all of us prayed!" This evasion was not likely to satisfy the Count, he gravely inquired on an answer to his question, when the housekeeper gave him this information: "There is a young gypsy, a servant, in the kitchen, she understands the virtue of every herb and plant, it was she who prepared the soup that has done you so much good." "Bring her to me this moment," returned the knight, "that I may thank and recompense her for the life she has saved." "Pardon me, sir," returned Gertrude, "but the very sight of her would make you ill again. She is as ugly to look upon as a toad; she has a great hunch upon her back, her clothes are all black and greasy, her hands and face are bedaubed with foot and ashes." "Do as I order you," concluded the Count, "and let me hear no longer demurrers." Mrs. Gertrude obeyed in silence; she summoned Matilda quickly from the kitchen, and ushered her into the sick chamber. The knight gave orders that every one should retire, and shut the door close. He then addressed the gypsy, "You must acknowledge freely, my girl, how you came by the ring I found in the basin in which my breakfast was served up." "Noble knight," replied the damsel, "I received the ring out of your own hands; you presented it to me the second evening we danced together at the public rejoicings, it was when you vowed eternal love and confidence to me. --Look now, and say whether my figure or station deserves that on my account you should sink into an early grave. In cou-
passion for the condition to which you were reduced; I could no longer suffer you to remain in such a mistake." Count Conrad's weak stomach was not prepared for so strong an antidote to love; he surveyed her in astonishment, and paused. He naturally conceived a suspicion, that his amour had been betrayed, and his friends were practicing a pious fraud to extricate him. Still, however, the genuine ring was proof positive that the beautiful stranger was some way or other concerned in the plot. He therefore determined to cross-examine and convict her out of her own mouth; "If you are indeed," said he, "the lovely maiden to whom I devoted my heart, be assured that I am ready to fulfill my engagement; but take care how you attempt to impose upon me. Realtime but the form under which you appeared at the ball-room, and the words which I uttered when I delivered this ring to you shall be facred and inviolable. But if you cannot perform these requisitions, I shall caute you to be corrected for a vile impostor, unless you satisfy me how you gained possession of this ring."—"Alas!" said Matilda, fainting, "if to be only the glare of beauty that has dazzled your eyes, woe be to me when time or chance shall rob me of these transient charms; when age shall have spoiled this tender shape, and bowed me down to the ground; when the roses and lilies shall fade, and this fleck shin become throned! When the borrowed form under which I now appear, shall, as some time it will, belong to me, what will become of your vows and promises?" Sir Conrad was staggered at this speech, which seemed much too considerate for a kitchen wench. "Know," he replied, "that beauty captivates the heart of man, but virtue alone can retain in the soft bondage of love." "Be it so," returned the damsel; "I go to fulfill your requisitions; the decision of my fate shall be left to your own heart."

The Count fluctuated between hope and the dread of a new deception, called the housekeeper, and gave her strict orders, "Attend this girl to her chamber, and wait at the door while she puts on her clean clothes.—Be sure you do not stir till she comes out." Mother Gertrude took her prisoner under charge, without being able to guess the intention of her lord's injunctions. Matilda asked for a bit of soap and a handful of bran, took up a walk-hand bason, entered her attic, and shut the door, while the new appointed distaff watched on the outside with all the punctuality that had been recommended to her. The Count, big with expectation, quitted his bed, put on his most elegant suit, and betook himself to his drawing-room, there to abide the final issue of his love adventure. At length the folding doors flew open of a sudden, and Matilda, arrayed like a bride, and beautiful as a goddess, stepped into the drawing-room. Conrad exclaimed, in the transport of a lover intoxicated with joy, "God of bliss or mortal! whichever you may be, behold me prostrate at your feet, ready to renew the vows I have already made, and to conform them by the most solemn oaths, provided you do not disdain to receive this hand and heart." The lady raised the suppliant knight: "Gently, sir knight, I pray, do not be too rash with your vows; you beheld me here in my real shape, but in all other respects I am
THE ROBBER'S DAUGHTER.

an utter stranger to you. You have still the ring on your finger." Conrad instantly drew it off, and it sparkled on his partner's hand, and she resigned herself to the knight. "Henceforward," said she, "you are the beloved of my heart. I have no longer any secret for you. I am the daughter of Wilibald, that stout and dauntless knight, whose misfortunes, doubtful, are well known to you. I escaped with difficulty from the downfall of my father's house; and under your roof, though in mean estate, have I found safety and protection." She proceeded to relate the whole of her story, without even suppressing the mystery of the musk-ball. Conrad, utterly forgetting that he had just been sick to death, invited for the following day, all the guests who had been driven away by his deposition, before whom she solemnly espoused his bride. The knight now relinquished the order, and celebrated his nuptials with great magnificence.

The new married couple spent their time in mutual happiness and innocent enjoyment. Count Conrad's mother was still living. She passed her widowhood in retirement, at the family seat. Her dutiful daughter-in-law had for some time langued, out of pure filial affection, to beg her blessing, and thank her for the noble son whom she had borne. But the Count always found some pretext for declining the visit; he now proposed, instead, a summer excursion to an estate that had lately fallen to him, and bordered upon the grounds belonging to Wilibald's demolished fortress. Matilda contented with great eagerness. She rejoiced at the idea of revisiting the spot where she had spent her early youth. She explored the ruins of her father's residence; dropped a duteous tear over the ashes of her parents; walked to the Nain's fountain, and hoped her presence would induce the nymph to manifest herself. Many a pebble dropped into the spring-head, without the desired effect. Even the musk-ball floated on the surface like an empty bubble, and Matilda herself was fail to be at the trouble of lifting it out again. No fairy rule to view, although another shrilling was at hand; for the lady was on the point of betwixting on her Count one of the blessings of wedlock. She brought forth a boy beautiful as Cupid; and the joy of the parents was so extravagant, that the mother would never part with him out of her arms. She herself watched every breath of the little innocent, although the Count had hired a different nurse to attend the infant. But the third night, while all within the castle was buried in profound sleep, after a day of rejoicing, and a light chamber had fallen upon the watchful mother, on awaking she found the child vanished out of her arms. She called out in a voice of furuipe and terror, "Nurse! where have you laid my babe?" "Noble lady," replied nurse, "the dear infant lies in your arms." The bed and bed-chamber were strictly searched, but nothing could be found, except a few spots of blood upon the floor. The nurse, on perceiving this, uttered a loud scream, "God, and all his holy saints, have mercy upon us! — the Griffin has been here, and carried off the child." The lady pined for the loss of her child till she became pale and emaciated, and the father was inconsolable. Though
the belief in the Griffin did not weigh a single grain of mustard in his mind; yet, as he could not explain the accident in any plausible manner, he allowed the nurse’s prattle free range, and applied himself to comfort his afflicted wife; and she, out of deference to him, who hated all falsehood, forced a cheerful countenance.

Time, the asserter of grief, closed by degrees the wound of the mother’s heart, and love made up her loss by a second son. The anxious mother would not part with the boy; and she rested the influence of sleep as long as ever her strength would permit. When at last she was no longer able to refuse the call of nature, she took the golden chain from her neck, flung it round the infant’s body, and fastened the other end on her own arm; she then crossed herself and the child, that the Griffin might have no power to hurt it, and soon after was overtaken by an irresistible number. She awoke at the first ray of morning, but—horrible to tell! the sweet babe had vanished out of her arms. Mosthia examined the golden chain that was wrapped round her arm; she found that one of the links had been cut through by a pair of sharp scissors, and swooned away at the discovery. The nurse raised an alarm in the house, and Conrad, upon hearing what had befallen his lady, drew his sword in a transport of rage and indignation, firmly resolved to inflict condign punishment on the nurse.

“Wretched woman?” he exclaimed, “did I not give thee strict charge to watch all night, and never once to turn aside thine eyes from the infant, that when the mother came to rub the sleeping mother, thou mightest raise the house by thy outcries, and scare the Griffin away? But thou hast now sleep an everlasting sleep.” The woman fell down on her knees before him: “Yes, my noble lord, I entreat you, as you hope for mercy hereafter, to slay me this instant, that I may carry to the grave the horrid deed mine eyes have seen this night.”

“What deed,” he asked, have thine eyes beheld this night, too horrid for thy tongue to tell? Better confess, as becomes a faithful servant, than have thy secret extorted by the rack.” “Alas!” replied the woman; “better the fatal secret were buried with me in the cold ground.” The Count, whose curiosity was only raised the more by this reply, took the woman into a private apartment, and by threats and promises forced from her a discovery, which he would fain have been the pain of making. “Your lady, since I must needs disclose it, is a vile sorceress. At the dead of night, when every thing was hushed in repose, she feigned herself asleep, and I, without well knowing why, did the same. Not long afterwards she called me by my name, but I took no notice, and kept to breathe hard and fierce. Supposing me to be fast asleep, she took the infant, and pressing it to her bosom, killed it fondly, and lipst these words, which I distinctly overheard, ‘Child of bone, be transformed into a charm to secure me thy father’s love. Now, thou little innocent, go to thy brother, and then I will prepare, from nine sorts of herbs, and thy bones, a potent draught, which will perpetuate my beauty and thy father’s fondness.’—Having said this, she drew a dia-
mend needle out of her hair, forced it through the infant's heart, held the poor innocent out to bleed, and when it had ceased struggling laid it upon the bed before her, took out a musk-ball, and muttered a few words to herself. As she uncovered the cover, a magic flame blazed forth, as if from a pan of pitch, and consumed the body in a few moments. She carefully gathered the ashes and bones into a box, which she pushed under the bed. She then, as if suddenly awaking, cried out in an anxious voice, 'Nurse! what have you done with my babe?' and I replied, thundering for fear of her forceery, 'Noble lady, the infant lies in your arms.' Thereupon she began to throw signs of bitter sorrow, and I ran out of the room, under pretence of calling afflurance. Thee are the particulars of the shocking deed, which you have forced me to disclose.'

Count Conrad stood as still as though he had been petrified; and it was a long time before he could utter a word. When he had a little collected himself, he said, 'What occasion is there for so fiery trial? the stam of truth is impressed on your words; I feel and fully believe that all is as you say. Keep the horrid secret close pent up in your heart. Intuit it to no mortal, not even to the priest when you confide. I will go in to the hyena with a feigned countenance; and while I embrace her, and speak comfort to her, be sure to draw the box with the dead bones, and deliver it secretly to me.'

He leaped into his wife's chamber with the air of a man firm though deeply touched. His lady received him with the eye where no guilt was depicted, though her soul was wounded to death. She did not speak, but her countenance resembled an angel's countenance. Compassion softened the spirit of vengeance; he clasped the unhappy mother to his bosom, and she moistened his garment with the tears of her affliction. Meantime the nurse had taken care punctually to perform what she was ordered respecting the delivery of the horrid reservoir of bones. It cost his heart a hard struggle, before he could determine the fate of the supposed forceresis. He at length resolved to get rid of her privately, and without drawing the notice of mankind towards his domestic grievances. He mounted his steed, and rode away, after he had given these orders: "When the Countess leaves her chamber at the expiration of nine days, for the purpose of bathing, bolt the door on the outside, and let the fires be raised as high as possible, that she may sink under the vehemence of the heat, and come no more out alive." The servant, who, in common with the whole household, adored his kind and tender lady, heard these orders with the utmost sorrow and concern. But, nevertheless, he was afraid to open his lips in opposition to the knight, on account of the positive manner in which he spake. On the ninth day Matilda gave orders for heating the bath. Her husband, the thought, would not abide long, and she wished, before his return, to eradicate every vestige of her late misfortunes. On entering the bathing-room she observed the air to quiver for mere heat, and she made an effort to retreat, but a vigorous arm forced her irresistibly forwards, and she instantly heard some without bolt and bar the door—She cried out
for help in vain—nobody heard; the fuel was now piled up high, and the fire raged till the furnace glowed like an iron furnace.

The Countess resigned herself to her fate; only the odious suspicion, which the apprehension had fallen upon her, afflicted her soul much more than her disgraceful death. She then threw herself down upon a coach to begin her last agonies. Nature, however, on the approach of the evil hour, will make an involuntary struggle against her disposition. In the anguish occasioned by the sottisheating heat, as the unhappy sufferer toiled and tumbled on the coach, the mulek-ball, which she had constantly carried about her, fell upon the ground. She snatched it eagerly up, and cried aloud, "Oh Naiad, if it be in thy power, deliver me from a dish nourishing death, and vindicate my innocence!" She screwed off the top, and the same instant a thick mist arose out of the mulek-ball, and diffusing itself through the whole apartment, refreshed the Countess, so that she no longer felt any oppression. The cloud collected itself into a visible form; and Matilda, whose apprehensions for her life had now vanished, beholding, to her unspeakable joy, the Nymph of the Fountain clasping the new-born infant to her bosom, and holding the elder boy with her right hand.

"Hail, my beloved Matilda!" exclaimed the Naiad: happy was it for thee that thou didst not so heartlessly lavish the third with of thy mulek-ball as the two former. Behold here the two living witnesses of thy innocence: they will enable thee to triumph over the black calumny under which thou hast nearly sunk. Henceforward the mulek-ball will fulfiill no more of thy wishes; but nothing further remains for thee to desire; I will unfold the riddle of thy fate—

Know, that thy mother is the author of all thy calamity. The marriage of her son proved a dagger to the heart of that proud woman, who imagined he had stained the honour of his house by taking a kitchen-wards to his bed. She breathed nothing but curses and execrations against him, and would no longer acknowledge him for the offspring of her womb. All her thoughts were bent on contrivances and plots to destroy thee, although the vigilance of thy husband had hitherto frustrated her malicious designs. She, however, at last succeeded to elude his vigilance by means of a flattering hypocritical nurse. She induced this woman, by the most liberal promises, to take thy first-born child out of thy arms, while asleep, and cast it, like a whelp, into the water. Fortunately the chieft my spring-loaded for her wicked purpose; and I received the boy in my arms, and have ever since nurtured him as his mother. In the same manner did she undeniably commit to my charge the second son of my dear Matilda. It was this vile deceitful naithe who became thy accuser. She prevailed the Count that thou art a

Socrates. She delivered into his hands a box full of the bones of doves and fowls, which he took for the remains of his children, and in consequence of this mistake gave orders to fling thee in the bath. Spurred on by penitence, and an eager desire to countermand this cruel sentence, though he still holds thee guilty, he is now on his return, and in one short hour thou wilt recline, with thy honour van-
THE MAGIC LEGACY.

A CERTAIN king had one son, named Alindor, whom he had made an accomplished prince. A few minutes before his death, which took place after a long illness, he addressed him in the following words:

"Son, the spirits of my ancestors beckon me to them; I am aged, and it is time I should make room for thee. The crown, which I bequeath, has been a burden to my head. Thou, my son, wilt wear it with joy and honour. Know, that I have long possessed a treasure which enchantment has prevented me from enjoying; but..."
nothing reflects thee from the use of it. Take this key, and open a chest that thou wilt find buried beneath the fountain before the eastern front of thy palace. Poffeit thyself; as soon as I am in the land of spirits, of this ineffimable prize; and let justice and generosity guide thee in the application of it. Once more, reverence me, and receive the last breath of thy expiring father in a prayer for thy prosperity."

With these words the old king breathed his last. Alindor, sunk in deep grief, hung long sorrowing over the lifeless corps. His grief was genuine, and flowed from the sensibility of a tender and grateful heart. He caused his father to be interred with pomp suited to his worth, and fulfilled every duty to his remains. He then let fifty labourers to dig under the fountain, which was constructed of enormous masses of marble, that rendered the work slow of execution. At length, after some weeks labour, a vault was discovered many feet under the earth.

The prince, whom curiosity often led to inspect the industri of his workmen, was present when it was broken. All that it was found to contain was a chest of ebony, which Alindor, to his amazement, found so light, that he could raise it in his arms and carry it without difficulty. But what a new shock to the expectations of the prince, when opening the chest, he found nothing but an empty leather purse, a horn of metal, and a girdle of coarse hair. His sudden disappointment was such, that he stood for some time speechless, meditating in silent agony on the insulting mockery of his father.

Alindor examined the chest with more attention, and in one corner discovered a roll of parchment, on which he read these words:

"When thou hast need of gold, open the purse and thou wilt find whatever thou hast occasion for. If soldiers be necessary to thee, blow the horn three times, and an army will stand at thy command, whom thou mayst dismiss with a word. Wouldst thou be transported from one place to another, gird thyself with the belt, and it will convey thee instantly to the place where thou wilt. These wisely employed may make thee the most powerful of monarchs; but be careful to preserve them, for they will possess the same virtues in the hands of another; and what may conduco to thy prosperity may also be employed for thy destruction."

The son of a poor king, debarred from the magnificence of his rank, will ever desire gold; and gold was accordingly the first with of Alindor. The purse was required to do its office, and scarcely had the young king opened it with the wish, than it swelled in his hands to such a bulk and weight, that he was constrained to let it fall to the floor, which was covered with gold of every species.

The prince then blowing the enchanted horn inconsiderately, he found himself surrounded with soldiers, who disappeared at his
order. These proofs satisfied him that his girdle would not fail when brought to trial, and he soon found occasion to employ it. He had long languished with a secret passion for Zenomia, the daughter of a califh. Zenomia was selfish, vain, haughty, and ambitious, but at the same time, an admirable creature; since in beauty and accomplishments she was unrivalled among her sex.

Zenomia's beauty, which was the more seductive as she knew how to vary it with every form of sentiment, held a crowd of young princes in her chains. Allidor sighed in solitude for her, while his richer rivals, by magnificent offerings, openly contended for her favour. That he had never declared his love proceeded from his inability to support an expense equal to his rivals, and he felt that in courage, address, and personal accomplishments he was inferior to none. This made him confide in his power to attract the attention of Zenomia, if he were enabled to present himself with suitable splendour.

The treasure which he professed in the magic purse, now furnished him with means of surpassing every competitor in expense. As soon as he entered the realms of the califh, he spared no cost to extend the fame of his wealth and liberality. His entrance into the capital excited the amazement of the people, and his appearance at court awakened the jealousy of all the rival princes, who dreaded in him a formidable antagonist.

The califh and his court encouraged the addresses of so rich a monarch to their daughter, and Zenomia gradually displayed a marked preference for him over his rivals. Allidor was benevolent, sincere, and consequently, unimpeachable and credulous; he thought himself master of the princess's heart, when, in fact, he had but exci ted her avarice and vanity.

The violence of his passion at length drew from him a formal declaration, when his efforts to please her had seemed to render her peculiarly favourable to him.

"How canst thou expect acceptance of thy love?" said the princess, "when it is too plain thou hast reposed no confidence in me. The title thou hast assumed is an imposition; since the petty kingdom, of which thou callest thyself the ruler, could never suffice to thy profusion. In short, prince, there is somewhat mysterious in your appearance, which must be explained before I can make any answer to your offers."

Allidor professed, that his name and title were what he professed them, and as Zenomia was still incredulous, and persisted to maintain the contrary, to remove from himself the unjust suspicion, the too ingenious prince revealed to his beloved fair the secret treasure of his riches.

Zenomia was not content with his assurance; she would see the purse, and make experiment of its virtues.

Allidor long refused to part, for a moment, with so inestimable a treasure, the care of which had been so solemnly enjoined on him by his father; but Zenomia's reproaches and insinuating entreaties, at
length triumphed over his constancy, and he gave the purse reluctantly into her hands.

No sooner was it in her power, than she flew out of the apartment, and shut the door on the prince, who, considering her only in a jest, expected her return with impatience, but without uneasiness.

After some time, a slave came in the name of the princes, to thank him for his present, and announce to him that Zenomia, in company of the califf, and her mother, was about to set off for one of their country palaces.

The plot now stood revealed to the prince, and he saw, that the father, mother and daughter, had been engaged in a conspiracy to plunder him. He had no resource, but to return to his kingdom for the support of his father's gifts, to revenge the injury, and to obtain retribution of what had been so treacherously won from him.

In two months he appeared before the capital of the califf, provided with his horn and girlide. No sooner had he given three blasts, than an army of fifty thousand men stood at each of the four gates of the city, while a large body of horsemen scourred the country. Amazement and fear seized the inhabitants; none thought of attack, or were prepared for resistance; they threw themselves at the mercy of the victor, and the califf fought to save himself and his family by flight.

The fugitives were intercepted by the prince's cavalry, and brought captives into the tent of Alindor.

Zenomia wiped away the tears that dimmed her eyes, and recognized Alindor, whom his helmet and arms had at first concealed from the knowledge of the califf and herself.

"Scarcely can I trust my eyes," said she, "when I behold in thee, prince, the disturber of our peace, and the ravager of our city and empire. Alas! I see, that thy vows of love and esteem were words devoid of sentiment! Shame," proceeded she, scornfully, "who, to avenge a woman's frolic, wastes kingdoms, and, sword in hand, affails his mistress! Blush, prince, this conduct disgraces you."

Zenomia concluded her address with a voice of such tenderness, that Alindor, wholly subdued, cast himself at her feet, and swore with the most solemn imprecations to disband his troops, and think no more of vengeance, as soon as his purse was restored to him.

"Here is the unhappy cause of all this mischief," said the prince, with a leathern purse in his hand; "receive the fatal treasure, of the possession of which thou art so jealous. Take it, and know that I feel no more pain in parting with it, than I do in flying a lover whose humours are so impetuous and fatal."

Alindor left all government of himself; he mistook the reproaches of Zenomia for offended love, and fancying he had really possessed the prince's heart, the fear of losing her esteem drove him almost to desperation. He would willingly, to exculpate himself, rather by actions than words, have made a voluntary offering of the purse to
Zenomia, had she deigned to wait his answer; but with the last words she had retired hastily from his presence.

Alindor now turned to the calif, and conjured him to reconcile him with the prince. He dismissed his army, which, during this time, had collected about his tent, and which he annihilated by a word. The calif thanked the prince for his generosity, and besought him to accompany him to the city, where a banquet should solemnize the peace, and confound all enmity to oblivion.

He now renewed with more fervor his vows of love; and his wish to possess the heart of his princess.

"Willingly," said she, "would I obey a voice that speaks too eloquently for thee in my heart, were not thy power too tremendous. I shudder at the thought of belonging to a man, who stands in such close relation to supernatural beings. Disclose to me the means by which thou hast brought so innumerable a host before our gates even we knew of thy arrival. Explain to me the possibility of such a surprise, which is not less miraculous than the sudden disappearance of so many, whom I myself saw vanish into air in an instant. Speak, prove thyself of a mortal nature like myself, that I may not be weighed down with thy superiority, and from that moment I will chase awe and terror from my soul, and all within me shall be Love's and Alindor's."

Zenomia uttered these words with so true a tone of affection and tenderness, that the prince consented to gratify her curiosity. He produced his magic horn, and informed Zenomia of the manner and effect of its operation. The artful beauty soon found means to gain this precious instrument; and as soon as it was in her hands, she gave three blaps, and in an instant an army, that filled the palace, attended her orders. Alindor's confidence in his beloved was so sincere, and his shame of his former distrust was so great, that he had not the least suspicion of any insidious design, and he only regretted the alarm and confusion which her inconsiderate experiment might create in the city.

He requested her to diminish the magic horn into air, when, to his amazement and horror, the princes, instead of listening to his words, turned to the nearest soldiers, and bade them seize the prince and convey him to her father.

Fortunately Alindor had girded himself beneath his robe with the magic belt, and this with its full width transported him instantaneously to his own kingdom. His indignation was so incensed at this second deceit of his pernicious mistress, that he vowed eternal hatred, and menaced the most severe vengeance on her head. But what words can speak his phrenzy, when returning to his patric to replenish his exhausted coffers, he found it remain empty. When, on closer inspection, he found it totally different from his own, and he perceived the black fraud and perfidy of Zenomia.

Stung by resentment, he was not long inventing the plan of his revenge, and the means of executing it were found in the magic girdle, the sole remaining and apparently most worthless legacy of his father. On this he repented all his hopes of restitution and vengeance, and
waiting only for midnight, he bound the girdle about his waist, and wished himself in the princess's apartment.

The belt ruffled its office in an instant, and placed him beside the couch of his true mistress, who, sunk in sound sleep, apprehended nothing from her enraged lover.

Alindor's design had been to surprise Zenomia during her sleep, to extort from her, by menaces of instant death, his magic purse and horn, and by means of the latter to collect a numerous army, and carry away the califh, with his perfidious family, captives. But the poor prince soon felt that the execution of this fiendish scheme was impossible, and he renounced a triumph for which his too weak and susceptible heart incapacitated him. The charms of his false, but fair, Zenomia, whom he saw by the light of a lamp reclined before him, more enchanting and irresistible than ever, and whom he contemplated too long to remain constant to his design, raised his passion in full force, made him forget his wrongs, and left him no care but to execute his temperance. A deep sigh, which broke from his lips, disturbed the califh, who started from the sofa, and cried aloud for help. Alindor embraced her, and besought her to be tranquil.

"Who art thou, rash man?" exclaimed Zenomia, striving to extricate herself, "what means thy insolence? Unhand me!"

"Forgive my temerity, Zenomia," said the prince, "as I forgive thee greater offences. I conjure thee to banish every fear, and give me a patient audience."

Zenomia now recollected the voice and features of her injured lover, foreboded his design, and prevented his declarations by thus addressing him. "I am culpable, prince, I own. I urged too far the proud design of robbing you of every thing, that from my hand you might receive all. You have mistaken my sentiments, and must have argued meanly of me. I will not inquire by what new charm you have penetrated through the numerous guards of my palace; I revere the mycellious powers that obey you, and search not into their ways. Yet you need not their assistance to recover your treasures; ere morning they shall be restored. But, prince," continued she, with a tone of inflating tenderness, "there is a reparation owing me, which, if thou hast ever loved me, thou wilt not scruple to acquire thyself of. Thou hast endangered my honour, and exposed my name to calumny by this intrusion into my apartment; from this hour thou art my husband, and to-morrow must solemnize our nuptials."

"Is it possible," cried Alindor, "that thou canst return my raffness with such generosity? Yes, beloved Zenomia, I am thine, and nothing henceforth shall disturb our harmony."

Zenomia, meanwhile observed his girdle, whose sloughy texture rendered it sufficiently perceptible on thei;ten robe which the prince wore beneath, and her penetration suggested to her that some new magic was concerned with this uncouth ruffian. Hoping to win the secret from her lover, she loosed the belt gradually from his waist; and when she had so far effected her purpose, that another touch would detach it, she drew back, in the midst of a tender address of..."
the prince, pretending to have been hurt by some part of his apparel. She now feigned to perceive the magic girdle, and ridiculed it for its ungraceful appearance, begged him to divest himself of so odious an ornament.

"Do not despise this belt," replied Alindor, "of all the wonders I possess it is the most precious. To this girdle I owe all the happiness of my future life."

To support his words, Alindor related how he had made, after many weeks, by means of this girdle, an enchanting and, unluckily, informed her, it had the virtue of transporting him whithersoever he would.

No sooner was the artful Zenomia acquainted with the prince, than she approached the amorous prince, threw him off his guard by her carelessness, and loosed from his body the girdle, which now scarcely hung to his side.

In an instant binding it round her waist, she wished herself conveyed to the califf's apartment, and vanished in the moment from the arms of her deluded lover.

Alindor's astonishment at this treachery was so great, that he lost all consciousness, and was near falling into the hands of the guards, whom she had dispatched to seize him. Fortunately the rattle of the gates awaked him from the stupor in which the base perfidy of the princess had left him, and he had time to save himself by a staircase that led into the gardens.

Death was his sole wish; and to rid himself of life, which had become insupportable to him, he fought the haunts of lions and tigers, to find in their fangs refuge from the thoughts of a mistress more inhuman than all the savages of the wild.

For two days he wandered about the rough cliffs of a horrid wilderness, to meet that death which he could never find. Fatigued beyond difference, and tormented by the most raging thirst and hunger, he resolved to terminate all his miseries, and accordingly, mounting to the summit of the steepest precipice, he threw himself headlong down. The fall must have proved immediate death to him, had not his robe caught in the projecting branch of a fig tree. This broke the force of his fall, and let him down gently on a bed of thick moss, that preserved him free from any fracture; but he had lost his breath and sense during the fall, and he lay some time motionless on the ground.

When his reason returned, he found himself tormented by a burning thirst, that he curst the destiny which had prostrated hisanguish by preserving his existence, and seeing no way to escape from the place into which he had thrown himself, he had the prospect of dying in the most deplorable and lingering manner.

Urged by his scorching thirst, he strove to raise himself from the earth, that he might search for some spring water; but all his struggles were ineffectual, and he seemed held to the ground by some vast weight. Looking for the impediment that restrained him, he perceived that a vast branch, which he had by the violence of his fall detached from the tree, lay under him, and was entangled with his
garment. With joy he saw the branch covered with ripe figs of extraordinary size and beauty. He gathered some, and devoured them with avidity.

Secretly had the prince appealed his thirst with the delicious fruit, than he was disturbed in his enjoyment by a frightful prodigy. With every fig he had eaten, his nose extended itself the length of a thumb; but occupied with the cravings of hunger and thirst, he did not remark the deformity, till the disproportion of feature was become monstrous. He observed it with wonderment, but without terror, and almost with indifference. "Perhaps," said he, "it is a brand of ignominy for my folly and credulity, in loosing the precious donations of my father."

During these reflections, the prince wandered about the valley, into which he had precipitated himself, in search of an outlet. Noontide advanced, the sun shot more burning rays, and Alindor's thirst returned on him with new fury. Happily he heard the gushing of water, and perceiving a spring, he reclined beside it, to drink with more facility the clear liquid. He swallowed the cool water out of his palms for want of a better cup, and observed, that with every draught the monstrous exuberance of his nose diminished. He profited by the discovery, and continued his draughts till his deformed feature had recovered its natural dimensions.

This unexpected good fortune inspired him with a triumph joy; which nothing can extinguish in the human breast, was again resumed in him. Meditating on the possibility of regaining all his privileges, the ludicrous accident that had befallen his countenance, suggested to him a stratagem, which promised to retrieve his losses, and revenge him on his false mistresses.

Alindor delayed not an instant the execution of his plan. He broke off a branch of the sweet figs, and returning to the spring with an earthen vessel which he procured from a forest, he filled it with the miraculous water. Exchanging his rich vestments for a dres of inferior stuff, he entered the city in the disguise of a peasant, bearing his figs modestly disposed in a basket, and proceeded with them to the palace of the califf.

As the fruit was of uncommon beauty, they were immediately purchased for the table of the sultane and her daughter. Alindor retired hastily from the palace, when the bargain was consummated, and disguising himself anew in a long beard and a black mantle, he hired a house in one of the suburbs, and assumed the character of an Egyptian physician. The mother and daughter, allured by the delicious flavour of the fruit, devoured it with an eagerness that did not suffer them to perceive its consequences, till the noses of both had enlarged to an enormous bulk of deformity. Each perceived the alteration in herself and the other at the same moment, and both burst into exclamations of surprise and horror.

Mother and daughter ran affrighted to a mirror, and, seeing their faces thus hideously disfigured, brought all their attendants about them with their lamentations. The rumour of this miraculous event spread though the whole palace, and the califf came to satisfy himself of this extraordinary incident.
The caliph summoned all the most celebrated physicians of his capital, and promised a kingly recompense to him, who should relieve his wife and daughter from their odious incumbrances. After long consultations, it was unanimously agreed, that the misfortune was not to be removed by medicine, and that, as its cause was not in natural circumstances, neither was its remedy in nature.

Neither would submit implicitly to this judgment, and they flattered their hopes by a thousand experiments, which had no other effect, than to fill their minds with expectations that were constantly disappointed.

Ahindor now thought it time to hailed the prowess of his stratagem. He accordingly announced himself as a sage experienced in all the mysteries of medicine, and he boasted of possessing a magical secret, of infallible efficacy, to restore the princely to their pristine beauty.

He was received with every mark of respect, and an apartment was assigned him in the palace, that he might be nearer his patients.

The water from the fountain, of which he had made in his own cell the successful experiment, effected on the infirmities all he could wish. Her nose was reduced with every draught, and it depended on the prince alone to have at once freed her from the deplorable incumbrance; but he purposely delayed the accomplishments of her cure, to give it greater value from its apparent difficulty.

When the cure was perfected, and he had no longer an excuse for devoting his labour to the prince's, Ahindor one morning was introduced to her apartment, and addressed her in these words:

"Your aspect, princess, moves me at once to mirth and compassion. Should you ever appear with this frightful proboscis in the world, will it not be thought you are defended from an elephant? Of what use are your graces, now that this monstrous redundancy counteracts the lustre of your complexion and the splendour of your eyes? The wretches whom you once subjected to your caprice, by the magic of your beauties, now triumph in their turn, and deride your deformity. But compose your anguish, your mother ceases to be an object of horror, and perhaps by the success of my efforts you may soon be to no longer."

Then after pronouncing many strange words, and using various gestures, he administered to her a cup of common water, which was without any consequence, but to irritate the hopes of the princess. Feigning surprise and disappointment at the failure of his pretended medicine, he prepared another cup of the same potent remedy, into which, to render it still more infallible, he pressed the juice of some flowers and herbs, amidst a multitude of magical ceremonies, and thus the princess was directed to drink with her face turned towards the East.

The nose of the princess was not lessened a hair's breadth by this tantalizing process.

Zenomia was in the utmost despair, and the pretended sage confessed himself embarrassed at the failure of his remedies. He retired with the assurance, that he would renew his endeavours the ensuing morn.
Alindor repeated three days successively this pantomime, till the anguish and fears of the princess had become almost insupportable.

He then appointed the hour of midnight for a grand and final attempt.

Zenomia waited the instant of his arrival with the most agonizing palpitations. It was now to be decided, whether she should remain a monster, or should be again the most beautiful of creatures. Her whole soul hung to the event; she received the astrologer with tears in her eyes, and conjured him to exhaust all his skill to free her from so hateful a deformity.

"If the magnificent rewards promised by my father be insufficient to excite your diligence and industry, know," said she, "that I possess treasures of ineffable value, with which, on the instant you effect my cure, I will demonstrate to you my gratitude."

"I am familiar with the promises of the sick," said the false physician with indifference and coldness, "and know how little they are of performance."

Zenomia, without answering, retired into her chamber, and returned to the stage with her magic purse, together with the horn and girdle, that she might excite his arrière and establish his confidence.

"These three insignificant utensils," said she, "possess such miraculous virtues, that it depends only on my use of them to become the richest and most powerful of all mortals. From this instant they are your own, and I will instruct you to employ them, when you have restored me to my proportion of beauty."

"I need not thy directions," interrupted Alindor, throwing away his disguise, and seizing the precious prize. "I refuse what thou hast robbed me of, and leave thee thy false heart, and thy monstrous nose." While he spoke these words, he girded himself in his magic belt, and wishing himself in his own kingdom, left the false fair one to deplore the loss of her ill-gotten gains and her beauty.

THE ENCHANTED KNIGHT;

or,

PHEBE.

THERE was a man who was left a widower with one child, a sweet girl, whose name was Phebe. After he had lived two or three years single, he determined to marry again; and he was the more easily inclined to do so, because he had met with a woman about his own age, and very much of his own disposition, to whom he had made himself agreeable. This woman was a widow, and, like him, had a daughter called Martha, who was two years older than Phebe; they mutually promised to be exceedingly good and tender to each other's offspring; and at first they kept their promises tolerably well.
It happened that the father died, when Phebe was about twelve years old; and as she had been well instructed by her father's care, who loved her dearly, she was, on account of the readiness of her wit, more accomplished and advanced in knowledge than many of twice her age, and much more so than her sister Martha, though there had been equal care taken of them both. The death of her father was a great misfortune to Phebe; she soon began to find an alteration in the behaviour of her mother and sister. The latter, having now no restraint upon her, (for her mother had always been far too indulgent) took every opportunity of thwarting Phebe, of whom she became exceedingly jealous, owing to the preference Phebe always obtained in society.

It may easily be imagined that poor Phebe soon became deprived of all the little pleasures in which she used to share; instead of mixing with the visitors, and going abroad with her sister, as formerly, she was confined to her needle, and ordered to assist the servant at the lowest drudgery.

The praises that Phebe had obtained, and the admiration with which every body was struck who happened to get a sight of her, served only further to inflame the envy of those to whom alone she could look for protection; insomuch, that she at last was not only the drudge of the family, but was stinted in her very food, obliged to eat the offals, and best upon the most frivolous pretences, till she was sometimes hardly able to move.

One day, when the mother and favourite daughter were gone out, and had, as usual, locked up every thing from her, leaving her but a scanty pittance, scarce half enough to satisfy nature, a poor old woman, tottering under age, came to the door, begging she would give her a morsel to keep her from starving. Phebe, though very hungry herself, had too good a heart to see such an old creature ready to sink with age and hunger, and not give her every allowance in her power. She immediately went to the door, gave the poor woman her hand, directed her to come in and rest herself, and set about warming what little morsel she had, (which the herself was going to have eat cold) to make it as comfortable as she could. She then laid a clean napkin and plate, and waited upon and cherished her as though she had been her own mother. "The God of Heaven bless thee!" said the old woman, as Phebe Word her by her side; "thou art a merciful and a gracious angel, and shalt lose nothing by thy charity. Thou hast given me food, wilt thou give me a kiss?"
Phebe would always hurt her own feelings than the feelings of another; and though the old woman was very disagreeable with rags and age, she instantly kissed her with the best grace imaginable, lest she should give her pain, or lest she should be thought to despise age and poverty. The old woman fixed her eyes steadfastly upon her. "Sweet and heavenly creature," said she, "have I at last found such a one? Yes, if thy courage equals thy other virtues, thou art the treasure I so long and ineffectually have sought."—Phebe wondered to hear a miserable old woman speak in this manner, and in such language too. "Thou art very young; art thou of a timid disposition?—"No, indeed," said Phebe, "I never injure
any creature that has life or sensibility. I would do good to every
body; if I had the power, and I hope I commit no wickedness, then
wherefore should I be afraid?"

Phæbe turned her eyes towards her guest, and instead of a poor,
decrepit, and haggard old woman, she beheld a beauteous Being
in robes of white and scarlet, and wings more variously spotted than
the shining plumage of the Chalced pheasant!

"Purest and best of earthy virgins," said the bright vision, 
"be not alarmed."—"No," replied Phæbe, "I am only surprised. If
you are a heavenly being, you will not injure me; if a wicked one,
you cannot, till I, by guilt, shall give you power over me."—
"Listen to me," said the spirit; "Long have I been seeking to
delive Ornon, the knight of a neighbouring castle, from the authori-
ty of the demons; but in vain; they have seduced and enchanted
him, and he is held a willing slave to five of the most powerful
that the dark enthrals of the fabulous regions can emit. He hath
suffered them to light up the Dead Hand within his walls, which
hath stupified and bullied to sleep the guardians, spirits, fate had ap-
pointed to protect him from their machinations; and till that is ex-
tinguished, never shall he be freed from their wicked dominion. The
sylphs and other aetherial elences have in vain made war upon these
demons and their adherents; a young virgin alone can vanquish
them, and extinguish the enchanted flame of the Dead or Glorious
Hand; for a good and beauteous virgin is of more power than a host
of spirits. I and my companions have long mourned over the mis-
fortunes of Ornon; for till these infernal and malicious fiends had
fascinated him, the earth had few young men so promising. To
thee, then, wise, and excellent creature, is this charitable and noble
talk alligned."

"I hope I have the will, if I have the ability, to do good," re-
p lied Phæbe; "not am I afraid of encountering such danger, as a
weak creature, like me, may support; but I am dependent on the
will of another. I must not leave my mother's house without her
knowledge; for that would be wickedness, and not virtue."

Phæbe had scarcely pronounced the last words, when the heard her
mother and sister at the door; and, instead of a sylph, saw the fame
old woman again at her side whom her charity had to lately re-
lieved. She knew not what to think; she was ready to imagine she
had been in a dream; the ran, however, to open the door for her
mother.—"Hey-day! indeed said the sister, "what old beldam
have you got here to keep you company? I suppose you have been
having your fortune told, but I am afraid it is not very good."—
"Better than thine will ever be, Calot," answered the old woman,
and glided out of the house. There needed not half this to set
them upon the patient suffering Phæbe: they both fell upon her,
and, as they thought, beat her most unmercifully; but, to the
amendment of Phæbe, their blows gave her no pain. They were
not satisfied with this: her sister insisted upon it that she should be
instantly turned out of doors, and the foolish and cruel mother put
her wicked wishes in execution.

Phæbe could not forbear weeping, at finding herself, thus friend-
The Enchanted Knight.

left and unknown, driven from her mother's house; she was even exceedingly affected with the thought of sparing from persons who had treated her so badly. She comforted herself however, as well as she could. "I am very able and willing to work," thought she, "and surely some charitable good person will give me a little food for my labour."

She wandered along the path she first took, without knowing whither it led, till evening began to come on, and she was faint with hunger, when, being come to an eminence, she herself down, and turned round to take a last look at the inhospitable, yet respected mansion, from which she was expelled. As she looked down the lawn, the face, with favourite, her favourite cat, to which she had always been very kind, coming trotting after her, and looking up, as if in pity for her fate. The cat seemed to be guided by a superior instinct: there were three paths led from where her mistress sat, and the took one of them, and looked back as if inviting Phœbe to follow; which action she repeated several times. Phœbe, to whom no path had a peculiar preference, inclined to that from the action of the animal. The cat had not gone far, before she turned a little from the way to a bush, and stopped, then went back to meet her mistress, and returned to the same spot: this incited Phœbe's curiosity, and the followed to the bush. Here she found a clean white napkin, and in it a part of a very fine eaxon, with some good wheaten bread. Phœbe's feelings may easily be imagined; she sat herself upon the bank, and divided her treasure with her friend.

She presently rose from her repast, and her cat still ran before, as if to conduct her. They came presently to a place where the fide had been hedged up, to prevent passengers from coming any more that road; the cat turned down the side of the hedge, and found a clear gap.—Darkness now grew on apace, and there was neither town, hamlet, nor house, in view; yet poor Phœbe kept implicitly following her wary guide. On each hand were deep pits, bogs, and precipices, into which the smallest deviation would for ever plunge her; but her faithful cat kept just before; and every moment kept turning its luminous eyes, as if to light and guide its mistress. Suddenly tumbled down a precipice, and, by its cries, gave Phœbe, whose feet were upon the very brink, warning of her danger, and its own apparent destruction.

While the flood thus motionless, and looking down the abyss into which her guide had fallen, she beheld an apparition rise slowly from the bottom, holding a lighted torch in its right hand, for it had but one. Its vesture was of a death-like pale and pitious; it held up the remains of its left arm, as if to impale redels, had brandishing its torch to make it shed a brighter light, it glided by, and flew on at some little distance. Phœbe beheld the spectre with terror, yet with that resolution which virtue alone can give.

Her dreadful guide conducted her safely over the moor, till they came to a gothic castle, surrounded by a moat. The draw-bridge was up, and the spectre made a sudden leap, as a signal for Phœbe to proceed no farther yet; it then skimmed across the canal, and
A frei the maily hinges began to creak, and the bridge defended
with a weighty and loud crash that echoed through the stillness of
the night, and made the old vaulted cellar reverberate horror.

Phebe was now in total darkness, and courage and virtue began
to shudder at the remembrance of her situation. However, she
summoned up her strength, and with heroic fortitude ascended a
narrow stair-case. She went up to many steps, and kept on continually
winding, that at last, with giddiness and want of breath, she was
obliged to rest. She had scarcely stopped a moment, before she heard
the clanking of chains, and the footsteps of one descending, who
sent forth at intervals, the most painful and dismal groans. Her
hair now stood an end, her blood ran cold, and her heart sunk within
her; it was impossible for any one to pass, and the least opposing
body would precipitate her to the bottom. The groans and the
clanking increased; they seemed not three steps distant, and her fa-
culties were frozen with horror, when the place was instantaneously
illuminated, and she beheld the beauteous Sylph sustaining a dreadful
combat with a monstrous demon, by which it seemed to be almost
overpowered. A voice at the same time cried aloud—'Go forward!
You only are in danger when you do not proceed. Phebe again cal-
lced up her resolution, began to ascend, and again was left in silence
and total darkness.

She came at length to a little door, which opened with a gentle
push; through this she went, and found herself upon the great stair-
case, opposite to a suite of magnificent apartments, illuminated with
large wax tapers; thence she boldly entered, passed through several,
and found each succeeding one superior to the last, till she arrived
in the grand saloon. Here, in the centre, she beheld, upon a superb
couch, Oron, the enchanted knight, lying entwined; over him hung
suspended in the air the Glorious Hand, that is to say, a dead
man’s hand prepared by Necromancy, dipt in magical oil, and each
finger lighted up.

The Glorious Hand burnt dim as the draw near; the colours re-
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