

## BOOK III.

### THE PRESENTIMENT AND THE VERIFICATION.

#### I.

The face, of which Pierre and Lucy so strangely and fearfully hinted, was not of enchanted air; but its mortal lineaments of mournfulness had been visibly beheld by Pierre. Nor had it accosted him in any privacy; or in any lonely byeway; or beneath the white light of the crescent moon; but in a joyous chamber, bright with candles, and ringing with two score women's gayest voices. Out of the heart of mirthfulness, this shadow had come forth to him. Encircled by bandelets of light, it had still beamed upon him; vaguely historic and prophetic; backward, hinting of some irrevocable sin; forward, pointing to some inevitable ill. One of those faces, which now and then appear to man, and without one word of speech, still reveal glimpses of some fearful gospel. In natural guise, but lit by supernatural light; palpable to the senses, but inscrutable to the soul; in their perfectest impression on us, ever hovering between Tartarean misery and Paradisaic beauty; such faces, compounded so of hell and heaven, overthrow in us all foregone persuasions, and make us wondering children in this world again.

The face had accosted Pierre some weeks previous to his ride with Lucy to the hills beyond Saddle Meadows; and before her arrival for the

summer at the village; moreover it had accosted him in a very common and homely scene; but this enhanced the wonder.

On some distant business, with a farmer-tenant, he had been absent from the mansion during the best part of the day, and had but just come home, early of a pleasant moonlight evening, when Dates delivered a message to him from his mother, begging him to come for her about half-past seven that night to Miss Llanyllyn's cottage, in order to accompany her thence to that of the two Miss Pennies. At the mention of that last name, Pierre well knew what he must anticipate. Those elderly and truly pious spinsters, gifted with the most benevolent hearts in the world, and at mid-age deprived by envious nature of their hearing, seemed to have made it a maxim of their charitable lives, that since God had not given them any more the power to hear Christ's gospel preached, they would therefore thenceforth do what they could toward practicing it.

Wherefore, as a matter of no possible interest to them now, they abstained from church; and while with prayer-books in their hands the Rev. Mr. Falsgrave's congregation were engaged in worshipping their God, according to the divine behest; the two Miss Pennies, with thread and needle, were hard at work in serving him; making up shirts and gowns for the poor people of the parish. Pierre had heard that they had recently been at the trouble of organizing a regular society, among the neighboring farmers' wives and daughters, to meet twice a month at their own house (the Miss Pennies) for the purpose of sewing in concert for the benefit of various settlements of necessitous emigrants, who had lately pitched their populous shanties further up the river. But though

this enterprise had not been started without previously acquainting Mrs. Glendinning of it,--for indeed she was much loved and honored by the pious spinsters,--and their promise of solid assistance from that gracious manorial lady; yet Pierre had not heard that his mother had been officially invited to preside, or be at all present at the semi-monthly meetings; though he supposed, that far from having any scruples against so doing, she would be very glad to associate that way, with the good people of the village.

"Now, brother Pierre"--said Mrs. Glendinning, rising from Miss Llanlylyn's huge cushioned chair--"throw my shawl around me; and good-evening to Lucy's aunt.--There, we shall be late."

As they walked along, she added--"Now, Pierre, I know you are apt to be a little impatient sometimes, of these sewing scenes; but courage; I merely want to peep in on them; so as to get some inkling of what they would indeed be at; and then my promised benefactions can be better selected by me. Besides, Pierre, I could have had Dates escort me, but I preferred you; because I want you to know who they are you live among; how many really pretty, and naturally-refined dames and girls you shall one day be lord of the manor of. I anticipate a rare display of rural red and white."

Cheered by such pleasant promises, Pierre soon found himself leading his mother into a room full of faces. The instant they appeared, a gratuitous old body, seated with her knitting near the door, squeaked

out shrilly--"Ah! dames, dames,--Madam Glendinning!--Master Pierre Glendinning!"

Almost immediately following this sound, there came a sudden, long-drawn, unearthly, girlish shriek, from the further corner of the long, double room. Never had human voice so affected Pierre before. Though he saw not the person from whom it came, and though the voice was wholly strange to him, yet the sudden shriek seemed to split its way clean through his heart, and leave a yawning gap there. For an instant, he stood bewildered; but started at his mother's voice; her arm being still in his. "Why do you clutch my arm so, Pierre? You pain me. Pshaw! some one has fainted,--nothing more."

Instantly Pierre recovered himself, and affecting to mock at his own trepidation, hurried across the room to offer his services, if such were needed. But dames and maidens had been all beforehand with him; the lights were wildly flickering in the air-current made by the flinging open of the casement, near to where the shriek had come. But the climax of the tumult was soon past; and presently, upon closing the casement, it subsided almost wholly. The elder of the spinster Pennies, advancing to Mrs. Glendinning, now gave her to understand, that one of the further crowd of industrious girls present, had been attacked by a sudden, but fleeting fit, vaguely imputable to some constitutional disorder or other. She was now quite well again. And so the company, one and all, seemingly acting upon their natural good-breeding, which in any one at bottom, is but delicacy and charity, refrained from all further

curiosity; reminded not the girl of what had passed; noted her scarce at all; and all needles stitched away as before.

Leaving his mother to speak with whom she pleased, and attend alone to her own affairs with the society; Pierre, oblivious now in such a lively crowd, of any past unpleasantness, after some courtly words to the Miss Pennies,--insinuated into their understandings through a long coiled trumpet, which, when not in use, the spinsters wore, hanging like a powder-horn from their girdles:--and likewise, after manifesting the profoundest and most intelligent interest in the mystic mechanism of a huge woolen sock, in course of completion by a spectacled old lady of his more particular acquaintance; after all this had been gone through, and something more too tedious to detail, but which occupied him for nearly half an hour, Pierre, with a slightly blushing, and imperfectly balanced assurance, advanced toward the further crowd of maidens; where, by the light of many a well-snuffed candle, they clubbed all their bright contrasting cheeks, like a dense bed of garden tulips. There were the shy and pretty Maries, Marthas, Susans, Betties, Jennies, Nellies; and forty more fair nymphs, who skimmed the cream, and made the butter of the fat farms of Saddle Meadows.

Assurance is in presence of the assured. Where embarrassments prevail, they affect the most disembarassed. What wonder, then, that gazing on such a thick array of wreathing, roguish, half-averted, blushing faces--still audacious in their very embarrassment--Pierre, too, should flush a bit, and stammer in his attitudes a little? Youthful love and

graciousness were in his heart; kindest words upon his tongue; but there he stood, target for the transfixing glances of those ambushed archers of the eye.

But his abashments last too long; his cheek hath changed from blush to pallor; what strange thing does Pierre Glendinning see? Behind the first close, busy breast-work of young girls, are several very little stands, or circular tables, where sit small groups of twos and threes, sewing in small comparative solitudes, as it were. They would seem to be the less notable of the rural company; or else, for some cause, they have voluntarily retired into their humble banishment. Upon one of these persons engaged at the furthest and least conspicuous of these little stands, and close by a casement, Pierre's glance is palely fixed.

The girl sits steadily sewing; neither she nor her two companions speak. Her eyes are mostly upon her work; but now and then a very close observer would notice that she furtively lifts them, and moves them sideways and timidly toward Pierre; and then, still more furtively and timidly toward his lady mother, further off. All the while, her preternatural calmness sometimes seems only made to cover the intensest struggle in her bosom. Her unadorned and modest dress is black; fitting close up to her neck, and clasping it with a plain, velvet border. To a nice perception, that velvet shows elastically; contracting and expanding, as though some choked, violent thing were risen up there within from the teeming region of her heart. But her dark, olive cheek is without a blush, or sign of any disquietude. So far as this girl lies

upon the common surface, ineffable composure steeps her. But still, she sideways steals the furtive, timid glance. Anon, as yielding to the irresistible climax of her concealed emotion, whatever that may be, she lifts her whole marvelous countenance into the radiant candlelight, and for one swift instant, that face of supernaturalness unreservedly meets Pierre's. Now, wonderful loveliness, and a still more wonderful loneliness, have with inexplicable implorings, looked up to him from that henceforth immemorial face. There, too, he seemed to see the fair ground where Anguish had contended with Beauty, and neither being conqueror, both had laid down on the field.

Recovering at length from his all too obvious emotion, Pierre turned away still farther, to regain the conscious possession of himself. A wild, bewildering, and incomprehensible curiosity had seized him, to know something definite of that face. To this curiosity, at the moment, he entirely surrendered himself; unable as he was to combat it, or reason with it in the slightest way. So soon as he felt his outward composure returned to him, he purposed to chat his way behind the breastwork of bright eyes and cheeks, and on some parlor pretense or other, hear, if possible, an audible syllable from one whose mere silent aspect had so potentially moved him. But at length, as with this object in mind, he was crossing the room again, he heard his mother's voice, gayly calling him away; and turning, saw her shawled and bonneted. He could now make no plausible stay, and smothering the agitation in him, he bowed a general and hurried adieu to the company, and went forth with his mother.

They had gone some way homeward, in perfect silence, when his mother spoke.

"Well, Pierre, what can it possibly be!"

"My God, mother, did you see her then!"

"My son!" cried Mrs. Glendinning, instantly stopping in terror, and withdrawing her arm from Pierre, "what--what under heaven ails you? This is most strange! I but playfully asked, what you were so steadfastly thinking of; and here you answer me by the strangest question, in a voice that seems to come from under your great-grandfather's tomb! What, in heaven's name, does this mean, Pierre? Why were you so silent, and why now are you so ill-timed in speaking! Answer me;--explain all this;--she--she--what she should you be thinking of but Lucy Tartan?--Pierre, beware, beware! I had thought you firmer in your lady's faith, than such strange behavior as this would seem to hint. Answer me, Pierre, what may this mean? Come, I hate a mystery; speak, my son."

Fortunately, this prolonged verbalized wonder in his mother afforded Pierre time to rally from his double and aggravated astonishment, brought about by first suspecting that his mother also had been struck by the strange aspect of the face, and then, having that suspicion so violently beaten back upon him, by her apparently unaffected alarm at finding him in some region of thought wholly unshared by herself at the



time.

"It is nothing--nothing, sister Mary; just nothing at all in the world. I believe I was dreaming--sleep-walking, or something of that sort. They were vastly pretty girls there this evening, sister Mary, were they not? Come, let us walk on--do, sister mine."

"Pierre, Pierre!--but I will take your arm again;--and have you really nothing more to say? were you really wandering, Pierre?"

"I swear to you, my dearest mother, that never before in my whole existence, have I so completely gone wandering in my soul, as at that very moment. But it is all over now." Then in a less earnest and somewhat playful tone, he added: "And sister mine, if you know aught of the physical and sanitary authors, you must be aware, that the only treatment for such a case of harmless temporary aberration, is for all persons to ignore it in the subject. So no more of this foolishness. Talking about it only makes me feel very unpleasantly silly, and there is no knowing that it may not bring it back upon me."

"Then by all means, my dear boy, not another word about it. But it's passing strange--very, very strange indeed. Well, about that morning business; how fared you? Tell me about it."

II.

So Pierre, gladly plunging into this welcome current of talk, was enabled to attend his mother home without furnishing further cause for her concern or wonderment. But not by any means so readily could he allay his own concern and wonderment. Too really true in itself, however evasive in its effect at the time, was that earnest answer to his mother, declaring that never in his whole existence had he been so profoundly stirred. The face haunted him as some imploring, and beauteous, impassioned, ideal Madonna's haunts the morbidly longing and enthusiastic, but ever-baffled artist. And ever, as the mystic face thus rose before his fancy's sight, another sense was touched in him; the long-drawn, unearthly, girlish shriek pealed through and through his soul; for now he knew the shriek came from the face--such Delphic shriek could only come from such a source. And wherefore that shriek? thought Pierre. Bodes it ill to the face, or me, or both? How am I changed, that my appearance on any scene should have power to work such woe? But it was mostly the face--the face, that wrought upon him. The shriek seemed as incidentally embodied there.

The emotions he experienced seemed to have taken hold of the deepest roots and subtlest fibres of his being. And so much the more that it was so subterranean in him, so much the more did he feel its weird inscrutableness. What was one unknown, sad-eyed, shrieking girl to him? There must be sad-eyed girls somewhere in the world, and this was only one of them. And what was the most beautiful sad-eyed girl to him? Sadness might be beautiful, as well as mirth--he lost himself trying to

follow out this tangle. "I will no more of this infatuation," he would cry; but forth from regions of irradiated air, the divine beauty and imploring sufferings of the face, stole into his view.

Hitherto I have ever held but lightly, thought Pierre, all stories of ghostly mysticalness in man; my creed of this world leads me to believe in visible, beautiful flesh, and audible breath, however sweet and scented; but only in visible flesh, and audible breath, have I hitherto believed. But now!--now!--and again he would lose himself in the most surprising and preternatural ponderings, which baffled all the introspective cunning of his mind. Himself was too much for himself. He felt that what he had always before considered the solid land of veritable reality, was now being audaciously encroached upon by bannered armies of hooded phantoms, disembarking in his soul, as from flotillas of specter-boats.

The terrors of the face were not those of Gorgon; not by repelling hideousness did it smite him so; but bewilderingly allured him, by its nameless beauty, and its long-suffering, hopeless anguish.

But he was sensible that this general effect upon him, was also special; the face somehow mystically appealing to his own private and individual affections; and by a silent and tyrannic call, challenging him in his deepest moral being, and summoning Truth, Love, Pity, Conscience, to the stand. Apex of all wonders! thought Pierre; this indeed almost unmans me with its wonderfulness. Escape the face he could not. Muffling his own

in his bed-clothes--that did not hide it. Flying from it by sunlight down the meadows, was as vain.

Most miraculous of all to Pierre was the vague impression, that somewhere he had seen traits of the likeness of that face before. But where, he could not say; nor could he, in the remotest degree, imagine. He was not unaware--for in one or two instances, he had experienced the fact--that sometimes a man may see a passing countenance in the street, which shall irresistibly and magnetically affect him, for a moment, as wholly unknown to him, and yet strangely reminiscent of some vague face he has previously encountered, in some fancied time, too, of extreme interest to his life. But not so was it now with Pierre. The face had not perplexed him for a few speculative minutes, and then glided from him, to return no more. It stayed close by him; only--and not invariably--could he repel it, by the exertion of all his resolution and self-will. Besides, what of general enchantment lurked in his strange sensations, seemed concentringly condensed, and pointed to a spear-head, that pierced his heart with an inexplicable pang, whenever the specializing emotion--to call it so--seized the possession of his thoughts, and waved into his visions, a thousand forms of by-gone times, and many an old legendary family scene, which he had heard related by his elderly relations, some of them now dead.

Disguising his wild reveries as best he might from the notice of his mother, and all other persons of her household, for two days Pierre wrestled with his own haunted spirit; and at last, so effectually purged

it of all weirdnesses, and so effectually regained the general mastery of himself, that for a time, life went with him, as though he had never been stirred so strangely. Once more, the sweet unconditional thought of Lucy slid wholly into his soul, dislodging thence all such phantom occupants. Once more he rode, he walked, he swam, he vaulted; and with new zest threw himself into the glowing practice of all those manly exercises, he so dearly loved. It almost seemed in him, that ere promising forever to protect, as well as eternally to love, his Lucy, he must first completely invigorate and embrown himself into the possession of such a noble muscular manliness, that he might champion Lucy against the whole physical world.

Still--even before the occasional reappearance of the face to him--Pierre, for all his willful ardor in his gymnastics and other diversions, whether in-doors or out, or whether by book or foil; still, Pierre could not but be secretly annoyed, and not a little perplexed, as to the motive, which, for the first time in his recollection, had impelled him, not merely to conceal from his mother a singular circumstance in his life (for that, he felt would have been but venial; and besides, as will eventually be seen, he could find one particular precedent for it, in his past experience) but likewise, and superaddedly, to parry, nay, to evade, and, in effect, to return something alarmingly like a fib, to an explicit question put to him by his mother;--such being the guise, in which part of the conversation they had had that eventful night, now appeared to his fastidious sense. He considered also, that his evasive answer had not pantheistically

burst from him in a momentary interregnum of self-command. No; his mother had made quite a lengthy speech to him; during which he well remembered, he had been carefully, though with trepidation, turning over in his mind, how best he might recall her from her unwished-for and untimely scent. Why had this been so? Was this his wont? What inscrutable thing was it, that so suddenly had seized him, and made him a falsifyer--ay, a falsifyer and nothing less--to his own dearly-beloved, and confiding mother? Here, indeed, was something strange for him; here was stuff for his utmost ethical meditations. But, nevertheless, on strict introspection, he felt, that he would not willingly have it otherwise; not willingly would he now undissemble himself in this matter to his mother. Why was this, too? Was this his wont? Here, again, was food for mysticism. Here, in imperfect inklings, tinglings, presentiments, Pierre began to feel--what all mature men, who are Magians, sooner or later know, and more or less assuredly--that not always in our actions, are we our own factors. But this conceit was very dim in Pierre; and dimness is ever suspicious and repugnant to us; and so, Pierre shrank abhorringly from the infernal catacombs of thought, down into which, this foetal fancy beckoned him. Only this, though in secret, did he cherish; only this, he felt persuaded of; namely, that not for both worlds would he have his mother made a partner to his sometime mystic mood.

But with this nameless fascination of the face upon him, during those two days that it had first and fully possessed him for its own, did perplexed Pierre refrain from that apparently most natural of all

resources,--boldly seeking out, and returning to the palpable cause, and questioning her, by look or voice, or both together--the mysterious girl herself? No; not entirely did Pierre here refrain. But his profound curiosity and interest in the matter--strange as it may seem--did not so much appear to be embodied in the mournful person of the olive girl, as by some radiations from her, embodied in the vague conceits which agitated his own soul. There, lurked the subtler secret: that, Pierre had striven to tear away. From without, no wonderful effect is wrought within ourselves, unless some interior, responding wonder meets it. That the starry vault shall surcharge the heart with all rapturous marvelings, is only because we ourselves are greater miracles, and superber trophies than all the stars in universal space. Wonder interlocks with wonder; and then the confounding feeling comes. No cause have we to fancy, that a horse, a dog, a fowl, ever stand transfixed beneath yon skyey load of majesty. But our soul's arches underfit into its; and so, prevent the upper arch from falling on us with unsustainable inscrutableness. "Explain ye my deeper mystery," said the shepherd Chaldean king, smiting his breast, lying on his back upon the plain; "and then, I will bestow all my wonderings upon ye, ye stately stars!" So, in some sort, with Pierre. Explain thou this strange integral feeling in me myself, he thought--turning upon the fancied face--and I will then renounce all other wonders, to gaze wonderingly at thee. But thou hast evoked in me profounder spells than the evoking one, thou face! For me, thou hast uncovered one infinite, dumb, beseeching countenance of mystery, underlying all the surfaces of visible time and space.

But during those two days of his first wild vassalage to his original sensations, Pierre had not been unvisited by less mysterious impulses. Two or three very plain and practical plannings of desirable procedures in reference to some possible homely explication of all this nonsense--so he would momentarily denominate it--now and then flittingly intermitted his pervading mood of semi-madness. Once he had seized his hat, careless of his accustomed gloves and cane, and found himself in the street, walking very rapidly in the direction of the Miss Pennies'. But whither now? he disenchantingly interrogated himself. Where would you go? A million to one, those deaf old spinsters can tell you nothing you burn to know. Deaf old spinsters are not used to be the depositaries of such mystical secrecies. But then, they may reveal her name--where she dwells, and something, however fragmentary and unsatisfactory, of who she is, and whence. Ay; but then, in ten minutes after your leaving them, all the houses in Saddle Meadows would be humming with the gossip of Pierre Glendinning engaged to marry Lucy Tartan, and yet running about the country, in ambiguous pursuit of strange young women. That will never do. You remember, do you not, often seeing the Miss Pennies, hatless and without a shawl, hurrying through the village, like two postmen intent on dropping some tit-bit of precious gossip? What a morsel for them, Pierre, have you, if you now call upon them. Verily, their trumpets are both for use and for significance. Though very deaf, the Miss Pennies are by no means dumb. They blazon very wide.

"Now be sure, and say that it was the Miss Pennies, who left the



news--be sure--we--the Miss Pennies--remember--say to Mrs. Glendinning it was we." Such was the message that now half-humorously occurred to Pierre, as having been once confided to him by the sister spinsters, one evening when they called with a choice present of some very recherche chit-chat for his mother; but found the manorial lady out; and so charged her son with it; hurrying away to all the inferior houses, so as not to be anywhere forestalled in their disclosure.

Now, I wish it had been any other house than the Miss Pennies; any other house but theirs, and on my soul I believe I should have gone. But not to them--no, that I can not do. It would be sure to reach my mother, and then she would put this and that together--stir a little--let it simmer--and farewell forever to all her majestic notions of my immaculate integrity. Patience, Pierre, the population of this region is not so immense. No dense mobs of Nineveh confound all personal identities in Saddle Meadows. Patience; thou shalt see it soon again; catch it passing thee in some green lane, sacred to thy evening reveries. She that bears it can not dwell remote. Patience, Pierre. Ever are such mysteries best and soonest unraveled by the eventual unraveling of themselves. Or, if you will, go back and get your gloves, and more especially your cane, and begin your own secret voyage of discovery after it. Your cane, I say; because it will probably be a very long and weary walk. True, just now I hinted, that she that bears it can not dwell very remote; but then her nearness may not be at all conspicuous. So, homeward, and put off thy hat, and let thy cane stay still, good Pierre. Seek not to mystify the mystery so.

Thus, intermittingly, ever and anon during those sad two days of deepest sufferance, Pierre would stand reasoning and expostulating with himself; and by such meditative treatment, reassure his own spontaneous impulses. Doubtless, it was wise and right that so he did; doubtless: but in a world so full of all dubieties as this, one can never be entirely certain whether another person, however carefully and cautiously conscientious, has acted in all respects conceivable for the very best.

But when the two days were gone by, and Pierre began to recognize his former self as restored to him from its mystic exile, then the thoughts of personally and pointedly seeking out the unknown, either preliminarily by a call upon the sister spinsters, or generally by performing the observant lynx-eyed circuit of the country on foot, and as a crafty inquisitor, dissembling his cause of inquisition; these and all similar intentions completely abandoned Pierre.

He was now diligently striving, with all his mental might, forever to drive the phantom from him. He seemed to feel that it begat in him a certain condition of his being, which was most painful, and every way uncongenial to his natural, wonted self. It had a touch of he knew not what sort of unhealthiness in it, so to speak; for, in his then ignorance, he could find no better term; it seemed to have in it a germ of somewhat which, if not quickly extirpated, might insidiously poison and embitter his whole life--that choice, delicious life which he had

vowed to Lucy for his one pure and comprehensive offering--at once a sacrifice and a delight.

Nor in these endeavorings did he entirely fail. For the most part, he felt now that he had a power over the comings and the goings of the face; but not on all occasions. Sometimes the old, original mystic tyranny would steal upon him; the long, dark, locks of mournful hair would fall upon his soul, and trail their wonderful melancholy along with them; the two full, steady, over-brimming eyes of loveliness and anguish would converge their magic rays, till he felt them kindling he could not tell what mysterious fires in the heart at which they aimed.

When once this feeling had him fully, then was the perilous time for Pierre. For supernatural as the feeling was, and appealing to all things ultramontane to his soul; yet was it a delicious sadness to him. Some hazy fairy swam above him in the heavenly ether, and showered down upon him the sweetest pearls of pensiveness. Then he would be seized with a singular impulse to reveal the secret to some one other individual in the world. Only one, not more; he could not hold all this strange fullness in himself. It must be shared. In such an hour it was, that chancing to encounter Lucy (her, whom above all others, he did confidingly adore), she heard the story of the face; nor slept at all that night; nor for a long time freed her pillow completely from wild, Beethoven sounds of distant, waltzing melodies, as of ambiguous fairies dancing on the heath.

### III.

This history goes forward and goes backward, as occasion calls. Nimble center, circumference elastic you must have. Now we return to Pierre, wending homeward from his reveries beneath the pine-tree.

His burst of impatience against the sublime Italian, Dante, arising from that poet being the one who, in a former time, had first opened to his shuddering eyes the infinite cliffs and gulfs of human mystery and misery;--though still more in the way of experimental vision, than of sensational presentiment or experience (for as yet he had not seen so far and deep as Dante, and therefore was entirely incompetent to meet the grim bard fairly on his peculiar ground), this ignorant burst of his young impatience,--also arising from that half contemptuous dislike, and sometimes selfish loathing, with which, either naturally feeble or undeveloped minds, regard those dark ravings of the loftier poets, which are in eternal opposition to their own fine-spun, shallow dreams of rapturous or prudential Youth;--this rash, untutored burst of Pierre's young impatience, seemed to have carried off with it, all the other forms of his melancholy--if melancholy it had been--and left him now serene again, and ready for any tranquil pleasantness the gods might have in store. For his, indeed, was true Youth's temperament,--summary with sadness, swift to joyfulness, and long protracting, and detaining with that joyfulness, when once it came fully nigh to him.

As he entered the dining-hall, he saw Dates retiring from another door with his tray. Alone and meditative, by the bared half of the polished table, sat his mother at her dessert; fruit-baskets, and a decanter were before her. On the other leaf of the same table, still lay the cloth, folded back upon itself, and set out with one plate and its usual accompaniments.

"Sit down, Pierre; when I came home, I was surprised to hear that the phaeton had returned so early, and here I waited dinner for you, until I could wait no more. But go to the green pantry now, and get what Dates has but just put away for you there. Heigh-ho! too plainly I foresee it--no more regular dinner-hours, or tea-hours, or supper-hours, in Saddle Meadows, till its young lord is wedded. And that puts me in mind of something, Pierre; but I'll defer it till you have eaten a little. Do you know, Pierre, that if you continue these irregular meals of yours, and deprive me so entirely almost of your company, that I shall run fearful risk of getting to be a terrible wine-bibber;--yes, could you unalarmed see me sitting all alone here with this decanter, like any old nurse, Pierre; some solitary, forlorn old nurse, Pierre, deserted by her last friend, and therefore forced to embrace her flask?"

"No, I did not feel any great alarm, sister," said Pierre, smiling, "since I could not but perceive that the decanter was still full to the stopple."

"Possibly it may be only a fresh decanter, Pierre;" then changing her

voice suddenly--"but mark me, Mr. Pierre Glendinning!"

"Well, Mrs. Mary Glendinning!"

"Do you know, sir, that you are very shortly to be married,--that indeed the day is all but fixed?"

"How-!" cried Pierre, in real joyful astonishment, both at the nature of the tidings, and the earnest tones in which they were conveyed--"dear, dear mother, you have strangely changed your mind then, my dear mother."

"It is even so, dear brother;--before this day month I hope to have a little sister Tartan."

"You talk very strangely, mother," rejoined Pierre, quickly. "I suppose, then, I have next to nothing to say in the matter!"

"Next to nothing, Pierre! What indeed could you say to the purpose? what at all have you to do with it, I should like to know? Do you so much as dream, you silly boy, that men ever have the marrying of themselves? Juxtaposition marries men. There is but one match-maker in the world, Pierre, and that is Mrs. Juxtaposition, a most notorious lady!"

"Very peculiar, disenchanting sort of talk, this, under the circumstances, sister Mary," laying down his fork. "Mrs. Juxtaposition, ah! And in your opinion, mother, does this fine glorious passion only

amount to that?"

"Only to that, Pierre; but mark you: according to my creed--though this part of it is a little hazy--Mrs. Juxtaposition moves her pawns only as she herself is moved to so doing by the spirit."

"Ah! that sets it all right again," said Pierre, resuming his fork--"my appetite returns. But what was that about my being married so soon?" he added, vainly striving to assume an air of incredulity and unconcern; "you were joking, I suppose; it seems to me, sister, either you or I was but just now wandering in the mind a little, on that subject. Are you really thinking of any such thing? and have you really vanquished your sagacious scruples by yourself, after I had so long and ineffectually sought to do it for you? Well, I am a million times delighted; tell me quick!"

"I will, Pierre. You very well know, that from the first hour you apprised me--or rather, from a period prior to that--from the moment that I, by my own insight, became aware of your love for Lucy, I have always approved it. Lucy is a delicious girl; of honorable descent, a fortune, well-bred, and the very pattern of all that I think amiable and attractive in a girl of seventeen."

"Well, well, well," cried Pierre rapidly and impetuously; "we both knew that before."

"Well, well, well, Pierre," retorted his mother, mockingly.

"It is not well, well, well; but ill, ill, ill, to torture me so, mother; go on, do!"

"But notwithstanding my admiring approval of your choice, Pierre; yet, as you know, I have resisted your entreaties for my consent to your speedy marriage, because I thought that a girl of scarcely seventeen, and a boy scarcely twenty, should not be in such a hurry;--there was plenty of time, I thought, which could be profitably employed by both."

"Permit me here to interrupt you, mother. Whatever you may have seen in me; she,--I mean Lucy,--has never been in the slightest hurry to be married;--that's all. But I shall regard it as a lapsus-lingua in you."

"Undoubtedly, a lapsus. But listen to me. I have been carefully observing both you and Lucy of late; and that has made me think further of the matter. Now, Pierre, if you were in any profession, or in any business at all; nay, if I were a farmer's wife, and you my child, working in my fields; why, then, you and Lucy should still wait awhile. But as you have nothing to do but to think of Lucy by day, and dream of her by night, and as she is in the same predicament, I suppose; with respect to you; and as the consequence of all this begins to be discernible in a certain, just perceptible, and quite harmless thinness, so to speak, of the cheek; but a very conspicuous and dangerous



febrileness of the eye; therefore, I choose the lesser of two evils; and now you have my permission to be married, as soon as the thing can be done with propriety. I dare say you have no objection to have the wedding take place before Christmas, the present month being the first of summer."

Pierre said nothing; but leaping to his feet, threw his two arms around his mother, and kissed her repeatedly.

"A most sweet and eloquent answer, Pierre; but sit down again. I desire now to say a little concerning less attractive, but quite necessary things connected with this affair. You know, that by your father's will, these lands and--"

"Miss Lucy, my mistress;" said Dates, throwing open the door.

Pierre sprang to his feet; but as if suddenly mindful of his mother's presence, composed himself again, though he still approached the door.

Lucy entered, carrying a little basket of strawberries.

"Why, how do you do, my dear," said Mrs. Glendinning affectionately.

"This is an unexpected pleasure."

"Yes; and I suppose that Pierre here is a little surprised too; seeing that he was to call upon me this evening, and not I upon him before

sundown. But I took a sudden fancy for a solitary stroll,--the afternoon was such a delicious one; and chancing--it was only chancing--to pass through the Locust Lane leading hither, I met the strangest little fellow, with this basket in his hand.--'Yes, buy them, miss'--said he. 'And how do you know I want to buy them,' returned I, 'I don't want to buy them.'--'Yes you do, miss; they ought to be twenty-six cents, but I'll take thirteen cents, that being my shilling. I always want the odd half cent, I do. Come, I can't wait, I have been expecting you long enough.'

"A very sagacious little imp," laughed Mrs. Glendinning.

"Impertinent little rascal," cried Pierre.

"And am I not now the silliest of all silly girls, to be telling you my adventures so very frankly," smiled Lucy.

"No; but the most celestial of all innocents," cried Pierre, in a rhapsody of delight. "Frankly open is the flower, that hath nothing but purity to show."

"Now, my dear little Lucy," said Mrs. Glendinning, "let Pierre take off your shawl, and come now and stay to tea with us. Pierre has put back the dinner so, the tea-hour will come now very soon."

"Thank you; but I can not stay this time. Look, I have forgotten my own

errand; I brought these strawberries for you, Mrs. Glendinning, and for Pierre;--Pierre is so wonderfully fond of them."

"I was audacious enough to think as much," cried Pierre, "for you and me, you see, mother; for you and me, you understand that, I hope."

"Perfectly, my dear brother."

Lucy blushed.

"How warm it is, Mrs. Glendinning."

"Very warm, Lucy. So you won't stay to tea?"

"No, I must go now; just a little stroll, that's all; good-bye! Now don't be following me, Pierre. Mrs. Glendinning, will you keep Pierre back? I know you want him; you were talking over some private affair when I entered; you both looked so very confidential."

"And you were not very far from right, Lucy," said Mrs. Glendinning, making no sign to stay her departure.

"Yes, business of the highest importance," said Pierre, fixing his eyes upon Lucy significantly.

At this moment, Lucy just upon the point of her departure, was hovering

near the door; the setting sun, streaming through the window, bathed her whole form in golden loveliness and light; that wonderful, and most vivid transparency of her clear Welsh complexion, now fairly glowed like rosy snow. Her flowing, white, blue-ribboned dress, fleecily invested her. Pierre almost thought that she could only depart the house by floating out of the open window, instead of actually stepping from the door. All her aspect to him, was that moment touched with an indescribable gayety, buoyancy, fragility, and an unearthly evanescence.

Youth is no philosopher. Not into young Pierre's heart did there then come the thought, that as the glory of the rose endures but for a day, so the full bloom of girlish airiness and bewitchingness, passes from the earth almost as soon; as jealously absorbed by those frugal elements, which again incorporate that translated girlish bloom, into the first expanding flower-bud. Not into young Pierre, did there then steal that thought of utmost sadness; pondering on the inevitable evanescence of all earthly loveliness; which makes the sweetest things of life only food for ever-devouring and omnivorous melancholy. Pierre's thought was different from this, and yet somehow akin to it.

This to be my wife? I that but the other day weighed an hundred and fifty pounds of solid avoirdupois;--I to wed this heavenly fleece? Methinks one husbandly embrace would break her airy zone, and she exhale upward to that heaven whence she hath hither come, condensed to mortal sight. It can not be; I am of heavy earth, and she of airy light. By heaven, but marriage is an impious thing!

Meanwhile, as these things ran through his soul, Mrs. Glendinning also had thinkings of her own.

"A very beautiful tableau," she cried, at last, artistically turning her gay head a little sideways--"very beautiful, indeed; this, I suppose is all premeditated for my entertainment. Orpheus finding his Eurydice; or Pluto stealing Proserpine. Admirable! It might almost stand for either."

"No," said Pierre, gravely; "it is the last. Now, first I see a meaning there." Yes, he added to himself inwardly, I am Pluto stealing Proserpine; and every accepted lover is.

"And you would be very stupid, brother Pierre, if you did not see something there," said his mother, still that way pursuing her own different train of thought. "The meaning thereof is this: Lucy has commanded me to stay you; but in reality she wants you to go along with her. Well, you may go as far as the porch; but then, you must return, for we have not concluded our little affair, you know. Adieu, little lady!"

There was ever a slight degree of affectionate patronizing in the manner of the resplendent, full-blown Mrs. Glendinning, toward the delicate and shrinking girlhood of young Lucy. She treated her very much as she might have treated some surpassingly beautiful and precocious child; and this was precisely what Lucy was. Looking beyond the present period, Mrs.

Glendinning could not but perceive, that even in Lucy's womanly maturity, Lucy would still be a child to her; because, she, elated, felt, that in a certain intellectual vigor, so to speak, she was the essential opposite of Lucy, whose sympathetic mind and person had both been cast in one mould of wondrous delicacy. But here Mrs. Glendinning was both right and wrong. So far as she here saw a difference between herself and Lucy Tartan, she did not err; but so far--and that was very far--as she thought she saw her innate superiority to her in the absolute scale of being, here she very widely and immeasurably erred. For what may be artistically styled angelicalness, this is the highest essence compatible with created being; and angelicalness hath no vulgar vigor in it. And that thing which very often prompts to the display of any vigor--which thing, in man or woman, is at bottom nothing but ambition--this quality is purely earthly, and not angelical. It is false, that any angels fell by reason of ambition. Angels never fall; and never feel ambition. Therefore, benevolently, and affectionately, and all-sincerely, as thy heart, oh, Mrs. Glendinning! now standest affected toward the fleecy Lucy; still, lady, thou dost very sadly mistake it, when the proud, double-arches of the bright breastplate of thy bosom, expand with secret triumph over one, whom thou so sweetly, but still so patronizingly stylest, The Little Lucy.

But ignorant of these further insights, that very superb-looking lady, now waiting Pierre's return from the portico door, sat in a very matronly revery; her eyes fixed upon the decanter of amber-hued wine before her. Whether it was that she somehow saw some lurking analogical

similitude between that remarkably slender, and gracefully cut little pint-decanter, brimfull of light, golden wine, or not, there is no absolute telling now. But really, the peculiarly, and reminiscently, and forecastingly complacent expression of her beaming and benevolent countenance, seemed a tell-tale of some conceit very much like the following:--Yes, she's a very pretty little pint-decanter of a girl: a very pretty little Pale Sherry pint-decanter of a girl; and I--I'm a quart decanter of--of--Port--potent Port! Now, Sherry for boys, and Port for men--so I've heard men say; and Pierre is but a boy; but when his father wedded me,--why, his father was turned of five-and-thirty years.

After a little further waiting for him, Mrs. Glendinning heard Pierre's voice--"Yes, before eight o'clock at least, Lucy--no fear;" and then the hall door banged, and Pierre returned to her.

But now she found that this unforeseen visit of Lucy had completely routed all business capacity in her mercurial son; fairly capsizing him again into, there was no telling what sea of pleasant pensiveness.

"Dear me! some other time, sister Mary."

"Not this time; that is very certain, Pierre. Upon my word I shall have to get Lucy kidnapped, and temporarily taken out of the country, and you handcuffed to the table, else there will be no having a preliminary understanding with you, previous to calling in the lawyers. Well, I shall yet manage you, one way or other. Good-bye, Pierre; I see you

don't want me now. I suppose I shan't see you till to-morrow morning. Luckily, I have a very interesting book to read. Adieu!"

But Pierre remained in his chair; his gaze fixed upon the stilly sunset beyond the meadows, and far away to the now golden hills. A glorious, softly glorious, and most gracious evening, which seemed plainly a tongue to all humanity, saying: I go down in beauty to rise in joy; Love reigns throughout all worlds that sunsets visit; it is a foolish ghost story; there is no such thing as misery. Would Love, which is omnipotent, have misery in his domain? Would the god of sunlight decree gloom? It is a flawless, speckless, fleckless, beautiful world throughout; joy now, and joy forever!

Then the face, which before had seemed mournfully and reproachfully looking out upon him from the effulgent sunset's heart; the face slid from him; and left alone there with his soul's joy, thinking that that very night he would utter the magic word of marriage to his Lucy; not a happier youth than Pierre Glendinning sat watching that day's sun go down.

IV.

After this morning of gayety, this noon of tragedy, and this evening so full of chequered pensiveness; Pierre now possessed his soul in joyful mildness and steadfastness; feeling none of that wild anguish of



anticipative rapture, which, in weaker minds, too often dislodges Love's sweet bird from her nest.

The early night was warm, but dark--for the moon was not risen yet--and as Pierre passed on beneath the pendulous canopies of the long arms of the weeping elms of the village, an almost impenetrable blackness surrounded him, but entered not the gently illuminated halls of his heart. He had not gone very far, when in the distance beyond, he noticed a light moving along the opposite side of the road, and slowly approaching. As it was the custom for some of the more elderly, and perhaps timid inhabitants of the village, to carry a lantern when going abroad of so dark a night, this object conveyed no impression of novelty to Pierre; still, as it silently drew nearer and nearer, the one only distinguishable thing before him, he somehow felt a nameless presentiment that the light must be seeking him. He had nearly gained the cottage door, when the lantern crossed over toward him; and as his nimble hand was laid at last upon the little wicket-gate, which he thought was now to admit him to so much delight; a heavy hand was laid upon himself, and at the same moment, the lantern was lifted toward his face, by a hooded and obscure-looking figure, whose half-averted countenance he could but indistinctly discern. But Pierre's own open aspect, seemed to have been quickly scrutinized by the other.

"I have a letter for Pierre Glendinning," said the stranger, "and I believe this is he." At the same moment, a letter was drawn forth, and

sought his hand.

"For me!" exclaimed Pierre, faintly, starting at the strangeness of the encounter;--"methinks this is an odd time and place to deliver your mail;--who are you?--Stay!"

But without waiting an answer, the messenger had already turned about, and was re-crossing the road. In the first impulse of the moment, Pierre stepped forward, and would have pursued him; but smiling at his own causeless curiosity and trepidation, paused again; and softly turned over the letter in his hand. What mysterious correspondent is this, thought he, circularly moving his thumb upon the seal; no one writes me but from abroad; and their letters come through the office; and as for Lucy--pooh!--when she herself is within, she would hardly have her notes delivered at her own gate. Strange! but I'll in, and read it;--no, not that;--I come to read again in her own sweet heart--that dear missive to me from heaven,--and this impertinent letter would pre-occupy me. I'll wait till I go home.

He entered the gate, and laid his hand upon the cottage knocker. Its sudden coolness caused a slight, and, at any other time, an unaccountable sympathetic sensation in his hand. To his unwonted mood, the knocker seemed to say--"Enter not!--Begone, and first read thy note."

Yielding now, half alarmed, and half bantering with himself, to these

shadowy interior monitions, he half-unconsciously quitted the door; repassed the gate; and soon found himself retracing his homeward path.

He equivocated with himself no more; the gloom of the air had now burst into his heart, and extinguished its light; then, first in all his life, Pierre felt the irresistible admonitions and intuitions of Fate.

He entered the hall unnoticed, passed up to his chamber, and hurriedly locking the door in the dark, lit his lamp. As the summoned flame illuminated the room, Pierre, standing before the round center-table, where the lamp was placed, with his hand yet on the brass circle which regulated the wick, started at a figure in the opposite mirror. It bore the outline of Pierre, but now strangely filled with features transformed, and unfamiliar to him; feverish eagerness, fear, and nameless forebodings of ill! He threw himself into a chair, and for a time vainly struggled with the incomprehensible power that possessed him. Then, as he avertedly drew the letter from his bosom, he whispered to himself--Out on thee, Pierre! how sheepish now will ye feel when this tremendous note will turn out to be an invitation to a supper to-morrow night; quick, fool, and write the stereotyped reply: Mr. Pierre Glendinning will be very happy to accept Miss so and so's polite invitation.

Still for the moment he held the letter averted. The messenger had so hurriedly accosted him, and delivered his duty, that Pierre had not yet so much as gained one glance at the superscription of the note. And now

the wild thought passed through his mind of what would be the result, should he deliberately destroy the note, without so much as looking at the hand that had addressed it. Hardly had this half-crazy conceit fully made itself legible in his soul, when he was conscious of his two hands meeting in the middle of the sundered note! He leapt from his chair--By heaven! he murmured, unspeakably shocked at the intensity of that mood which had caused him unwittingly as it were, to do for the first time in his whole life, an act of which he was privately ashamed. Though the mood that was on him was none of his own willful seeking; yet now he swiftly felt conscious that he had perhaps a little encouraged it, through that certain strange infatuation of fondness, which the human mind, however vigorous, sometimes feels for any emotion at once novel and mystical. Not willingly, at such times--never mind how fearful we may be--do we try to dissolve the spell which seems, for the time, to admit us, all astonished, into the vague vestibule of the spiritual worlds.

Pierre now seemed distinctly to feel two antagonistic agencies within him; one of which was just struggling into his consciousness, and each of which was striving for the mastery; and between whose respective final ascendancies, he thought he could perceive, though but shadowly, that he himself was to be the only umpire. One bade him finish the selfish destruction of the note; for in some dark way the reading of it would irretrievably entangle his fate. The other bade him dismiss all misgivings; not because there was no possible ground for them, but because to dismiss them was the manlier part, never mind what might

betide. This good angel seemed mildly to say--Read, Pierre, though by reading thou may'st entangle thyself, yet may'st thou thereby disentangle others. Read, and feel that best blessedness which, with the sense of all duties discharged, holds happiness indifferent. The bad angel insinuatingly breathed--Read it not, dearest Pierre; but destroy it, and be happy. Then, at the blast of his noble heart, the bad angel shrunk up into nothingness; and the good one defined itself clearer and more clear, and came nigher and more nigh to him, smiling sadly but benignantly; while forth from the infinite distances wonderful harmonies stole into his heart; so that every vein in him pulsed to some heavenly swell.

V.

"The name at the end of this letter will be wholly strange to thee. Hitherto my existence has been utterly unknown to thee. This letter will touch thee and pain thee. Willingly would I spare thee, but I can not. My heart bears me witness, that did I think that the suffering these lines would give thee, would, in the faintest degree, compare with what mine has been, I would forever withhold them.

"Pierre Glendinning, thou art not the only child of thy father; in the eye of the sun, the hand that traces this is thy sister's; yes, Pierre, Isabel calls thee her brother--her brother! oh, sweetest of words, which so often I have thought to myself, and almost deemed it profanity for an

outcast like me to speak or think. Dearest Pierre, my brother, my own father's child! art thou an angel, that thou canst overleap all the heartless usages and fashions of a banded world, that will call thee fool, fool, fool! and curse thee, if thou yieldest to that heavenly impulse which alone can lead thee to respond to the long tyrannizing, and now at last unquenchable yearnings of my bursting heart? Oh, my brother!

"But, Pierre Glendinning, I will be proud with thee. Let not my hapless condition extinguish in me, the nobleness which I equally inherit with thee. Thou shall not be cozened, by my tears and my anguish, into any thing which thy most sober hour will repent. Read no further. If it suit thee, burn this letter; so shalt thou escape the certainty of that knowledge, which, if thou art now cold and selfish, may hereafter, in some maturer, remorseful, and helpless hour, cause thee a poignant upbraiding. No, I shall not, I will not implore thee.--Oh, my brother, my dear, dear Pierre,--help me, fly to me; see, I perish without thee;--pity, pity,--here I freeze in the wide, wide world;--no father, no mother, no sister, no brother, no living thing in the fair form of humanity, that holds me dear. No more, oh no more, dear Pierre, can I endure to be an outcast in the world, for which the dear Savior died. Fly to me, Pierre;--nay, I could tear what I now write,--as I have torn so many other sheets, all written for thy eye, but which never reached thee, because in my distraction, I knew not how to write to thee, nor what to say to thee; and so, behold again how I rave.

"Nothing more; I will write no more;--silence becomes this grave;--the heart-sickness steals over me, Pierre, my brother.

"Scarce know I what I have written. Yet will I write thee the fatal line, and leave all the rest to thee, Pierre, my brother.--She that is called Isabel Banford dwells in the little red farm-house, three miles from the village, on the slope toward the lake. To-morrow night-fall--not before--not by day, not by day, Pierre.

THY SISTER, ISABEL."

VI.

This letter, inscribed in a feminine, but irregular hand, and in some places almost illegible, plainly attesting the state of the mind which had dictated it;--stained, too, here and there, with spots of tears, which chemically acted upon by the ink, assumed a strange and reddish hue--as if blood and not tears had dropped upon the sheet;--and so completely torn in two by Pierre's own hand, that it indeed seemed the fit scroll of a torn, as well as bleeding heart;--this amazing letter, deprived Pierre for the time of all lucid and definite thought or feeling. He hung half-lifeless in his chair; his hand, clutching the letter, was pressed against his heart, as if some assassin had stabbed him and fled; and Pierre was now holding the dagger in the wound, to stanch the outgushing of the blood.

Ay, Pierre, now indeed art thou hurt with a wound, never to be completely healed but in heaven; for thee, the before undistrusted moral beauty of the world is forever fled; for thee, thy sacred father is no more a saint; all brightness hath gone from thy hills, and all peace from thy plains; and now, now, for the first time, Pierre, Truth rolls a black billow through thy soul! Ah, miserable thou, to whom Truth, in her first tides, bears nothing but wrecks!

The perceptible forms of things; the shapes of thoughts; the pulses of life, but slowly came back to Pierre. And as the mariner, shipwrecked and cast on the beach, has much ado to escape the recoil of the wave that hurled him there; so Pierre long struggled, and struggled, to escape the recoil of that anguish, which had dashed him out of itself, upon the beach of his swoon.

But man was not made to succumb to the villain Woe. Youth is not young and a wrestler in vain. Pierre staggeringly rose to his feet; his wide eyes fixed, and his whole form in a tremble.

"Myself am left, at least," he slowly and half-chokingly murmured. "With myself I front thee! Unhand me all fears, and unlock me all spells! Henceforth I will know nothing but Truth; glad Truth, or sad Truth; I will know what is, and do what my deepest angel dictates.--The letter!--Isabel,--sister,--brother,--me, me--my sacred father!--This is some accursed dream!--nay, but this paper thing is forged,--a base



and malicious forgery, I swear;--Well didst thou hide thy face from me, thou vile lanterned messenger, that didst accost me on the threshold of Joy, with this lying warrant of Woe! Doth Truth come in the dark, and steal on us, and rob us so, and then depart, deaf to all pursuing invocations? If this night, which now wraps my soul, be genuine as that which now wraps this half of the world; then Fate, I have a choice quarrel with thee. Thou art a palterer and a cheat; thou hast lured me on through gay gardens to a gulf. Oh! falsely guided in the days of my Joy, am I now truly led in this night of my grief?--I will be a raver, and none shall stay me! I will lift my hand in fury, for am I not struck? I will be bitter in my breath, for is not this cup of gall? Thou Black Knight, that with visor down, thus confrontest me, and mockest at me; Lo! I strike through thy helm, and will see thy face, be it Gorgon!--Let me go, ye fond affections; all piety leave me;--I will be impious, for piety hath juggled me, and taught me to revere, where I should spurn. From all idols, I tear all veils; henceforth I will see the hidden things; and live right out in my own hidden life!--Now I feel that nothing but Truth can move me so. This letter is not a forgery. Oh! Isabel, thou art my sister; and I will love thee, and protect thee, ay, and own thee through all. Ah! forgive me, ye heavens, for my ignorant ravings, and accept this my vow.--Here I swear myself Isabel's. Oh! thou poor castaway girl, that in loneliness and anguish must have long breathed that same air, which I have only inhaled for delight; thou who must even now be weeping, and weeping, cast into an ocean of uncertainty as to thy fate, which heaven hath placed in my hands; sweet Isabel! would I not be baser than brass, and harder, and colder than ice, if I

could be insensible to such claims as thine? Thou movest before me, in rainbows spun of thy tears! I see thee long weeping, and God demands me for thy comforter; and comfort thee, stand by thee, and fight for thee, will thy leapingly-acknowledging brother, whom thy own father named Pierre!"

He could not stay in his chamber: the house contracted to a nut-shell around him; the walls smote his forehead; bare-headed he rushed from the place, and only in the infinite air, found scope for that boundless expansion of his life.