

force, and heaping on her the most debasing reproaches. "Gentlemen," I exclaimed, "that female is under my protection; pray resign her to my care."

A loud laugh burst from the minions of authority, accompanied with a threat of punishment if I offered to oppose them in the performance of their duty—at the same time they pushed the poor creature with such violence, that she fell prostrate on the cold and flinty pavement.

I felt the blood of indignation mount to my face. I clenched my fist, and but for the cooler judgement of my companion, who arrested my arm, the ruffians the next moment would have fallen before me. I sprang forward, and raised the sufferer—the blood was streaming from a deep gash above her temple.—On perceiving I was beside her, she clung around me with frantic violence. "Save me! save me!" she exclaimed, "they would drag me to a prison—they call me a beggar—a thief—a—a—she could not give utterance to the epithet—a convulsive shudder ran throughout her frame—a flood of tears came to her relief, and she wept bitterly upon my bosom.

The gens d'armes looked at each other with amazement. Their stern visages seemed to relax at the scene of misery. They muttered some words, the direct purport of which I could not hear, but the sounds I thought were those of pity. I seized the moment to appeal to their feelings. My prayer was successful, which, backed by a few pieces—a more powerful advocate than the voice of humanity—they consigned the unfortunate creature to my protection. I now lost no time in urging upon her the necessity of accompanying us to a place of safety. At first she hesitated, as if suspicious that my suggestion was the covert of some sinister design, but my request being seconded by my generous friend, won her confidence, and leaning upon us for support, we directed her tottering footsteps to the dwelling of the good Baptiste—the name of the worthy individual who had listened to my story, and who was now most

anxious in his efforts to succour the unfortunate.

Arrived at his dwelling, his kind dame was busy in administering to the wants of the sufferer, who now beginning to feel assured that we were guided in our actions solely from the impulse of charity, began to acquire confidence, while her countenance assumed an expression of melancholy happiness, mingled with the remains of departed beauty. Her age was apparently not more than forty, while her language and mien gave token of a superior education. The locket already referred to, gave also proof that there was a mystery connected with the situation in which I had found her. Her exhausted state, however, forbade, for the present, any enquiry, and confiding her to the care of Baptiste and his spouse, with means to procure whatever was necessary for her immediate wants, I was about to retire, with the promise that I should be with her in the morning, but the poor creature appeared fearful to part from me. "Oh, sir," she exclaimed, "do not forsake me. I am indeed unfortunate. I have no friend on earth; all, all have deserted me. You, sir, I feel, were sent by Heaven to extricate me from the wiles of oppression, do not deny me your confidence—your counsel. I am a wretched wife and mother—my husband is—"

"Hush!" I cried, interrupting her: "to-morrow I will hear all—doubt not my friendship—my interest in your case. You want repose. Retire, and in the morning I shall be with you." The poor creature seemed entirely overcome by the little kindness I had shown her; she fell upon her knees, and invoked a blessing upon me. Baptiste and his spouse responded "Amen!" I departed from the house. Darkness had now completely enveloped the world; the elements had nothing abated in their fury, and hurrying through the storm-swept streets, I soon reached my home. That night as I pressed my pillow, I thanked God that I felt a better and a happier man.

On the morning I repaired to the