

'O my lord!' said Kenrick, 'let me now claim the long promised retirement: till I leagued with you, guilt was unknown to me; I now wish a spot where uninterrupted penitence may bring peace; my hands are free from actual blood but my crimes are heavy.'

'Stay,' interrupted Osmond, 'no more of this dismal theme; a *retreat* is already provided for you, where I trust you will find a *calm repose*.'

'Generous friend,' exclaimed Kenrick, full of gratitude; 'let me thank you on my knees—pardon me, I thought of late you seemed cool, and I mistrusted your friendship.'

'Enough, enough, my good Kenrick,' said Osmond, clasping his hands—he then ordered him to retire, and send the Lady Angela to him. He arose at her entrance, and greeted her with courteous salutations, which were replied to very coolly by our youthful heroine; she had heard from dame Alice, the talkative housekeeper of the castle, (who had long held that station, and was as proud of relating the traditions of the family as she was of holding the keys) much the same account of Earl Osmond, and the murdered pair, as that given by Gilbert to Percy. But when he offered her himself in marriage, and to make her the uncontrolled mistress of all his vast possessions, she indignantly refused him, and avowed her love, her unalterable passion for the peasant Edwy. Oh! what sounds of harmony and joy to Northumberland's greedy ear, as he stood cased in armour on the pedestal. In vain Osmond tried to combat against her truth and predilection for another, till overcome with rage, he talked of using force—a hollow groan met his ear; he started back, but recovering himself, he impiously said, 'Angela shall be mine, though hell and all the furies interfere;' and with these words, he clasped the lovely shrieking maid round the waist with his detested arms: at this important moment a second groan was heard, accompanied by a clanking noise of armour; Osmond turned round, and was horror-struck on beholding the statue descend from its pedestal and advance towards him in a menacing attitude. Nature, blended with a guilt-stained conscience, could not support the shock, and the earl fell senseless on the floor, crying out, 'shade of the murdered Reginald, in mercy spare me!'

Angela, thus providentially rescued from his ruffian-like grasp, fled from the armoury; and as she was leaving it, she spied a dagger, which she seized, from the idea it might afford her aid in some future extremity, should Osmond

have the temerity to renew his base attacks on her person. This was to be to her an evening of wonders—she had not long gained her own apartment, when Gilbert introduced Earl Percy, now divested of his borrowed armour; kneeling at her feet, he thanked her with ardour for her constancy to him, and avowed the stratagem he had used to obtain a sight of her. 'It is not rank or fortune can sway my affections,' said the blushing maid; 'and though I am now declared to be the heiress of the late Sir Malcolm Mowbray, yet Edwy, the peasant, is as dear to me as in those happy peaceful days when I considered myself the worthy Allan's daughter.'

'Excellent girl, exalted creature!' exclaimed her lover, 'I will no longer dissemble—it would be ungenerous—I am not Edwy, the peasant, but Percy, Northumberland's Earl, as such I am known to the tyrant Osmond; he has refused my suit, and from the most unworthy motives. Dearest Angela, you must confide in me; you are not safe a moment here; Gilbert, who waits without, will give us egress from the castle; nay, do not hesitate, this opportunity lost, we may meet perhaps no more.'

At this moment the door opened, and Kenrick, with the black slaves entered, and made a prisoner of Percy, whom they dragged into the presence of Osmond, leaving the terrified Angela overwhelmed with despair. Father Phillip entered the room, and exhorted her to comfort, as he would do every thing in his power to befriend her—he then asked her if she did not sleep in the cedar chamber; she replied in the affirmative; he said it was favourable to his designs, but did not explain himself further.

'I have been so fortunate,' said he, 'as to save the life of Gilbert, by warning him to flee from the castle; a minute more, and it would have been too late—the watchful Kenrick had discovered the Earl Percy, and the means by which he was introduced into the armoury; and Osmond was so irritated by the false alarm he had undergone, and the frustration of his schemes that he ordered his instant death. As for Northumberland, he will not dare to take his life, and I trust the captivity of your lover will be short; so daughter be of good cheer, we shall soon meet again:' with these words he withdrew.

Percy taxed Osmond with cowardice, in imprisoning an unarmed individual, and dared him to instant combat if he would give him a sword.