

THE WANDERING JEW.

By Louise May.

CHAPTER LXV.

The wild light of a circular lamp of oriental design, suspended from the ceiling by three silver chains, spread a faint light through the bed-chamber of Adrienne de Cardoville. The large ivory bedstead, raised with mother-of-pearl, is not at present occupied, and a most swiftness beneath snowy curtains of lace and muslin, transparent and vaporous as clouds, on the white marble mantelpiece, from beneath which the fire throws rapidly beams on the massive carpet, is the usual inmate filled with a bush of red camellias, in the midst of their shining green leaves. A pleasant aromatic odor, rising from a warm and perfumed bath in the next room, penetrates every corner of the bedchamber. All without is calm and silent. It is hardly eleven o'clock. The ivory door, opposite to that which leads to the bathroom, opens slowly. Djalma appears. Two hours have elapsed since he committed a double murder, and believed that he had killed Adrienne in a fit of jealous fury.

The servants of Mlle. de Cardoville, accustomed to Djalma's daily visits, no longer announced his arrival, and admitted him without difficulty, having received no orders to the contrary from their mistress. He had never before entered the bedchamber, but, knowing that the apartment the lady occupied was on the first floor of the house, he had easily found it. As he entered that virgin sanctum, the countenance was pretty calm, as well as the general appearance; only a slight paleness betrayed the brilliant author of the complexion.

"Here in this chamber," he continued, "the heaven of my burning vision!" And she, who had aided, with a heartrending accent, as he again buried his face in the hands, "Dead! dead!" "What! I too shall soon be dead!" he resumed, in a firmer voice. "But no! I will die slowly, gradually. A few drops of the poison will suffice; and when I am quite certain of dying, my remorse will perhaps be less terrible. Yesterday, she dressed my hand when she parted. Who could have foretold me this?" The Indian raised the phial resolutely to his lips. He drank a few drops of the liquor it contained, and replaced it on a little ivory table close to Adrienne's bed.

"This liquor is sleep and not," said he. "Now I am certain to die. Oh! that I may still have time to feast on the sight and perfume of this chamber—to lay my dying head on the couch where she has reposed!" Djalma fell on his knees before the bed, and leaned against it with his burning brow. At this moment, the ivory door, which communicated with the bathroom, opened gently, and he and Adrienne entered. The young lady had just sent away her woman, who had assisted to undress her. She wore a long mistle wrapper of lustrous satin, fastened over her shoulders, which gave to her countenance an extremely juvenile air. Her snowy complexion was slightly tinged with rose-color, from the warmth of the perfumed bath, which she used for a few seconds every

evening. When she opened the ivory door, and placed her little naked feet, in its white satin slippers, upon the crimson carpet, Adrienne was dazzlingly beautiful. Happiness sparkled in her eyes, and adorned her brow. All the difficulties relative to her union with Djalma had now been removed. In two days she would be his. The sight of the marital chamber oppressed her with a vague and ineffable languor. The ivory door had been opened so gently, the lady's first steps were so soft upon the fur-carpet, that Djalma, still leaning against the bed, had heard nothing. But suddenly a cry of surprise and alarm struck upon his ear. He turned round abruptly. Adrienne stood before him.

"My friend, why are you here? what aids you? why this dagger?"

At last Djalma, clasping his hands together, exclaimed, with an accent impossible to describe, "Fray not, not dead!" "Dead!" repeated the young lady, in amazement.

"It was not thou, really not thou, whom I killed? God is kind and just!"

And as he pronounced these words with intense joy, the unfortunate youth forgot the victim whom he had sacrificed in error.

More and more alarmed, and again glancing at the dagger, on which she now perceived marks of blood—a terrible evidence, in confirmation of the words of Djalma—Mlle. de Cardoville exclaimed, "You have killed someone, Djalma! Oh! what does he say? It is dreadful!" "You are alive—I see you—you are here," said Djalma, in a voice trembling with rapture. "You are here—beautiful! pure! for it was not you! Oh, no! had it been you, the steel would have turned back upon myself."

"You have killed someone?" cried the young lady, beside herself with the unforeseen revelation, and clasping her hands in horror. "Why? whom did you kill?"

"I do not know. A woman that was like you—a man that I thought your lover—it was an illusion, a frightful dream—you are alive—you are here!"

And the oriental kept for joy. "A dream? but no, it is not a dream. There is blood upon that dagger!" cried the young lady, as she pointed wildly to the scabbard. "I tell you there is blood upon it!"—"Yes, I threw it down just now, when I took the poison from it, thinking that I had killed you."

"The poison!" exclaimed Adrienne, and her teeth chattered convulsively. "What poison?"—"I thought I had killed you, and I came here to die!"

"Rodie? Oh! wherefore? who is to die?" cried the young lady, almost in delirium.

"I," replied Djalma, with inexpressible tenderness, "I thought I had killed you—and I took poison."

spring to the drinker's side, and dragged away the phial, which seemed almost glued to her mouth.

"No matter! I have swallowed as much as you," said Adrienne, with an air of gloomy triumph.

For an instant, there followed an awful silence. Adrienne and Djalma gazed upon each other, mute, motionless, horror-struck. The young lady was the first to break this mournful silence, and said in a tone which she tried to make calm and steady, "Well! what is there extraordinary in this? You have killed, and death must expiate your crime. It is just. I will not survive you. That also is natural enough. Why look at me thus? This poison has a sharp taste—does it act quickly? Tell me, my Djalma!"

The prince did not answer. Shuddering through all his frame, he looked down upon his hands. Faringhea had told the truth: a slight violet tint appeared already beneath the nails. Death was approaching, slowly, almost insensibly, but not the less certain. Overwhelmed with despair at the thought that Adrienne, too, was about to die, Djalma felt his courage fail him. He uttered a long groan, and hid his face in his hands. His knees shook under him, and he fell down upon the bed, near which he was standing.

"Already?" cried the young lady in horror, as she threw herself on her knees at Djalma's feet. "Death already? Do you hide your face from me?"

In her fright, she pulled his hands from before his face. That face was bathed in tears.

"No, not yet," murmured he, through his sobs. "The poison is slow."

"Really?" cried Adrienne, with ineffable joy. Then, kissing the hands of Djalma, she added tenderly, "If the poison is slow, why do you weep?"

"For you! for you!" said the Indian, in a heart-rending tone.

"Think not of me," replied Adrienne, resolutely. "No more tears, my adored!" cried the young lady, exultingly. "No more tears—but only smiles of joy and love! Our cruel enemies shall not triumph!"

"What do you say?"

"They wished to make us miserable. We pity them. Our felicity shall be the envy of the world!"—"Adrienne—bethink you—"

"Oh! I have all my senses about me. Listen to me, my adored! I now understand it all. Falling into a snare, which these wretches spread for you, you have committed murder. Now, in this country, murder leads to infamy, or the scaffold—and to-morrow—to-night perhaps—you would be thrown into prison. But our enemies have said: 'A man like Prince Djalma does not wait for infamy—he kills himself. A woman

like Adrienne de Cardoville does not survive the disgrace of death of her lover—she prefers to die. Therefore a frightful death awaits them both.' said the black-robed man; and that immense inheritance, which we covet—"

"And for you—so young, so beautiful, so innocent—death is frightful, and these monsters triumph!" cried Djalma. "They have spoken the truth!"

"They have lied!" answered Adrienne. "Our death shall be celestial. This poison is slow—and I adore you, my Djalma!"

The light transparent curtains fell like a cloud over the nuptial and funeral couch. Yes, funeral; for, two hours after, Adrienne and Djalma breathed their last sigh in a voluptuous agony.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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