

instantly in alarm; but i soon discovered them to be atoi and his party, who had been absent about two months on a war like expedition to the thames, and they were now returning successful. i had witnessed the departure of this expedition, and considered it in the light of a reconnoitring party. i could not make out what the real object was they had been in search of; but, wherever they had been, they had been victorious, for they now returned with quantities of plunder, human heads, human flesh, and many prisoners after the dance and sham fight had been duly gone through, they proceeded to land their cargo of spoil. first came a group of miserable creatures, women and children, torn by violence from their native homes, henceforth to be the slaves of their conquerors; some were miserably wounded and lacerated, others looked half starved, but all seemed wretched and dejected. the women of kororarika, with their usual humanity, instantly surrounded them, and endeavoured to console them, and then shed abundance of tears over them. i enquired of one of the warriors what they had done with the male prisoners: he coolly replied, they had all been eaten, except some titbits, which had been packed up in the baskets and brought on shore, in order to regale particular friends and favourites they had also brought with them several heads, which they have the art of preparing in their native ovens, so as not to disfigure the countenance nor injure the figure tatood upon them. one of these, the skull of a distinguished chief, seemed to afford them amazing delight. most of our people had known him well, and several of his near relations were present: but cruel war seemed to have eradicated every probably, as it would seem, a roman citizen, in which case as porphyrius agreed both the young girl and her little brother could legally claim their freedom. the insurgents who had dragged the two children out into the street had been driven off by the troops, and it was from them that karnis had rescued them. and i have never regretted it, added the old musician, for agne is a sweet, gentle soul. of her voice i need say nothing, since you yourselves heard it yesterday. and were quite delighted with it cried gorgo. if flowers could sing it would be like that well, well, said karnis. she has a lovely voice but she wants wings. something what, i know not, keeps the violet rooted to the soil. christian scruples, said the merchant, and damia added: let eros touch her that will loosen her tongue. eros, always eros repeated gorgo shrugging her shoulders. nay, love means suffering those who love drag a chain with them. to do the best of which he is capable man needs only to be free, true, and in health. that is a great deal, fair mistress, replied karnis eagerly. with these three gifts the best work is done. but as to agne what can be further from freedom than a girl bound to service her body, to be sure is healthy, but her spirit suffers; she can get no peace for dread of the christians terrors: sin, repentance, and hell. oh, we know how their life is ruined interrupted the old lady. was it agne who introduced you to marys asylum no, noble lady. but how then that prudent saint generally selects her guests, and those that are not baptized she certainly sheltered heathens on this occasion. i am much surprised. tell me how it happened. we were at rome, began karnis, and my patron there persuaded marcus, marys son, to take us on board his ship at ostia. we dropped anchor at cyrene, where the young master wanted to pick up from which he might hope in time to recover some measure of self respect and peace of mind. he would resign his work at cullerne the very next day; and then a wilder gust of wind buffeted the windows of his room, and he thought of the scaffolding on saint sepulchres tower. what a terrible night it was would the thin boards of the tower arches live through such a night, with the weight of the great tower rocking over them no, he could not resign to morrow. it would be deserting his post. he must stand by till the tower was safe, that was his first duty. after that he would give up his post at once. later on he went to bed, and in those dark watches of the night, that are not kept by reason, there swept over him thoughts wilder than the wind outside. he had made himself sponsor for lord blandamer, he had assumed the burden of the others crime. it was he that was branded with the mark of cain, and he must hide it in silence from the eyes of all men. he must fly from cullerne, and walk alone with his burden for the rest of his life, a scapegoat in the isolation of the wilderness. in sleep the terror that walketh in darkness brooded heavily on him. he was in the church of saint sepulchre, and blood