

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CAPTIVE CONTINUED

OUR renegade had in a fortnight's time bought a very good bark, capable of carrying above thirty people; and to give no suspicion of any other design, he undertook a voyage to a place upon the coast called Sargel, about thirty leagues to the eastward of Algiers towards Oran, where there is a great trade for dried figs. He made his voyage two or three times in company with the Tagarin Moor his partner. Those Moors are called in Barbary Tagarins, who were driven out of Arragon; as they call those of Granada, Mudajares; and the same in the kingdom of Fez are called Elches, and are the best soldiers that prince has.

Every time he passed with his bark along the coast, he used to cast anchor in a little bay that was not above two bow-shot from the garden where Zoraida expected us; and there he used to exercise the Moors that rowed, either in making the Sala, which is a ceremony

among them, or in some other employment; by which he practised in jest what he was resolved to execute in earnest. So sometimes he would go to the garden of Zoraida and beg some fruit, and her father would give him some, though he did not know him. He had a mind to find an occasion to speak to Zoraida, and tell her, as he since owned to me, that he was the man who by my order was to carry her to the land of the Christians, and that she might depend upon it; but he could never get an opportunity of doing it, because the Moorish and Turkish women never suffer themselves to be seen by any of their own nation, but by their husband, or by his or their father's command; but as for the Christian slaves, they let them see them, and that more familiarly than perhaps could be wished. I should have been very sorry that the renegade had seen or spoke to Zoraida, for it must needs have troubled her infinitely to see that her business was trusted to a renegade; and God Almighty, who governed our design, ordered it so, that the renegade was disappointed. He in the meantime seeing how securely, and without suspicion, he went and came along the coast, staying where and when he pleased by the way, and that his partner the Tagarin Moor was of

his mind in all things; that I was at liberty, and that there wanted nothing but some Christians to help us to row; bid me consider whom I intended to carry with me besides those who were ransomed, and that I should make sure of them for the first Friday, because he had pitched on that day for our departure. Upon notice of this resolution, I spoke to twelve lusty Spaniards, good rowers, and those who might easiest get out of the city: it was a great fortune that we got so many in such a conjuncture, because there were above twenty sail of rovers gone out, who had taken aboard most of the slaves fit for the oar; and we had not had these, but that their master happened to stay at home that summer, to finish a galley he was building to cruise with, and was then upon the stocks. I said no more to them, than only they should steal out of the town in the evening upon the next Friday, and stay for me upon the way that led to Agimorato's garden. I spoke to every one by himself, and gave each of them order to say no more to any other Christian they should see, than that they stayed for me there. Having done this, I had another thing of the greatest importance to bring to pass, which was to give Zoraida notice of our design, and how far we had carried it, that she

might be ready at a short warning, and not to be surprised if we came upon the house in a sudden, and even before she could think that the Christian bark could be come. This made me resolve to go to the garden to try if it were possible to speak to her: so one day, upon pretence of gathering a few herbs, I entered the garden, and the first person I met was her father, who spoke to me in the language used all over the Turkish dominions, which is a mixture of all the Christian and Moorish languages, by which we understand one another from Constantinople to Algiers, and asked me what I looked for in his garden, and who I belonged to? I told him I was a slave of Arnaute Mami (this man I knew was his intimate friend), and that I wanted a few herbs to make up a salad. He then asked me if I were a man to be redeemed or no, and how much my master asked for me? During these questions, the beautiful Zoraida came out of the garden-house hard by, having descried me a good while before; and as the Moorish women make no difficulty of showing themselves to the Christian slaves, she drew near, without scruple, to the place where her father and I were talking; neither did her father show any dislike of her coming, but called to her to come

nearer. It would be hard for me to express here the wonderful surprise and astonishment that the beauty, the rich dress, and the charming air of my beloved Zoraida put me in: she was all bedecked with pearls, which hung thick upon her head and about her neck and arms. Her feet and legs were naked, after the custom of that country, and she had upon her ankles a kind of bracelet of gold, and set with such rich diamonds that her father valued them, as she since told me, at ten thousand pistoles a pair; and those about her wrists were of the same value. The pearls were of the best sort, for the Moorish women delight much in them, and have more pearls of all sorts than any nation. Her father was reputed to have the finest in Algiers, and to be worth, besides, above two hundred thousand Spanish crowns; of all which, the lady you here see was then mistress; but now is only so of me. What she yet retains of beauty after all her sufferings, may help you to guess at her wonderful appearance in the midst of her prosperity. The beauty of some ladies has its days and times, and is more or less according to accidents or passions, which naturally raise or diminish the lustre of it, and sometimes quite extinguish it. All I can say

is, at that time she appeared to me the best-dressed and most beautiful woman I had ever seen; to which, adding the obligations I had to her, she passed with me for a goddess from heaven, descended upon earth for my relief and happiness.

As she drew near, her father told her, in his country language, that I was a slave of his friend Arnoute Mami, and came to pick a salad in his garden. She presently took the hint, and asked me in *Lingua Franca*, whether I was a gentleman, and if I was, why I did not ransom myself? I told her I was already ransomed, and that by the price, she might guess the value my master set upon me, since he had bought me for 1500 pieces of eight. To which she replied, "If thou hadst been my father's slave, I would not have let him part with thee for twice as much; for," said she, "you Christians never speak truth in any thing you say, and make yourselves poor to deceive the Moors."—"That may be, madam," said I, "but in truth I have dealt by my master, and do intend to deal by all those I shall have to deal with, sincerely and honourably."—"And when dost thou go home?" said she.—"Tomorrow, madam," said I, "for here is a French bark that sails to-morrow, and I intend not to

lose that opportunity.”—“Is it not better,” replied Zoraida, “to stay till there come some Spanish bark, and go with them, and not with the French, who, I am told, are no friends of yours?”—“No,” said I; “yet if the report of a Spanish bark’s coming should prove true, I would perhaps stay for it, though it is more likely I shall take the opportunity of the French, because the desire I have of being at home, and with those persons I love, will hardly let me wait for any other conveniency.”—“Without doubt,” said Zoraida, “thou art married in Spain, and impatient to be with thy wife.”—“I am not,” said I, “married, but I have given my word to a lady, to be so as soon as I can reach my own country.”—“And is the lady handsome that has your promise?” said Zoraida. “She is so handsome,” said I, “that to describe her rightly, and tell truth, I can only say she is like you.” At this her father laughed heartily, and said: “On my word, Christian, she must be very charming if she be like my daughter, who is the greatest beauty of all this kingdom: look upon her well, and thou wilt say I speak truth.” Zoraida’s father was our interpreter for the most of what we talked; for though she understood the *Lingua Franca*, yet she was not

used to speak it, and so explained herself more by signs than words.

While we were in this conversation, there came a Moor running hastily, and cried aloud that four Turks had leaped over the fence of the garden, and were gathering the fruit, though it was not ripe. The old man started at that, and so did Zoraida, for the Moors do naturally stand in awe of the Turks, particularly of the soldiers, who are so insolent on their side, that they treat the Moors as if they were their slaves. This made the father bid his daughter go in and shut herself up close, “whilst,” said he, “I go and talk with these dogs; and for thee, Christian, gather the herbs thou want’st, and go thy ways in peace, and God conduct thee safe to thy own country.” I bowed to him, and he left me with Zoraida, to go and find out the Turks: she made also as if she were going away, as her father had bid her; but she was no sooner hid from his sight by the trees of the garden, but she turned towards me with her eyes full of tears, and said in her language, “*Amexi Christiano, Amexi,*” which is, thou art going away, Christian, thou are going: to which I answered, “Yes, madam, I am, but by no means without you; you may expect me next Friday, and be not surprised

when you see us, for we will certainly go to the land of the Christians." I said this so passionately, that she understood me; and throwing one of her arms about my neck, she began to walk softly, and with trembling, towards the house. It pleased fortune, that as we were in this posture walking together (which might have proved very unlucky to us) we met Agimorato coming back from the Turks, and we perceived he had seen us as we were; but Zoraida, very readily and discreetly, was so far from taking away her arm from about my neck, that, drawing still nearer to me, she leaned her head upon my breast, and letting her knees give way, was in the posture of one that swoons; I at the same time made as if I had much ado to bear her up against my will. Her father came hastily to us, and seeing his daughter in this condition, asked her what was the matter? But she not answering readily, he presently said, "Without doubt these Turks have frightened her, and she faints away;" at which he took her in his arms. She, as it were, coming to herself, fetched a deep sigh, and with her eyes not yet dried from tears, she said, "Amexi Christiano, Amexi, begone, Christian, begone." To which her father replied, "It is no matter, child, whether he go or no, he has done thee no hurt,

and the Turks, at my request, are gone."—"It is they who frightened her," said I; "but since she desires I should be gone, I will come another time for my salad, by your leave; for my master says the herbs of your garden are the best of any he can have."—"Thou may'st have what, and when thou wilt," said the father, "for my daughter does not think the Christians troublesome; she only wished the Turks away, and by mistake bid thee begone too, or make haste and gather thy herbs." With this I immediately took leave of them both; and Zoraida, showing great trouble in her looks, went away with her father. I in the meantime, upon pretence of gathering my herbs here and there, walked all over the garden, observing exactly all the places of coming in and going out, and every corner fit for my purpose, as well as what strength there was in the house, with all other conveniences to facilitate our business. Having done this, I went my ways, and gave an exact account of all that had happened to the renegade and the rest of my friends, longing earnestly for the time in which I might promise myself my dear Zoraida's company, without any fear of disturbance. At last the happy hour came, and we had all the good success we could promise

ourselves, of a design so well laid; for the Friday after my discourse with Zoraida, towards the evening, we came to an anchor with our bark, almost over-against the place where my lovely mistress lived; the Christians, who were to be employed at the oar, were already at the rendezvous, and hid up and down thereabouts. They were all in expectation of my coming, and very desirous to seize the bark which they saw before their eyes, for they did not know our agreement with the renegade, but thought they were by main force to gain their conveyance and their liberty, by killing the Moors on board. As soon as I and my friends appeared, all the rest came from their hiding-places to us. By this time the city-gates were shut, and no soul appeared in all the country near us. When we were all together, it was a question whether we should first fetch Zoraida, or make ourselves masters of those few Moors in the bark. As we were in this consultation, the renegade came to us, and asking what we meant to stand idle, told us his Moors were all gone to rest, and most of them asleep. We told him our difficulty, and he immediately said, that the most important thing was to secure the bark, which might easily be done, and

without danger, and then we might go for Zoraida.

We were all of his mind, and so, without more ado, he marched at the head of us to the bark, and leaping into it, he first drew a scymitar, and cried aloud in the Moorish language, Let not a man of you stir, except he means it should cost him his life; and while he said this, all the other Christians were got on board. The Moors, who are naturally timorous, hearing the master use this language, were frightened, and without any resistance, suffered themselves to be manacled, which was done with great expedition by the Christians, who told them at the same time, that if they made the least noise, they would immediately cut their throats. This being done, and half of our number left to guard them, the remainder, with the renegade, went to Agimorato's garden; and our good fortune was such, that coming to force the gate, we found it open with as much facility as if it had not been shut at all. So we marched on with great silence to the house, without being perceived by anybody. The lovely Zoraida, who was at the window, asked softly, upon hearing us tread, whether we were Nazarani, that is Christians? I answered yes; and desired her

to come down. As soon as she heard my voice, she stayed not a minute; but, without saying a word, came down and opened the door, appearing to us all like a goddess, her beauty and the richness of her dress not being to be described. As soon as I saw her, I took her by the hand, which I kissed, the renegade did the same, and then my friends: the rest of the company followed the same ceremony; so that we all paid her a kind of homage for our liberty. The renegade asked her in Morisco, whether her father was in the garden? She said yes, and that he was asleep. Then said he, We must awake him, and take him with us, as also all that is valuable in the house."—"No, no," said Zoraida, "my father must not be touched, and in the house there is nothing so rich as what I shall carry with me, which is enough to make you all rich and content." Having said this she stepped into the house, bid us be quiet, and she would soon return. I asked the renegade what had passed between them, and he told me what he had said; to which I replied, that by no means any thing was to be done, otherwise than as Zoraida should please. She was already coming back with a small trunk so full of gold, that she could hardly carry it, when to our great

misfortune, while this was doing, her father awaked, and hearing a noise in the garden, opened a window and looked out: having perceived that there were Christians in it, he began to cry out in Arabic, "Thieves, Thieves! Christians, Christians!"

These cries of his put us all into a terrible disorder and fear; but the renegade seeing our danger, and how much it imported us to accomplish our enterprize before we were perceived, he ran up to the place where Agimorato was, and took with him some of our company; for I durst by no means leave Zoraida, who had swooned away in my arms. Those who went up bestirred themselves so well, that they brought down Agimorato with his hands tied behind him, and his mouth stopped with a handkerchief, which hindered him from so much as speaking a word; and threatening him besides, that if he made the least attempt to speak, it should cost him his life. When his daughter, who was come to herself, saw him, she covered her eyes to avoid the sight, and her father remained the more astonished, for he knew not how willingly she had put herself into our hands. Diligence on our side being the chief thing requisite, we used it so as we came to our bark, when our men began

to be in pain for us, as fearing that we had met with some ill accident. We got on board about two hours after it was dark; where the first thing we did was to untie the hands of Zoraida's father, and to unstop his mouth, but still with the same threatenings of the renegade, in case he made any noise. When he saw his daughter there, he began to sigh most passionately, and more when he saw me embrace her with tenderness, and that she, without any resistance or struggling, seemed to endure it; he, for all this, was silent, for fear the threatenings of the renegade should be put in execution. Zoraida seeing us aboard, and that we were ready to handle our oars to be gone, she bid the renegade tell me, she desired I would set her father, and the other Moors, our prisoners, on shore; for else she would throw herself into the sea, rather than see a father, who had used her so tenderly, be carried away captive for her sake, before her eyes. The renegade told me what she said, to which I agreed; but the renegade was of another opinion; saying, that if we set them on shore there, they would raise the country, and give the alarm to the city, by which some light frigates might be despatched in quest of us, and getting between us and the sea, it

would be impossible for us to make our escape; and that all that could be done, was to set them at liberty in the first Christian land we could reach. This seemed so reasonable to us all, that Zoraida herself, being informed of the motives we had not to obey her at present, agreed to it. Immediately, with great silence and content, we began to ply our oars, recommending ourselves to providence with all our hearts, and endeavoured to make for Majorca, which is the nearest Christian land; but the north wind rising a little, and the sea with it, we could not hold that course, but were forced to drive along shore towards Oran, not without great fear of being discovered from Sargel, upon the coast, about thirty leagues from Algiers. We were likewise apprehensive of meeting some of those galliots which came from Tetuan with merchandize. Though, to say truth, we did not so much fear these last; for except it were a cruizing galliot, we all of us wished to meet such a one, which we should certainly take, and so get a better vessel to transport us in. Zoraida all this while hid her face between my hands, that she might not see her father; and I could hear her call upon Lela Marien to help us. By the time we had got about thirty miles the day broke, and we found ourselves within a mile of