



**Ann Radcliffe**

*The Mysteries  
of Udolpho.  
Part II*



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## VOLUME 3

### CHAPTER I

I will advise you where  
to plant yourselves;  
Acquaint you with the perfect  
spy o' the time,  
The moment on 't;  
for 't must be done tonight.

*Macbeth*

**E**mily was somewhat surprised, on the following day, to find that Annette had heard of Madame Montoni's confinement in the chamber over the portal, as well as of her purposed visit there, on the approaching night. That the circumstance, which Barnardine had so solemnly enjoined her to conceal, he had himself told to so indiscreet a hearer as Annette, appeared very improbable, though he had now charged her with a message, concerning the intended interview. He requested that Emily would meet him, unattended, on the terrace, at a little after midnight, when he himself would lead her to the place he had promised; a proposal, from which she immediately shrunk, for a thousand vague fears darted athwart her mind, such as had tormented her on the preceding night, and which she neither knew how to trust, nor to dismiss.

It frequently occurred to her that Barnardine might have deceived her, concerning Madame Montoni, whose murderer, perhaps, he really was; and that he had deceived her by order of Montoni, the more easily to draw her into some of the desperate designs of the latter. The terrible suspicion that Madame Montoni no longer lived, thus came, accompanied by

one not less dreadful for herself. Unless the crime, by which the aunt had suffered, was instigated merely by resentment, unconnected with profit, a motive, upon which Montoni did not appear very likely to act, its object must be unattained, till the niece was also dead, to whom Montoni knew that his wife's estates must descend. Emily remembered the words, which had informed her that the contested estates in France would devolve to her, if Madame Montoni died, without consigning them to her husband, and the former obstinate perseverance of her aunt made it too probable that she had, to the last, withheld them.

At this instant, recollecting Barnardine's manner, on the preceding night, she now believed, what she had then fancied that it expressed malignant triumph. She shuddered at the recollection, which confirmed her fears, and determined not to meet him on the terrace. Soon after, she was inclined to consider these suspicions as the extravagant exaggerations of a timid and harassed mind, and could not believe Montoni liable to such preposterous depravity as that of destroying, from one motive, his wife and her niece. She blamed herself for suffering her romantic imagination to carry her so far beyond the bounds of probability, and determined to endeavour to check its rapid flights, lest they should sometimes extend into madness. Still, however, she shrunk from the thought of meeting Barnardine, on the terrace, at midnight; and still the wish to be relieved from this terrible suspense, concerning her aunt, to see her, and to sooth her sufferings, made her hesitate what to do.

"Yet how is it possible, Annette, I can pass to the terrace at that hour?" said she, recollecting herself, "the sentinels will stop me, and Signor Montoni will hear of the affair."

"Oh! Ma'amselle! That is well thought of," replied Annette. "That is what Barnardine told me about. He gave me this key,

and bade me say it unlocks the door at the end of the vaulted gallery that opens near the end of the east rampart, so that you need not pass any of the men on watch. He bade me say, too that his reason for requesting you to come to the terrace was, because he could take you to the place you want to go to, without opening the great doors of the hall, which grate so heavily."

Emily's spirits were somewhat calmed by this explanation, which seemed to be honestly given to Annette. "But why did he desire I would come alone, Annette?" said she.

"Why that was what I asked him myself, ma'amselle. Says I, 'Why is my young lady to come alone?—Surely I may come with her!—What harm can I do?' But he said 'No—no—I tell you not,' in his gruff way. Nay, says I, I have been trusted in as great affairs as this, I warrant, and it's a hard matter if I can't keep a secret now. Still he would say nothing but—'No—no—no.' Well, says I, if you will only trust me, I will tell you a great secret that was told me a month ago, and I have never opened my lips about it yet—so you need not be afraid of telling me. But all would not do. Then, ma'amselle, I went so far as to offer him a beautiful new sequin that Ludovico gave me for a keepsake, and I would not have parted with it for all St. Marco's Place; but even that would not do! Now what can be the reason of this? But I know, you know, ma'am, who you are going to see."

"Pray did Barnardine tell you this?"

"He! No, ma'amselle that he did not."

Emily enquired who did, but Annette showed that she *could* keep a secret.

During the remainder of the day, Emily's mind was agitated with doubts and fears and contrary determinations, on the subject of meeting this Barnardine on the rampart, and submitting herself to his guidance, she scarcely knew

whither. Pity for her aunt and anxiety for herself alternately swayed her determination, and night came, before she had decided upon her conduct. She heard the castle clock strike eleven—twelve—and yet her mind wavered. The time, however, was now come, when she could hesitate no longer: and then the interest she felt for her aunt overcame other considerations, and, bidding Annette follow her to the outer door of the vaulted gallery, and there await her return, she descended from her chamber.

The castle was perfectly still, and the great hall, where so lately she had witnessed a scene of dreadful contention, now returned only the whispering footsteps of the two solitary figures gliding fearfully between the pillars, and gleamed only to the feeble lamp they carried. Emily, deceived by the long shadows of the pillars and by the catching lights between, often stopped, imagining she saw some person, moving in the distant obscurity of the perspective; and, as she passed these pillars, she feared to turn her eyes toward them, almost expecting to see a figure start out from behind their broad shaft.

She reached, however, the vaulted gallery, without interruption, but unclosed its outer door with a trembling hand, and, charging Annette not to quit it and to keep it a little open that she might be heard if she called, she delivered to her the lamp, which she did not dare to take herself because of the men on watch, and, alone, stepped out upon the dark terrace. Everything was so still that she feared, lest her own light steps should be heard by the distant sentinels, and she walked cautiously towards the spot, where she had before met Barnardine, listening for a sound, and looking onward through the gloom in search of him.

At length, she was startled by a deep voice that spoke near her, and she paused, uncertain whether it was his, until

it spoke again, and she then recognised the hollow tones of Barnardine, who had been punctual to the moment, and was at the appointed place, resting on the rampart wall. After chiding her for not coming sooner, and saying that he had been waiting nearly half an hour, he desired Emily, who made no reply, to follow him to the door through which he had entered the terrace.

While he unlocked it, she looked back to that she had left, and, observing the rays of the lamp stream through a small opening, was certain that Annette was still there. But her remote situation could little befriend Emily, after she had quitted the terrace; and, when Barnardine unclosed the gate, the dismal aspect of the passage beyond, shown by a torch burning on the pavement, made her shrink from following him alone, and she refused to go, unless Annette might accompany her. This, however, Barnardine absolutely refused to permit, mingling at the same time with his refusal such artful circumstances to heighten the pity and curiosity of Emily towards her aunt that she, at length, consented to follow him alone to the portal.

He then took up the torch, and led her along the passage, at the extremity of which he unlocked another door, whence they descended, a few steps, into a chapel, which, as Barnardine held up the torch to light her, Emily observed to be in ruins, and she immediately recollected a former conversation of Annette, concerning it, with very unpleasant emotions. She looked fearfully on the almost roofless walls, green with damps, and on the gothic points of the windows, where the ivy and the briony had long supplied the place of glass, and ran mantling among the broken capitals of some columns that had once supported the roof. Barnardine stumbled over the broken pavement, and his voice, as he uttered a sudden oath, was returned in hollow echoes that made it more terrific.

Emily's heart sunk; but she still followed him, and he turned out of what had been the principal aisle of the chapel. "Down these steps, lady," said Barnardine, as he descended a flight, which appeared to lead into the vaults; but Emily paused on the top, and demanded, in a tremulous tone, whither he was conducting her.

"To the portal," said Barnardine.

"Cannot we go through the chapel to the portal?" said Emily.

"No, Signora that leads to the inner court, which I don't choose to unlock. This way, and we shall reach the outer court presently."

Emily still hesitated; fearing not only to go on, but, since she had gone thus far, to irritate Barnardine by refusing to go further.

"Come, lady," said the man, who had nearly reached the bottom of the flight, "make a little haste; I cannot wait here all night."

"Whither do these steps lead?" said Emily, yet pausing.

"To the portal," repeated Barnardine, in an angry tone, "I will wait no longer." As he said this, he moved on with the light, and Emily, fearing to provoke him by further delay, reluctantly followed. From the steps, they proceeded through a passage, adjoining the vaults, the walls of which were dropping with unwholesome dews, and the vapours that crept along the ground, made the torch burn so dimly that Emily expected every moment to see it extinguished, and Barnardine could scarcely find his way. As they advanced, these vapours thickened, and Barnardine, believing the torch was expiring, stopped for a moment to trim it. As he then rested against a pair of iron gates that opened from the passage, Emily saw, by uncertain flashes of light, the vaults beyond, and, near her, heaps of earth that seemed to surround an open grave.

Such an object, in such a scene, would, at any time, have disturbed her; but now she was shocked by an instantaneous presentiment that this was the grave of her unfortunate aunt, and that the treacherous Barnardine was leading herself to destruction. The obscure and terrible place, to which he had conducted her, seemed to justify the thought; it was a place suited for murder, a receptacle for the dead, where a deed of horror might be committed, and no vestige appear to proclaim it. Emily was so overwhelmed with terror that, for a moment, she was unable to determine what conduct to pursue.

She then considered that it would be vain to attempt an escape from Barnardine by flight, since the length and the intricacy of the way she had passed would soon enable him to overtake her, who was unacquainted with the turnings, and whose feebleness would not suffer her to run long with swiftness. She feared equally to irritate him by a disclosure of her suspicions, which a refusal to accompany him further certainly would do; and, since she was already as much in his power as it was possible she could be, if she proceeded, she, at length, determined to suppress, as far as she could, the appearance of apprehension, and to follow silently whither he designed to lead her. Pale with horror and anxiety, she now waited until Barnardine had trimmed the torch, and, as her sight glanced again upon the grave, she could not forbear enquiring, for whom it was prepared. He took his eyes from the torch, and fixed them upon her face without speaking. She faintly repeated the question, but the man, shaking the torch, passed on; and she followed, trembling, to a second flight of steps, having ascended which, a door delivered them into the first court of the castle.

As they crossed it, the light showed the high black walls around them, fringed with long grass and dank weeds that found a scanty soil among the mouldering stones;



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