

**ANNE CAVE. A
TALE. IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. III**

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Anne Cave. A Tale. In Three Volumes, Vol. III by Kenner Deene

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KENNER DEENE

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TALE. IN THREE
VOLUMES, VOL. III**

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ANNE CAVE.

A TALE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

KENNER DEENE,

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A N N E C A V E .

CHAPTER I.

LET those who have been tortured by news, true or false, respecting the one being dearest to them, picture to themselves the rage of jealousy, the torment of conjecture, the heart-sick disbelief in all things true, or honourable, or unselfish, that rushed in upon Anne's mind and overwhelmed her whole soul.

After listening to Gomazzio's tale, Marie de Villiers was in her thoughts; she must be the beautiful woman of the opera box, although the doctor had concealed her name. Robert then loved this French heiress. Well, in birth she was more his equal than herself;

and her heart seemed broken, and, in the words of Scripture, Anne could have exclaimed, "And I, whither shall I go?"

She hid her face on the pillow of Elsie's bed and sighed one long deep sigh, that seemed to pierce through her like a sword. She did not weep, tears were far from her eyes, they felt burning. "And now the business of my life must be to forget him, to forget Robert!" She could have laughed at the thought in bitterest, deadliest scorn. "Why, he was the life of my life, the being of my being, the soul of my soul! Never, never for one single instant was he absent from my waking thoughts. Always, when alone, would I murmur to myself the words he had spoken, whether to me or to others, in my presence. Every look, every gesture, was treasured in my mind, to be, as it were, perused and re-perused in my moments of freedom." Oh, that first love of youth is a terrible thing, a great reality, a mad idolatrous

suffering or happiness as the case may be. Anne suffered. Heaven had pity on her that night, and sent her comfort and reassurance, and pure, brief, delicious joy.

The outer bell rang sharply; Anne raised her head to listen who was coming to disturb her thoughts. Mrs. Aubrey and Sophy were gone to the opera. It was about half-past nine o'clock; the door opened, and presently she heard a man's firm tread in the passage, and then in the little boudoir, and then in Mrs. Aubrey's chamber, and then the handle of the door turned, and there entered,—Gomazzio again? no,—Robert, with the kind, bright smile she had not seen upon his lip since the days of the past summer at Yanly Manor. He advanced towards Elsie, and Anne signed to him that she slept; so he sat down on the other side of the bed to the one on which she had been leaning. He offered her his hand, and when her damp, trembling fingers were once clasped in his own, he would