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TOO STRANGE NOT TO BE TRUE.

BY LADY GEORGIANA FULLERTON.

PART II—CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

So he evaded the question, and did not revert to the subject.

As they were returning to the castle the baron met them, and took Mina into the hall. He asked her to point out the exact spot where she had seen that limb of Satan, Lohie. She showed him the window at which she had caught sight of his face. Then inspired with a sudden courage, she said:

"M. le Baron, will you tell the gendarmes not to kill Osseo till I have spoken to him?"

"You would not wish, my dear, to speak to a robber?"

"Oh, but I would, M. le Baron, indeed, indeed I would."

"He is an outlaw, like the rest of the gang, and our men may destroy them like vermin. But I have given orders that if this Lohie or Osseo is caught he should be brought here alive, as he may give information as to the others. By the bye, Raoul tells me you speak the language of these savages, Mademoiselle Mina. As you are so courageous, we shall get you to examine him."

"Shall you put him into the dungeon?" she asked.

"Take care, grandpapa," Bertha cried; "Mina will let him out."

The baron looked grave.

"This man is a murderer and a robber. Mademoiselle Mina has been too well brought up, I am sure, to pity such a wretch."

Poor Mina! she did not answer, but she longed to say that it was because this man was a murderer and a robber, and an unbelieving, unbaptised heathen, that the thought of his sudden death wrung her heart.

The day went by somewhat wearily; and, as the night approached, some of the inmates of the castle felt restless and anxious. The ladies and the servants had related to one another

stories of robbers and assassins till they had grown so nervous that a foot-fall on the stairs, or the rustling of leaves near the window, made them start and shudder.

The baron desired that every one should go to bed as usual, except the sentries to whom he had assigned their several posts. Madame d'Auban and her daughter withdrew to their room, and both fell asleep soon after going to bed. But Mina woke in about an hour, her nerves on the full stretch, and her heart beating like a pendulum. For two hours not a sound disturbed the tranquility of the night. Then a sort of faintness, the result of intense watching came over her. She slipped out of bed, put on her dressing gown and shoes, and a mantle, and a hood over her head. The door of the bed-room opened on an outward winding staircase leading to the parapet. She opened it gently, and stood on the steps breathing the fresh air. There was no moon, but the night was not very dark: a few stars were visible, when the clouds divided in the sombre sky. She stood there for a few minutes, and was about to reenter the room, when she saw a figure ascending the steps perfectly noiselessly. She did not move or scream, but said in a low whisper, "Osseo!"

The figure stopped, and she heard it answer in the Indian language—

"Who are you that know Osseo?"

She stepped forward and said:

"I am Mina. In the city of Natches you once called me your sister. Go away; the white men are watching for you, and will kill you. Throw away the serpent, Osseo: leave the wicked tribe."

"I have shed the blood of the white men," answered the Indian, in a low but distinct whisper: "the serpent delivers them into my hand. But the sound of thy voice is like water to the parched lip. O, daughter of the French tribe,