

unwittingly, by her husband's hand, and a bark was chartered to carry us far away to a new and unknown world.

Another day, and we should have been on the broad waters. We sat together, with hearts too full to find utterance in words. My thoughts were, however, of happiness—the true happiness of love—which we might share, where there were none to look upon us with the cold eye of scorn. The face of my young wife was turned towards mine, and it was sad—I would not that it had been less so, for she had left the home endeared to her by so many ties, and she might never again look upon the face of her kindred. She tried to smile; but the effort failed, and tears started from her swimming eye. So wrapt had we been in sad reflection that, unheard, a carriage drew up, and the door was burst open. The Baron of Loridale entered the cottage, followed by several of his retainers. Clara started, and clung closer to me, for there was a dark frown upon his brow, although grief had left its traces there.

"It is then so," he said. "Miserable girl, knowest thou the wretchedness of thine own fate—Albert——"

"My Lord, stay," I cried, interrupting him—"Your daughter deserves your pity—the reproach is mine. Nay, my lord, look not so terrible—I can defend her against even a father's rage."

His features were literally convulsed with excessive emotion, and Clara terrified, hid her face in my breast.

"Thou clingest to *him*," he exclaimed; "then indeed, is it time that thou shouldst learn how very a wretch thou art. Know, girl, that he upon whose breast thou leanest, is thy brother's murderer—that he is himself thy father's son!"

"And had I then found a father?" The question that rose to my lip remained unspoken there, for the face of my wife was overspread with the livid pallour of death, and falling prostrate on the earth, she called her sire to unsay those cruel words. He was silent, and she, reading in my bewildered gaze, the dreadful truth of her father's tale, fell on the earth—her heart broken within her, and with a murmured prayer for forgiveness to him who had wrought such ruin, her gentle spirit winged its flight to heaven.

Horror and sorrow were alike forgotten in the madness that raged in my boiling veins. "Hoary villain!" I almost shrieked, "have I indeed drank of life from a source like thee? I have long owed thee a debt of vengeance, and now! the murder of thy child—my sister-wife—hath overflowed the already brimming chalice. Die! villain, die! Thou shalt not live to exult in successful crime," and I sprang towards him with a tiger's bound. A moment more, and he should have slept beside his murdered child, when my course was arrested by a stunning blow from one of his retainers who stood beside him.

I know no more, until I awoke from a long delirium upon the mountain wave, and when memory returned, I learned that I had been borne on board by the followers of the Baron of Loridale, who deemed it better that a tale so coupled with disgrace and crime, should be forgotten in the tomb of its victims. A sealed packet lay beside me, and its contents were these:—

"Boy! thou hast been my curse, but I blame not thee. At thy hands I have well deserved it. Thy mother was young and beautiful, but she was poor. I was high-born, wealthy and a debauchee. I wooed her, not as an honoured bride, but as the plaything of my passion, and she was mine. For months we lived together; thou wert the offspring of our guilt. It became necessary that I should wed, and a lovely heiress was the prize at which I aimed; but that day which saw her mine, saw thy mother a corpse upon my threshold. Thou wert then a helpless infant, and I gave thee to the keeping of a former victim. Her hate may have been the offspring of revenge. I traced thy history from her, and her name and thine gave the first hint of thy paternity. I learned what had passed between thee and thy sister from an accidental loiterer in the wood of Loridale, and it was that gave rise to my anxiety for thy departure from thy native village. Destiny sent thee back to work my ruin, and to avenge thy mother's wrong. She is revenged! and if I live, it is but to spend the rest of life in penance for the past. I cannot call thee son, and it were mockery to wish thee blest, yet do I pray for thy forgiveness. Boy, farewell."

I lived through all! It seemed as if nought could break a heart longing after annihilation. Thrice have I essayed to rob myself of life, and three times hath fate snatched me from the doom for which I prayed. I will essay no more. Better is it that I should suffer, as I now do, with a seared heart and a burning brain, the meed of guilt so dire.—Should this scroll ever meet a human eye, it will be when the hand that traced it is bleached in death—let it be read as the outpouring of a raving maniac, when reason partially illumed his darkened soul.

The foregoing tale is founded upon a very elegant ballad, bearing the same title, with a perusal of which we have been favoured by the author, a gentleman occupying a most prominent position among the *literati* of Canada. The ballad itself we intended publishing with the tale, but the latter has so far exceeded the original bounds assigned to it, that subject as we are to the tyranny of space, we dare not venture further. In our succeeding pages, however, will be found several beautiful productions from the same pen.