

fled on, stopping neither for wind, nor rain, nor storm—unheeding, unfeeling them all—keeping her fierce, devouring gaze fixed, with a look that might have pierced the very heavens, on the still far-distant city.

There was no one on the road but herself. The lateness of the hour—for it was almost midnight—and the increasing storm, kept pedestrians within doors that cheerless March night. Now and then she would pass cottages in which lights were still glaring, but most of the houses were wrapped in silence and darkness.

And still on, through night, and storm, and gloom, fled the wanderer, with the pitiless rain beating in her face—the chill blasts fluttering her thin-worn garments and long, wild, black hair. Still on, pausing not, resting not, never removing her steadfast gaze from the distant city—like a lost soul hurrying to its doom.

Suddenly, above the wailing of the wind and plashing of the rain, arose the thunder of horses' hoofs and the crash of approaching carriage wheels. Rapidly they came on, and the woman paused for a moment and leaned again a cottage porch, as if waiting until it should pass.

A bright light was still burning in the window, and it fell on the lonely wayfarer as she stood, breathing hard and waiting, with burning, feverish impatience, for the carriage to pass. It displayed the form of a woman of forty, or thereabouts, with a tall, towering, commanding figure, gaunt and bony. Her complexion was dark; its naturally swarthy hue having been tanned by sun and wind to a dark-brown. The features were strong, stern, and prominent, yet you could see at a glance that the face had once been a handsome one. Now, however—thin, haggard, and fleshless, with the high, prominent cheek-bones; the gloomy, overhanging brows; the stern, set, unyielding mouth; the rigid, corrugated brow; the fierce, devouring, maniac, black eyes—it looked positively hideous. Such eyes!—such burning, blazing orbs of fire, never was seen in human head before! They glowed like two live coals in a bleached skull. There was utter misery, there was despair unspeakable, mingled with fierce determination, in those lurid, flaming eyes. And that dark, stern, terrific face was stamped with the unmistakable impress of a despised, degraded race. The woman