

was the same that had killed Fenn. She took it up and came with us. The old man stood still where he was. He was like a stone. I looked at him for a minute and thought, then I turned round and went to the barroom. The old man followed. Just as I got inside the door I saw the girl start back and her hand drop, for she saw that it was Fingall. He was looking at her very strange. It was the rule to empty the gun into a man who had been sentenced, and already Fingall had heard his 'God have mercy.' The girl was to do it.

"Fingall said to her in a muffled voice, 'Fire Cynthie.'"

"I guessed what she would do. In a kind of dream she raised the pistol up—up—up, till I could see it was out of range of his head, and she fired. One, two, three, four, five! Fingall never moved a muscle. But the bullets spotted the wall at the side of his head. She paused after the five, but the arm was still held out, and her finger was on the trigger. She seemed to be in a dream. There were only six chambers in the gun, and, of course, one chamber was empty. Fenn had its bullet in his lungs, as we thought. Some one beside Cynthie touched her arm, pushing it down. But there was another shot; and this time, because of the push, the bullet lodged in Fingall's skull."

Pierre paused now, but waved his hand toward the mist which now hung high up like a canopy between the hills.

"But," said Lawless, not heeding the scene, "what about that sixth bullet?"

"Mon Dieu, it is plain! Fingall did not fire the shot. His revolver was full, every chamber, when Cynthie first took it."

"Who killed the lad?"

"Can you not guess? There had been words between the father and the boy; both had fierce blood; the father in a bad minute fired. The boy wanted revenge on Fingall, and, to save his father, laid it on the other. The old man? Well, I do not know whether he was coward or stupid or ashamed—he let Fingall take it."

"And Fingall took it to spare the girl, eh?"

"For the girl. He knew it wasn't good for her to think that her father killed his own son."

"And what came after?"

"The worst. That night the girl's father killed himself, and the two were buried in the same grave. Cynthie—"

"Fingall! Fingall! Oh, Fingall!"

"You hear? Yes, like that all the time as she sat on the floor, her hair about her like a cloud, and the dead bodies in the next room. She thought that she had killed Fingall, and she knew now that he was innocent. The two were buried. Then we told her that Fingall was not dead. She used to come and sit outside the door and listen to his breathing and ask if he ever spoke of her. What was the good of lyin'? If we said he did she'd have come into him, and that would do no good, for he wasn't right in his mind. By and by we told her he was getting well, and then she didn't come, but stayed at home, just saying his name over to herself. Alors, things take hold of a woman—it is so strange. When he was strong enough to go out I went with him the first time. He was all thin and handsome as you can think, but he had no memory and his eyes were like a child's. She saw him and came out to meet him. What does a woman care for the world when she loves altogether? Well, he just looked at her as if he'd never seen her before and passed by without a sign, though afterward there came trouble in his face. Three days later he was gone, no one knew where. That is two years ago. Ever since she has been looking for him."

"Is she mad?"

"Mad? It is not good to have one thing in the head

all the time. What do you think? So much all at once. And then—"

"Hush, Pierre. There she is," Lawless said, pointing to a ledge of rock not far away.

The girl stood looking out across the valley, a weird, rapt look in her face, her hair falling loose, a staff like a shepherd's crook in one hand, the other over her eyes, as she slowly looked from point to point of the horizon. The two watched her without speaking. Presently she saw them. She gazed at them for a minute, then descended to them. Lawless and Pierre rose, doffing their hats. She looked at both a moment, and her eyes settled, steadily glowing on Pierre. Presently she held out her hand to him.

"I knew you—yesterday," she said.

Pierre returned the intensity of her gaze with one deep and strong.

"So, so, Cynthie!" he said. "Sit down and eat."

He dropped on a knee and drew a scone and some fish from the ashes. She sat facing them, and taking from a bag at her side some wild fruits ate slowly, saying nothing. Lawless noticed that her hair had gone gray at the temples, though she was but one-and-twenty years old. Her face, brown as it was, shone with a white kind of light, which may or may not have come from the crucible of her eyes, where the tragedy of her life was fusing. Lawless could not bear to look long, for the fire that consumes a body and sets free a soul is not for the sight of the quick. At last she rose, her body steady, but her hands having that tremulous activity of her eyes.

"Will you not stay, Cynthie?" asked Lawless, very kindly.

She came close to him, and, after searching his eyes, said with a smile that almost hurt him: "When I have found him I will bring him to your camp-fire. Last night the Voice said that he waits for me where the mist rises from the river at daybreak, close to the home of the White Swan. Do you know where is the home of the White Swan? Before the frost comes and the red wolf cries I must find him. Winter is the time of sleep. I will give him honey and dried meat. I know where we shall live together. You never saw such roses! Hush! I have a place where we can hide—"

Suddenly her gaze became fixed and dreamlike, and she said, slowly: "In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, good Lord, deliver us!"

"Good Lord, deliver us," repeated Lawless in a low voice.

Without looking at them she slowly turned away and passed up the hillside, her eyes scanning the valley as before.

"Good Lord, deliver us," again said Lawless. "Where did she get it?"

"From a book which Fingall left behind."

They watched her till she rounded a cliff and was gone, then they shouldered their kits and passed up the river on the trail of the wapiti.

One month later, when a fine white surf of frost lay on the ground, and the sky was darkened often by the flight of the wild geese southward, they came upon a hut perched on a bluff at the edge of a clump of pines. It was morning, and Whitefaced Mountain shone solemnly clear, without a touch of cloud or mist from its haunches to its crown.

They knocked at the hut door, and in answer to a voice entered. The sunlight streamed in over a woman lying upon a heap of dried flowers in a corner and a man kneeling beside her. They came near, and saw that the woman was Cynthie.

Then Pierre broke out suddenly, "Fingall!" and