

tion, that rapid concentration of troops upon a given point, they appear to know nothing. We do not expect that volunteer corps could easily be taught all the details of concentrated action, but there appears to be no machinery in existence, in the higher grades, to facilitate the mobilization of troops, as there appears to be an utter absence of all knowledge of it in the ranks. That there must be some rude means of bringing troops together, and of providing for them when assembled, we do not doubt, but we ask the question: If it would not be well to reduce this chaos to order and to form a Volunteer Service Corps, whose duty it would be to attend to the requirements of an army in the field. Such a corps would be a necessity during war. No army can get along without it, and if our volunteers are to become really efficient, ready to turn out at once, and find their concentration provided for, such a corps would be found to facilitate their movements and enable the volunteers to mobilize rapidly and well. We must remember that Canadian resources have never yet been tested in this respect, and men who talk about "being at the front" have but a poor idea of the strain that actual warfare, against an organized government, would put upon the resources of the volunteer system. What our volunteers have done is no proof of what they would do if they had to meet invasion from the troops of the United States, or the landing of 30,000 Russians upon our shores. In fighting against organized troops we would have no time to build up our military resistance, the shock would come at once, sharp and sudden, and unless we put in training all necessary expedients to enable us to mobilize rapidly, we would inevitably suffer the consequences, which would probably be disastrous. Saxe well said that it was "legs not arms that won campaigns" and that saying is true to day. The general who can concentrate the most men at a given point, will generally succeed, and that concentration is not much facilitated by simply teaching battalion or company drill. The mere routine of the parade ground is oftentimes abandoned in the reality of a fight, and what is admirable on parade, may be useless in the field. It is in the internal economy of regimental and brigade duty, the careful provisioning of the supplies, the attention to the requirements of the troops, that go to make an army efficient and win campaigns. Few volunteer corps could surpass in physical appearance those, for instance, of Montreal. Taken at an average, the Victorias, the Prince of Wales', the 5th and 6th Fusiliers, the Artillery or the French corps, will stand comparison with the average corps in Great Britain or with the militia of the neighbouring Republic. But all this is not enough. We want to understand the means of provisioning and providing for each corps when in the field, and thus will their efficiency be secured. Some people may think that that would be an easy matter. Let us assure them that there is, perhaps, not a man in Montreal, unless he has been either a quartermaster or a quartermaster's sergeant, who could feed a regiment of men for 24 hours without making such chaos of his work as would defy Babil to extricate him from. The Commissariat is the most difficult branch of the non-combatant troops to manage successfully, and we doubt very much if it does not require more administrative capacity and experience, in its own way to manage the Commissariat well, than it does to conduct a campaign. If then this branch is so necessary to success is it not to be expected that we should look for some movement to form it, especially in Canada, where we are without a regular force of army service men to form the nucleus for such a corps in case of war. If the regular troops were here such a volunteer force as we suggest might not be necessary, but without any organized force of the kind to rally around, the necessity of having an Army Service Corps of our own becomes more apparent. Unlike a battalion of the line, Army Service Corps cannot be trained to pass muster after a few days drill in the year. They must know the routine of their duties, and opportunities could be taken in camps, &c. &c. of giving them experience as well. The expense may be urged against the suggestion. Well if the Government would not give the money necessary to form such a corps, and drill it for say 14 days each year in camp, then it would be better to reduce some of the outlaying country companies in order to make such a corps a fact. An army in the field could do better without twenty half drilled companies than without an Army Service Corps, and above all let us not forget that it is easy enough to make those same companies pass muster, but it is not so easy to become a quartermaster or a quartermaster's sergeant. At the present time the quartermaster of a battalion is merely a nominal appointment. These gentlemen do nothing, and it is no harm to say, that they know nothing whatever of the duties which would fall to their lot in the event of being required. The medical staff require

no training, but the quartermaster and the quartermaster-sergeants certainly do. While we do not advocate the lavish expenditure of money upon our volunteer system, yet a niggard economy in the same respect has often been the ruin of nations. The marvel is that the volunteers in this country are able to pass muster at all considering the little encouragement they receive. There is no test of efficiency. The man who can make good practice at the target gets no more encouragement from government than the man who can make no practice at all. Why not have first class men to whom some pecuniary or other reward may be given? This is the case in England, and it introduces that keen competition and esprit de corps which tends to develop the best energies of the men.

CHRISTMAS STORY.

THE GHOST OF BERNARD HALL.

CHAPTER I.

Never met, never parted,
We had never been broken-hearted.

There are a great many streets in London through which a stranger might pass directly without once having his attention attracted to either the right hand or the left. So quiet and retiring are they in appearance that they seem almost to sink away from the gaze of the curious. Arbour street was one of this class. There was not a large thoroughfare within a quarter of a mile of it, and the harsh noises of a factory never invaded its sacred precincts. Briefly described, it was a quiet, respectable street, with a neat row of unpretending, characteristically quiet houses on either side. In a pretty studio, in one of the best of these houses, a young man was seated bending thoughtfully over the leaves of a large volume. His face, although extremely pale, was decidedly handsome. The dark wavy hair, brushed well back, displayed a finely developed forehead. The eyes, dark and flashing, were lit up with the fire of genius and energy, while the mouth small and well-cut, spoke of firmness and high resolve.

The surroundings of the room proclaimed him to be an artist. On the walls a vast variety of pictures were hung. Weird, melancholy figures looked down with a strange expression on the magician who had given them their life-like appearance. Then there were paintings of brigands, and frowning warriors, to say nothing of beautiful women and sweet innocent faces. There were abundance of looks and plenty of pictures in this little studio, but few of what one might call the substantial comforts of the world. Upon the table, before which the young man sat, a number of photographs were tastefully arranged in an ornamental glass basket, and among the rest was that of a beautiful young girl. From its position one could almost fancy it was endowed with life, and watching fondly over the stooping form of the pallid student. Upon the back of the portrait were written the following words:—

"Helena Wardbrook,
Died June 15th, 18—
Beloved."

There was nothing more than these few simple words, and yet few as they were, they recorded the close to a life full of bright youthful hopes and ardent affection. Ah! yes, these words brought back to Walter Hastings' mind the bitter recollection of by-gone days. Two years ago he had been engaged by Sir Lionel Wardbrook of Essex House—an old college friend of his father's—to instruct his eldest daughter in drawing. There he saw Helena the youngest. Her freshness, her winning manner, at once captivated him. He lost his heart almost the instant he saw her, and at once fell desperately, but hopelessly in love: hopelessly, but love would still be "lord of all." Helena Wardbrook shared a similar fate. Proud and distant as she generally was to others, she was forced to give way to the strange influence which this man had over her. He did not possess wealth nor title. He could not talk familiarly of his uncle as the earl of a shire, nor refer to his grandfather as a defeated baronet. Yet he possessed all the qualities, which to her mind, made a man noble, and worthy of a woman's deepest affection.

Sir Lionel, a shrewd man of the world, was not slow to detect the "imprudence" of his daughter; but it was the term he, a prosaic man of the world, applied to this romantic affair, and he resolved to nip it in the bud, in the cool calculating way in which he did everything. He entered the spacious drawing-room one day, just as Walter had seated himself to indulge his fancy with a delicious vision of the future—the grand character in the said vision being of course, Helena Wardbrook. He had only half completed the building of this castle in the air when Sir Lionel entered, and with a few cold words annihilated the airy structure.

"Mr. Hastings," he said, in a most courteous tone (Sir Lionel was always excessively polite) "I have a little bit of news for you this morning."

"Something relating to a railway accident, or a colliery explosion, Sir Lionel?" Walter inquired smiling, little guessing what was to follow.

"Well, not so volcanic as all that. I dare say you will call it tame when you hear it. It is simply this: Miss Ellen and Miss Gerlie have made up their minds to start for the continent in a week or so."

"And Helena, too, is she going?" he asked eagerly, forgetting in his anxiety the conventional "Miss."

"No," was the cold response. "Your pupils have been rather dull I fear, Mr. Hastings," continued Sir Lionel, "and I daresay you will not lament their departure."

Walter looked inquiringly into Sir Lionel's face before replying. He saw through his cloak of politeness, and felt assured that the man who stood before him had already banished him from all that had made life happy. After a painful pause, he said "Your daughters, Sir Lionel, it is hardly necessary for me to say, have not been dull, but the reverse, and I only regret that I am about to lose such creditable pupils. I suppose our engagement will terminate on—"

"Ah! yes, to be sure. I am so glad you comprehend me. What day would suit you, Mr. Hastings?"

"To-day, to-morrow, any," was the hasty reply.

"Friday week?"

"Yes, that will do."

"Thank you," and Sir Lionel bowed and left the room, well pleased to have completed an unpleasant business so quickly.

"Friday week?" Walter Hastings repeated slowly to himself as the door closed on Sir Lionel. This, then, was to be the climax to all his fond hopes. He would have to start out again into the din and bustle of a cold cheerless world, rudely awakened from his dream to stern realities. Yes,

there could be no mistaking Sir Lionel Wardbrook's meaning. His coldly polite manner, in painful contrast to his former friendliness of tone, said as plainly, or more plainly than words, "Our engagement now ends, end with it our friendship." Walter Hastings felt it all, and much as he loved Helena, his pride made him anxious for the time to come when he should take his final farewell.

The fatal day came at last. He received the thanks of Sir Lionel for his services. His daughters, too, complimented him, in a manner infinitely condescending, upon his talent for teaching. But where was Helena?

He passed despondingly from the room. Helena stood in the massive doorway, with a hectic flush on her cheeks, suppressed feeling making her appear more lovely than ever. As Walter approached she hastened to meet him.

"And so you are going away, Walter?" she said, her voice trembling with emotion.

He looked into her earnest face, and could scarcely master courage to answer. At last with some effort he replied distinctly, "I am, Helena."

She looked up at him, her beautiful blue eyes were fast filling with tears.

"Yes," he stammered. Then lowering his voice almost to a whisper, he said softly.

"Perhaps, after all, it will be more conducive to your happiness, I suppose Heaven never meant us for each other."

The words were spoken with apparent cheerfulness, but around his heart already a dark funeral cloud was gathering, shutting out completely the light of happiness and hope.

"Walter," she said, after a pause, a vague fear taking possession of her as she spoke. "I had a most curious dream last night. I dreamt that, rambling through a large forest, I came upon a dismal lake, overhung with evil, drooping trees, which seemed to weep as their branches kissed the tide. The water was of a greenish hue, owing to the immense number of weeds floating along on its surface. Anything so loathsome or wretched could not, I think, be imagined than this dreary liquid expanse. As I stood looking into that lake's melancholy depths I fancied it began to grow larger and larger, and at last assumed all the proportions of a mighty sea. I was so terrified by this sudden change that I turned quickly away from the spot, but just as I was about to depart I met six figures—men or spirits, I do not know what they appeared to be. They were dressed alike, in flowing robes, and between them they carried a boat shrouded in the deepest black crape. They glided towards the gloomy lake in a noiseless manner, and quickly launched the boat. This done, they all turned towards me, each pointing with his index finger as a signal for me to enter. I tried to scream for help, but my tongue refused to utter a sound. I turned to fly, but their eyes fastened on me and seemed to exercise over me a strange mesmeristic power, and I was compelled to obey them. When I was seated my silent companions entered, each took hold of an ear and rowed away quickly into the mysterious water. After a long time we came to a strange country. Some unseen arms lifted me on to the shore, and when I turned to look for my captors I found that they and their cabinous boat had disappeared. The scene then changed. I fancied I had been years in this new country when I again wandered to the brink of this peculiar sea, and met in precisely the same fashion as before six robed figures. On this occasion their garments were of the purest white, and each had a heavenly smile on his countenance. I approached them with confidence and said—'Can you not let me see Walter again?' They all bowed assent, and in a moment I found myself in a beautiful bark, with snowy white sails, which danced gladly over the now sparkling waves, and was soon back to the point in the forest from which I had been taken. Here the dream grew confused. I thought I saw you pale and dejected, leaning both your arms on a great moss-covered stone, and looking dreamily and very sad. I approached you joyfully, but you turned coldly away. I knew you did not recognize me, so like had I grown to the spirits I had only just left. Shortly after I awoke. Doubtless you will say this is all silly nonsense—an idle dream—you always laugh at such things. But Walter, I have a strange presentiment something is going to happen. I told you I overheard the doctor tell papa my heart was affected. What if I should die?"

Walter Hastings started as if a dagger had pierced his heart. Her words uttered with a strange solemnity rang out like a prophecy, and he shuddered at the bare idea of that prophecy being fulfilled.

"I can see my words pain you, Walter, but indeed I do not care much about life—now." The hot tears were coming fast. She tried to speak further, but the words would not come.

Oh! the bitter, bitter thoughts that filled Walter Hastings' soul as he gazed into that upturned tear-stained face.

There was a painful pause.

"You will learn in time to forget, darling," Walter said huskily.

"Never," she answered emphatically. "But Walter, if anything should happen to me, I shall not exist and a place in your memory? Promise me this."

He had no time to reply. At this moment the tall figure of Sir Lionel appeared at one of the windows. He was evidently watching them with anything but a pleased countenance. A hurried farewell was whispered, and they parted with hearts choked with sorrow and distress.

It would have been well for Walter Hastings if his misery had ended here, but it was not to be so. A cruel fate had willed that he should drink the cup to the very dregs. Some months after this painful scene, just as he sat down to breakfast, Mrs. Goodall, his landlady, placed in his hands a newspaper which she said had been left by a person who refused to give any name.

"I wonder what it can contain likely to amuse me," he said, tearing off the wrapper, looking up and down the long columns. There was a racy article on the management of balloons, and a dry meaningless one on "Ultramontane" politics. "But was in the name of common sense could think such objects would interest me?" he said, about to lay the paper down, when his eye caught the following paragraph under the "deaths," in printed heavily with pen and ink.

"Wardbrook—June 19th, at Essex House Helena, third surviving daughter of Sir Lionel Wardbrook."

Did his eyes deceive him? Was it really in the death column. Alas! it was only too true. The letters merged into one black blot as he read. He could not discern through his tears the print before him. The paper dropped from his hands and he fell faint and ill.

With what force those parting words came back to him now. "What if I should die?" Slowly he was beginning to recognize that there was a meaning deep and hidden in her dream which he could not now comprehend, but which would be revealed to him some day. Strange to say, the very recollection of that dream filled him with comfort when hope and comfort were most needed.

The newspaper report containing Helena Wardbrook's death, was confirmed by the family doctor, who looked in upon Walter one day. Tapping his gold snuff box, and sniffing a little of its puffed dust from his fingers, he remarked gravely, "It's just what I expected; heart-disease." He laid a peculiar emphasis on the last two words. "I told her father months ago. It was a pity too. She was so young and beautiful. But what does our friend Shakespeare say? The good die first, or the bad. Which is it? Can you not help me, Mr. Hastings?"

"I think he says the good," Walter said, sighing heavily.

"Now come, old fellow, I do not like too see you looking so dull. 'Pon my word if I had thought my visit would have had this effect on you, I would have declined Sir Lionel's embarrassing commission."

"I heard it all before you came doctor."

"Well, well, Mr. Hastings, I must go. I am sorry to see you looking so pale and careworn, and God knows I wish Sir Lionel had conveyed his own message. Good-bye," and wringing Walter's hand warmly he left him to commune with his own sad thoughts.

CHAPTER II.

A TURN OF THE TIDE.

Such was the sad retrospect which these few words on the back of the portrait presented to Walter Hastings' mind, as he sat in his quiet studio in Arbour street. Two years had slipped away to swell the mighty past since these events had taken place, but love had fixed them on his heart with the traces of an indelible pencil. There are some who would remove completely away from the sight anything calculated to remind them of a departed one, but Walter Hastings was not of that type. He hugged his grief. Sorrowful as was the train of feelings which this little memento awakened, he yet felt an almost sacred joy in its possession. It was not a transient and flicker affliction but fixed and interable. There were lines of care graven on his features, showing how deeply he had suffered, but there, too, were written bright hopes evincing that he looked forward to a meeting in a happier world. But hopeful as he was he was unable to bear with stoical indifference the melancholy reflections which now crowded upon him, and which were in no way alleviated by a painful sense of his present poverty.

In time gone by he enjoyed all the happiness that wealth could give, but a year or two previous to his engagement at Essex House, he and his improvident father were plunged into utter ruin through the sudden failure of a large speculative banking firm.

Walter then took to his pencil as a means of subsistence, and was rapidly acquiring fortune and fame, when he met Helena Wardbrook, the daughter of his father's friend in more prosperous days.

On again resuming his labors, after leaving Essex House, he found his pictures, once the admiration of thousands, now looked upon with cold indifference. The fact was his pencil, formerly bright, and vivacious in its touches, now reflected and portrayed only the gloom of his heart.

It is possible at times to drown the deepest grief in the pages of an interesting book, and Walter Hastings tried to forget the bitter past by engrossing mind and soul with the contents of the cumbersome volume before him. So deeply absorbed was he in the book, that he did not notice the sharp quick knock of the postman outside. Shortly after, a sweet little girl, with dark curly hair, tapped softly at the door, entered, and placed by his side a letter.

Hurriedly glancing at it, he saw it bore the Woodland post mark, and took no further notice of it till he had finished reading. A full hour elapsed before the book was closed. He then took a cigar from his case, lighted it, and proceeded leisurely to break the seal and examine the contents of the letter. Hardly had he got half way through the epistle, when his hands trembled violently. His face a few moments before pale, now became flushed and crimson.

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed, when he had finished reading. "Can it be true, or is it some cruel dream sent to mock my poverty? Let me peruse it again," and taking up the letter, he read as follows:

"My Dear Walter,
"I have the most joyful, startling news to tell you. Some months ago I received a long official letter from an American solicitor, stating that an aunt of mine, dying at an advanced age in Florida had willed the whole of her money to me, amounting to some thousands. A fortnight since I received another epistle from the same source, informing me that the whole of the large sum was lodged in the Bank of England, and that by going through some further formalities I should at once come into possession of it. To-day, I am happy to say, Fortune has again smiled upon me—after frowning for years—and I am complete master of this wealth. I would have acquainted you with this matter before, but that I feared the news might prove too good to be true. I dread, my dear boy, I am quite sure, by the unexpected news, I really hardly know what I am doing. Come down at once."

"Your Affectionate Father,
"James Hastings."

Yes! it was all true. His father had poured every syllable of it; and at nine o'clock on the following morning he found himself seated in the snug little breakfast room, at Woodland House, chatting over the whole affair as an accomplished fact.

"Woodland House." That was the rather assuming title this miniature residence had the audacity to assume. It was cut in a large character on the two diminutive "pillars" which stood at the entrance of the tiny garden, probably with the view of awing strangers into respect for the tiny abode.

A glorious morning welcomed father and son, as they sat down to breakfast. The glad, golden sunshine was streaming in at the open window. The fresh balmy air wafted towards them the odor of a thousand flowers, Nature herself was sharing their joy.

Mr. Hastings looked at the picture of happy contentment as he gazed out on the lovely landscape, stretching away from the house in all directions. His son was not so elated. A dreamy sadness lingered in his eyes, as his thoughts stole back to her whose spirit was now in Heaven.

"You have something to tell me, father," he said, breaking through his reverie, and looking up abruptly at the curious expression on the older man's countenance. "I can half read it in your face."

"Pray where did you study physiognomy, Walter?" said he, sarcastically, casting a look of enforced solemnity at the ceiling as he spoke. This disguise failing, he burst into a heavy fit of laughing. "Well, Walter, my boy," he added, "I cannot keep it any longer from you—the sum and substance of my life is this: I have purchased Bernard Hall, the grand old house you and I so much admired."

Walter started. He had a strong love for this lonely house. He felt that his very existence was bound up with it.

"I went in for furniture, and everything attaching to the place," continued Mr. Hastings, "and got them at an extremely low figure."

"You really surprise me. I fancied furniture so grand and massive would have fetched a fabulous amount."

"So it would under ordinary circumstances, but the fact is, Walter, they could find very few bidders either for the place or the furniture, owing to the frightful stories circulated about ghosts and beings from the other world occasionally taking up their abode there."

"Pardon me for my vehemence, father, but I could almost horsewhip the inventors of such trash."

"By doing so you would be acting basely, and with prejudice. There is a great deal of truth in some of these stories, I assure you," Mr. Hastings urged warmly.

"Doubtless you will be displeased, but I feel I

am doing an act of justice when I brand all such tales as thorough humbug."

Walter got up from the table as he spoke and sauntered towards the window as a means of ending the conflict of opinion which threatened to grow rather warm. But his father was a more persistent disputant, and at once he opened fire upon him in his own retreat.

"Oh, you were always skeptical on these points," he began, "but cynic as you are you must give way to facts. If spirits are fond of solitude they could not, to my idea, choose a fitter residence."

"You presuppose then that spirits are fond of solitude," Walter said, turning round to have a look at his father's warlike expression.

"No, no, my boy, I am sure of it. Who ever heard of a ghost in Parliament, or the shade of an orator haranguing a multitude? You will find if they generally choose a tomb-stone for a seat, and if they lounge at all, it is in the depth of a forest."

Walter Hastings resolved to end the discussion if possible, with a single home-thrust. "This tomb-stone I hold to be but the theory of a demented brain, he said, emphasizing each word slowly, an assertion which called upon his father's visage the strangest of all possible looks.

"I tell you what, Walter," Mr. Hastings said with warmth, "you shall become a convert to my way of thinking, this very night. People with stronger nerves than you or I have been made to shudder in that half-covered old mansion."

"If they shook with terror till they fell to pieces their shattered fragments would not make me believe in an 'a' surdity." He finished the sentence abruptly, by leaning his head well out of the window, so as to be partially under cover from his father's next shot.

"Well, look here Walter," (standing up and thrusting his hands deep in his pockets, before proceeding). "Are you prepared to take charge of the place with no other companion than old Mrs. Farr, the housekeeper?"

"Of course I am," was echoed back from the window. "You do not fancy for one moment I would shrink from meeting a ghost or hobgoblin, or a whole regiment of both sorts?"

"Your bravery is beyond all reproach," Mr. Hastings replied with the nearest possible approach to a sneer. "I suppose I may put the thing down as settled—even your starting after dinner?" He took a few steps forward to ring for breakfast to be cleared away, while awaiting his son's reply.

"With all my heart, and I only wish I was off now to have a glimpse at this terror-striking edifice," he said, leaving the window and again resuming his seat.

"His Parr will be glad of such a valiant champion as you are, Walter," running his fingers through his gray hair, he muttered. "I shall chat the thing over with Sir—confound the fellow!" he said, stopping himself abruptly finding his soliloquy had been overheard. "I meant Mr. Wallace."

"I think, father, your own manufacturing some little scheme," Walter put in, looking inquiringly at his father.

"Nothing of the kind I assure you," Mr. Hastings replied solemnly, as he bustled out of the room.

CHAPTER III.

"Over all there hung a shadow and a fear;
A sense of mystery the spirit haunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is haunted."

Walter Hastings was now alone, and at perfect liberty to dwell upon this delicious proposal of his father—that he should visit the "haunted house." The dream of his life would now be fulfilled. He would possess Bernard Hall with all its old traditions and stories of bygone days. "Time flies." Whoever wrote such a fabrication, he mused, as he counted the tedious hours intervening between breakfast and dinner; but time, to use a vulgar expression, would not budge an inch to please anybody. Headless of all grumbling it pursued the even tenor of its way, and at last ushered in the hour of starting. Walter was all excitement. There was a charm, a fascination about this solitary house he could not resist, and as his home bore him swiftly on, his heart thrilled with a wild joy he could not well account for. Arrived at the place, he was more than ever impressed with its beauty. The stately building itself, with the tall, grand trees arranged so gracefully round it, the elegantly planned gardens, and the music of the falling waters, issuing from a fountain hidden among the trees—all appealed to his sense of the beautiful.

The windows were prettily devised with a touch of the antique about them. The entrance, embedded in luxuriant foliage, though of modern construction, had, from the style employed in building, an almost ancient look. But the most charming thing connected with Bernard Hall was its position. Built on the summit of a gentle incline, it looked out with stern grandeur on a natural scenery, which for beauty and wild magnificence is unequalled in any part of the British Kingdom. If any fault could have been found at all it would have been with the solitude and extreme loneliness which appeared to brood over everything. Having fully reconnoitered the place, he proceeded to salute its august guardian, Mrs. Parr. She, poor soul, was delighted to see him; assuring positively that she had heard strange noises in the night; and the credulous soul wound up by saying, "The place ain't right, sir, I'd stake my life on that."

Supper over, Mrs. Parr retired to rest, taking care to keep up a blazing fire, and her lamp night, as a warning to adventurous spirits inclined to trespass on her privacy.

Walter, too, went to bed, but could not sleep. A feeling took possession of him impelling him to go into the moonlight. He felt a longing, a wild desire, to pace the garden and breathe the cool night air. He could not resist this strange, unaccountable fancy, though he battled hard with it. Finding he could not sleep, he gave way to his inclination, dressed hurriedly, and sauntered into the garden. Never before did a sight so lovely meet his eyes as that which now repaid him for his midnight visit. The moon shone out in all the fullness of its glory, silencing the foliage on all sides with lovely streaks of light. Lighting a cigar he sat down leisurely on one of the rustic seats, while his eye drank in the beauty of the scene. He watched the queenly moon sailing majestically in the heavens, now and then plunging into a dark cloud, but quickly extricating herself again, as if afraid her heavenly brightness would be tarnished. Absorbed in noble thoughts inspired by such a time and place, he bent his head upon his breast, while his heart was drawn up in thankfulness to the grand author of all the loveliness that surrounded him.

On raising his eyes they fell on the form of a lovely woman clothed in a flowing silken garment. The light was streaming full on her faultless figure. Every feature was exquisitely formed. Every limb was gracefully moulded. Never had Walter Hastings gazed on such a picture of matchless beauty as that which now stood before him. But what was there in her glance that chilled the warm blood in his veins? That cold icy look—those strange meaningless gestures—great heaven! the truth slowly dawned on his mind—he was in the presence of the dead.

At that late hour, and in that terribly lonely place, he stood confronted with a spirit! The thought was horrifying, and the advanced hour and solitary place made the pain of those few moments most intense. A cold perspiration ran over his forehead. He laid hold of the seat with a nervous grasp,