

"What do you mean?" I gasped hoarsely.

He rose and taking my arm led me out of the room, and down a short passage. Putting his finger on his lips, he softly opened a door. She was standing with her back to us. Her beautiful hair was loose, and covered her like a cloak. She was motionless, her arms crossed above her head.

"I love him, I love him," she murmured softly.

I made a step forward, but my arm was held as in a vice. I also noticed for the first time that Fannie was in the room.

"Beautiful gull, I nearly caught you." And she began to laugh.

What was there in that laugh that revealed the horrible truth to me? The General drew me quickly out of the room.

"Yes," he said, answering the question my lips could not articulate. "*She is mad.*"

## AN UNFINISHED TALE.

BY E. MACG. LAWSON.

Not one of us had yawned yet, none of us seemed to be at all sleepy though it was just midnight. What had been a huge bonfire of stumps, but which now was a glowing mass of embers, formed the centre of our little circle. We did not care to look into the awfully intense darkness behind us. Not a star, not a cloud, no sky and a terrible stillness. Strange that none of us had suggested returning to camp. Other nights a dozen such propositions had been made before twelve o'clock. And it was not pleasant either, for I think we all were feeling depressed. A party of campers—pleasure seekers—with numberless black bottles and loads of good tobacco, lying about a bone-fire at midnight, feeling depressed! Nonsense. And yet it was so. And there we sat, smoking silently and gazing across the fire into each other's eager faces—eager, I know not why. The silence was very impressive. The lake a few yards from us gave forth no sound. There was not a breath of wind. "Why don't you talk, Ned" said Bolton in a soft voice as though he feared waking some one. "For the same reason that you do not." And we said no more but

continued smoking in silence. Suddenly we all started to our feet.

Out of the darkness, that awful still darkness, a man stepped into our midst—what was once a man rather. As I jumped to my feet I had accidentally stirred the fire, and a little flame darted upwards as if to give us a better view of the intruder. His face, although traces of refinement still remained in some of the features, was shrunken and distorted, apparently the result of some terrible mental suffering. His locks were snowy white, and his eyes—I think no such eyes were ever before seen in human sockets. Terror flashed from them. Agony smouldered in their depths. I shuddered as I met his gaze. He was bent as if with age, and his whole appearance was so utterly incongruous with the instinctive feeling I had that he was a young man, that I was at once shocked and mystified. We surveyed him in perplexed silence.

"In heaven's name, gentlemen," he said, abruptly, "let me linger among you awhile to dispel the terrors that beset me in darkness alone." He peered for a moment into the night behind him, then