

absent at the time, but who, on his return, heard the story from the sexton who had buried my mother. His oath of vengeance was fearful, and fearfully kept. Five years passed away. Sir William and Lady Stanley had but one child, a daughter, whom they idolized. Leila was the gentlest and most beautiful creature I ever saw. Words cannot tell you, Gus, how I loved that child. One day, as the nurse was walking with her through the grounds of Stanley Park, a man, dressed in the rough garb of a sailor, sprang from behind the trees, and, in spite of the shrieks and struggles of the attendants, bore her off.

The nurse, wild with terror, fled back to the house, and meeting Sir William on the piazza, fell, fainting, at his feet. When she recovered, she related what had happened, and the consternation and horror her recital produced may be imagined. There was no doubt in Sir William's mind as to who had done the deed. The abductor had left a message: '*Tell Sir Will Stanley,*' said he, '*my sister is avenged!*' Search was made in every direction, enormous rewards were offered, the police was put on the track, but all in vain. Not the slightest clue to Leila could be obtained. It was the belief of every one, the sailor had destroyed the child to escape detection."

"It is more than probable," said Gus. "Poor Lady Stanley! I can now understand the cause of the strange melancholy that used to puzzle me so much."

"She never smiled from that day," said Fred. "Had the child died she would have grieved, but such grief is as nothing. It was the terrible uncertainty as to its fate that weighed on her heart. It was well she did not survive it long."