

tell, as the figure was clad in grave clothes, having on a long white shroud reaching from head to foot. The under jaw had been tied up by a bandage running over the head.

This bandage was stained with blood, as was the bosom of the shroud.

The moon was shining outside and made a dim light in the room. Mr. Lane noticed that the throat of his visitor had been cut from ear to ear, and blood seemed to be still flowing from the wound.

Mr. Lane was at first a good deal startled by the appearance of his nocturnal visitor, but he soon regained his self-possession.

The ghost, on seeing that Mr. Lane was awake, as he had raised partly up in bed to get a better view, stretched forth its arms, and stepping backwards slowly towards the darkest corner of the room, repeated in a low, sepulchral tone, two or three times, "Leave here at once, this is my place."

As the figure was about to disappear in the dark corner, Mr. Lane drew a pistol from under his pillow, and presenting it, fired. The report was followed by a subdued cry, as of pain, that sounded to Mr. Lane very much like a human voice, but when his eyes recovered from the blinding effect of the flash of his pistol, the ghost had disappeared.

The two colored servants came rushing up to the room to see what was the matter. They were told by Mr. Lane that he had had a bad dream and fired his pistol while asleep.

The story satisfied the servants and they returned to their beds, as did their employer, and the house was not further disturbed that night.

The next day one of the frequenters of the Millport House was missing from his accustomed place.

The second night, however, after the events just recited had transpired, and while Mr. Lane was sleeping soundly, he was aroused by the pressure of a human hand upon his throat. He struggled to free himself from the grasp, but was unable to do so.

In less time than it takes to tell it, Mr. Lane was gagged and securely bound, his hands being tied behind his back, and his feet tied together. A bandage was placed over his eyes, and in this condition he was carried from the room and to some place, he knew not whither. When the bandage was removed, Mr. Lane found himself in what appeared to be an under-ground room, or rather cave, as it had apparently neither door or windows. He was surrounded by some half a dozen masked men, all armed with pistols and long knives.

A lantern cast a dim light around the place, being held in the hand of one of the men.

Mr. Lane had hardly taken a glance at his surroundings when one of the men approached him, and after removing the gag from his mouth, said to him:

"You are in our power; we had intended to kill you—why, we shall not say—but we have determined to give you a chance for your life, on one condition, and that condition is, that you tell us where to find your money and jewellery; and if we find ten thousand dollars' worth, we will release you, otherwise, you die."

"You may as well do your killing then," said Mr. Lane, "for I assure you that I shall not give you a single dollar for my release; so do your worst."

A short consultation was now held among the maskers. Then the former speaker turned to Mr. Lane and said: "You will change your mind before we are done with you. We have determined to leave you here, bound as you are, without food or drink, until you comply with our demands, or until you starve to death." Saying which, they all left the room, but how, Mr. Lane could not tell.

An hour passed, which seemed to Mr. Lane to be almost endless.

He was laying on the cold damp ground, unable to help himself in the least, for although he strove manfully to release himself from his bonds, he could not do so.

At length he thought he heard a stealthy step coming toward him, and he came to the conclusion that one of the gang had returned to kill him at once; he hoped at least, it might be so, for a quick death was far preferable to a lingering death by starvation and thirst.

His surprise may be imagined when, instead of the assassin's knife thrust to his heart, he heard a low voice near him saying, "Fear nothing; I am a friend and a brother. I have solemnly promised to help, aid and assist all worthy brothers and fellows, and I have come to aid you."

Mr. Lane was instantly released from his bonds, when his new friend took him by the hand and said, "Follow your guide and fear no danger."

After passing through two or three dark passages and up two or three flights of stairs, Mr. Lane found himself in the hall and at the door of his own room.

"Here," said his guide, "I must leave you for the present. You are safe now for to-night, and will not be again disturbed."

"Let me thank you for your timely aid," said Mr. Lane. "Come in while I make a light and learn to know my deliverer."