

swarthy visage; he spurned her rudely from him, and with his own hand snatching a burning brand from an unextinguished watchfire, he darted furiously forward and cast it among the combustibles that were strewn around me. Slowly they ignited, for with a refinement of cruelty in which these barbarians excel, they had mingled green fuel profusely with the lighter materials of the pile, in order thereby to prolong and heighten my sufferings; but long before the flame was kindled, the blue smoke curled up, and involved my person in its thin and vapoury wreaths.

At that sight, Ascaora became frantic. She uttered a wild and piercing cry—such a cry! it thrilled through every fibre of my frame, and since that hour how often has it sounded in my ears. In solitude and in crowds, in the dark hour of midnight, in the broad clear light of the sunny noon I have heard it—like the shrill blast of a trumpet it has startled me from sleep, and my cheek has paled at the ringing sound, when all the horrors of the battle field were powerless to blanch its healthful hue. With the bound of a young fawn, she sprang towards me—she darted through the eddying smoke that encircled me, and in another instant would have been within my clasping arms—for in the agony of my soul I had burst the bands that confined them—when the giant hand of Takaltha plucked back her fragile form with words of burning rage—

“Die!” he said, “the eyrie of Takaltha shall no longer shelter the treacherous eaglet of his race!”

I saw the gleaming steel raised high in air, it flashed before my eyes, and the father’s hand buried it deep in the bosom of his innocent child. Oh! blessed religion of Jesus! how has thy benign influence purified and softened the rugged heart of man, and elevated the sweetest and holiest affections of his nature—to thee we owe all that is most precious in our earthly joys, and the bright and glorious hopes centered in the futurity which thou hast revealed to us. The maiden staggered as the fatal blow descended, then with the latest effort of her strength, sprang forward and fell upon my breast. “Ascaora comes to die with thee,” she murmured; “to go with thee to that Saviour whom thou lovest,” her voice faltered, her breath grew short and quick, for the blood trickled faster and faster from her wound, and turning her dying eyes, those soft and speaking eyes, tenderly upon me, she laid her head upon my breast and expired. Let me not speak of the feelings with which I had gazed upon this dreadful and affecting scene—it would madden me to recall them. There I now stood, still and breathless, straining with a clasp that a giant’s strength could not have unloosed, that lifeless maiden to my heart. I heeded not the slowly rising flames, the blinding smoke, the tumult and the din around. Passion was dead within me, and every desire and hope concentrated in the one joyful

thought, that in a few brief moments we should again be reunited in that bright region where no clouds ever darken the horizon, and where pain, and fear, and man’s vindictive rage, would never come to mar our pure and perfect bliss.

While thus I stood, borne on the wings of prayer up to the throne of the Almighty, there was a sudden hush of the tumultuous throng—and then with startling abruptness, burst forth the loud tremendous war-whoop of some advancing foe. Far and wide, and deep, and terrible, it rang through the dense forests, while the crashing as of a thousand trees, told, that come from whence they would, they came in power and might. Takaltha sounded his war-whoop in reply, and strove to rally his warriors, but unprepared for the attack, they fled in dismay, shouting “Olocatara! Olocatara!” At that name I felt that freedom was at hand; but still I stood, for I had looked death so closely in the face, that life had become almost a matter of indifference to me! On came that rushing host, darkening the air with their arrows, and brandishing their rude weapons with wild and warlike fury. Like a mighty whirlwind scattering the withered leaves of autumn, they drove the followers of Takaltha before them, and hastily ascending the eminence, tossed to the four winds the blazing combustibles that surrounded me, and which in another instant would have wrapped my devoted person in a mantle of devouring flames. Then advanced a noble specimen of manly beauty, an Apollo of the wilderness, and severed the cord that bound me. I recognized in him the savage prince with whom the Chevalier De Gourges had held friendly and frequent intercourse, and to whose protection I was flying with the ill-fated Ascaora, when our progress was so suddenly arrested. Briefly and gratefully I thanked him, but even recovered life and freedom failed, in an instant, to draw back my thoughts and affections to the earth, from which I had been enabled so entirely to wean them. Silently I sunk upon the ground, still holding on my bosom the tender form of that murdered maiden, and clasping her with a rigid embrace closely to my heart. Olocatara looked upon me with pitying eyes, and addressed me in a jargon of French, gathered from my countrymen, intermixed with the barbarous dialect of his own uncouth language—but I had become so familiar with the expressive signs of those untaught people, that I easily comprehended him. At his earnest entreaty I roused myself to explain to him the terrible circumstances of the maiden’s death, and when I ended he intimated by a fierce look and a corresponding gesture, that vengeance should speedily be taken for the atrocious deed. He then proposed that we should bury her, before our departure, and to this I gladly assented; and selecting a quiet spot beneath the branches of a spreading beech, I laid her on the turf, and knelt down beside her body, to look my