

comprehensive vice of avarice. It was this which had led him to traverse the tideless Mediterranean as the leader of a pirate crew—it was this that brought him back to his native land, when his estate was in jeopardy—it was this that induced him to wed the child-like heiress—it was this that drew him to the lonely hearth of his ancestral home, in order to hoard up his treasures, and the raging of the winds and waves around his cliff-built castle, had taught him a new lesson of rapine and lust of gold.

In the dark, smooth, deceitful character of the Lord of Dunraven, there was but one redeeming quality, and this was his *paternal affection*. Even while treating his wife with cold-hearted cruelty, he was passionately attached to his twin sons, the only offspring of his marriage. However his evil passions might be aroused towards others, to them he was ever kind. The mysterious bond of union which nature seems to form between twin children, he sought to strengthen by every means in his power, for he meant that brotherly love should make the inheritance of Dunraven an equal gift to both. The boys loved each other tenderly, and never were they seen asunder. Beautiful were they both, with their long, fair curling locks, their snowy complexion, and the ruddy glow of mountain health upon their round cheeks.—And proud was the father—guilt-stained and evil as he might be—proud was the father of these noble scions of an ancient stock. He determined to train them up in the strict seclusion of Dunraven Castle, and when time should have developed the faculties of their minds and bodies, he designed to be their guide through the mazes of the world, trusting that his own dangerous experience would enable him to guard them from contact with the evils he had himself encountered. But above all, he resolved to make them rich; they should be the first in wealth as well as in beauty and in honour; and with this tender love and proud ambition for his boys ever awake within his heart, he pursued his dark and tortuous course of crime and cruelty.

Night after night in the season of darkness and storms, a light appeared on the Dunraven Cliffs. Sometimes it gleamed from one point of the headland, sometimes it glittered at another, but still it shone over the waters like a beacon-light, proffering hope, and alas! leading only to despair. The Lord of Saint Donat's had watched in vain to discover the source of this light which flashed along the dark waters. No tower—no lofty pinnacle arose on the Dun-

raven manor, and it shone not from the windows of the castle; but had he known that a noble black steed, *shod with felt*, and bearing a lantern suspended from his neck, had been trained to traverse the edge of the cliff, he would not have been at a loss to understand the decree of the wicked Lord of Dunraven. Many were the wrecks which strewed the shore, and it was frequently observed that while the poor sailors were frequently rescued from the waves, the passengers, whose effects might be counted of richer worth, rarely lived to reach the land. Malek could swim like a native of the element; his skill in diving was wonderful, and though he was ever ready to go to the relief of the struggling wretches, he never succeeded in bringing them safe to the shore. Many a jewelled casket—many a bag of gold did he draw from the stranded vessels, as they lay creaking and grinding upon the rocks, for he could venture where any one else would have found certain death—but the only treasure which Malek could never rescue, was the precious gift of life.

In the meantime the boys were springing up in beauty and grace, beloved by everybody, excepting the swarthy Malek, and making the old castle merry with their childish glee. Indulged by their father in every wish, there was only one passion in their young hearts which he refused to gratify. He shrunk from seeing them launched on the wild waters which surrounded Dunraven Castle, and despite of their entreaties, he resolutely forbade them from entering a boat, or venturing out from the shore. But with all the wilfulness of petted children, they longed for the forbidden pleasure, and every moment that they could steal from their father's notice, was spent upon the rocky beach. The colonnade beneath the cliff, was a favourite resort, and they wandered over its resounding and rocky floor, with their hearts filled with vain longings to bound over the blue waves, which almost laved their feet within their cavern. Early one morning Mr. Vaughan had left home on business which would detain him until nightfall, but ere he went he had uttered some fierce rebuke to Malek. None knew what was the cause of his displeasure, but all could read the meaning of Malek's awful look, when his master, roused to intemperate passion by the sullen demeanour of the culprit, with a blow of his fist felled the boy to the ground. Malek arose slowly, and as he wiped the blood from a wound in his temple, he looked fixedly after Mr. Vaughan as he rode rapidly down the path from the castle. A livid hue overspread his swarthy features, his eyes gleamed with