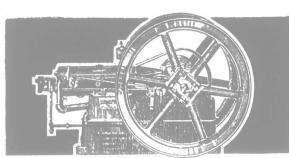


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upon the ear of Caroline, as she prolonged her vigil of prayer through the still watches of the night. Her noir. ear was dull enough now to all earthly sound! But the toll of the bell reached the ear of La Corriveau, rousing her to the need of immediately effecting her escape, now that her task was done.

She sprang up and looked narrowly around the chamber. She marked with envious malignity the luxury and magnificence of its adornments. Upon a chair lay her own letter sent to Caroline by the hands of Mere Malheur. La Corriveau snatched it up. It was what she sought. She tore it in pieces and threw the fragments from her; but with a sudden thought, as if not daring to leave even the fragments upon the floor, she gathered them up hastily and put them in her basket with the bouquet of roses, which she wrested from the dead fingers of Caroline in order to carry it away and scatter the fatal flowers in the forest.

She pulled open the drawers of the escritoire to search for money, but, finding none, was too wary to carry off aught else. The temptation lay sore upon her to carry away the ring from the finger of Caroline. drew it off the pale, wasted finger, but a cautious consideration restrained her. She put it on again, and would not take it.

"It would only lead to discovery!" muttered she. "I must take nothing but myself and what belongs to me away from Beaumanoir, and the sooner the better !'

La Corriveau, with her basket again upon her arm, turned to give one last look of fiendish satisfaction at the corpse, which lay like a dead

angel slain in God's battle. bright lamps were glaring full upon her still beautiful but sightless eyes, which, wide open, looked, even in death, reproachfully yet forgivingly upon their murderess

Something startled La Corriveau in that look. She turned hastily away, and, relighting her candle, passed through the dark archway of the secret door, forgetting to close it after her, and retraced her steps along the stone passage until she came to the watch-tower, where she dashed out

her light. Creeping around the tower in the dim moonlight, she listened long and anxiously at door and window to discover if all was still about the Chateau. Not a sound was heard but claimed she, starting from the chair the water of the little brook gurgling and drawing her gaunt figure up to

La Corriveau emerged cautiously done. Do you? from the tower. She crept like a guilty thing under the shadow of the plied Angelique, touched as with a the same road she had come. She it is done! that were folly, needless, glided like a dark spectre through dangerous, now that it is done! But turned to the city to tell Angelique des Meloises that the arms of the Intendant were now empty and ready to clasp her as his bride; that her rival was dead, and she had put herself under bonds forever to La Corriyeau as the price of innocent blood.

La Corriveau reached the city in the gray of the morning; a thick fog lay like a winding-sheet upon the lofty rocks, every object, great and small, was hidden from view.

To the intense satisfaction of La Corriveau, the fog concealed her return to the house of Mere Malheur. a command to the old crone to ask no questions yet, she sallied forth again to carry to Angelique the welcome news that her rival was dead.

cerned ten paces off.

Angelique was up. She had not feverishly on the watch, expecting the

She had counted the minutes of the

successive scenes of the tragedy which was being accomplished at Beauma-

The hour of midnight culminated over her head, and looking out of her window at the black, distant hills, in the recesses of which she knew lay the Chateau, her agitation grew intense. She knew at that hour La Corriveau must be in the presence of her victim. Would she kill her? Was she about it now? The thought fastened on Angelique like a wild beast, and would not let go. thought of the Intendant, and was filled with hope; she thought of the crime of murder and shrunk now that it was being done.

It was in this mood she waited and watched for the return of her bloody messenger. She heard the cautious foot on the stone steps. She knew by a sure instinct whose it was, and rushed down to admit her.

They met at the door, and without a word spoken, one eager glance of Angelique at the dark face of La Corriveau drank in the whole fatal story. Caroline de St. Castin was dead! Her rival in the love of the Intendant was beyond all power of rivalry now! The lofty doors of ambitious hope stood open-what! to admit the queen of beauty and of society? No! but a murderess, who would be forever haunted with the fear of justice! It seemed at this moment as if the lights had all gone out in the palaces and royal halls where her imagination had so long run riot, and she saw only dark shadows, and heard inarticulate sounds of strange voices babbling in her ear. It was the unspoken words of her own troubled thoughts and the terrors newly awakened in her soul!

Angelique seized the hand of La Corriveau, not without a shudder. She drew her hastily up to her chamber and thrust her into a chair. Placing both hands upon the shoulders of La Corriveau, she looked wildly in her face, exclaiming in a halfexultant, half-piteous tone, "Is it done? Is it really done? I read it in your eyes! I know you have done the deed! Oh, La Corriveau!"

The grim countenance of the woman relaxed into a half smile of scorn and surprise at the unexpected weakness which she instantly noted in Angelique's manner.

'Yes, it is done!" replied she, coldly, "and it is well done! But, by the manna of St. Nicholas!" exin its pebbly bed, which seemed to be all that was awake on this night of death.

its full height, while her black eyes shot daggers, "you look, Mademoiselle, as if you repented its being

"Yes! No! No, not now!" rehot iron "I will not repent now is she dead? Did you wait to see if she were really dead? People look dead sometimes and are not! Tell me truly, and conceal nothing!"

"La Corriveau does not her work by halves, Mademoiselle, neither do you; only you talk of repentance after it is done, I do not! That is all the difference! Be satisfied; the lady of Beaumanoir is dead! I made doubly sure of that, and deserve a double reward from you!

"Reward! You shall have all you crave! But what a secret between you and me!" Angelique looked at La Corriveau as if this thought now struck her for the first time. She was in this woman's pow-She shivered from head to foot. 'Your reward for this night's work is here," faltered she, placing her hand over a small box. She did not No one observed La Corriveau as she passed, in her peasant dress, through the misty streets, which did not admit of an object being dis-

La Corriveau snatched the box off gone to bed that night, and sat the table and held it to her bosom. Angelique continued, in a monotonous tone, as one conning a lesson by rote -" Use it prudently. Do not seem to the world to be suddenly rich; it might be inquired into. I have She pictured to her imagination the thought of everything during the past