

Sweet Norine

If it should happen that any one of these bands of Pawnees should come by that road between here and Barrison Hall, it would be impossible to pass the savages and get to the town hall.

"You are right, Daniel," she answered. "We have not a moment to lose."

Putting aside all the terrible fears that assailed her, the good old soul hastened as quickly as her trembling limbs could carry her to the little attic room above. When she reached the door she called gently:

"Norine, Norine, dear, arise. I—I want you."

Within all was silent. No sound even of the girl's breathing could be heard.

"How deeply youth sleeps," murmured the old grandmother, "and age sleeps so lightly."

"Norine, child!" she called again, more loudly this time. "Do you hear me?"

Still there was no response from within in the little chamber.

She pushed open the door and groped her way into the room and up to the little bed that stood in one corner, running her wrinkled hand lightly over the pillow.

But no curly head met her loving touch. She started back with a cry of horror. Norine was not there!

Her boy, the bright Daniel to her side. Even before he gasped out the words that Norine was not there, he seemed to divine intuitively what had happened—that their darling had gone.

For the first time in her life the poor old soul was incapable of speech or action, save the terrified words, "Bring a candle, quick!"

He complied with all the haste he was capable of. One glance around the little apartment showed that their fears were but too well grounded. Norine, their darling, the child of their old age, was missing.

The little cottage was so small that they had little difficulty in searching it carefully through in a very few moments.

Again, and yet again they searched it, calling loudly, tearfully, despairingly her name, but there was no response.

The aged couple forgot the terrors that menaced their cottage home—ay, their very lives, in their fear over the girl's unaccountable disappearance.

"Where is Norine?" they asked each other, with pallid brow and trembling lips. But they could find no answer.

She had parted from them in anger, for the first time in young life, and in anger she must have fled from the roof that had sheltered her. But where had she gone?

The howling winds, tearing with demoniac fury around the little cottage, gave them no answer.

"We will search for her," muttered the old man, hoarsely. "If—if anything has happened to Norine, I—I would not care to live."

"Something tells me that Norine has fled to her lover," moaned the old grandmother, pressing her hands tightly over her heart.

"If she has fled toward Barrison Hall, she has fallen into the hands of the advancing tribe of Pawnees," groaned Daniel Gordon. "Better far that she were dead than that."

CHAPTER XXII.

Leaving the inhabitants of Hadley in their intense excitement, every man of them cursing Joe Brainard from the very depths of his heart for being the cause of their woe, we will return for a few brief moments—you and I, dear reader—to the thrilling scene in which we left poor, hapless, noble Joe, and learn his fate, for much that happens in the following chapters hinges upon it.

When Clifford Castle thrust his victim bodily over the precipice, he supposed that he was consigning his victim's body to the rocky chasm a thousand feet below, and where it would never afterward be found to mutely reveal the tragedy which had taken place.

But in the hour of his deadly peril Heaven guarded Joe Brainard.

The spot at which his antagonist tossed him over the cliff had a wide, shelving rock jutting out from it but a few feet down, and upon this Joe landed, lying at full length, motionless, like one dead.

Death must soon have overtaken him from the intense cold he had lain there long. Fate ordained it otherwise. He had landed directly at the feet of two half-breed Indians, who were crouching on the rock waiting for the stagecoach to pass.

From their position they could hear the skirmish which had taken place above, but could behold nothing owing to the intense darkness, and being too low down.

One thing they did know, however, and that was that one of the combatants was Joe Brainard, the express agent, for both of the half-breeds had recognized his voice.

It so happened that both of these particular men had a grievance against Joe, which made them his sworn enemies. One because he had been discharged from the express office by him because of his dishonesty, the other because the young express agent had given him, once upon a time, a most severe thrashing for abusing a little lad on the village against the House of Lords.

As soon as the coach had rumbled on its way the two half-breeds made haste to light their lantern, which they had extinguished, to see which of the two combatants had been vanquished.

Their amazement and intense gratification upon learning that it was Joe Brainard was intense.

"We will dash him over the cliff!" cried one of the savages whose deadly intent was from his lips.

"No," returned the other in his gruff, guttural voice, "we can make better use of him. We will make him tell just how many men there are in the village, how much ammunition they have, and how they would be likely to oppose us in a massacre. He shall tell us, and truly, or we will roast him to a stale."

"He is more stubborn than a mule," returned the other. "He will not open his lips."

"Wait until the fugitives are lighted and the flames begin to scorch. He will open his lips freely then and tell us all that we would know."

"Perhaps, but I doubt it," returned the other.

Making a rude litter, they placed the form of the unconscious man upon it; then lifting it to their stalwart shoulders, they proceeded to cross the mountain with their helpless burden.

It was indeed a pitiful hour for Joe Brainard when he fell into their hands. Death would have been a thousand times preferable, more merciful, for they discussed their plans freely together concerning their prey as they trudged

A BLOOD MIXTURE.

A Fine Remedy Which Anyone Can Easily Fix at Home.

along the steep, narrow path, where none save those with the red, daring, hazardous blood of the Indian in his veins would have dared to climb. The twenty miles or more which these men traversed were as nothing to them, used as they were to the mountain vastness.

The highest point of the mountain was reached by a circuitous route, so densely covered by forests of heavy underbrush that it was considered impassable for man. Toward this point they bent their steps with alacrity, and in much exultation. It was so far out of the reach of travel that no one in Hadley was aware that in the height of the mountain the Pawnees, who refused to take advantage of civilized conditions, had a large tract of ground on which they lived, depending upon the wild animals that roamed the forests for sustenance.

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BEATEN TO DEATH.

TALES OF HORRIBLE CRUELTY IN PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA.

General Piemar Tells Mothers' Congress at Washington of Men, Women and Children Mutilated on the Cocoons.

Washington, March 11.—A vivid description of atrocities alleged to be perpetrated upon slave laborers on coco plantations on the Islands of Principe and Saint Tome, Portuguese West Africa, was given in an address on "Children's Lives in Africa," by Gen. Joubert Piemar, of South Africa, at to-night's session of the International Congress on the welfare of the child, under the auspices of the National Mothers' Congress.

"The atrocities I have witnessed in Portuguese West Africa have taken such a hold upon me," declared Gen. Piemar, "that I cut myself loose from all my business, and leaving my family thousands of miles away, I have consecrated my life to the freeing of the men and women that are daily being done to death, and the little children I have frequently seen being beaten until the blood flowed to the ground."

After stating that the "cruelties meted out to these enslaved human beings on the mainland were beyond description," Gen. Piemar continued: "Children are torn away from the breasts of their mothers and sold as slaves. Slaves in the employ of their taskmasters are beaten to death; men, women and children are mutilated. Often after a native has been done to death he is quartered, and the different portions of his body are hung on trees to terrorize the other natives."

At that moment a shadow darkened the doorway of the rude tent, and raising his agonized eyes he beheld the tall, brawny figure of one of the half-breeds, whose face he recognized instantly.

"So, so, you know me!" snarled the fellow. "I told you when last we parted that an Indian never forgets an injury, and sometimes waits long for his revenge; but it is sure to come. You had me discharged from the express office for taking a ham, and that was the worst hour's business you ever did. It was your turn, then, Brainard, but it is my turn now, curse you!"

"I suppose you are wondering where you are?" he went on grimly and insolently. "I will tell you. You are in the hands of the Pawnees, the most deadly enemies of the tribes, the tribe whom all your Government agents have never been able to bring into subjection by threats or treatise."

"Joe tried to speak but no sound came from his lips. This intelligence, coming so quickly upon the heels of the terrible discovery that the money intrusted to him was gone, rendered him fairly speechless. Indeed for the instant he was at loss to find his voice, hoping against hope that this remised would awaken some tender feeling in the heart of the brawny half-breed for Joe had recognized him.

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"You did not tell them that when I was the village schoolmaster I taught you to read and write—ay, even to speak as well as the white man," cried Joe, at last finding his voice, hoping against hope that this remised would awaken some tender feeling in the heart of the brawny half-breed for Joe had recognized him.

"You do not answer," returned the half-breed, "and it is well, for at the slightest outcry a score or more of Pawnee braves would be here to riddle you with their arrows, for they have all heard of your treatment of me, and are thirsting for revenge."

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