

day, in the hall, was Donald arraigned for trial. All testified to the situation in which they found him, and it was evident to every one, that he had deprived his aunt of life for the purpose of possessing himself of the money collected for the rents the day previous. But yet Allan was missing, he could be no where found. Had he too been destroyed for the better purpose of advancing the views of the cruel Donald? Poor Allan! but yesterday he had obtained the release of the murderer from jail—alas! but to destroy thy aunt and perhaps thy noble self.

In brief, Donald was doomed the following morning to suffer death, and the poor youth was on the eve of being carried to prison from the hall, when a female voice in loud tones was heard exclaiming without:

"This way, villain! you shall not escape me, help! help! here is the murderer!" All eyes were directed to the quarter from whence the voice came, and Catharine Graham burst into the hall, pale and almost exhausted, dragging with her the villain Murdoch, and followed by a crowd of people.

"What means this, girl?" exclaimed the judge. "Who is that man whom you have dragged hither?"

"He is the murderer!" cried Catharine, "the assassin of Lady Alice—he that was seen lurking about this place two years ago, when the family plate was stolen from that iron chest."

Several individuals testified at once to his identity.

"Speak, fellow, what know you of the murderer?" demanded the judge.

"Nothing!" replied Murdoch, sulkily.

"How came you in this quarter at the very time that murder had been committed?"

"I came to see—to sec—" and Murdoch looked around, thinking that he would recognize Allan.

"To see whom? speak sirrah!"

"Why to see an old crony of mine, Allan Mentieth."

A deep cry of astonishment ran throughout the throng, while the judge continued—"And for what purpose?"

"Why, to receive payment of a small bond which was owing by him unto me," replied Murdoch.

"What was the nature of that bond?"

"That is a secret between ourselves," said the ruffian.

"Were you ever in these parts before?"

"Why, yes—I think I was—"

"And on what occasion?"

"Why, to see my friend Allan to be sure.—Have you aught more to ask of me?"

"Yes, and expect that you will answer without prevarication—on your truth depends your acquittal."

"Umph!" muttered Murdoch, doggedly.

"You were in this neighbourhood when the family plate was extracted from yonder chest, some two years since?"

"I was!"

"And you were the person that did so!"

"'Tis false!" shouted Murdoch in a voice of thunder. "'Tis false! it was not me—it was—" and he paused suddenly, as if afraid of revealing the secret.

"Who? speak, fellow—your life depends on your answer," replied the judge.

"Why, then, if I must tell, it was my young friend, Allan Mentieth."

A thrill of horror burst from the crowd.

"How, Allan Mentieth, 'tis impossible—you wish to exculpate yourself by casting the guilt upon an innocent man. Were Allan here you would not dare to say this, besides I suspect that you have murdered *him* as well as the Lady Alice."

"Murder—no, no, I am bad enough, but my hands are yet free from blood! Allan not to be found, 'tis singular. I could stake my neck against a halter that he is not far from here," said Murdoch.

"We shall look to that hereafter," continued the judge. "But you confess that you were accessory to the stealing of the plate, some two years since?"

"I do!"

"I remember it was said that there was a secret spring to the chest, which must have been known to the parties—if therefore what you say be true, prove it by pointing out that spring."

"Ha! ha!" laughed Murdoch. "That I can easily do—make way there, and I'll show you."

The domestics stood aside, and the ruffian approaching the chest, touched a spring—the lid flew open—and the body of Allan Mentieth was discovered, cold and lifeless from suffocation.

Terror and amazement stood on every countenance—and the evidence of Murdoch, with other circumstances, showed that Allan was the murderer, and Donald innocent.

More need not be said—the tale is told, gentle reader, which shows that if there are indeed supernatural agents, and mortals seek their help—they will find, that they but "keep the word of promise to our ear, and break it to our hopes."