

There was another person whom I always dreaded to meet, and that was Mrs. Martin, the mother of my unfortunate victim. This woman always looked me so resolutely in the face, that I felt my cheeks flush beneath her searching gaze. There was something I could scarcely define in her earnest regard, it was a mixture of contempt and defiance. Fortunately for me, she heard of a situation in a distant parish, and a subscription was set on foot by a kind neighbor, to procure the means for her removal—I was so eager to get rid of her, that anonymously I subscribed ten pounds. My mother and her gossips imagined that this donation came from the Hall, but Sir Walter had no such motive as mine, to stimulate his bounty.

It was just at this period that I fell sick of a dangerous, highly infectious fever. The house was of course deserted. The doctor alone dared visit the infected chamber, and my mother was left to nurse me herself. The good, the happy, the fortunate, the lovely, and the beloved, those to whom life is very dear, and the world a paradise, die, and are forgotten in the dust. But a despairing heaven-abandoned, miserable wretch like me, struggled through the horrors of that waking night-mare of agony, the typhus fever, and once more recovered to the consciousness of unutterable woe.

Delirium, like wine, lays bare the heart in all its weakness and its guilt, both reveal secrets which the possessor has for half a life carefully hid.

This I doubt not was my case, although no human lip ever revealed to me the fact.

When I left my bed, I found my mother gliding about like the spectre of her former self. Her beautiful auburn hair, of which she was so proud, and which, when a boy, I used to admire so much in its glossy bands, was as white as snow, and her bright, blue, loving eye had lost all its fire, and looked dim and hopeless, like the eyes of the dead.

Alarmed at her appearance, I demanded if she were ill, she shook her head, and said, "that her anxiety for me had sadly pulled her down. But I need not ask any questions. Her sin had found her out." And then she hurried from me, and I heard her weeping hysterically in her own room.

Could I have betrayed myself during the ravings of fever, I trembled at the thought, but I dared not ask. From that hour, no confidence existed between me and my mother. During the day I laboured in the field, and we saw little of each other. At night we sat for hours in silence without uttering a word. Both seemed unwilling to go to bed, but as if we lacked heart or courage

to disclose to the other, the sorrow that was consuming us. Years passed on in this cheerless gloom, this living death. My mother at last seemed to awaken from her stupor of despair, she read the Bible earnestly, she wept and prayed, she went regularly to the meeting house, and got what they call religion. Gradually she grew more cheerful, and would talk to me of the change that she had experienced, and would urge me in the most pathetic manner, to confess my sins to God, and to sue for pardon and peace, through the blood of the Saviour. My heart was closed to conviction, I could neither read nor pray.

The only thing from which I derived the least comfort, was in sending from time to time, large sums of money anonymously to Sir Walter Carlos, to relieve him from difficulties to which he was often exposed, by his reckless extravagance.

The beautiful Ella, the idol of my boyhood, followed her husband to India and died there. I heard the news with indifference, but when I saw the lovely orphan girl she had left to the guardianship of her brother, I wept bitter tears, for she was so like her mother at the same sinless age, that the sight of her filled my heart with unutterable anguish, and recalled those days of innocent glee that the corrosive poison of guilt had blotted from my memory. My paradise was in the past, but the destroying angel guarded the closed gates with his flaming sword. My present was the gulf of black despair, my future was a blank, or worse. Oh! agony of agonies, how have I contrived to endure so much, and yet live.

Death,—The good alone can contemplate death with composure. Guilt is a dreadful coward. The bad dare not die. My worst sufferings are comprized in this terrible dread of death. I have prayed for annihilation, but the fear of after punishment forbids me to hope for that. The black darkness, the soul-scorching fire, the worm that never dies, the yells of the damned,—I might learn to endure; but this hell of conscience, this being cast out for ever from the presence of God, what obstinacy of will, what hatred to good, could ever teach me to bear!

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Ten long years have passed away. The name of Squire Carlos is almost forgotten. People used to talk over his murder at ale houses and by the road side, but they seldom speak of him now. A splendid monument covers his mouldering dust. The farmers lounge around it on the Sabbath, and discuss their crops and the news of the village. They never glance at the marble slab, or read the tale it tells. The old Hall has passed into other hands. Sir Walter dissipated his inheritance and