

looked upon her, think that the days of angel visitation to earth had not ended; and one as he gazed upon her innocence and beauty, almost expected to see the bright angelic wings unfold, and the little one take flight to a world more congenial than this. Taking the girl by the hand, the gentleman entered the office of the hotel and entered upon the register in a business like hand writing, the name of Lawrence Clark and daughter, leaving the place of residence and destination blank.

As soon as a room was assigned him, he retired with his daughter, whom he called Belle, and was seen no more until at the supper table. After supper, he called the landlord aside and inquired if he could recommend to him some female of kind and gentle disposition, to whose care he could safely entrust his little daughter for a few days, while they remained at the hotel. Sherill replied in the affirmative, and conducting the stranger to the public parlor he introduced him to his daughter, the beautiful and accomplished Miss Sherill, a young lady of some eighteen years, who readily consented to take the charge of little Belle for such time as the father might desire. These arrangements having been satisfactorily completed, and little Belle placed in charge of her new friend, Lawrence Clark wandered away by himself until bed time.

Days flew rapidly away, and Lawrence Clark remained the same retiring and lonely stranger to all the company of visitors at the hotel, as when he first came among them. He neither sought nor accepted any companionship, except that of little Belle, for whom he evinced an almost idolatrous love, and whom he daily took for an hour or two from the care of her friend, Miss Sherill, and wandered with her down beside the blue waters of the Lake, or took her to ride with him upon their calm bosom. No one knew even whence he came, and no one showed any desire to intrude upon his privacy or ask him questions concerning himself or his antecedents. Mr. Clark, after spending his mornings as above described with his daughter, was in the habit of leaving the hotel after dinner and wandering away by himself until supper time; and frequently remained out until nearly bed time. Some three weeks had thus passed away, when on one bright and beautiful day, after taking little Belle to ride upon the Lake in the morning, Mr. Clark walked off in the direction of French Mountain, telling his daughter that he was going to climb to the mountain's top, and if at about three o'clock she watch a certain tree on the mountain's brow, she would see him wave his handkerchief to her. Little Belle and her kind friend, Miss Sherill, at the promised hour, saw the promised signal. Some hours after, as the sun was sinking in the west, a sudden and very severe storm arose and soon swept across the country. The winds blew almost a hurricane and the rain fell in torrents. So suddenly had the storm arisen, that many wanderers from the hotel, although but a little way off, were drenched by the rain before they could reach shelter in the house. Night had also suddenly fallen upon the earth, and soon after the advent of the storm all nature seemed shrouded in almost impenetrable darkness. Some of the wanderers from the hotel were compelled to seek shelter in the houses of citizens residing in the neighborhood, while some half dozen young men and maidens who had been paying a visit to a pleasant place about one mile from the hotel known as Kiss Hollow, found themselves at the approach of the storm, in the immediate vicinity of the Gage Hill school house, of which they took immediate possession, and when darkness came on, they lighted some pieces of candles which they found in the house, left, no doubt, from the last evening prayer-meeting held in the school room, and thus provided, they set about enjoying the time of their imprisonment as best they might.

Three of the strollers from the hotel were less successful, and were compelled to endure the full force and violence of the storm. These three were Lawrence Clark, last seen at the summit of French Mountain, and Albert Colby and his inseparable friend and companion, Henry Newton. The two last named had been visiting Bloody Pond and its vicinity and were there overtaken by the storm, and in endeavoring to find some kind of shelter in the blinding wind and rain, they lost their way and wandered some time before they found even the big road leading from Glen's Falls to Caldwell. Staggering rather than walking along in the direction of the hotel, amid darkness so deep that it could be almost felt they neared Gage Hill. Suddenly, Colby, who was a little in advance of his friend, struck his foot against some object in his pathway, and fell headlong into the water and mud of the road. Before he could sufficiently recover to warn his companion to beware, he too had struck the same obstruction, and met the same misfortune that had befallen his unfortunate friend. Rising as soon as possible, they both simultaneously stretched forth their hands to find if possible, the nature of the obstacle that had caused their fall.

The reader may imagine their horror when they found the form of some human being lying prone in the highway, with face upturned to the merciless pelting of the storm, and apparently lifeless. "My God!" exclaimed Colby in a hoarse whisper, "it is a man and dead! what shall we do with him?" "We can do nothing," said Newton in the same frightened tone, "there is no house near that I know of, and I even do not know where I am myself."