

frightful noise and violence. But they disturbed me not; my soul was pluming her wings for another world, and striving by self examination and close communion with her maker, to prepare herself for that flight which was to bear her to the presence of the Invisible. Through all the watches of that long and solemn night, fervent were my supplications for pardon and support—for humble submission, and perfect trust in Him through whom we are saved, and that gracious ear which is never closed against the prayer of faith and contrition, heard and answered me. Strength descended upon me from the fountain of all strength and wisdom, and never perhaps shall I be more willing or prepared to enter the presence of my God, than I was in those hours, which I then doubted not, were to be my last upon earth. As the night advanced towards dawn, the wild din of the savages grew fainter and fainter, and then my exhausted nature sought repose in sleep—but it was not of long duration—the grasp of fierce hands awakened me, my bonds were loosened, and I was led forth among a multitude of wild and horrible figures, at the head of whom stalked in savage majesty, the chief Takaltha—and if I had thought him terrible as a demon on the preceding night, not less unearthly looked he to me now, disfigured as he was by paint and deep incisions cut in various forms, in every part of his almost naked body. The skins of serpents, mottled and striped, were wreathed as bracelets around his arms and legs, intermixed with gaudy beads and other gewgaws, that had been obtained in traffic with the Spaniards. An eagle's plume was the only graceful ornament he wore, and to complete the wildness of his barbarous costume, a skin of the prairie buffalo, to which the horns still adhered, adorned his shoulders, and gave him a close resemblance to the fierce animal he had robbed of its covering. Thus attended, I was conducted to a distant eminence, on the summit of which a quantity of green fuel heaped round a stake, indicated the place where I was doomed to suffer. There was I bound, and then with shouts and insulting gestures, the savage throng began to perform around me the war dance of their tribe.

God alone supported me in that fearful hour, when nature looked with shuddering on the torments prepared for her. But terrible as was to be my passage to eternity, I felt that it would be brief, and though in the spirit's agony I uttered the prayer of my Saviour, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," yet thanks be to God, I was also enabled to add with sincerity and fervour, "not my will but thine be done." One only earthly wish still dwelt within my heart—to behold yet again, if but for a brief instant, that gentle being to whose sweetness my heart had mysteriously and fondly linked itself, and who had ever seemed to possess so few sympathies in common with the rude race, among whom she had been nurtured. Anxiously

I cast my eyes over the dusky throng of barbarians, that with strange and grotesque gestures shouted, and leaped, and danced, around me. Woman was there in all the glory of her savage beauty; innocent childhood, and tender infancy receiving on the unwritten pages of their souls, early and indelible lessons of revenge and cruelty. But the fair form and bright face of Ascaora met not my gaze, and sad as was the feeling that I must die without beholding her, yet was it softened by the thought, that her tender and devoted heart would be spared the pang of witnessing, without the power of averting my sufferings.

I had done then with the vain hopes, the fleeting pageantries of earth, and bending my head upon my breast, I prayed that I might not falter in this last moment of trial—but that with more than savage courage, even with the high and holy hope of the Christian, I might encounter death. Suddenly there was silence around me—a pause in the orgies of the mad revellers, and as I looked forth to learn its cause, the crowd parted in the centre, and I started, as I beheld Takaltha, leading forward the sweet maiden of my love. She was decked as for a bridal, with chains of minute pearly shells encircling her neck, and clasping her beautiful arms and ankles. Her head was crowned with a snow white plume, and a feathery cloak of the same unsullied hue, floated from her graceful shoulders. Her step was timid and faltering, and her eyes bent fixedly upon the earth. Once or twice the chief addressed her, when she clasped her small hands earnestly together and shook her head with a gentle yet decided gesture. As they advanced nearer towards me, she looked up, our eyes met, a sudden rush of crimson suffused her face, and with a faint cry, she stretched her arms towards me, and struggled to free herself from the rigid grasp of Takaltha. But forcibly he held her back; with frantic vehemence he addressed her, and plucking from his girdle a short knife of Spanish form and workmanship, he pointed it with threatening gestures at her heart. She recoiled not, but my sensations were like those of a chained lioness, chafed to madness by beholding her young slain before her sight. Forgetful of the cords that confined me, I strove to bound towards her, and the forests echoed with the voice of my agony, as I called upon her name. Still she struggled to flee to me, but the strong hand of the savage restrained her, and with loud and angry words, that now were audible to my sharpened sense, bade her, 'if she would save her own life, dance around the pale face, and chant the song of sacrifice, while the flame was kindling to consume him.' Steadily she refused, though to save that young life, I cried aloud and joined my entreaties to those of her savage sire. But still she resisted, and still he urged her to the act. In vain she wept, she knelt, she raised her eloquent face with pleading beauty to his stern and