

tle St. Albans had perhaps never displayed before during his life time, he snatched from the hostess' hands the cup of cold water she had just raised from the table, and pushing her impatiently aside, approached it to Nina's lips. His agitation, however, was too overpowering to permit him to be of service, and he was obliged to resign his office to the woman, who frightened by his abruptness, out of her own terror, evinced a little more alacrity than before."

"Tell me, will she recover?" asked the earl with colourless lips, as he gazed on Nina's deathlike cheek.

"Yes, without doubt, my lord. She will soon be well, and I am thinking 'tis not the first time, poor child, she has suffered as much, for of all the ruffians your lordship ever knew, even though he has paid me regularly, that villainous Luttridge is the worst."

"Who can he be? surely no relative of hers."

"I think not, but his wife is either her guardian or sister. If this were a slave country, though, I would say she was his bought slave. Oh! my lord, you cannot imagine what this poor dear has suffered since they came among us. Up night and day, working at her needle, waiting on the sick woman, and all she gets is abuse and hard words from that bad man. Many a time when I have looked in her poor pale face, white with watching, and, Lord save us! I think with fasting too, I have called her down to take a little morsel with myself, but, always, under one excuse or another, she would take it into her room and give it to her sick friend. I never saw mortal man in such a fury as he was in, one time he found her giving to his wife, a taste of cordial I had given the little creature for herself. He swore it was his money she was spending, and only I threw myself between them, I certainly believe he would have killed her. The child generally came in too for the abuse he intended for his wife, for knowing a blow might kill the woman in her dying state, the poor little thing always strove to save her at her own expense." Lord St. Albans' eyes flashed fire as he muttered:

"Would, would that I had been here! But he shall pay for it—yes, ay! even to the last farthing," and, then, his countenance relaxing to an expression of almost womanly softness, he knelt by Nina, and smoothing her dark hair back from her pale countenance, gazed earnestly upon it. "Yes," he sadly murmured. "Sorrow and suffering are plainly stamped here, but purity and goodness too. That face has still the childlike holiness of yore; but, thank God! her deathly paleness is disappearing fast. She is recovering." Whilst he was arranging her more easily on her

chair, the hostess placing pillows at her back, they were startled by the sound of pistol shots.

"What is that?" exclaimed the woman wildly starting to her feet. "They are killing each other, and my son, my poor Luke, is among them. Save him, my lord, save him, if it is not already too late." The earl waited for no more, but wrapping a large shawl round Nina, caught up his sword and hurried after the hostess. The outer apartment was silent and vacant.

"Quick! where is my horse?" he hurriedly asked. "The scoundrel must have taken it, and Lawton's is gone too." With a passionate exclamation of anger, he drew out his pistols, examined them, and thrusting them into his bosom, bounded over the threshold, charging the woman to return immediately to Nina.

"Wait, wait, for the love of God!" screamed the poor woman. "Your excellency will fall down the precipice; or slip into some torrent. Wait, for a guide or a light;" but the earl was already beyond the reach of her voice. After a moment, however, he checked his headlong speed; and putting his hand to his mouth, called his servant in a loud protracted tone. The solitary hills alone replied to the sound, and whilst debating within himself what course to pursue, he was startled by a deep moan, proceeding apparently from the earth at his feet. He stooped and discovered it was a man grievously wounded. To his eager questions, the other feebly replied that "he was the hostess' son, and that he had been wounded, he feared mortally, by Luttridge. The English servant was in pursuit of the latter." The earl immediately assisted the poor lad to rise; and supporting him as gently and easily as possible, they slowly turned their steps to the cabin. Suddenly the boy stopped, and tremblingly whispered:

"Did you not hear something like a step behind us, my lord?"

"No, nothing but the roar of the torrent, keep up your courage, you will soon be safe." The boy clung closer to the young nobleman's arm, and they proceeded a few steps farther in silence. But his companion's ear had not deceived him, and just as they entered a gloomy thicket of fir trees, a cold clammy object like a hand was placed on the earl's shoulder, and the warm breath of his unknown antagonist, played over his very cheek. Though St. Albans was brave as he was gentle, there was something so silent, so murderous in this mode of attack that his heart for a moment quailed within him. His tried courage, though, soon came to his aid, and throwing his arm round his fainting companion, he endeavoured to extricate his pistols. Encum-