

Closer to his heart she press'd ;
 Scorch'd, the quivering flesh recoil'd ;
 Unconsumed his burning breast,
 While that grim tormentor smiled.

Now revenge ! the maiden cried,
 I have barter'd heaven for this ;
 Mine thou art, proud Rudolph's bride :
 Mine, by this last demon kiss.

Tower, and battlement, and hall,
 Scathed as with the thunder-stroke,
 Flash'd through midnight's dusky pall,
 Twined in wreaths of livid smoke.

O'er the gulf of yawning flame
 Horrid shapes are hovering ;
 Monstrous forms, of hideous name,
 To the bridal-bed they bring.

They come ! they come ! their frantic yell,
 On a wave of billowy light
 Sudden rose (so marvellers tell)
 The maiden and her traitor knight.

The moon looks bright on Rudolph's towers,
 The breeze laughs lightly by,
 But dark and silent sleep the hours,
 The lone brook murmuring nigh.

The lank weed waves round the domain,
 The fox creeps to thy gate ;
 Dark is thy dwelling, proud chieftain,
 Thy halls are desolate !

The legend we have thus rendered.
 His own idiom and versification, as we
 have already observed, were of a more
 homely sort ; better suited, perhaps, to
 the fashion of the time, and the capacity
 of his hearers.

But gloom still pervaded the once-
 cheerful hearth, and the night wore on
 without the usual symptoms of mirth
 and hilarity.

Holt, of Grislehurst, held the manor-
 ial rights, and was feudal lord over a
 widely-extended domain, the manor of
 Spotland descending to him by succe-
 sion from his grandfather. His charac-
 ter was that of a quiet, unostentatious
 country gentleman ; but withal a proud
 spirit, not brooking either insult or ne-
 glect. This night, an unaccountable
 depression stole upon him. He strode
 rapidly across the chamber, moody and
 alone. The taper was nigh extinguish-
 ed ; the wasted billet grew pale, a few
 sparks starting up the chimney, as the
 wind roared in short and hasty gusts
 round the dwelling. The old family
 portraits seemed to flit from their dark
 panels, wavering with the tremulous
 motion of the blaze.

Holt was still pacing the chamber
 with a disturbed and agitated step. A
 few words, rapid and unconnected, fell
 from his lips.

"Rebel ! Outcast ! I cannot betray
 thee !"

"Betray me !" echoed a voice from
 behind. Turning, the speaker stood
 before him. It was the athletic form of
 the stranger, wrapped in his grey cloak
 and cap of coarse felt, plumed from the
 falcon's wing.

"And who speaks the word that
 shall betray me—a king—a fugitive ?
 Yet not all the means that treachery can
 compass shall trammel one hair upon
 this brow without my privity or con-
 sent."

"Comest thou like the sharp wind
 into my dwelling ?" inquired Holt, in a
 voice tremulous with amazement.

"Free as the unconfined air ; yet fet-
 tered by a lighter bond—a woman's
 love !" returned the intruder. "Thou
 hast a daughter."

The Lord of Grislehurst grew pale at
 these words. Some terrific meaning
 clung to them. After a short pause, the
 stranger continued :

"Thus speaks the legends of Tiger-
 nach, and the bards of Ulster, rapt into
 visions of the future :—'When a king of
 Erin shall flee at the voice of a woman,
 then shall the distaff and spindle conquer
 whom the sword and buckler shall not sub-
 due.' That woman is yon heretic queen.
 A usurper, an intruder on our birth-
 right. Never were the O'Neils conquer-
 ed but by woman ! I linger here, while
 the war cry rings from the shores of my
 country. Again I hear their shout.
 The impatient chiefs wait for my re-
 turn. Hui—"

The warrior seemed to writhe during
 the conflict. His hands were clenched,
 every muscle stiffened with agony.
 Scorn at his weakness, and dread, hor-
 rible, undefinable dread, as he felt the
 omnipotent power mastering his proud
 spirit—the man who would have laugh-
 ed at the shaking of a spear, and the
 loud rush of the battle, quailed before a
 woman's hate and a woman's love.

"And what is thy request to-night ?"
 said Holt.

The stranger answered, in a voice of
 thunder—

"Thy daughter !"