

I dared not move for fear of being torn by the jaws of the savage brute, which glared at me with eyes that seemed to emit red flames; I dared not even close my eyes lest it would be the signal for my instant destruction.

It is impossible to describe my sufferings, both mental and physical, for the next three hours; at the end of which time the sound of the return of my tormentors, drunken and disorderly, seemed to me the knell of a speedy death. Then, strange to say, I felt an entire resignation to my fate; all thoughts of my situation and the consciousness of surrounding objects deserted my mind; I seemed to have entered into a new and inexplicable condition.

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It was broad day-light; the noise of traffic in the streets was at its height; before me was the St. Lawrence, glittering in the morning sun; and the wharfs were thronged with busy crowds. I lay bruised and shivering upon a pile of rubbish, in an open store-house fronting the harbour. I hastily reviewed in my mind the events of the preceding night, and endeavoured to form some plausible reason for the singular adventure.

Evidently no injury had been intended to my person; the remark of the man who had closed the office door clearly implied that they had no intention of plundering my shop. My hands had been again secured, and seeing no present chance of relief, wearied by idle conjecture and numbed by the chill wind which blew over me from the water, I sunk into a sort of lethargy, in which I remained in a state of semi-consciousness, until late in the day. Then I was accidentally discovered by a carter, who kindly bore me to the nearest hotel. There my wife found me, by a happy concurrence, on her arrival; and the cheerful influence of her presence and the great pleasure of beholding her again after so long an absence, gave a surprising impetus to my recovery. In the course of a few days I was again able to attend to my business; and I then discovered the only solution which I can give to my extraordinary adventure.

I found my shop closed as it had been left on that terrible night; but when I entered, a singular scene was presented to my astonished view. Upon the counter, on one side, were the remains of a sumptuous feast; in every direction upon the floor were strewn fragments of broken glass and articles of silver plate. Suspended from the ceiling in the centre of the room, was the dead body of a man, wrapt closely around with black cloth which had been taken from the shop. Upon a piece of paper attached to the feet of the corpse were these words: "*Thus perished by the hands of those whom he wronged, the basest of men.*"

In my office was a large purse of gold and a brief note expressing regret