

the attention of the murderer, in the wild hope that succor would reach them in time.

Alas! they were doomed to die.

Tom first sprung on Helen. Before the poor child could utter a cry the murderous axe had fallen, gashing the neck in the very same place where her sisters had been struck.

A third corpse lay in the path of the murderer.

As to little Patriek, pale and trembling with terror, he had no time to stammer a vain prayer for mercy.

Tom, pitiless, swung his axe for the last time, and the keen edge of the weapon cut out the life of the last innocent being who stood in the way of his projects.

After accomplishing this horrible massacre, Tom Nulty left the house, and wandered in the woods like a wild beast gorged with blood.

Towards evening, he went to the house of an honorable farmer, Mr. Beaudry. There he met Miss Rosa Lesperance, the granddaughter of Beaudry, who questioned him about his excited state and his sadness.

"Nothing is the matter," replied Tom.

He stayed at Beaudry's until ten o'clock at night, conversing much as usual, and left the house to go home at his usual hour.

Miss Rosa Lesperance, who is ordinarily called Miss Beaudry after her grandfather, with whom she stays, is a pretty, dark-haired girl; her large black eyes are soft and frank. Elegant and intelligent, this girl had made a profound impression on Tom, who, despite his wildness, had nevertheless a heart.

Miss Rosa is eighteen years old; she lived two years in Montreal, where she acquired the grace and innocent coquetry of the young misses in the city. One can easily understand how such a girl made an impression on a fellow keenly alive to all that makes life agreeable in spite of his dislike to work.

Tom met Miss Rosa Lesperance only two weeks before the crime. Accustomed to have his way in everything, he followed up his usual line of conduct and came right to the point.

He had hardly made the acquaintance of the young person, before he asked her to marry him. Miss Rosa said neither yes nor no, and this vague answer, this polite putting off, was sufficient for him to build his plans for the future. He considered himself as already the husband of the young girl, and, without letting the grass grow under his feet, he enquired first of his parents, then of his sister, whether he could get from them the shelter and the daily food without having any other care than taking his place at the table, or going to bed.

It has already been seen how this beautiful project had miscarried.

It must here be said that in all this affair, Miss Lesperance is blameless.