

# ADRIFT:

## A STORY OF NIAGARA.

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### CHAPTER I.

"And wherever we turn, and whatever we do,  
Still that horrible sense of the *déjà connu*."

OWEN MEREDITH.

ON a certain April evening a year or so ago the city of Buffalo had evidently incurred the displeasure of the powers who dispense the weather, and was suffering—shall we say as usual?—all the outrages which Borcas, Frey, and the other storm-creators could inflict. The wind howled and tore through the trees as if anxious to strip them of their early buds, and to a fanciful observer the incessant rain might have seemed like a cruel and heavy lash laid upon the few shrinking pedestrians.

There were doubtless numerous tenements in the city whose inmates were incommoded by the tempest, inasmuch as the chill breath of the wind through crevice and keyhole is not a welcome visitor, and as water has a disagreeable tendency to trickle through pervious roofs. But there were also many residences, on the contrary, whose internal comfort was only enhanced by the contrast between