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That black, forbidding door was the dividing of light from darkness, of good from evil, of innocence from guilt. On one side of it, in a chamber of light, sat a fair girl, confiding, generous, and deceived only through her excess of every virtue; on the other, wickedness, fell and artful, was approaching with stealthy footsteps through an unseen way, and stood with hand upraised to knock, but incapable of entering in unless that unsuspecting girl removed the bar.

As the hour of midnight approached one sound after another died away in the Chateau. Caroline, who had sat counting the hours and watching the spectral moon as it flickered among the drifting clouds, withdrew from the window with a trembling step, like one going to her doom.

She descended to the secret chamber, where she had appointed to meet her strange visitor and hear from strange lips the story that would be told her.

She attired herself with care, as a woman will in every extremity of life. Her dark raven hair was simply arranged, and fell in thick masses over her neck and shoulders. She put on a robe of soft, snow-white texture, and by an impulse she yielded to, but could not explain, bound her waist with a black sash, like a strain of mourning in a song of innocence. She wore no ornaments save a ring, the love-gift of Bigot, which she never parted with, but wore with a morbid anticipation that its promises would one day be fulfilled. She clung to it as a talisman that would yet conjure away her sorrows; and it did! but alas! in a way little anticipated by the constant girl! A blast from hell was at hand to sweep away her young life, and with it all her earthly troubles.

She took up a guitar mechanically, as it were, and as her fingers wandered over the strings, a bar or two of the strain, sad as the sigh of a broken heart, suggested an old ditty she had loved formerly, when her heart was full of sunshine and happiness, when her fancy used to indulge in the luxury of melancholic musings, as every happy, sensitive, and imaginative girl will do as a counterpoise to her high-wrought feelings.

In a low voice, sweet and plaintive as the breathings of an Aeolian harp, Caroline sang her Minne-song—

"A linnet sat upon a thorn
At evening chime,
Its sweet refrain fell like the rain
Of summer-time
Of summer-time when roses bloomed,
And bright above
A rainbow spanned my fairy-land
Of hope and love!
Of hope and love! O linnet, cease
Thy mocking theme!
I ne'er picked up the golden cup
In all my dream!
In all my dream I missed the prize
Should have been mine;
And dreams won't die! though fain
would I,
And make no sign!"

The lamps burned brightly, shedding a cheerful light upon the landscapes and figures woven into the tapestry behind which was concealed the black door that was to admit La Corriveau.

It was oppressively still. Caroline listened with mouth and ears for some sound of approaching footsteps until her heart beat like the swift stroke of a hammer, as it sent the blood throbbing through her temples with a rush that almost overpowered her.

She was alone, and lonely beyond expression. Down in these thick foundations no sound penetrated to break the terrible monotony of the silence around her, except the dull, solemn voice of the bell striking the hour of midnight.

Caroline had passed a sleepless night after the visit of Mere Malheur, sometimes tossing on her solitary couch, sometimes starting up in terror. She rose and threw herself despairingly upon her knees, calling on Christ to pardon her, and on the Mother of Mercies to plead for her, sinner that she was, whose hour of shame and punishment had come!

The mysterious letter brought by Mere Malheur, announcing that her place of concealment was to be searched by the Governor, excited her liveliest apprehensions. But that faded into

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nothingness in comparison with the absolute terror that seized her at the thoughts of the speedy arrival of her father in the Colony.

Caroline, overwhelmed with a sense of shame and contrition, pictured to herself in darkest colors the anger of her father at the dishonor she had brought upon his unsullied name.

She sat down, she rose up, she walked her solitary chamber, and knelt passionately on the floor, covering her face with her hands, crying to the Madonna

MAPLEINE FUDGE

Two cups of granulated sugar, one cup of milk, a piece of butter the size of a walnut and one heaping teaspoonful of Mapleine.

Cook about fifteen minutes. Take off and beat hard until it grains, then pour in buttered plate.

Chopped nuts, figs, dates or cocoanut spread on the plate before pouring makes tasty variations.

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for pity and protection.

Poor self-accuser! The hardest and most merciless wretch who ever threw stones at a woman was pitiful in comparison with Caroline's inexorable condemnation of herself.

Yet her fear was not on her own account. She could have kissed her father's hand and submitted humbly to death itself, if he chose to inflict it; but she trembled most at the thought of a meeting between the fiery Baron and the haughty Intendant. One or the other, or both of them, she felt instinctively, must die, should the Baron discover that Bigot had been the cause of the ruin of his idolized child. She trembled for both, and prayed God that she might die in their stead and the secret of her shame never be known to her fond father.

A dull sound, like footsteps shuffling in the dark passage behind the arras, struck her ear; she knew her strange visitor was come. She started up, clasping her hands hard together as she listened, wondering who and what like she might be. She suspected no harm,—for who could desire to harm her who had never injured a living being? Yet there she stood on the one side of that black door of doom, while the calamity of her life stood on the other side like a tigress ready to spring through.

A low knock, twice repeated on the thick door behind the arras, drew her at once to her feet. She trembled violently as she lifted up the tapestry; something rushed through her mind telling her not to do it. Happy had it been for her never to have opened that fatal door!

She hesitated for a moment, but the thought of her father and the impending search of the Chateau flashed suddenly upon her mind. The visitor, whoever she might be, professed to be a friend, and could, she thought, have no motive to harm her.

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