

No. 1^o

It was at one my lot to live on a farm at some distance from a flourishing mining town of the Sierras. The road from the town to my home after traversing for some ~~time~~ distance ~~over~~ a sloping plateau at length crossing the ridge of this plateau descended rapidly winding along the edge of a ravine which gradually grew narrower and deeper as it approached my home. This ravine at one point made a sharp turn while the road ~~were~~ still following it was ~~here~~ ~~immated~~ flanked on both sides by thick groves of pine bushes, which on the side of the ravine only opened sufficiently to enable the ~~sudden descent~~ ~~to be visible~~ and on the opposite side bordered closely upon the road ~~only~~ ~~returning~~ a few feet in but a single spot.

This Spot seemed to have been ~~left~~ ^{deserted} by Nature to barrenness and desolation. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~. Dusty, dry, flowerless & unfertile ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~. There was nothing in it which could possibly ~~exist~~ ^{exist} even the ^{most} ^{transient} ^{lees} commend it to passersby as a resting place, to the

~~the~~ morning as the last couch for a lost friend. Yet there in that stranger gall strange spot for such a purpose a man a rough-hewn shingle proclaimed the existence of a grave, where lonely and forsaken some one once loved, once full of hope, reposed ^{together} with the love and hope so long forgotten.

I had often wondered often wished to know what the mysterious history of this tomb might be, but my late interview with him had never been satisfied till one night.

I met a friend at ~~former~~ a former inhabitant of the place whom I had not seen for years. For old acquaintance sake as it was a clear quiet moonlight evening he consented to walk

part ~~part~~ part of the way home with me.

Our conversation, as we sauntered along over the still country road, gradually fell into a mournful strain, and at length the lonely grave ahead of us was mentioned.

To my surprise I found that my friend was acquainted with its history having been during his former residence in the town an eye-witness to many of the events connected with it.

I wish I could describe the way in which the curious and sorrowful story as he told it to me chimed in with the ~~the~~ ^{quiet} ~~still~~ scene before us, and how every voice of the night which broke the stillness around seemed to chant a sad refrain from the

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silver-vailed wood ~~about~~ due to the tale of a
frighted heart. An outline of this history is all
I can give.

It appears that in 1857 when a very few families
had yet appeared ^{in the town} there, a young man of
handsome countenance, quite industrious as well as
quite reticent, arrived ~~on~~ suddenly ~~and~~ and
after a short stay took up a claim near this very
rod. He lived almost alone and was very seldom
seen among the other miners. He always
although poor seemed to expect success in his work,
and was generally considered quite lucky. It
was reported ~~that he~~ that he desired to be
wealthy that he might win ^{the hand of} a certain young lady
whose father would consent to marriage on no
^{other condition}. It was noticed that he sometimes re-
ceived letters directed in a female hand ^{about which he would say nothing}.
The only person whom he appeared to be acquainted
with in town was a young fellow by the name
of Lewis, a shiftless rascal who was noted
chiefly for his wonderful success in gam-
bling. These two so unlike seemed to desire
to avoid one another a good deal but evidently
had considerable knowledge of one another.

About two or three years after this ~~the arrival was~~
excited by the arrival of a new family, consisting
of a gentleman a considerable wealth his
old maid sister, his daughter & a young lady
of no ordinary beauty, and his little son.
It was noticed by my friend that about this time the
young gambler Lewis, who by a late turn of Fort-
une's wheel had realized a considerable sum of
money, ~~just about the time~~ left off his for-
mer habits and assumed the character of
a respectable hard working youth, and what
was more claimed, an acquaintance with the
new-comers, ~~he~~ renewed a friend-
ship with the old gentleman which he boasted
to be of years standing and showed quite
plainly to those who watched him that he
desired nothing less than the hand of
the young beauty.

Meanwhile the ~~young man~~ reticent
miner of the road was often seen in the town
and seemed also ~~to be~~ from a few remarks
which he dropped not to be totally unacquainted
with the strangers himself. He seemed to
avoid the sight of the old ~~man~~ gentleman but
evidently desired if possible to see the young
lady alone. At least my friend was able
to judge all this from certain occurrences
which space will not permit me fully
to ~~do~~ narrate,

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About this time Lewis was observed to open up a very sudden intimacy with the young miners. He talked with him often, in the hotel bar-room on the streets, and even went home with him on several occasions. This intimacy caused to change the young man's reticence into gloomy silence and his thoughtfulness into dark meditation. While he was of never seen than formerly, and seemed to be more watchful than ever, he was still less inclined to general society, and even to my friend who had done him some trifling favors and with whom he was on pretty good terms, he refused to give any explanation. At last one day he disappeared and search around his cabin revealed only a scrap of writing to this effect - "I depart for foreign parts
"I leave my claim to whosoever shall desire it; hoping that the gold he gains from it may not become as coals of fire to him, ~~when~~ if he should find that through ^{the} faithlessness of me, his hopes of happiness should be forever blasted."

Young Lewis disclaimed any knowledge of the

cause of this sudden departure but he was
more ~~foolish~~ than usual during the next week.

But troubles thick and fast ^{now} fell on the heads
of the new family. First the young lady
immediately after the disappearance of the
young miner began to grow pale and thin
and it ~~was~~ ~~was~~ whispered that consump-
tion would not leave her very long in this
world. Then by a sudden reverse of fortune
the old gentleman lost nearly all he possessed,
his sister was taken very sick and ~~died~~
scarcely recovered alive. The young daughter
grew fairer and paler each day, the victim of a
settled melancholy, the very shadow of the
young beauty who had charmed the town
~~there~~ so short a time before, gradually
faded before the eyes of her agonized father.
At length at the closing scene, it was said
that in a frenzy of grief he asked her dying
request and swore that, did it cost him his
life he would fulfill it. And then she in
a scarcely audible voice asked as her only
request that they might bury her in the
woods ~~where~~ in the most barren spot that
could be found. And so the despairing heart
to which joy could never again come ~~stilled~~
its throbbing 'neath the mound of the lonely
grave

"I have no doubt concluded my friend that
that unprincipled Lewis soon found that
he had to deal with a rival in the young mind.
I have no doubt that the report with regard
to this young man who was working so del-
igently was true and that it was for this
young lady's hand that he toiled and that of
her affections he was already sure. Doubt-
less also it was from her that he received
those letters. It is quite evident that Lewis
used some means to prevail on him to
leave the country so that he himself should
have a clear field, and it is easy to guess
from that scrap of writing that he had
~~made~~ made ~~the~~ the young lover believe
that she whom he loved and toiled
for was faithless to him. It is at least
comforting to know that Lewis gained
nothing by his miserable plot."

Shortly after ~~the~~ completing this story
my friend bade me
goodnight and left me to go on the rest
of my journey alone.

The moon had almost reached the zenith and
now shone down in unclouded splendor
on the forest of pine, as I passed the turn in

the road and approached the lonely grave. Very different were my feelings now from what they had been a while before, no longer ~~that~~ did I look upon the tomb as simply the last home of some poor miner, now I saw in it the shrine of buried loveliness, the resting place of a broken heart.

My heart beat unaccountably fast as I approached. I looked and saw in the shadow not far from the grave the figure of a man, wrapped in a heavy cloak, seated upon the ground, his head buried between his shoulders, his face turned toward the grave.

How shall I describe the sensations of that moment. The brook trickling down in the depths of the dark ravine, the mournful hoo-hoo of the owl these sounds alone broke the awful silence and there by that grave that had acquired ^{so} ~~but~~ an interest in my eyes in weird solitude and silence that my stony form ~~sat~~. In a moment I controlled myself and stepped forward. Just then he looked up and without any ~~hesitation~~ ^{hesitate} hause, out

ring his voice in clear wild tones of
the air. "Do you know he said what joy what
happiness, what love, was once mine,
you have heard, you must know,
I say do you know what one I might
have enjoyed. Yes! but now it all
lies buried there. Yes! there!. Two thoughts
flashed through my mind and became
convictions while this strange speech was
being made; one that the disappoindt'd miner
the disappointed lover was before me,
the other that the man before me was
mad. "Yes" he continued ^{starting up}, "I believed a
vile wretch who told ~~it~~ me she was
faithless, had forgotten me, hated me,
and I wrote to her ~~sick at all~~ that
I believed it, that I never should forgive
her in time or eternity and I killed her,
killed her?" His voice had almost risen to
a shriek but as he spoke his eye fell on
the grave; in an instant his look changed
he sank back and was silent motionless
I had now had time to collect my thoughts,
Sir I said ~~is~~ is not well that you

should remain here. To mourn ~~this~~
can do no good. Come with me." He was
silent. I felt as if I spoke in ~~the~~ the depths
of space. Sir I said it is cold come to
some shelter." Silence ^{Depart} burst forth he "Do
not break the stillness around her last
couch. Perhaps you'll hear her voice, it
will be like music, she will say 'I for-
give thee' and in peace I shall die."
~~His voice ceased all again was still.~~
I was in no mood to cope with a crazy
man and much as I disliked this to leave
him, I could do nothing else. So in
silence I went home.

In the morning early again I came to
the spot. And there, stretched upon the
grave the sweet smile of the forgiven
of his life lay the ~~old~~ broken-hearted
lover and in death they were united.
Then there was a coroner's inquest and
a p.m. examination, but no medical
skill could ever discover what I knew, and
unless the unfortunate father still lives
in some foreign land, none but my friend
and I mourn over the occupant of the lonely
grave.

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