

GOTHIC BOURNES

**THE MONSTER MADE BY MAN
(1832)**

TRANSCRIPTION BY
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THE PENNY STORY-TELLER.

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FAMILY READING AND AMUSEMENT.

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for December 5 1832, (pp. 161-166).

THE MONSTER MADE BY MAN.

In every age of the world woman's curiosity has been equalled by man's presumption; and one of the most astonishing events produced by the latter quality is related in Germany, that native country of everything non-natural.

In one of the most romantic parts of it resided Wallberg, a magistrate, whose eldest son, Ernest, had from his youth evinced a studious disposition and gloomy cast of thought, seldom enlivened by the usual vivacity belonging to his years, though of an amiable disposition. Some of his ancestors had held a high rank amongst the learned men of their times; a library collected by them had descended from father to son for several generations, the reading of which formed the chief delight of Ernest. A large portion of it consisted of a certain kind of philosophical works, which the superior light of modern science has proved to be absurd and rendered obsolete. To that species of study, for want of a judicious director, Ernest unfortunately devoted his chief attention; and the consequence was, that, instead of storing his mind with useful knowledge, he became an admirer of the explored¹ mysteries of astrology, and filled with a desire to attain possession of these two unattainables—the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life.

Wallberg had a younger son; but the chief ornament of the family was an orphan niece of Madame Wallberg's. Agnes was as lovely in person as she was excellent in disposition. It had long been the wish of their friends that at a proper age she should be united to Ernest. Their attachment appeared to be reciprocal, though, had hers been defined, it would have been found to have partaken more of a sister's love than the affection of a destined wife. His most intimate friend was Lewis Hartmann, in whose society and that of Agnes was spent the few hours that Ernest could be tempted to allow from the pursuit of those studies he became daily more attached to. Hartmann much

¹ Erratum for "*exploded*".

regretted the deep influence such a pernicious course of reading was getting over the mind of Ernest, more especially as he saw in it the probable seeds of unhappiness to Agnes, for whom he entertained feelings which, looking upon her as the intended wife of one whom he regarded, he would never allow himself to consider of a deeper kind than those of friendship. With a view to their happiness, he endeavoured to detach Ernest from such useless studies, and to cheer his mind with innocent amusement; but all in vain, for he daily became more attached to the acquirement of such ignorant knowledge, until it appeared to absorb his whole faculties.

When the mind of Ernest had been thus occupied a few years, it became worked up to that pitch of enthusiasm so nearly allied to lunacy, as to be fully impressed with the belief that he had found out the mysterious art of forming and imparting the vital spark of life to a being perfectly endowed with all the faculties and attributes of human nature. Wrapt in the contemplation of such supernatural power, all other knowledge seemed valueless, and his mind was bent on giving effect to the strange idea he had formed. His attention was now given to studying the structure of the human body, nor could the necessary disgusting researches turn him from his purpose; scenes loathsome to the mind were sources of delight to him, and he might be said to banquet on the revolting objects of decaying nature. For the place of his operations he chose a retired cave, and for his assistant a simple rustic lad, who only thought his employer was going to make a similar statue to those he had often seen in gardens. Of the purest and best-tempered clay he there began to form a figure, modelled after the finest sculptures he could procure; the fibres, muscles, veins, and skins, he supplied according to the preconceived idea of his distempered imagination, while his mind revelled in the idea of being the creator and master of a set of beings, that should be the living proofs of his superior knowledge and power. When his prolonged absence from home was mentioned by his friends, his replies consisted of such incomprehensible hints as alarmed them for his sanity. At length, after many hours of toil, he proudly surveyed an outwardly-perfect representative of human beauty. He now began to collect the instruments that were to give life and animation to the mass he had compounded; and Frantz, his assistant, when he saw his proceedings, sometimes thought his master a madman, and sometimes a wonderful genius, that might in the end learn even him to be a clever fellow. Scarcely, however, had Ernest commenced those operations which

were to produce what he thought would be the elixir of life, the infusing of which into his figure would give it vitality, than chancing to look at it, it seemed to his amazed senses to have a slight convulsive motion. While gazing on it with all the intensesness his almost-bewildered mind would allow, a peal of thunder broke directly over the cave, that seemed as if it would level it with the ground, and bury him and his presumptuous work in its ruins. Ere² it had subsided, the form again began to move, and as it gradually arose from the platform on which he had modelled it, its perfect proportions were enlarged to an unnatural size, its regular features were distorted into hideousness, the eyelids opened, and displayed two green balls, bedded in a yellow fluid, and the alabaster whiteness of its exterior turned to a leaden blue colour; at length it stood erect, every nerve and muscle writhing with convulsive agitation. Ernest was transfixed with astonishment and horror at the result of his toils, and Frantz threw himself on the ground, a picture of fear; at length recovering, he rushed from the cave, exclaiming, "A man devil! a man devil!" When motion was restored to Ernest, he shrunk with abhorrence from the object he beheld, rolling its detestable eyes at him, its jaws alternately opening and shutting, and its bosom heaving as if endeavouring to give vent to sounds that at length seemed to proceed from it. Ernest, unable longer to bear the torturing sight, left the horrid scene and hastened home, where he threw himself on his bed in all the agony of despair. After some hours of wretchedness, during which he called down imprecations on his daring folly, he began to reflect how he should act towards a being so unexpectedly called into existence. At length he resolved if it was alive to provide for its wants in a place of safety, if tractable, and to destroy it if it showed tokens of being possessed of a mischievous spirit; providing himself with the means either to sustain or deprive it of life, he returned to the cave.

In the meantime, the monstrous being observing that the two principal objects on which its eyes had rested, moved and then were not seen, using the instinct which along with animation had been given to it, essayed to do the same, stepped from the platform and issued from the entrance of the cavern; but the brilliant light of day striking suddenly upon its weak and glassy eyes, gave them such a painful shock that, uttering a hideous cry, he returned into it, and seated himself on the ground. In that position Ernest found

² Archaic word for "before; sooner than". (Samuel Johnson's 1755 Dictionary, Digital Edition)

it, and for some time stood looking on the singular being, mute with astonishment at the past, and apprehension for the future. The monster in return sat gazing at him, his distorted face rapidly changing in expression, at each variety of which Ernest felt that it was also becoming endowed with the accompanying passion; but its growl of rage gave him a feeling of horror that was only exceeded by his disgust at its attempts at laughter. Seeing it shake with cold, he threw a cloak on it, and lighting a fire, placed it near it; from the warmth thus produced, evident pleasure was derived. Ernest next produced some bread, and putting a little in his own mouth, gave part to the being, who did the same; that a want of nature was thus supplied became evident, for no sooner was the portion given him eaten, than he seized on all the roll with the eagerness of a hungry wolf, and ravenously devoured it, while the expression of his face made Ernest fearful of interfering. Revolving in his mind how best to act towards the detested creature, after what he had witnessed, he determined to place it under such confinement as would prevent its inflicting injury on others. To effect this, he bound its arms with a cord, and then attempted to lead the monster out by it; not liking the twitch the rope gave, he struggled and resisted, at which Ernest struck him with a large stick; furious with the pain the blow evidently gave the monster, it with an effort broke the cords asunder as though they were only pack-thread, and seized Ernest with so powerful a grasp as proved that in point of strength the one was not more than as a child in the hands of the other. Ernest's feeling of abhorrence was for a time changed into terror as the monster fixed his eyes on him, while his whole frame appeared convulsed, as if some new sensation within him was struggling to find vent; at length, in a hollow voice, in which was discernible none of the usual tones of human nature, he uttered, "I am the punishment of thy presumption." He then released Ernest from his hold, who immediately fled, fully impressed with the truth of the few words he had heard, and that though he had impiously dared to mould the figure of a fellow-creature, it was a supreme power that had imparted to it the principle of vitality, and would make it an instrument of retribution. These thoughts operating upon his previous irritation of mind, caused a fever and delirium, which reduced him to the brink of the grave.

Frantz, when he rushed from the cavern at the animation of the monster, stopped not until he reached his own home, continuing his outcry of "A man devil!" the whole way. Nor did he cease when he entered his father's cottage, but still using the

exclamation, exhibited every antic and look of ludicrous terror, except occasionally shuddering as if his blood was suddenly congealed by the remembrance of what he had seen. This continued until his friends, thinking the few wits he ever possessed had certainly bid him farewell, they sent for a barber-surgeon to try and bring them back again. The wielder of the lancet and razor thinking his being called in would be useless, unless he exercised his art, bled Frantz without mercy, in spite of his resistance: he was next proposing to use his razor, and make his head as smooth as his chin, when Frantz seizing a pole, used that emblem of the barber's profession on his head with such dexterity as saved his own skull at the expense of the operator's, by causing him to take to his heels. Frantz, exhausted with that amusement and loss of blood, went quietly to bed, where he lay so still as to make his friends rejoice [163] at his recovery. Next morning, however, when in answer to their inquiries, he repeated what had passed at the cavern, they began to feel doubts as to the reality of his cure, and proposed to the barber that he should complete his operations. That man of science, however, having had sufficiently-convincing proofs that if Frantz's head was weak his arm was strong, begged to be excused again putting his skill in competition with the patient's valour, though his resolution was attended with infinite loss, as he had not only calculated upon a good fee for baring the other's head, but also on a handsome profit from covering it again with an old wig. Frantz, being blessed with a good appetite, soon recovered his loss of blood; but as, whenever he repeated his story, his friends seemed inclined to again treat him like a madman, he found it the safest plan to be silent.

Nor was it long before there were full proofs of Frantz's story having some truth in it; for the monster being endued with a singular combination of animal instinct and human sense, was forced by the cravings of hunger to leave the cave in search of food, he found what at first satisfied him in wild berries and roots, and when his appetite was appeased, returned to his abode. Gradually he extended his walks, till at length he was seen by the labourers in the fields. Struck with terror at the approach of a being of such gigantic stature, and frightful visage, whose appearance was that of savage wildness and ferocity, they all fled at his approach; the provisions and clothes they left he immediately converted to his own use. Having thus again tasted food more pleasing to his palate than the wild produce of the hedges, he repeated his visits, fear constantly driving the men away, till at length the annoyance became so great they determined to end it by his

destruction. For that purpose all the villagers assembled, watched, and surrounded him; the shout they raised to keep up their own courage deprived him of his, and filled him with an instinctive desire to fly; rushing on them, he seized the two that were nearest, hurled them from him with a power that fully proved his strength was equal to his stature, and ran with such speed as set all their endeavours to secure him at defiance. Finding, however, that he never attempted to injure them beyond devouring their food, a kind of silent bargain was made between the parties. The villagers regularly placed provisions for him in one place, and he, after having eaten them, suffered the men to pursue their labours unmolested, and would even mount some elevated spot, and quietly look at them until the close of day ended their toils. One day he wandered beyond his usual bounds, approached a cottage, and was tempted to enter it. It was the residence of Frantz's father, but none of its inhabitants were at home except his three sisters. They had often heard of, but never seen their strange visitor,³ the uncouthness of whose figure naturally filled them with terror. His continuing to stand in the door-way [sic] prevented their being able to run away, while he stood motionless with wonder at the new objects that he saw. One of the girls summoning courage, and remembering his partiality for eating, placed some victuals as near to him as she durst venture, while the other two barricaded themselves with furniture in the furthest corner of the room. Having satisfied his eyes, he was just approaching the food, when Frantz entered, who seeing the unwelcome guest, and the fears of his sisters, instantly felt bold in their defence. Seizing the cudgel that had preserved his head from the barber's razor, he applied it with good will to the shoulders of the monster, who in a moment wrested it from his attacker, dashed him to the ground, and raising the stick, was about striking a blow that would have deprived Frantz of power if not of life, when the sisters seeing his danger threw themselves before him in a supplicating attitude. The beauty of their innocent faces, and mute imploring eloquence, arrested his arm; he gazed on them with as much pleasure as could be pictured in so unnatural a face, gradually dropped the weapon, and after an expressive action, in which surprise, feeling, and delight, were singularly blended, left the cottage, thus proving that in a lovely, innocent woman's

³ Alternative spelling of the word "visitor".

countenance there is a silent language that speaks to and subdues the most untutored heart, when its possessor is undepraved⁴ by vice.

Ernest's illness was of long continuance: the mysterious exclamations he made during it were naturally attributed to delirium; the attentions of his mother and the lovely Agnes were unremitting. Hartmann witnessed them, and it far more firmly riveted the attachment which he was unwilling to allow, but could not subdue, for the excellent girl; while his mind was filled with the deepest anxiety for her happiness⁵ when united to Ernest, as the latter's mind, when he began to recover, appeared more than ever burdened with gloom and approaching misanthropy. Madame Wallberg's health had also suffered by her attendance on her son, and they were both advised to retire a few miles into the country for change of air, thither they repaired. Youth and exercise soon renewed the son, but could not remove his excessive agitation of mind, whenever the portentous words of the monster rose to his mind. The mother's health received not so much benefit from the change of air, as her spirits did from her son's improved looks. They were one day walking in a plantation near their residence, when the frightful being suddenly appeared before them, to the horror (though from different causes) of them both. Madame Wallberg, appalled by the terrific appearance of a creature, in size and looks so unlike aught⁶ human, fell senseless in the arms of her son, who, convulsed with agony, had scarcely power to support her. The monster, after eyeing Ernest for some time with the malice of a demon, gave vent to a howl, in which all the bad passions of human nature might be fancied as combined together in a sound of a most unearthly description. Ernest remembered the superior strength of the other, and shuddered at what would be his mother's fate should hate prompt its possessor to use it; at length his feelings found utterance, and he cried out, "Monster! pernicious fiend! avaunt!⁷ If thou art destined, as the penalty of my folly, to torment me with thy accursed presence, the innocent must be beyond thy appointed power, away then! and disturb not those who have not sinned like myself." The being seemed to understand the import of his words,

⁴ Obsolete word for "not corrupted". (Collins Dictionary)

⁵ Misspelling of the word "happiness".

⁶ Obsolete variant of "anything". (Samuel Johnson's 1755 Dictionary, Digital Edition)

⁷ Archaic word for "go away!" (Collins Dictionary)

but not to regard them; for after a loud, contemptuous laugh he⁸ appeared on the point of rushing on Ernest, like a hyena on its prey, when casting his eyes on the placid, but death-like countenance, of Madame Wallberg, as she lay supported on her son's bosom, its almost more than mortal look seemed to arrest him; gazing on it for some time, his eyes rolled alternately on the face of the mother and son, as if tracing a similarity between them; after some time, starting from his fixed attitude, the terrific being again uttered the dreadful words, "I am the punishment of thy presumption," and then disappeared. Madame Wallberg soon after began to recover, and looked fearfully round to see if the cause of her terror [164] was still present, and then asked her son if some threatening words⁹ had not been spoken by it, he endeavoured to assure her not. Supported by Ernest, she was able to reach the house, but her delicate frame had received a shock it was not able to sustain, and before many days it became evident to all her family that her time on earth was drawing rapidly to a close. To lose so excellent a being, wrung the hearts of all her relatives with grief; but their feelings were comparative happiness to the wretched misery of Ernest, at the knowledge that his daring folly had led to the death of one of the most excellent of women, and that she who gave him existence was deprived of hers, as the first victim sacrificed by his presumption. Madness would have almost been welcome to him, but there was a sentiment always prevalent in his mind that his senses were to be preserved, that he might bear the inflictions of further sufferings. Feeling her last hour approaching, after a heart-breaking farewell of her beloved family, his mother entreated him to endeavour at a more composed state of mind, for the sake of those who would need his consolations; then placing his hand in the hand of Agnes, prayed for a blessing on her son and daughter, and soon after resigned her pious spirit into the hands of her Creator.

Wretched at having been the cause of such an irreparable loss to his family, Ernest subdued as much as possible his own feelings, that he might be the more capable of assuaging their grief; resolved afterwards to seek and destroy the monster whose appearance had produced the lamentable event. When time therefore had softened the violence of their sorrow, he armed himself and repaired to the cavern, as the most likely

⁸ There is no "h" in the original version. However, it does not make sense without it. Probably erased when printed.

⁹ The "r" was almost erased in the original, but it fits perfectly.

place to meet with the object of his hatred. When he arrived at the entrance, the monster was just issuing from it, who, on seeing Ernest, gave one of those howls which equally with his looks were nearly indescribable, being neither angelic, demoniac, nor human, but a combination of the extreme of all. Ernest, after recovering the sensation of horror which his presence raised, said, "Detestable wretch! whose appearance in the face of day carries destruction with it, for in thy hideous aspect is death, forbear to contaminate the earth by showing thy abominable presence; submit thyself to my commands, and keep within the cavern, or I will this moment end thy life, and rid the world of such a monster." The being's looks showed that he understood what was addressed to him, while his countenance marked both contempt and defiance of the threat; after a malignant laugh, in his usual unearthly tone, he answered as before, "I am the punishment of thy presumption." "Thy mission has been already fulfilled," Ernest replied, "by the death of one most dear unto me; but the innocent shall not again suffer for my presumptuous misdeeds, even if I forfeit my own life in the attempt, I will extinguish thy existence. "Canst thou?" was the answer, accompanied with the same contemptuous defying look. Ernest felt that the supreme power that had endued the being with life, might also have placed him above his vengeance, but he also felt that he had with his own life rather make an atonement for his sin, than let further injury attend the innocent. "And why cannot I?" exclaimed Ernest; "the strongest beasts of the field are subservient to the power of man, thy strength may be superior to mine, but then it is only brutal strength, unaided by the influence of reason; the beasts that are not useful are deemed pernicious, and driven from the abodes of men, as thou shalt be, for thou art—" "The punishment of thy presumption," interrupted the being; then, after a pause, changing from the tone he had hitherto spoken into one of deep solemnity, continued, "thyself, a created being, presumed in thy pride of knowledge to become a creator: like the heathen who raises the funeral pile on which he perishes, thou hast only built up an edifice too frail to last, but which, falling, will destroy thee." In the voice he now heard, there was that which was more appalling to the mind of Ernest than even the one that had before made him tremble at its sound. It first filled him with awe, then with desperation. "Be this the moment then of its fall and my destruction:" so saying, Ernest pointing his gun fired; his intended victim was unhurt, and said, "it is not the hour appointed for thee, but may be that fixed for one of thine." He then rushed on Ernest,

and with ease wrenched the weapon from him, who immediately drew his sword, and furiously attacked the hated being, who returned not the blows, but caught them on the gun.

Ernest's young brother, Henry, was rambling in the fields, and being near, heard the report of Ernest's gun when he fired, thinking he was out shooting, he hastened to the spot, and beheld what appeared such an unequal combat. His terror at the superhuman appearance of the monster, was lost in fear for his brother's safety, to aid whom, he, with the broken branch of a tree that he found on the ground, struck at the hideous being, who instantly returned the blow by one with the butt-end of the gun, which levelled him to the earth, and a moment sufficed to extinguish life in the affectionate, but unfortunate, Henry. Ernest flew to his brother, the monster pointed to the victim with terrible expression, and then left them. The miserable Ernest finding life extinct in Henry, threw himself frantic on the ground beside him, in which state they were found in the course of the day, and conveyed to that home again rendered the scene of mourning. Conjecture attributed the fatal event to accident; for when Ernest recovered his faculties, every inquiry or allusion to the dreadful occurrence, drove him to the verge of madness.

And now Agnes proved how often in the hour of trial the fortitude of woman is superior to that of man. She had loved Henry with the affection of a sister, and was deeply afflicted at his loss, but she was the consoling angel of the family, and her assiduities at length mitigated the extreme grief of Mr. Wallberg, and produced a more composed state of mind in Ernest, though he still appeared enveloped in mysterious gloom, which it was equally impossible to dispel or penetrate the cause of. Hartmann was, during this period of sorrow, unremitting in his attentions; the excellence of mind displayed by the lovely Agnes, added to the affection he had so long felt, not a word or movement of hers was lost upon him; he at length began to hope that the attachment of Ernest and Agnes towards each other was different in its nature to what he entertained for her; he rejoiced at it for his own sake, but much more so for hers, for it was evident that Ernest's mind was sinking into a state of melancholy morbid feeling, that would ensure misery to all closely allied to him.

Time at length began to produce again its usual soothing effects on the mourners; short excursions to amuse their minds by change of scene were proposed and executed.

One day, Ernest, Hartmann, and Agnes, were sailing in a small boat near their residence, the two latter endeavouring by their conversation to interest the former, who, though he appeared to listen, was only occupied by his own thoughts. Looking towards the land, he suddenly uttered an exclamation of horror, and starting up with great force, the violence of the action overset the boat, and in a moment they were all plunged in the water. Ernest had mechanically seized the boat, and was supported by it; Hartmann, when he rose to the surface, looked round for Agnes, and to his horror saw that the current was hurrying her towards an eddy that would inevitably be fatal, long before he (though an excellent swimmer) could reach and rescue her from the danger. He was exerting himself to the utmost to save her, when he heard a violent plunge into the lake near her, and she totally disappeared. Almost frantic, he made a hopeless effort at saving her by diving; obliged to return above the water for air, what was his astonishment at beholding a being, monstrous in size and appearance, just emerging from the water with the lovely insensible girl in its arms, and which it deposited with every mark of care on the grass! He hastened towards the shore, and was just landing, when the being who had stood intently looking at the sufferer, saw him approach, and instantly fled into an adjoining grove. Ernest, too, had by this time reached the shore. Agnes soon opened her eyes, and made them happy with the assurance that, excepting the fright, she had sustained no injury. Hartmann was lost in wonder at the singular being that had so providentially saved her, when all hope appeared lost. Ernest knew it was owing to his unexpectedly seeing that object which had led to the accident, but did not mention it: he even began to console his mind with the hope, that the hated monster having been made the instrument of preserving one of his family, the allotted punishment of his presumption was fulfilled, and that his friend would no longer be endangered by it. This idea gave his mind a cheerfulness it had long been a stranger to; the unrestrained joy of Hartmann at the safety of Agnes showed to him the state of his friend's heart, and he resolved if he could discover that she had a reciprocal regard for him, his own affection for her should not be an obstacle to their happiness.

Time passed on: Ernest gave Agnes and Hartmann every opportunity of being together, in order that if there were any latent sparks of affection for each other in their bosoms, they might be productive of that bliss to them, his own feelings told him he never could enjoy. At length he felt assured his surmises were well founded, and he

determined to act accordingly. Never having seen the monster in the neighbourhood since he rescued Agnes from the water, he flattered himself that all annoyance to him or his family from that dreaded being was at an end, and he therefore announced his intention of making an excursion to visit some of the Alpine mountains. Hartmann pressed earnestly to accompany him, but he would not consent. Arrived at that part where he intended to remain some time, he wrote to Agnes and Hartmann, the conviction he felt of their love for each other, the utter impossibility of his ever enjoying the happiness he had once hoped for, on account of the state of his own mind, and entreating them not to delay their nuptials, which when he heard of having taken place, he would again return and enjoy their society by him so much valued. The receipt of the letter opened the real state of Agnes and Hartmann's feelings to each other, and produced that avowal which Ernest contemplated; but the two lovers could not permit their generous minds to entertain the thought of purchasing their own felicity at the expense of their friend's; they therefore resolved, together with Ernest's father, to proceed to the place where he then resided, and ascertain how far his peace of mind was involved in their union. What Ernest had wrote, instead of relieving his mind, as he expected it would have done, plunged it in deeper gloom, when he reflected that his prospects of happiness were more contracted by it. One day, wandering farther than usual from his habitation, the being unexpectedly stood before him, and appeared to welcome the sight of Ernest with one of his unnatural howls, which riveted him to the spot, and for a time made his tongue refuse to do its office. "Monster!" at length Ernest exclaimed; "hast thou again come to torment me? Thou heretofore proclaimed thyself the punishment of my presumption; if that punishment is to cease but with my life, let both now end together: use thy superhuman strength, and at once annihilate me; it will be an act of kindness, for I am weary of the world." "I owe thee no kindness," answered the being; "thou, in thy vanity of knowledge, aimed at that which one alone has power to perform; thy presumption began that which has called me into an existence, wretched to myself, and hateful to others: from where I first saw light and found a shelter, I have been hunted as though I were a beast of the forest, than which once I was little better; but now (for what purposes I know not), my nature seems changed, and I feel within me workings that make me nearer allied to human nature!" Ernest said, "Thou! hideous to look on; unlike every object that moves upon the earth, art of no

species, and can claim kindred with none, and yet dares to call thyself human.” “Mock me not;” replied the being: “deride not the mass of misery thou hast been the cause of; rather seek to lessen it, and be my benefactor by repairing the evil thou hast done me; find me a place of shelter, where, though I have no companion, I may be safe from injury. If my mind continues tractable as now, teach me the difference between good and evil, so that while I am cursed with life, though I may not be able to practise the former, I may avoid inflicting the latter upon others.” Ernest stood gazing with astonishment at the calm voice and manner of this singular being; a change wonderful as that which first gave him existence, seemed to have taken place in the inward, not the outward man, for that remained unsightly as it had ever been; but the very contemplation of this unlooked-for rationality in the one, seemed to deprive the other of his reason; suddenly his eyes began to roll with fury, and in a frenzied tone he exclaimed, “Why, thou art a sensible monster now, and fit company for those who think they are most learned, as I once thought myself! I hate the world, and thou art hated by the world; we, therefore, are the right associates for each other, and henceforth will live together; nay, if thou continuest to acquire knowledge as thou hast lately done, I will be thy pupil; what I learned, I learned from musty books, that puffed me up with vanity, and taught me to deceive myself. What thou knowest is from nature, and therefore drawn from a source of truth and purity; thou, therefore, must be the real philosopher, and so shall be my friend and master: come, then, let us away, and leave the hateful world to the ignorant fools who think they are wise.”

As soon as Ernest has ceased speaking, he seized the being by the hand, and proceeded with a hurried, agitated, pace towards the Alps, sometimes stopping to look earnestly, but wildly, in his companion’s face; at other times bursting into laughter, in which madness had evidently [166] usurped the place of mirth. They soon began to ascend some of the steepest acclivities of that tremendous chain of mountains, and before night closed in, had nearly reached to that height which remains constantly covered with the undissolving snows of winter.

That same evening, Agnes, Hartmann and Mr. Wallberg, arrived at the place of Ernest’s residence, and began to feel alarm in addition to disappointment, when he returned not home at night. His servant told them it was the first time he had been so long absent, they therefore concluded he had walked farther than usual, and that the

next day they should see him. In the morning, they amused themselves with viewing the magnificent Alpine scenery. After walking some time, they stood to admire the objects that presented themselves. Before them rose a mountain, the upper part of which was capped with snow; just below it a narrow path winded round its side overhanging a tremendous precipice, at the foot of which lay a beautiful valley. Suddenly, two figures appeared on the ridgy path. One was using the most violent gestures, as if endeavouring to force himself away from his companion, a man of gigantic proportions. Ernest and the being had wandered throughout the night amongst the mountains, the more than human strength of the one, and the burning frenzy of the other, enabled them to bear the excessive cold of that elevated region uninjured. He, who at his first starting into a supernatural existence, had possessed reason scarcely exceeding brutal instinct, was now the most rational of the two, and had several times preserved Ernest from rushing on destruction.

Indescribable was the consternation when the friends discovered the lesser man to be Ernest, and the other, the unknown monster that had saved Agnes. Ernest's reason had entirely left him, and he was only restrained by the other from plunging down the precipice. While all were thus situated, one of those thunder-storms, so usual in the Alpine regions, burst upon them; the concussion of the air occasioned one of those tremendous avalanches so magnificent to the spectator, but so destructive to all within its range. The snow, in its descent, swept Ernest and the monster from the narrow ridge into the abyss below, and inextricably buried them in the fallen mass. Mr. Wallberg did not survive the shock of thus witnessing the destruction of the last of his family, and the punishment of Ernest's presumption, as in the effects of crime is too often to be deplored, involved the innocent equally with the guilty in ruin. The examination of his papers explained the mystery of Ernest's conduct to the survivors. At the expiration of the time demanded by their own grief, and the respect due to the memory of their friends, the hands of Agnes and Hartmann were united, as their hearts had long secretly been.

Sincere as was their affection for each other, the successive loss of so many friends prevented those rejoicings usual at the celebration of a marriage; but what was wanting in the outward expressions of joy, was amply supplied by the inward feelings of their excellent hearts. In a short time after their nuptials, Hartmann, guided by the direction

in Ernest's papers, sought out the cavern that had been the scene of his labours, and destroyed every vestige of his presumption. A tablet was erected in the church, as a memorial of the unfortunate family of Wallberg. When the sun had dissolved the snow in the valley, the two bodies were found, the size and strange appearance of one of them, filled all who saw it with wonder; the simple and superstitious inhabitants never approached the place where they were discovered without shuddering, and long continued to call it the Valley of the Monster.

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