

THE UNKNOWN GRAVE.

[CONCLUDED]

When Moyne turned to go back, a nameless horror filled her soul which she could not understand. She put spurs to her horse and urged him on faster and faster.

When she had reached the top of the hill overlooking the valley, she glanced in the direction of the ranch and her heart sank at the sight she saw. A bright column of smoke was seen rising from the group of pines that surrounded her cabin home. On she flew, sinking her spurs deeper and deeper into the sides of her favorite steed, who seemed to catch fresh inspiration from her frantic appeals. The truth dawned upon her then, that even while her father had talked to her of her love affairs the red devils had been at the ranch burning her home, running off their stock and perhaps murdering her brothers. With these thoughts came a feeling of loneliness and helplessness that caused her erstwhile brave young heart to sink. Her head fell forward on her bosom and she reined her horse to a standstill. She looked long in the direction of the ruin that had been wrought and in her loneliness and despair she prayed for the presence of her lover, and the strength that his presence would give. And while she thus prayed this lover was approaching. He had seen the work of destruction that had been accomplished, and was thinking of his loved one and meditating revenge. New life came into his soul when he saw her, but his face paled visibly when he beheld the look of utter desolation and despair that oppressed her. With a frontiersman's keen perception he saw it all at a glance and asked no questions. He simply said "The Sioux are gone, Miss. They did their work in no time and cleared out. Let me help you down and give your horse a rest, he's about done for, and if you don't look out he'll not be able to carry you home."

"Home," said the girl with a voice of checked emotion that went like an arrow to his heart, "home, home, I have no home," and she buried her face in her hands and gave herself up to tears.

"There's no use of crying Miss, it won't bring them back," said Harry. "We can't catch the Indians today, but must get ready to follow them tomorrow and then make such an example of them as will prevent such business in the future."

He stopped talking, though his heart was full, but he suddenly thought how tame and meaningless were his efforts at comfort to that silent and horror stricken woman before him, whose whole soul seemed engrossed in a struggle with the awful calamity that had befallen her. He led the two horses a little to one side and for a few moments devoted himself to reviving the one she had ridden so near to death's door. He turned presently to where she stood and saw that she had fallen into a heap upon the ground. He ran to her assistance, unloosened her clothes, rubbed her hands, dashed some brandy in her face and presently forced a few drops between her lips. After a few moments the color came back to her cheeks, but she lay as limp and motionless as if dead. He took a blanket that he always carried with him for extra protection against a storm and made her a bed upon the ground, using the saddle for a pillow, and placed her upon it. After filling her canteen with fresh water from the river, he left it within her reach, and then walked some distance to stand guard and await the results. He whistled to keep up courage, for a man always grows weak under such conditions. His strong and passionate nature had gone out to this woman long ago, and now that she had been bereft of home and brothers and father too, he thought and was alone in the world, his