

of those scaly rascals, whose thirteen thousandth grandfather, caused Mother Eve to sin. I examined my priming, and finding everything correct, moved cautiously around the open space until the ground behind the log was open to my view. Upon a bed of moss, a monstrous rattlesnake lay coiled, ready to spring upon his lovely victim. His eyes were like burning rubies, his colors were beautiful and shifting, as those of the chamelion; his red forked tongue played between his crooked fangs, and a strain of lulling music seemed to proceed from his mottled throat. I hate snakes—I speak not in the seaman's vernacular now—and if I ever admired one's *taste* it was that of the one that coiled before me; and if I had been *in his skin*, I should have bitten the beauty, at first sight, to a *dead* certainty.—For a second I paused, but seeing his scaly majesty, slowly laying back his upper jaw to give the fatal spring, I aimed and fired—the hammock sent back the report with a hundred echoes, the snake rolled over and over, minus his head and neck. The Indian maiden dropped her hand, and raised a wild hysteric laugh—a warwhoop rang by my side, and a Seminole chief in his war paint, stalked up to me. I pointed to the snake, and then to the maiden.—“Hugh!” said he, and bounding like a cat to the writhing reptile tore out his heart and swallowed it before I could express my disgust at such a proceeding. I presumed this was his way of showing that he loved his enemies, and I feared that he might bestow his next compliment upon myself. The rescued maiden now approached me with a timid look, and plucking a wild rose from a moss bank, handed it to me with an air and grace that would have made little *Vic* of England, hang herself out of envy, had she been present. As she gave me the flower, she spoke in her own wild gutturals, but the language of Tuscany never fell more sweetly from beauteous lips. I could not understand her words, though I read her simple heart, and I answered her in Spanish. Her eyes sparkled with delight.

“My mother,” said she, “was a Castilian, and I was taught by her to speak her native tongue.”

The Indian now approached and seemed impatient for us to end the conversation. The maiden seemed to be labouring under great restraint, and I could see the chief's eye flash fire, as I imprinted a kiss upon her lovely cheek.

“Hugh,” said the chief, while a warwhoop rang in the distance. “White man—no good—go.”

Instantly the maiden bounded along the tangled pathway, and the warrior, after shaking me by the hand, strode off towards the sound in another direction. As his form was lost in the leafy labyrinth, and the sound of his moccasin died away, the young Venus of the woods peeped out from the moss that enveloped a cypress that towered above me.

“Stranger,” said she in a low voice, “we shall meet again—go now, for those approach who are enemies to your race.”

I kissed my hand to the beautiful child of nature, the face disappeared, and the moss waved in the evening breeze as silently and as impervious as before. Calling my dogs, I returned to the light-house, musing upon Indian maids, of love in trees, and of rural felicity; which being interpreted, gentle reader, meaneth a bed of damp leaves, and cold turkey, a gourd of slimy water, and an eternal fit of the ague.

The keeper of the light-house, Timothy Turnagain Turner, had been an old neighbour of my father's, and like most of the restless spirits of New England, migrated to the Southward, and lost all his family, but one, by the stranger's fever. Truly, strangers should be well treated by the chivalrous Southrons, for they generally turn out the scape goats to bear all their diseases.—I have often thought that in the last great day of account, the sons and daughters of New England, will be found in every shrouded legion of the mighty company that comes up at the