

moments, all the passages of his life seemed to concentrate themselves before him, as in one agonizing word, and he struggled to utter the dying prayer, to the virgin mother, for mercy on his soul.

And how did that soul rejoice on perceiving that all his inquietude was but a dream, a fantasy of the brain? Did he fall down in thankfulness, that he was yet spared to make some atonement for the mountain of evil which he had committed, and the enormity of which had been placed full before his vision? Ah! no. He commanded that the wine-cup should be brought to him, and resolved that the remainder of the night should be spent in jollity and revelry; for he would not—though he kept that secret to himself—encounter the risk of another such dream. Wine and wassail then prevailed, but though ribaldry was in the mouth of the King, a gnawing vulture was at his heart; and the ghastly expression of his features remained unaffected by the feasting and the license of which he endeavoured to partake.

Morning arrived, and daylight now gladdened the spirits of Rufus more than all the facetious aids which had been placed before him; nevertheless, he refused to permit the field sports which he had ordered the night before. Upon his mind still hung sad forebodings, and although his heart beat high for the chase which he loved, and his eye roved over the field where the attendants were passing with hounds and horses, he resolved that, for this day at least, he would remain within the walls of Malwood Keep, and find his joys in the conviviality of the table. So passed on the time until the dinner hour.

The noontide repast was on the board, the wine and the mirth went round; already was past care forgotten, and the cautious Prince Henry, who at this period was on friendly terms with the King, was covertly urging him to the sport he loved; he had consented, and had given to his favourite knight, Sir Walter Tyrrel, two out of six arrows deemed especially good in the workmanship. Once more the noise of steeds, and hounds, and attendants, was heard without; the heart of the Red King was elate, his dream was forgotten, or remembered as but the effect of a distempered brain; the wonted audacity of his soul was again predominant within him. His foot was in the stirrup, but before he mounted into the saddle, a messenger,

"Bloody, with spurring, fiery red with haste," rode up, and with more eagerness than respect presented a packet.

"Read, read, Sir Walter," exclaimed the irate King; "what brings the knave, and whence comes he?"

"So please you, my lord King," replied the man, with deep obeisance, "my message from the lord Abbot of St. Peters', and I was commanded to spare neither horse nor man until the packet should be delivered unto your highness."

"Read, read, Sir Walter," again exclaimed the monarch. "What says the shaveling? what asks he? *Dents-dieu*, how dares he interrupt our course? Thou dost hesitate, man, give me the scroll; *Dents-dieu*, the priest dares not to palter with us."

He snatched the missive from the knight and threw his eyes over the contents. What saw they? The relation of a dream! A monk of St. Peters' had dreamed! he saw the King tearing and gnawing with his teeth at the blessed symbol of his faith, as though he would destroy it, not devour it; and that the sacred image spurned and trod down the impious monarch, from whose mouth, nostrils and eyes, streamed forth flames of fire, which consumed him. This dream the friar had reported to his superior, who, deeming it ominous and danger to his sovereign, had forwarded the account with loyal haste.

A sudden pang shot across the heart of Rufus at the word "*dream*." It was but for a moment, for the wine wrought in his head and love of the chase wrought in his heart.—He laughed a scornful laugh as he cried aloud, "Give the slave an hundred pence; the monk is wise, he dreams for money, and practises credulity. What! He would prate his idle dreams, and presume to stay the course of his master's pleasure. To horse, my lords; *Dents-dieu*, shall we be checked because an old woman sazezes!"

Insensate man! Onward he goes towards his fate; onward from the castle which should never again receive him. His heart beat high as he chased the bounding deer, and little he recked that the setting sun should witness his setting also. Little he recked, that when he cried to his favorite knight and nearest attendant, "Shoot, Walter! shoot—in the devil's name!" he commanded his own death, in the name of the master he had so faithfully served. Scarcely had he spoken, when an arrow pierced his heart, and his soul instantly fled from its mortal abode.

The mind recoils, on contemplating the fearful and sudden end of one so ill prepared for his great account; of one, in whom reigned