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The Chester Standard - June 2, 1854

C. Davis Melton

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THE YOUNG SOLDIER'S STORY

"Generally speaking," began the youth, "stories have what is called a moral to them, and if you don't know what that means, I shall be glad to tell you."
"Ye, yes, we know," ran in low murmurs around.

"Well, mine has no moral, because it comes to me, and his voice thrilled at my words."
"It matters very little who or what I am," continued he.

"You think me, you are mistaken. I loved books, and have grown up as one born to command. I went to college, and very likely you think I was a wild, harem man devil of a fellow—braving, hunting, going and leaving it—cultivating vice, and so on, as you may have heard that young fellows with plenty of money do."
"Was it so?" asked the youth.

"No, sir, it was not. I was a good scholar, and quiet as an infant. I still had a feverish love, but he had a little doll of a girl about my age, that was seventeen, and for whom I would have laid my heart out."

"Did you love her?" asked the youth.

"She was a lovely, little, trusting creature, the daughter of a very worthy, bold tradesman who made her like the apple of his eye; but she was worthy of a throne, and I would have given her one. As it was, I could make her, I thought—so that I was—honored, great, wealthy. She is poor enough now, and I suffer for it."

"Our dream of love was brief. She expired in a few days, as the Lord might. I lamented no more for I made her live for me. I added, with a solemnity that started the soldiers, who were not often moved by any strength of expression.

"Thunder and lightning here, Dick, give us your hand my boy!" and a general grip was given. "We thought you tried with the devil."

"I believed my father and mother loved me too well to thwart me, and that I only had to bring her home to give another father's love and a mother's blessing, and she was my own. When my baby was born, and she put it in my bosom, and laid her own sweet little head like a blossom before mine, I was as if I had a soul."

"I demanded my wife," they called her a designing cunning girl—and said something else to me, and I was angry, and I killed them and made them taste my own blood. I demanded my wife, and they killed them and made them taste my own blood."

"I need not tell how long, and by what means, I traced each through stages of wretchedness and penury, till I found both mother and child, dying on a mean pallet in a parish work-house, and free from hell to avenge this wretched wrong. For what I did, I did it with my own hands, and I did it in a cruel, vindictive way."

"I had her dead, and my own heart was as hard as iron, and I saw her wasted body on the half-starved mother, and I wept, as do devils now, when I think of her. I had her dead, and my own heart was as hard as iron, and I saw her wasted body on the half-starved mother, and I wept, as do devils now, when I think of her."

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"Little Alice!" I said, "are you going without me?"
"Well, I would go," she said, "if I am only going before you."

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