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THE DEMON OF RUFF'S MOUNTAIN.

CHAPTER V.

BY T. P. SLIDER.

The settlers from finding their cattle

destroyed in the woods, gathered and

peened them up close to their habitations,

where they could have them under their

own immediate watch; but, notwithstanding

all their precaution and vigilance,

they would often in the morning wake

and find that four of their best

stealing their throats out.

It became truly

almost afraid to

the women could

tend to any out-

of the demon.

but it did not

teeth, as the settlement as close

and as search as possible, and the

terrible accounts, which only added to

the fear and consternation; but they

failed to discover anything by which to

explain the mystery.

So great a hold had the Demon upon

the public mind, that nothing occurred

but what he was blamed with. He en-

tered into everything and was connected

with everything. If a settler happened

to be taken suddenly ill, if any one sud-

denly died, if the weather became ex-

treinely hot or dry or wet, if a cold spell

came on, if the corn or tobacco failed to

come up, if a great wind or terrible thun-

der storm occurred, it was put down as

the work of the Demon. If a settler

missed anything about his premises, or

his horse got sick, or if the old woman

missed anything about the house as a

spoon, or if the butter didn't come after

much churning, it was the Demon that

was the cause of everything.

Even the preachers of the settlement

became profoundly inoculated with the

prevailing notions and ideas, and their

discourses and sermons like those of the

present day, redolent with politics and

sectionalities, were altogether about

spirits, witches, ghosts and demons. The

Bible was searched from Genesis to Re-

velations. The magicians of Phenicia's

time, the Witch of Endor, Satan who laid

his hand on Job, the serpent in the gar-

den of Eden, the devil who tempted the

Savior with the devil's who were cast out

of Mary Magdalene, the being cast

and the legions of evil spirits went into

out of someone and caused them to

be themselves by running into the

water, and dwelt upon all occasions, every

word of the week and Sunday too. So

each did it engage their attention, that

they became like persons insane on a

subject.

Yet amid all this excitement and alarm,

Sanatee, nevertheless, pursued his di-

abolical acts, and still would the settlers

and their cattle murdered and other depred-

ations committed, yet he seemed to

be unseen. Becoming emboldened by

his success, he determined to gratify his

ignavancy still further, by wreaking it

on the person of the pale face. Wary

and crafty, he resolved not to take life

the scene was likely to be discover-

ed but to seize upon his victim, bear

him away by force, and sacrifice him by

fire to appease the shades of his many

days' search, he turned his steps

homeward to communicate to Grace his

frustrated efforts. As step by step he

strode, he still kept a watch, faint

eye on everything he passed. Foggy

clouds began to gather in the heav-

ens. Late in the evening of the day, when

was yet many miles from his little cabin

came on one of those storms so com-

mon in the fall. The rain fell in torrents,

lightnings flashed fierce and lurid, and

the wind swept furiously over the for-

est as if it would uproot the towering

trees, yet he relaxed not his watch. His

eye gazed around as if he expected to see

the Demon with the stolen child. The

elements corresponded with the nature

of such a character. Once or twice he

seemed to hear the cry of Ran's! Ran's!

Ran's. He stopped and listened and he

imagined he heard the same cry of Ran's!

Ran's. Once he conceived he saw swiftly

moving, yet indistinctly, a strange look-

ing object. Brave as he was, his hair

stood on end. He turned to follow from

whence he heard the utterance of his

name; but then, he reasoned, how could

it be possible that any one was calling

him at such a time and place. It was

imagination, he concluded, that had con-

structed the rushing, driving winds into

articulations of his name. With this he

retraced his steps and proceeded home-

ward.

Wearied and fatigued he arrived at his

cabin and threw himself down upon his

humble pallet; wet to the skin, hungry

and troubled in mind, it was many an

hour before he fell into a gentle slumber.

In his dreams he heard that same cry of

Ran's! Ran's! Ran's! while before his

imagination rose up the Demon, a fierce

looking savage, bearing off his betrothed;

excited and agitated he awoke from the

terrible vision. But too true had been

his dream. Early in the morning as the

sun rose from his eastern couch, a

flash of intelligence that Grace

was in danger flashed across his mind;

he started up, and, without a moment's

hesitation, he rushed to the house, gathered

his rifle, and in a short time stood at an-

gler's house and communicated the sad

intelligence. Instantly it passed from

settler to settler, though miles apart and

by magic, and before the shades of even-

ing had gathered around, like Chan Al-

pin's band, a body of rough and stal-

wart men had assembled themselves to-

gether. They formed themselves into

many little divisions, and scoured the

country in every direction. The news

continued to spread all over the settle-

ments; on the banks of the Saluda away

into the sandy regions about Lexing-

ton C. H., over on the Edisto, round the

sides of Ruff's Mountain, down about

Spring Hill and away down clean to the

junction, men embodied themselves in

clusters and joined in the search. It was

continued for days, but each night and

more brought with them no discovery.

CHAPTER VI.

Among the settlers of this section of

the county was a youngster by the name

of Rants Crim. He was remarkable for

his skill with the rifle and noted for a

great hunter. He was very young and

conely to look on. The character of his

countenance was one common to the

German; massive, yet finely turned, not

heavy or inexpressive, but rarely lit or

excited; his form was slouching and slo-

venly until something kindled him into

action and brought his powers into full

play. He was betrothed to a young woman

in the settlements whose name was

Grace Harmon. Grace had taken a deep

interest in the loss sustained by her

mother and sympathized with her. She

sought an interview with Rants, and told

him that if he wished to prove himself

worthy of her, he must endeavor, if pos-

sible, to restore the child to its agonized

mother. Like another Theseus, after

every one had given it up, he set out

alone on the expedition. He was satis-

fied in his mind that some human being

was connected with the past events, and

he had a faint suspicion that there might

be still remaining in the settlement a

savage foe. He traversed every nook

and corner; he walked almost incessantly

day and night through the eastern, west-

ern and southern portions of the county,

but no traces, no signs could he discover

of the supposed Demon and boy. Wear-

ied by force, and sacrifice him by fire

to appease the shades of his many days'

search, he turned his steps

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