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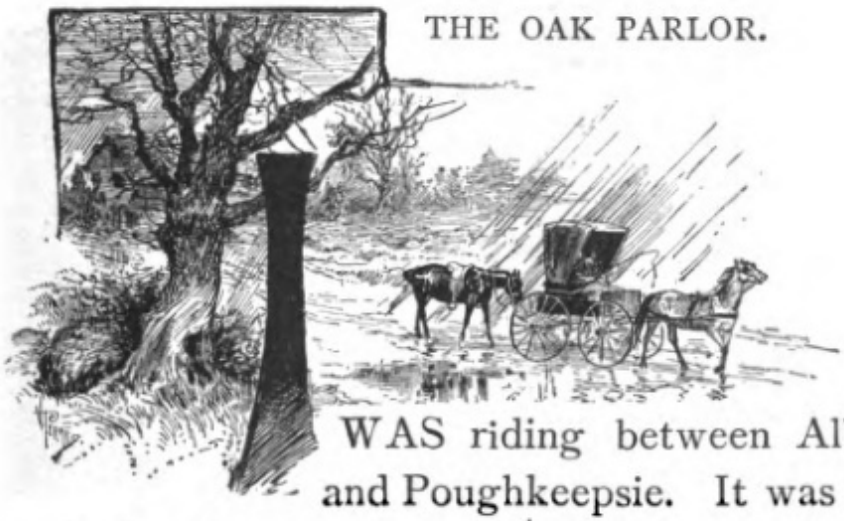
THE FORSAKEN INN.

CHAPTER I.



THE OAK PARLOR.

I WAS riding between Albany and Poughkeepsie. It was raining furiously, and my horse, already weary with long travel, gave unmistakable signs of discouragement. I was, therefore, greatly relieved when, in the most desolate part of the road, I espied rising before me the dim outlines of a house, and was correspondingly disappointed when, upon riding forward, I perceived that it was but a deserted ruin I was approaching, whose fallen chimneys and broken windows betrayed a dilapidation so

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CHAPTER II.

BURRITT.

All was quiet in the halls, but as I proceeded toward their room I perceived a figure standing

near the doorway, which, in another moment, I saw to be that of Burritt. He was trembling like a leaf, and was bent forward, listening.

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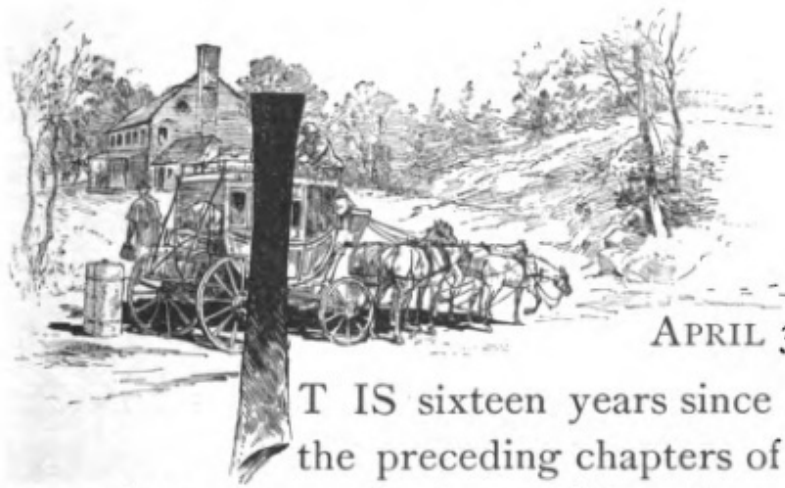
CHAPTER III.

A FEARFUL DISCOVERY.



APRIL 3, 1791.

IT IS sixteen years since I wrote the preceding chapters of this history of mystery and crime. When the pen dropped from my hand—why did it drop? Was it because of some noise I heard?

I imagine so now, and tremble. I did not anticipate ever adding a line to the words I had written. The impulse which had led me to put upon paper my doubts concerning the two Urquharts soon passed, and as nothing ever occurred to recall this couple to my mind, I gradually allowed their name and memory to vanish from my thoughts, only remembering them when chance led me into the oak parlor. Then, in-

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stayed some minutes behind. When his kindly but not undisturbed countenance showed itself again in the gap at the side of the fireplace, I could almost have thrown myself at his feet.

"What is it?" I gasped. "Tell me at once. Is it a man or a woman or—"

"It is a woman. See! here is a lock of her hair. Beautiful, is it not? She must have been young."

I stared at it like one demented. It was of a

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CHAPTER V.

AN INTERIM OF SUSPENSE.

MAY 5, 1791.

HOW fearful! To hear a spade in the night and know that this spade is digging a grave! I sit at my desk and listen to hear if any one in the house has been aroused or is suspicious, and then I turn to the window and try to pierce the gloom to see if anything can be discerned, from the house, of the grewsome act now being performed in the garden. For after much consultation and several conferences with the authorities, we have decided to preserve from public knowledge, not only the secret of the room hidden in my house, but of the discovery which has lately been made there. But while much harm would accrue to me by revelations which would throw a pall of horror over my inn, and make it no better than a place of

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