



The fatal Pilot grasps the Helm,  
And steers the Crew to Pluto's Realm.

Pub. June 1 1866 at K. Ackermann's, 20, N. York St.

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## Death turned Pilot.

AMONG the Cares by which the breast  
Of anxious mortals is opprest,  
Are the prophetic doubts that wait  
Upon their childrens' future fate.  
Swath'd in the cradle, they sustain  
The troubles which they can't explain;  
And, when escap'd from Infancy  
Their growing childhood is not free  
From num'rous evils that attend  
Life's passage onward to its end.  
What pains and anguish might we name  
That daily threat the human Frame!  
What various casualties await  
Life's active or inactive state!  
What diff'rent forms Disease assumes,  
And to what ills our Nature dooms!

Sometimes with a swift-winged power,  
It hurries to the fatal hour;  
Or, with slow, undermining art,  
Stills, by degrees, the beating heart.  
Then comes frail Youth's incautious hour,  
And Passion's overwhelming power,  
To fill with tears a parent's eye  
Or wring his heart with agony :—  
When no grave counsels will controul  
Th' impetuous sallies of the soul ;  
When no kind warnings will impart  
Discretion to the erring heart ;  
When fond Affection big with Fear,  
Foreboding some dark peril near,  
May call on Death to strike, and save  
The Stripling in the sheltering Grave.  
—But should the genial Offspring rise  
To bless an anxious Parent's eyes,  
While in the growing form they trace  
The female charm or manly grace,  
And view each opening virtue shine  
That makes a mortal half divine ;

If Death should point his fatal dart  
At such a much-lov'd victim's heart,  
How great would be the Father's woe,  
What bitter, ceaseless tears would flow  
Adown the Mother's cheek, while sighs  
Speak the rent bosom's agonies.  
But still some comfort waits the doom  
Of those we follow to the tomb :  
With awe and solemn step we tread  
The sacred mansion of the Dead ;  
And see the holy honours paid  
When, 'neath the marble they are laid,  
Who were our heart's delight and pride,  
And never griev'd us till they died.  
E'en while th' afflicted spirits mourn,  
And faithful fondness clasps the urn  
That marks the spot where Friendship lies,  
Or Love demands our Obsequies,  
We can with less'ning grief declare,  
The dust of those we lov'd is there.  
While the Cypress shade we weave,  
The sooth'd affections cease to grieve ;

And when we thus our thoughts employ,  
Sorrow becomes a solemn Joy.

But we've to tell another tale :—  
O'er the wide Ocean doom'd to sail,  
Two Maidens fair, in early bloom  
Found in the deep a wat'ry tomb.

In India born, a parent's cares  
Had sent them in their earliest years,  
To pass, beneath a milder clime,  
That doubtful, but important time  
Of Female Life, which intervenes  
Between its Childhood and the Teens.  
Submitted to a Guardian's power,  
Who, as the sun brings forth the flower,  
Watch'd his young Indians to improve  
With feelings like a Father's love.  
He, to th' important duty just,  
Fulfill'd with care the sacred Trust ;  
And taught their early minds to glow  
With all a Female ought to know.

The voice was tun'd to aid the Lyre,  
Each Grace did with the Muse conspire,  
And their respective powers combin'd  
T' exalt the form and deck the mind;  
While all the Virtues play'd their part,  
And took possession of the Heart.

Thus the fair infant plants, the boast  
Of Coromandel's distant coast,  
Foster'd beneath the genial skies  
That Britain's happy Isle supplies,  
Grew tall and stately to the sight,  
In every youthful colour bright;  
Nor did the Pride of Western Bowers  
Excel these Eastern Sister Flowers.

At length, the fruits of Friendship's toil  
Were summon'd to their native soil,  
Prepar'd with every winning grace  
To meet a parent's fond embrace,  
Whose hopes were fix'd that they should find  
The lovely form, the cultur'd mind;

And when again, in all their charms,  
The full-grown maids should fill their arms;  
With feelings rich in ecstasy,  
They should the Infant Cherubs see,  
Transform'd by Time and faithful Care,  
A mortal Angel's shape to wear.

To Albion's shores they bade adieu;  
The white Cliffs lessen in their view;  
And all was Hope, and all was gay,  
As they pursu'd their wat'ry way.  
—But—e'er one fleeting moon was past,  
With clouds the sky was overcast;  
With fearful force the tempest blows,  
And wave on wave tumultuous flows:  
The Sun, as he descends to rest,  
Just marks with red the dusky West,  
Till into darkness he declines,  
And the whole Heaven to Night resigns:—  
No ray of light is seen around,  
The Moon and Stars in shade are drown'd;—  
Thus Time, in its most dreadful Form,  
Augments the horrors of the Storm.

As the rude, swelling surges roll,  
No Power the Vessel can controul;  
She now defies the Steersman's skill,  
And through the billows drives at will;  
The Keel no longer can abide  
The floods that lash her weary side,  
And gaping planks no longer brave  
The force of the resistless wave.

—The Sisters, 'mid these dire alarms,  
Were fainting in each other's arms;  
Or with loud lamentable cries  
Told their heart-rending agonies.

—The toils of the alarming hour  
The Crews exhausted strength o'er-power.  
Some on the shrouds, before, behind,  
Mount, as it were into the wind;  
Some, clinging to the mast in vain  
Are thrown into the yawning main;  
Others in haste the boat prepare,  
The last faint hope in their despair;  
When, from the sinking vessel borne,  
Through the fierce billows, all forlorn



They see Death sitting at the Helm ;  
 And, as the mountain seas o'erwhelm,  
 Amid the Storm's tremendous roar,  
 One shriek they give—and all is o'er.

The Sailor's form'd the storm to brave,  
 And calls the Sea the Seaman's grave :  
 But Beauty sure might hope to sleep  
 Where Graces mourn, and Muses weep ;  
 And claim, to deck its mournful bier,  
 The fond lament, the flowing tear.  
 —Ill-fated pair, you find a grave  
 Far, far beneath the Stormy Wave,  
 And the loud winds, in boistrous swell,  
 O'er the deep waters sound your Knell.

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