Benjamin Dean

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Good people all, both great and small, read those few lines penned by me;
Those lines are written by a man deprived of liberty.
Who is serving out a sentence for a deed which I have done,
And here I fear I will remain till my race on earth is done.

My name it is Benjamin Dean, my age is forty-one,
I was born in New Brunswick in the city of Saint John,
Near by the Bay of Fundy where the sea gulls loudly call
And they rock with pride the silvery tide as the billows rise and fall

My parents reared me tenderly, brought me up in the fear of God,
But they have long been slumbering beneath their native sod.
Side by side they slumber in a quiet cemetery
Where the willows bow beneath the breeze far off the dark blue sea.

Farewell unto my native home, I ne'er shall see it more,
No more I'II watch those billows break upon that rockbound shore
No more I'II watch those ships go by with sails as white as snow
Bound for some port far over the sea before the winds that blow.

When I arrived in Berlin Falls some twenty years ago
The town was then about one half as large as it is now,
And labouring men of every nationality was there,
For work was plenty, wages good, each man could get his share

The business men of Berlin then was making money fast,
I thought that I too would invest before its boom had passed,
A building leased on Mason Street and into business went,
I kept a fruit and candy store, likewise a restaurant.

My business proved succssfully for I did right by all,
I gained the favour of the great, the rich, the poor, the small.
To my surprise before one year had fully rolled its round
In glittering gold I did possess more than two thousand pound.

The coming year I wed with one, the fairest of the fair,
Her eye were of a heavenly blue and dark brown was her hair
Her cheeks were like the dawn of day, her form graceful and fair
Her smiles were bright as the morning light, her steps were like the air.

She was born of goodly parents and they reared her tenderly,

But little did she ever think she would be slain by me.
The night I gained her promise and her hand to me she gave
It would have been better for her had she lied in her grave.

I own I loved my fair young bride who proved a prudent wife,
But little did I think that I would one day take her life,
And as the years rolled swiftly on upon the wheels of time
I found a path of pleasure that led to the fields of crime.

I soon began a wild career caused by the thirst for gold,
My property on Mason Street for a goodly sum I sold.
I bought a building on Main Street that cost a handsome sum,
I ran a free and easy house and went to selling rum.

My former friends of decent grade my company did shun,
But still I was contented to lead the life I had begun
For gold and silver like a brook came flowing into me,
By its glitters I was blinded and my danger could not see.

I soon began to associate with men of low degree,
My business kept me constantly in their base company.
I quickly went from bad to worse, did many a deed of crime
That never would be brought to light in future years of time.

Kind fortune that had been my friend began to frown on me,
'Twas then my eyes were opened, I could see my destiny.
Black clouds was gathering o'er me that with fury soon would break
I fain I would retrace my steps, but oh alas too late.

All I possessed in real estate to my wife it was made
Over in legal writings when kind fortune smiled its fate,
But her regards and love for me did gradually grow cold
When she found my heart and soul was bound with silver and with gold.

The storm it came, the house I built upon the sands did fall,
With it my name, my wife and children I got, wealth and all,
And on the verge of deep despair I saw them drift from me
Upon the tide of justice towards the sea of eternity.

Then under forty thousand dollar bonds then I was placed
For to respect the laws of man that I have long disgraced,
And then to add upon my name troubles that had come
When for indictments that appeared for selling beer and rum.

My fair wife she had fled to one whose name will not appe@r,
It is not neccessary that I should reveal it here.
To persuade her to return to me it was my whole intent,
Unto the house where she then dwelt my steps I quickly bent.

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I cautiously approached the house and opened the hall door,
I found the way to my wife's room upon the upper floor.
The sight that fell upon my gaze it stamped upon my mind,
Upon the bosom of a man my fair wife's he@d reclined.

The very pangs of hell it seemed my being had possessed,
I drew a loaded pistol and I aimed it at his breast.
'Twas when she saw the weapon it was loudly she did cry,
"For God's sake do not shoot me for I am not prepared to die."

The bullet pierced her snowy breast, in a moment she was dead,
"My God, oh Ben you shot me," were the last words that she said.
The trigger of my weapon either pulled too hard or slow
Or else another soul would have passed with her to weal or woe.

The last time that I saw my wife she lay upon the floor
Her long and her light brown wavy hair was stained with crimson gore.
The sun shined through the window on her cold and lifeless form (face?)
As the officers led me away from that polluted place.

I have two daughters living; they are orphans in a way,
And should you chance to meet them treat them kindly I pray,
Don't charge them for their father's sins, for on them they will rest
A crimson stain long after I am mouldering back to dust.

And now young men and women take by this sad tale of mine,
Don't sacrifice your honour for bright gold and silver fine.
Let truth and honour be your shield, you'll find that you will climb
The ladder to success and fame and not be stung by crime.

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