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*Was it
Right to Forgive?*

by
Amelia E. Barr



John W. ...



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WAS IT RIGHT TO FORGIVE ?

Was It Right To Forgive?

A Domestic Romance

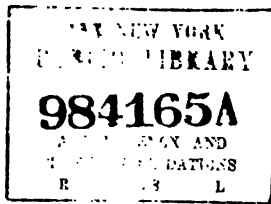
BY

AMELIA E. BARR



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Was It Right to Forgive?



CHAPTER I

Peter Van Hoosen was a result of Dutch Calvinism, and Dutch industry and thrift; also, of a belief in the Day of Judgment. The first motives were inherited tendencies, carefully educated; the last one, a conscious principle, going down to the depths of his nature and sharply dividing whatever was just and right from whatever was false and wrong. People whose religion was merely religiosity thought he took himself too seriously; but if they had a house to build, they wanted this man—who worked in the great Task-master's eye—to lay its foundation and raise its walls. So that, as a builder in stone, Peter Van Hoosen had a wide local celebrity.

He was a strong, loose-limbed man, with a swarthy face and straight black hair, a man of sturdy beliefs and strong prepossessions, yet not devoid of those good manners which spring naturally from a good heart. Among his fellows he was grave and silent, and his entire personality had something of the coldness and strength of the stony material with which he worked. In his home there was a difference; there his black eyes glowed with affection, and even when a

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young man, his wife and his little children could lead him. As he grew older, and years and experience sweetened his nature, he became large-hearted and large-minded enough to feel that beyond certain limits there was a possibly lawful freedom.

These hours of expansion were usually those spent with his daughter Adriana. He had two other daughters, and three sons, each of whom had done virtuously in their own way; but in Peter's estimation, Adriana excelled them all. She was the child after his own heart. In her presence, he felt it good to be hopeful and kind. She led him to talk of everything that was interesting humanity; she asked his opinion on all subjects. She constantly told him how wise he was! how clear-sighted! how far-seeing! She believed he ought to have been at the head of great affairs, and sometimes Peter could not help a little vague regret over the blindness of destiny. In short, Adriana always brought to the front the very best Peter Van Hoosen; she made him enjoy himself; she made him think nobly of himself; and is there any more satisfactory frame of mind? After an hour in Adriana's company, Peter was always inclined to say:

"Well, well, Yanna! In the Great Day of sifting and sorting, I know that I shall be justified. My well-limed mortar, my walls plumb and strong, my day's work of faithful service full rendered, will be accepted of my Master. And you too think so, Yanna."

"I am sure of it, father. It is not the kind of work we do; it is the way in which the work is done. I will risk my word, that you took as much pains with John Finane's little dairy as with Mr. Mac-Arthur's fine mansion."

"I did, Yanna. There is not a poor stone in either,"

and when he said the words, Adriana looked straight at him, with eyes full of admiration.

It must be explained, however, that if Adriana Van Hoosen was a remarkable girl for her position, she had had remarkable advantages. Her birth was fortunate in its time. She did not come to her parents until their struggle with poverty was long over; and before she was ten years old, four of her brothers and sisters had married and made homes for themselves. George and Theodore had gone to Florida, to plant pine-apples, and were making the venture pay them. Her sister Augusta was the wife of John Van Nostrand, a man growing rich in New York, by the way of groceries and politics. Her sister Gertrude had married a cousin who was a florist; and in watching the rose houses and bunching violets, they also were doing well and putting money away. Her youngest brother, Antony, was yet unmarried, but he had been long in California, and there was no reason to suppose he would ever return to the East.

It happened thus, that Peter and his wife found themselves alone with their youngest child, and the great tide of parental love turned actively towards her. They did not cease to love the absent, but the best love delights in service, and there was now none to serve but the charming child who stood in the place of the dear ones scattered so far apart. They began early to notice her beauty, to repeat her bright sayings, to assure themselves that they had been trusted with an extraordinary charge. The child also had the courage which accompanies a strongly affectionate nature; she did not fear to ask for all her desires; and as love gives gladly to those who trust it, she always won what she asked for. To his elder daughters, Peter had

not been generous in the matter of dress, but Adriana had not only plenty of gowns, she had also all the little accessories which are so dear to a girl's heart. But whatever style or whatever color was prominent, Peter enjoyed every change. Sometimes he was tempted to tell her how pretty she was, and how proud he was of her, but he always "thought better of it"; and yet, Adriana knew right well that her father considered her the most beautiful girl in America, and that he was delighted if he met an acquaintance, rich or poor, to whom he could say, "My daughter Adriana, sir."

However, though Peter was proud enough of his girl's beauty, he was far more elated over her mental aptitudes. She excelled all others easily; she carried off every prize in her classes; she came home to him one day with the diploma of her accomplishments in her hand. He was too proud to find the words suitable for his satisfaction; for, in a certain sense, it was his own diploma also. He had studied with Adriana constantly. He had heard her lessons, and talked them over with her, until they were as familiar to him as to her. As he walked about his room that night, so happily sleepless, he examined himself in history, geography, science and mathematics; and he gave Peter Van Hoosen the credit he honestly deserved:

"Even I have not done badly," he said. "I am a great deal more of a man than I was four years ago. Now, Yanna and I are going to have good times. She wants to learn music. Very well, she shall learn it. And we will read and study books that are something above the general run of school books." He sat down to the thought, let his hand fall upon his knee, and peered into the future with the proud glance

of one who knows his strength, and foretells his own victory.

In the morning he had a disappointment. Adriana wanted to go to college. To learn music was not all she desired. There were other things just as important—repose and dignity of manner, a knowledge of dress and address and of the ways and laws of society; and these things could be learned only by personal contact with the initiated. So she said, "Father, I wish to go to college." And after a short struggle with his own hopes and longings, Peter answered, "Well, then, Yanna, you must go to college."

She had been there but little more than two years when she received the following letter from her father: "Dear Yanna. I took your mother into New York yesterday. We went to see a famous doctor, and he told her that she must die; not perhaps for weeks, or even months, but sentence of death has been passed." Peter did not add a word to this information. He would not tell Adriana to come home; he wished her to have the honor of giving herself a command ennobled by so much self-denial. And as he expected, Adriana answered his letter in person. Thenceforward, father and daughter walked with the mother to the outermost shoal of life—yes, till her wide-open eyes, looking into their eyes at the moment of parting, suddenly became soulless; and they knew she was no longer with them.

After a few days Peter said, "Yanna, you must go back to college." But she shook her head resolutely, and answered, "I am all you have. I will not leave you, father. We can read and study together."

"That would make me very happy, Yanna. And you can have a good music teacher."

"I do not want a music teacher, father. I used to think I was an unrecognized Patti; now I know that I have only an ordinary parlor voice. I measured myself at college by a great many girls; and I found out I had been thinking too highly of Adriana Van Hoosen. My friend Rose Filmer—and twenty others beside her—can sing pieces I have not even the notes for. Rose plays much better than I do. She is cleverer with her pencil. She always does everything just properly, and I scarcely ever miss making a blunder. If I were only like Rose Filmer!"

"Come, come! that is a girl out of a book."

"No; Rose is a girl out of New York. I am a girl out of Woodsome village. There have always been a city and a country mouse, father. And they are both good in their own way. But I could not be Rose Filmer unless I had been rocked in Rose's cradle."

The name "Filmer" was a familiar one to Peter; for the Filmers were Van Hoosens on one side of their house; and he wondered if this clever Rose Filmer was not the descendant of the old Dominie Filmer who had preached in Woodsome when he was a boy. Certainly his father had built a stone wall and a dairy for a Dominie Filmer who was connected with the Van Hoosens on the mother's side. He thought of this coincidence in names for a few moments, and then dismissed the subject. In the morning, however, it was revived in a double manner. Adriana had a long letter from Rose Filmer, and Peter one from Mr. Filmer, asking an estimate for building a stone house from enclosed plans. Thus the conversation of the preceding day set the door open for the Filmers to enter the Van Hoosen home.

Rose's letter was full of their intention to build a

summer residence "so delightfully near to Adriana." She professed to think it a special providence in her behalf, and to care only for the movement because it brought her back to "her dear Adriana." "I who adore the ocean," she continued, "who feel my soul throb to its immensity, am content to dwell on the placid river bank, if, by so doing, I may have the joy of my dear Adriana's presence."

It was a charming thing that Adriana believed fully in this feminine affection, and that even Rose deceived herself as completely. Girls adore one another until they find lovers to adore; and there is a certain sincerity in their affection. All the following year, as the great stone house progressed to its completion, Rose wrote just such letters to her beloved Yanna as she might easily have written to the most exacting and devoted lover; and neither of the girls imagined that they were in a great measure the overflow of a life restrained on every other side. To the world, Rose made every effort to be the very flower and perfume of serenity and self-poise, and thus to set herself free to her friend was like drawing a good full breath after some restraint had been taken away.

There had been a possibility of a break in this union of souls, just when Peter accepted the contract to build the Filmer mansion. Adriana thought it best to speak of her father's work on the new house; and she did this with the simplicity of one who states a fact that may or may not have been understood. Rose was at first a little indignant. She went to her mother with Adriana's letter in her hand.

"She is the daughter of a builder, of a common stone-mason," she cried, "and she never told me until she was obliged to. Mamma, I am disillusioned. I

can never trust any one again. In her place, I should have felt it a point of honor not to hide my low birth. Really, mamma, you must excuse me if I weep a little. I am so disappointed—so wronged—so humiliated in Yanna's treachery."

"Nonsense, Rose!" answered Mrs. Filmer. "The girl behaved in the most natural manner. Society would be very disagreeable if people were required to go up and down telling who and what their fathers and grandfathers were. Did you ever ask her the question?"

"It was not my place to do so, mamma. I told her all about you, and Harry, and even papa. She was always talking about her father. She said he was such a noble old man—that he studied with her—and so on. Could I imagine a man laying stones all day, and reading Faraday and Parkman with his daughter at night? Could I, mamma?"

"I should not trouble myself about the girl's father, if I liked the girl. You see, Rose, it is always foolish to make acquaintances upon unknown ground. The Hamilton and Lawson girls were in your classes, and you knew all about them. Friendship with their families would have been prudent, and I advised you to make it."

"I could not, mamma. The Hamiltons declined to be at all familiar with me. As for the Lawsons, they are purse-proud and dangerous. Jemima Lawson has a tongue like a stiletto. She is slangy, too. She called her allowance her 'working expenses'; and she had dreadful private names for the girls she disliked. Miss Lawson you simply could not be civil to; if you were, she immediately began to wonder 'what you wanted from her?'"

"What dreadful creatures!"

"Now, Adriana Van Hoosen had a good name, she dressed well enough, and she really loved me. How could I imagine she was lowly born?"

"Does it matter, Rose?"

"Yes, for she lives quite near to our new house. In fact, her father is building it; and I have asked her so often to come and stay with me in New York, that I cannot, without a quarrel, ignore her in the country."

"In the country, one does not need to be particular. It is rather nice to have a friend in the village who can bring the news. The long summer days would be insupportable without the follies and misfortunes of our neighbors to discuss. Then, if she is pretty and presentable, she will be useful in lawn and tennis parties. I would not mind about Miss Van Hoosen's father. Fathers are not much, anyway; and fortunately she has no mother to annoy us. That makes a great difference. A vulgar mother would be an insurmountable objection. Is Miss Van Hoosen pretty?"

"Yanna is lovely. And she has a fine manner. Our art professor once said to me, 'Your friend Miss Van Hoosen is a gentlewoman with a great deal of background.' I do not know what he meant, but I am sure he intended a great compliment."

"Oh! he meant intellect, emotions, and such things. I am not so sure of Miss Van Hoosen now. There is Harry to be considered. He might fall in love with her. That would be inexpedient—in fact, ruinous."

"Harry fall in love! How absurd! Have not the prettiest girls in our set swung incense before him for five years? Harry glories in his ability to resist temptation. He knows that Eve never could have 'got round' him."

"She ruined Adam in about twenty-four hours. It would have taken Eve about one minute to 'get round' Harry. The boy is really very impressionable."

"Mamma! What a huge joke! Harry impressionable!"

"He is, I assure you, Rose. I presume I know my own son."

"Well, at any rate, he is not worse than the rest. Young men nowadays neither love nor hate. Their love is iced on prudence, and their hatreds have not a particle of courage. I wish I had been born one hundred years ago. I have the heart for a real man."

"You flatter yourself, Rose. You are the very triumph of respectable commonplace. And as for one hundred years ago, the follies of that date were just as innumerable as our own."

"You think I am respectably commonplace, mamma. Then let me tell you, I must be a consummate actress. I do not think you know Rose Filmer. I do not think I know her myself. I hope I have some individuality."

"Individuality! There is nothing more vulgar. I hear Parry with the carriage; will you drive with me?"

"No; I shall answer Adriana's letter, and get the subject off my mind. It is so much easier to know what you dislike to do than to be sure of what you like. Where are you going?"

"To McCreery's. I want some lace."

"Do buy the real article then. It is the chic thing now, to wear real lace, and it does look supreme, among the miles of imitation that are used."

Then Rose went to the library to answer Adriana's letter. It pleased her to think it an important decision, and she sat some time with the pen in her hand, and a judicial air on her beautiful countenance. For

she was undeniably a very attractive girl, as she sat in the sunshine that morning, deliberating on Adriana's "deception"; there being to a practiced observer many alluring contradictions in her face and manner. Her hair was the color of ripe wheat, her eyes almond-shaped, blue and limpid; her cheeks and chin dimpled; her mouth rosy and full; her figure supple; her feet small, finely dressed, and quite in view; her whole appearance that of a lovely innocent girl, on the threshold of life. But this exquisite seeming contained possibilities of evil, as well as good. Her dress was full of studied effects, her manners of attitudes and languors; and her charming way of dropping her blue eyes, and then suddenly flashing them open, was a conscious, and not a natural, grace. Even her sweet credulousness had in it an equal capacity for seductive wilfulness and petulance. Nor was she unconscious of this double nature within her; for she had often said to Adriana, "I feel as if there were twenty different girls in me—and the majority of them bad."

Social life, however, so far, had had a salutary effect on her. She had become more equable, more dependent on the approval of others, and less liable to unconventional self-assertions. Nothing, indeed, could have been better for Rose Filmer than the tight social rein of a set which conscientiously tried to be both religious and fashionable. She was compelled to honor *les convenances*, and to obey them; compelled to suppress her spontaneity—which was seldom a pleasant one—and to consider the feelings of others, as well as the wishes of her own heart. At college she had been remarkable for her self-willed personality; one season in society had taught her a decent self-restraint.

Consequently, she deliberated well the answer to her friend's letter.

"If I want to break with her, I have now an excellent excuse," she thought. "I could tell her that, though I have a soul above noticing the accident of birth, my whole nature declares against deception. There are a dozen moralities in the position, and I could retire wounded and innocent, and leave her altogether in the wrong. But do I want to break with Yanna? Would it be to my advantage? I think not. The girls in our set do not like me. Julia Mills the other day called me 'a little hypocrite' to my face. She did it with a laugh, but all the other girls laughed too, and it was not pleasant. Yanna believes in me. Then next summer we shall be at Woodsome, and mamma is right about the long, tiresome summer days. Yanna was born in the village; she knows every one, gentle and simple, and what is the use of neighbors if you cannot gossip about them?

"Besides," she continued, "I have now three lovers, and I have not one girl friend with whom I can talk them over—all the girls in our set are so jealous of me—and Yanna would like to see my love letters, I have no doubt. I wonder if she has a lover yet! I suppose not, poor girl! Then there will be fun in watching Harry. Whether he be utterly heartless, or, as mamma thinks, 'very impressionable,' he cannot meet Yanna day after day without some consequences. I think, upon the whole, it will be best to keep friends with Yanna." And having come to this decision, she raised herself from the reflective attitude into which she had fallen, and going to a table wrote as follows:

"My Beloved Yanna: Did you really think that your lowly birth could change my love for you? No, no!

Whether my Yanna be princess or pauper, is no matter to me. I only long for our new house to be finished, that I may have you more constantly near me." Then she hesitated. She was on the point of saying she had long known of Adriana's low birth; but she felt sure Adriana would ask her the "how" and "when" of her information; and there was absolutely no good to accrue from the falsity. But though she wrote eight pages of gushing affection, she was not satisfied; she had not been able to choose her words with precision, and far less able to prevent an *aura* of patronage which Adriana was as quick to feel as a barometer to answer the atmospheric changes.

"I will not take any patronage from Rose Filmer," she muttered; and then she flung Rose's letter into the fire; "I want nothing from her. Oh! I must answer this letter at once; I could not eat my dinner if I were so much in debt to my self-respect." So Adriana laid away her sewing, and wrote:

"Dear Rose: Thank you for your overflowing letter. It is very kind of you to overlook what you call the 'accident' of my birth. But I cannot let you entertain the idea that I think it an 'accident.' On the contrary, I regard my birth as the well-considered ordination of Almighty God. I was not an 'accident' to my good father and mother. I was placed in their care, because the All-Wise considered the Van Hoosen home the best possible place for my highest development. I think it is time people stopped talking about the 'accident' of birth; and I am sure, as soon as you regard birth in its proper light, you will do so. Your love for me has led you likewise into a very stupid assertion about 'loving Yanna the same whether she was prin-

cess or pauper.' My dear, there is no question of either. I am as far removed from pauperism as we both are from royalty. Our mutual liking has stood a number of little shocks, and I have no fear it will go to pieces on my father's trade. He is building you a handsome house in the most honorable manner. He was pleased to have the contract to do so, and Mr. Filmer was equally pleased to secure his work. That is the position, as I understand it. Suppose we say no more on the subject; it will be so much nicer to write about your balls, and fairs, and parties. From what you say, I think charity must be the gayest of all the virtues; certainly it cuts the most considerable figure of any during the New York season. I am sure you enjoyed the private theatricals; for we all like occasionally to play a part not our own. And so you are going to the seaside this summer? Will you bathe? That is one of the things vanity would forbid me to do, except in private. It is true, Venus rose beautiful from the sea; but no mere mortal woman can do so. Do you not think, that for a distinctly levelling process, sea bathing is supreme? Life is very even and quiet here; when Woodsome Hall is finished, we all hope it will make a difference. Is it to be 'Woodsome' or 'Filmer' Hall? Mr. Filmer had not decided when he was here last. Dear Rose, do not let us have any more misunderstandings, and send me a real nice letter soon.

"Yours lovingly,

"Adriana Van Hoosen."

This letter did not please Rose any better than her own effusion had pleased Adriana; and for a little while there was a coolness between the girls. They wrote to each other with accustomed regularity, but

their letters were set to a wrong key, Adriana's being specially independent in tone, as if her self-esteem was perpetually on the defensive. But life is not an exact science, something is always happening to change its circumstances, and feelings change with them. The following spring the new Filmer house was finished and ready for occupancy; and the village newspaper was busily blowing little fanfaronades of congratulation to Woodsome; and of welcome to the coming Filmers; and by that time Adriana and Rose were also eager to see each other again.

"I wonder if I ought to call on Rose," said Adriana to her father, as she laid down the paper announcing the long heralded arrivals. "I believe it would only be good form to do so."

"Under the circumstances, I would not call first, Yanna. Keep your place, until you are asked out of it."

"I am quite willing to do so. My own home is a very good place, father."

"Home is a blessed freedom, Yanna. At your own fireside, you can be a law unto yourself. You can speak the thing you like, from morning to night."

"The papers say the Filmers are Woodsome people. Do you remember them?"

"I never saw the present Mr. Filmer until I made my contract with him. I can just recollect his father, old Dominie Filmer, in his flowered dressing-gown, and his velvet cap. We did not sit in his church; but Adam Kors talks a great deal about him. He says he preached sermons hard to understand, and full of sharp words. I dare say he was a good man, for Adam tells of him being puzzled and troubled at living longer than the orthodox Scriptural three-score-years-and-ten. But he died at last—pretty well off."

"Most ministers die poorly off."

"Dominie Filmer was wise in his generation. He not only looked for mansions in the sky, he had also a reasonable respect for the land around Woodsome—and for shares in the railways, and things of that kind. But no one in his day could speak ill of him; and his children and grandchildren speak very well of him. And this friend of yours, Rose Filmer, will be his granddaughter."

"Yes. I hope she will call soon. If she delays too long, it will be no kindness. If she does not call at all, I think I shall hate her."

"No, Yanna. Anger and hate are not for you to bother with. They are such a dreadful waste of life. Why should you let a person whom you dislike, or despise, take possession of you, and of your mind, and occupy your thoughts, and run your precious time to their idea? That is a poor business, Yanna."

Here the conversation ceased, but the next morning Adriana was on the watch for her friend. And about noon Rose came. She was driving herself in a pretty dog-cart, for she had determined as she dressed for her visit, to take no servant. She did not know what kind of a house Adriana lived in, or in what situation she might find her. For Rose's experience of life had not given her any precedent by which she could judge of the social environments of a stone-builder; and she said softly as she pinned on her hat: "Yes, I shall go alone. It will be kinder to Yanna. Servants will talk. They might even wonder if she is not one of our relations; these Woodsome people have made such a stir about our being 'native.'"

She drove well, and was charmed and excited by her rapid movement down the hills, and through the

wooded lanes. Entering the village, she asked for Mr. Van Hoosen's house, and it was readily pointed out. She was a little astonished. It was a roomy, colonial dwelling, surrounded by well-kept grounds. Horse-chestnuts arched the wide avenues, and the house stood in a grove of flowering fruit trees. A boy who was rolling turf took her horse's head, and she stepped to the spotless door stone, with a decided access of affection. Adriana came running down the stairs to meet her. They kissed each other, and buried in the kiss all their small differences and offences.

"What a charming old house, Yanna!" cried Rose.

"What a perfect costume you have on, Rose!" cried Adriana.

"I knew you would like it. Put on your hat, Yanna. I want you all day, and all day to-morrow, and every other day you can spare."

"I must tell father. I shall be delighted to go with you, Rose; but I cannot do so without his knowledge."

"Certainly. I saw an old gentleman tacking up vines, as I drove through the garden."

"That was father."

"You can find him in two minutes and a half, I know."

In very little more, Adriana came back with the old gentleman. He looked so kindly at Rose that she could not help being pleased, and she set herself to win the old Dutchman. She made him talk about his flowers, and she listened with that air of being charmed and instructed which even when it is merely a cultivated grace is an irresistible one. She praised Yanna. She said with a frank enthusiasm, "I love Yanna dearly," and while entreating for her company she acknowledged "it was a great favor to ask."

Peter said "it was." He assured Rose that Yanna "was the sunshine of his life, but that to make them both happy, he would gladly give up his own pleasure." She thanked him with many pretty speeches, and when Adriana came down ready for her visit, Peter helped the girls into their seats, and put the reins into Rose's hands. Then he watched them out of sight, with a face beaming with satisfaction.

From this excited and exalted tone, it was impossible to fall at once. Rose gave herself up to it. She patted Yanna's hands; and as they went through the woods kissed her many times. Then the new house was to be gone through, and exclamations and adjectives were the only possible speech, so that everything naturally enough conduced to an emotional condition. At last Rose said, "I have not shown you my apartments yet, Yanna. They are a picture in pinks;" and she led her into a suite that was lovely with peach-bloom papers and hangings, with snow-white willow chairs cushioned with pink silk, and pink silk draperies trimmed with white lace. "I have chosen for you the room just across the hall," she added, "so we shall be very near to each other. Listen! that is the lunch-bell. Come and see mamma. In the afternoon we can talk over things."

Mrs. Filmer was very pleasant and good-natured. She chatted with the girls, and ate a salad, and then went away with her housekeeper. "Only a part of the house is in order yet," she explained to Adriana; "and neither workmen nor servants seem able to do without me. What will you girls talk about until seven o'clock?"

"Oh!" cried Rose, "we shall have a long, delightful afternoon." And probably to Rose it was delight-

ful, for she told Yanna the tale of ball-rooms, in which Rose Filmer had been chief among a thousand beauties; she showed the photographs of many youths, who were her adorers; and she read specially eloquent sentences from her many love letters. Indeed, after a long session of this kind, Rose said heartily, "I declare, I have not had such a sweet time since you left me at college. But really we must rest an hour before dinner. I always do. Come, I will take you to your room."

Adriana was glad to rest, and the soft, dim light of the carefully-shaded room tempted her to complete physical relaxation; but her mind was actively curious and alert. She had been hearing of a life entirely new to her, "a pretty lute-string kind of a life, quite within the verge of the Ten Commandments," she thought; "yet I do not believe it would please me long. Its feverish unrest, its small anxieties and petty aims have told already on Rose. Her mind has sunk to the level of what engages it. She no longer plans for study and self-improvement; she talks of her duties to society instead, and of its claims upon her. After all" —she thought a few moments, and then added emphatically—"after all, I am satisfied with my lot! Even upon the testimony of so prejudiced a witness as Rose, fashionable life is not a lofty thing. Its two principal standards appear to be money and smartness; and I do believe the world has a far higher ideal. It is only a very small minority who worship the great goddess Fashion, and the image which the Parisian Jupiter sends over here; the true *élite* of the world have always been those whose greatness was in themselves. There's father! In any kind of clothes, or in any company, he would always be one of the *élite*."

I never could be ashamed of him. But I might be, if I saw him haunting the gay places of the world, criticising ballet girls, and shuffling cards." She indulged this train of thought, and lived over again the fantasy of life Rose had shaped in her imagination.

A knock at the door roused her from it. A maid was there with some flowers, and an offer of her services, if Miss Van Hoosen wished them. The flowers were welcome, but the service would have been an embarrassment. Adriana knew her good points, and was quite able to do them justice. In her case, it was not the modiste that made the woman.

When she was dressed she went to the drawing-room. It was full of flowers and bric-a-brac, but there was not a book to be seen. No one was in the room; no one was apparently downstairs; she was evidently early, which at least was better than being late. So she walked about, looking at this and that, and speculating as to where the *curios* came from, and what queer histories they might have. Opposite one entrance to the parlor, there was a large mirror, and before this mirror a small gilded table. As Adriana passed it, she noticed that it held a portfolio; and the ribbons which fastened it being untied, she threw back the cover, and saw that it was full of photographs. Some faces were young and pretty; others, middle-aged and old, graven all over with the sharp tools of worldly strife, sorrow, thought, and experience of various kinds. The aged faces pleased her most; they were not merely calendars of so many years old, they had most of them a story to tell.

Presently she came to the pictured face of a young man which was very attractive. The countenance was full of force, and though the personality was at a

stand-still, "pulled up" for the second in which it was taken, it was both an expressive and an impressive personality. For the bit of prepared paper had caught something of that *fiery particle*, that "little more" which in the real man was doubtless a power going from him and drawing others to him, in spite of their own resolves and inclinations.

She held the photograph in her hand, and looked earnestly at it. As she did so, Harry Filmer stepped between the folds of pale blue plush which shielded the doorway. He stood motionless and watched Adriana. The mirror showed him at a glance beauty of a high and unusual kind. He took rapid note of every element of it—the thick dark hair drawn backward from the broad white brow—the white drooping eyelids, heavily fringed—the richly-colored oval face—the bow-shaped lips—the rounded chin—the straight white throat—the tall figure robed in soft, white silk, with purple pansies at the bosom and belt—and most of all, the air of freshness and of grave harmonious loveliness which environed her. He could have gazed his heart away; but in a few moments Adriana felt the unseen influence and turned. The presentment was still in her hand; the living man stood before her.

She put the picture back into the portfolio, and advanced a step or two. Harry bowed, and was at her side in a moment.

"I am sure you are Miss Van Hoosen," he said, with a pleasant smile; "mother told me about you. And Rose has told me a great deal about you. So, you see, we are old acquaintances. Is it not a most perfect day? Have you been riding, or walking? Or has Rose kept you all day 'talking over things'?"

He was really nervous under Adriana's smiling

eyes, and he felt it easier to go on talking than to take the next step. Fortunately Rose entered at the proper moment, and put every one conventionally at ease. And if people eating a good dinner together cannot get agreeably familiar, then there is something radically wrong with one-half the company, and perhaps also with the other.

Now, women are undoubtedly different beings in the presence of men. Adriana was a new Adriana to Rose. She was more mentally alert, more assured and dignified in manner, and she even contradicted Harry in many things. But then she had an agreeable way of dealing with those from whom she disagreed; and Harry was only stimulated by her opposition to his views. The dinner went delightfully to the chatter of tongues and the light clash of crystal and china, and when it was over, Harry exclaimed:

"What a charming meal we have had! I had almost forgotten how very pleasant it is to eat with one's own family!"

"Quite as pleasant as to dine at a club, I should think, Harry," said Rose.

"Talking of clubs, it is the ladies who run clubs nowadays, Miss Van Hoosen. Has Rose told you how many she belongs to? Most of the married men I know have had to resign their memberships; the candle cannot be burned at both ends, and, of course, the ladies' end must not be put out."

"Clubs are a new-fangled notion to women yet, Harry. They will soon tire of their own company. You may be sure of that," said Mrs. Filmer.

"Not so very 'new-fangled,' mother," continued Harry. "Women's clubs have existed for centuries in Persia and Turkey. They call them 'The Bath,' but

the 'bath' is only an excuse for getting together to talk gossip, and eat sweetmeats, and drink coffee. And if you like, I will lend you Aristophanes, mother, and you may read what came of women imitating such masculine ideas among those clever old Greeks."

"I have no time to read such ancient books. And they would have to be very clever Greeks indeed to write anything the New York women of to-day would care to read. My dear Harry, they are a few thousand years behind the time."

"Harry forgets," said Rose, softly, "that if one of a family have to retire from Club pleasures, justice decides against the man. It is not a matter of courtesy at all; men have had their day. I assure you, Woman is the Coming Man."

"Oh! I think we may claim club privileges on much higher grounds," said Adriana. "Every woman's club has before it the realization of some high purpose, or the redressing of some wrong. I never heard of a woman's club in New York on the oriental plan of tattle and gossip and eating sweetmeats."

"Two of the clubs to which I belong," continued Rose, "have very important subjects under discussion. One is the *Domestic Symposium*, and we consider topics relating to Household Economy. At present, we are trying to solve the Servant Girl Question."

"Oh!" cried Harry, with a hearty laugh, "if you indeed solve that problem, Rose, men will give you the suffrage, and leave the currency, and the tariff, and all such small financial and political questions to you."

"Thanks, Harry! It is likely we may voluntarily take them into consideration. This is an age of majorities. If we accomplish the suffrage, women will have a majority on all questions; and the reduction of man

becomes a mere matter of time. I was going to remark, that another of my clubs occupies itself with the criticism of the highest poets of the age."

"Who are they?" asked Adriana.

"That is the point we have been arguing all last winter. We have had difficulties. Mrs. Johnstone Miller raised objections to the consideration of any but American poets; and it took two months' sittings to settle that question. You would be astonished at the strength of some people's prejudices!" ejaculated Rose, holding up her pretty hands to emphasize her own astonishment.

"Not at all," answered Harry. "They call their prejudices 'principles,' and then, of course, they cannot be decently relinquished."

"Mrs. Johnstone Miller is a very superior woman. It is a great thing to hear her criticise Longfellow, Whittier, Eugene Field, Will Carlton, and the rest. I am sure she believes that she could easily excel each in their own department, if she were not prevented by her high-bred exclusiveness."

"Not unlikely, Rose; there is no impertinence like the impertinence of mediocrity."

"*Mediocrity!* Why, Harry, Mrs. Johnstone Miller is worth all of three million dollars, and it is very good of her to interest herself about literature at all." And with these words Mrs. Filmer rose, and Harry gave her his arm, and the little party strolled slowly round the piazzas, and so through the blue *portières* into the drawing-room. And as Adriana did so, she had a vivid memory of Harry Filmer as she first saw him, standing between the pale draperies. They had emphasized his black hair and eyes and garments very distinctly; for the young man was physically "dark,"

even the vivid coloring of his face being laid upon a skin more brown than white.

Mrs. Filmer made herself comfortable in the easiest of easy chairs, and began mechanically to turn and change the many rings upon her fingers; the act being evidently a habit, conducive to reflection or rest. She told Harry to "go away and smoke his cigar"; but the young man said he "was saving the pleasure until the moon rose; and in the meantime," he added, "he should expect the ladies to amuse him. Rose was talking of the greatest poets of the age," he said, "but I am wondering what possible use we can have for poetry. Our age is so distinctively material and epicurean."

Then Adriana asserted that it was precisely in such conditions poetry became an absolute necessity. Poetry only could refine views that would become gross without it; and give a tinge of romance to manners ready to become heartless and artificial. The discussion was kept up with much spirit and cleverness, though diverging continually to all kinds of "asides," and Mrs. Filmer, with half-closed eyes, watched and listened, and occupied her mind with far different speculations.

Then there was some music; Rose played in her faultlessly brilliant manner; and Harry sang *The Standard Bearer*, and Adriana sang a couple of ballads. And by this time the moon had risen, and Harry brought woolen wraps, and the two girls walked with him, while he smoked more than one cigar. At first, the promenade was to a quickstep of chatter and laughter; but as the glorious moonshine turned earth into heaven, their steps became slower, their laughter died away, feeling grew apace, speech did not seem

necessary, and a divine silence that felt even motion to be a wrong was just beginning to enthrall each young, impressible heart.

At that moment Mrs. Filmer broke the dangerous charm by an imperative assertion that "it was high time the house was locked up for the night. She had been asleep and forgotten herself," she said, and there was a tone of hurry and worry in her voice. So emotion, and romance, and young love's dreaming were locked out in the moonshine; and there was a commonplace saying of "good-nights." At their bedroom doors, Rose and Adriana kissed each other, and Rose said:

"I have been thinking of poor Dick Duval. Poor Dick! He loves me so much!"

"Then love him in return, Rose."

"Impossible! He is poor."

With a sad smile, and a deep sigh, Rose shut her door. It was characteristic of her, that she had not thought of Adriana and Harry. But Harry could not sleep for thought—for a sweet, pervading, drifting thought, that had no definite character, and would indeed have been less sweet if it had been more definite. He could only tell himself that he had found a new kind of woman; that her beauty filled his heart; and that her voice—whether she spoke or sang—set him vibrating from head to feet.

As for Adriana she was serious, almost sorrowful, and she wondered at the mood, finding it nevertheless quite beyond her control. Had she been wiser in love lore she would have feared it; for there is a gloom in the beginnings of a great love, as there is gloom in deep water; a silence which suspends expression; an attitude shy and almost reverent, it being the nature of true love to purify the temple in which it burns.

CHAPTER II

The next morning Harry went to New York. Mrs. Filmer, Rose, and Adriana stood on the piazza and watched him leap into the dog-cart, gather up the reins, and drive away at a rate supposed to be necessary in order to "catch the train." He looked very handsome and resolute, and the house felt empty without his predominating presence.

"Harry promises to be home again at five o'clock; then, if we are ready, he will drive with us," said Rose; and towards this hour all the day's hopes and happiness verged. For already Harry stole sweetly into Adriana's imaginations, and to Rose his return was interesting, because he was to bring back with him his friend Neil Gordon. Neil was not Rose's ideal lover; but he was unconquered, and therefore provoking and supposable; and as environment has much to do with love, Rose hoped that the heart, hard as flint to her charms in the city, might become submissive and tender among the roses and syringas.

Harry was on time, but he was alone. "Neil did not keep his engagement," he explained, "and as I wished to keep mine, I did not wait for him. I think we can do without Neil Gordon." Rose said he was not at all necessary; but she suddenly lost her spirits and grumbled at the sunshine and the dust, and did not appear to enjoy her drive in the least. They went twice through the village, and passed Adriana's home

each time. Peter was in his garden, and he saw them, and straightened himself that he might lift his hat to Harry's salute, and to the kiss his handsome daughter sent him from her finger tips. The event pleased him, but he was not unnaturally or unadvisedly proud of it. He considered the circumstance as a result of giving his girl a fine education, and he hoped some of the rich, miserly men of the village would see and understand the object lesson. In the evening he walked down to the post-office. He expected his neighbors to notice the affair, and he had a few wise, modest words ready on the duty of parents to educate their daughters for refined society. He intended to say "it was natural for girls to look for the best, and that they ought to be fitted for the best;" and so on, as far as he was led or supported.

But no one spoke of Adriana, and people generally seemed inclined to avoid Peter; even his intimates only gave him a passing "good-night" as they went rapidly onward. At length, Peter began to understand. "I believe they are dumb with envy," he thought, and his thoughts had a touch of anger. "Of course, it is better to be envied than pitied; but I wish they did not feel in that way. It is disappointing. Bless my little Yanna! There are many who would not mind her being behindhand with God; who cannot bear her to be beforehand with the world. It is queer, and it is mean; but I'll say nothing about it; a man can't wrangle with his neighbors, and be at peace with his God at the same time—and it is only a little cloud—it will soon blow over."

He had scarcely come to this conclusion when he was accosted by an impertinent busybody, who said some sharp things about Mr. Harry Filmer's reputation,

and the imprudence of Adriana Van Hoosen being seen driving with the young man.

"Go up to the Filmers' house, and say to them what you have said to me," answered Peter, and his face was black with anger.

"I was not thinking of the Filmers, Peter. I was thinking of your daughter."

"You have daughters of your own, William Bogart. Look after them. I will take care of my Adriana. She was driving with Miss Filmer, and not with Mr. Filmer; but that does not make a mite of difference. Miss or Mister, I can trust Adriana Van Hoosen. She is a good girl, thank God!"

Then still sharper words passed; for the accuser was a peevish, ill-natured man; and his shrugs, and sneering mouth, as well as his suspicious words, roused the Old Adam in Peter, and he felt him firing his tongue and twitching his fingers. Bogart was a younger man than himself; but Peter knew that he could throttle him like a cur; or fling him, with one movement of his arm, into the dust of the highway. Fortunately, however, Bogart's prolixity of evil words gave Peter pause enough for reflection; and when he spoke again, he had himself well in hand, though his eyes were flashing and his voice was stern.

"Bogart," he said, "you are a member of the Dutch Reformed Church; and you have doubtless a Bible somewhere in your house. Go home and read, '*With the froward, Thou wilt show Thyself forward.*' That is a dreadful Scripture for an ill-tongued man, Bogart. As for me, I will not answer you. He shall speak for me, and mine." And with this sense of an omnipotent advocate on his side, Peter walked majestically away.

At first he thought he would go to Filmer Hall in the morning, and bring home his child. But a little reflection showed him how unnecessary and unwise such a movement would be. "I will leave God to order events, which are his work, not mine," he thought, "and if Yanna pleases God, and pleases herself, she will not displease me."

Adriana, knowing nothing of this petty tumult of envy, was very happy. Harry did not go to New York the following day. He only talked of the city, and wondered why he wanted to stay away from it. "It is my native air," he said, as he struck a match swiftly and lit his cigar, "and usually I am homesick, the moment I leave it. I wonder what there is in Filmer Hall to make me forget Broadway; I do not understand!"—but he understood before he began to speak.

"The place itself is enchanting," said Adriana.

"We are living in Paradise," added Rose.

"Paradise!" cried Mrs. Filmer. "And we have to keep ten servants! Paradise! Impossible! This morning the laundress was also homesick for New York; and she has gone back there. I could have better spared any two other servants; for she was clever enough to deserve the laundress's vision of St. Joseph—'with a lovely shining hat, and a shirt buzzom that was never starched in this world.' Harry, why do people like to go to New York, even in the summer time?"

"Well, mother, if people have to work for their living, New York gives them a money-making impression. I always catch an itching palm as soon as I touch its pavements."

"I did not think you were so mercenary, Harry."

"We are nothing, if we are not mercenary. What a

gulf of yawns there is between us and the age that listened to the 'large utterance of the early gods!'

"I do not complain of the 'gulf,' Harry; *au contraire*;—here comes the mail! and the common-places of our acquaintances may be quite as agreeable as the 'what?' of the early gods!" Mrs. Filmer was unlocking the bag as she spoke, and distributing the letters. Rose had several, and she went to her room to read and answer them, leaving Adriana and Harry to amuse themselves. They went first to the piano, and, when tired of singing, strolled into the woods to talk; and as the day grew warm, they came back with hands full of mountain laurel and wild-flowers. Then Harry began to teach Adriana to play chess; and she learned something more than the ways of kings and queens, knights and bishops. Unconsciously, also, she taught as well as learned; for a young lovable woman, be she coquette or *ingénue*, can teach a man all the romances; this is indeed her nature, her genius, the song flowing from her and returning never again.

After lunch Rose took Adriana away, with an air of mystery. "I have had a most important letter," she said, with a sigh, "from poor Dick—Dick Duval! He is simply broken-hearted. And Dick has quite a temper, he does not like suffering so much. I feel that I really ought to see him."

"When is he coming, Rose?"

"He can *never* come here. All my family are against Dick. Harry quarrelled openly with him at the club; and papa—who hardly ever interferes in anything—met him in the hall one night, and opened the front door for him."

"What does Mrs. Filmer say?"

"Mamma says Dick is a physical gentleman and a

moral scamp; and she forbids me to speak or write to him. That is the whole situation, Yanna."

"It is a very plain one, Rose. There is nothing to discuss in it. You ought not to answer his letter at all."

"Dick says he will blow his brains out, if I do not see him."

"How absurd!"

"You do not know what love is, Yanna."

"Do you, Rose?"

"Not unless I am in love with Dick."

"I am sure you are not in love with Dick. You are far too conscientious, far too morally beautiful yourself, to be in love with a moral scamp. I know that you would not do anything deliberately wrong, Rose."

"Do not swear by me, Yanna. I cannot swear by myself. I have actually told Dick that I will meet him next Monday—at your house."

"Indeed, Rose, you must destroy that letter."

"It is a beautiful letter. I spent two hours over it."

"Tear it into fifty pieces."

"But Dick can call at your house, and I will just 'happen in.' There is no harm in that. You can be present all the time, if you wish."

"I will ask father. Of course, I must tell him the circumstances."

"And of course, he will go into a passion about his honor, and his honor to Mr. Filmer, and all the other moralities. You are real mean, Yanna."

"I am real kind, Rose. Please give me the letter. You know that you are going to do a wicked and foolish thing. Rose, I have always thought you a very angel of purity and propriety. I cannot imagine a man like this touching the hem of your garment."

Give me the letter, Rose. Positively, it must not go to him."

"I want to do right, Yanna."

"I know you do."

"But Dick is suffering; and I am sorry for him."

"We have no right to be sorry for the wicked. The wicked ought to suffer; sympathy for them, or with them, is not blessed. I am so glad to see you crying, Rose. If you sent that letter, it would trouble your soul, as a mote in your eye would torture your sight. In both cases, the trouble would be to wash out with tears. Give me the letter, and I will destroy it."

Then Rose laid it upon the table, and buried her face in her pillow, sobbing bitterly, "I do like Dick! Right or wrong, I want to see him."

"I may tear up the letter, Rose? It must be done. Shall I do it?"

"Could you not let Dick call at your house once? Only once?"

"It is not my house. I should have to ask father."

"Only once, Yanna!"

"Things that are permissible 'only once' ought never to be done at all. Do you remember how often Miss Mitchell told us that?"

"Miss Mitchell never had a lover in her life. People always do see lovers 'once more.'"

"Then ask Mrs. Filmer if you cannot do so."

"Certainly, she could not be more cruel than you are. Oh, Yanna! I am so disappointed in you!"

Then Yanna began to cry, and the girls mingled their tears; and when they had swept away their disappointment in each other, the letter was torn into little shreds as a peace offering; and they bathed their faces, and lay down for an hour. Yanna was sure she

had conquered; but it was but a temporary victory; for as soon as she was alone, Rose began to blame herself.

"I always was under that girl," she thought, "and I quite forgot about her father being only a stone mason. Poor Dick! I must send him half-a-dozen lines; and suppose I tell him that I walk in the mornings, by the little lake in the woods called 'Laurel Water'? If he finds me out there, he will deserve to see me; and if not—there is no harm done."

Yet this second letter, though written and sent, was not conceived with any satisfaction. Rose was conscience-hurt all the time she penned it; and very restless and unhappy after it had passed beyond her control. For she was in general obedient to the voice within her; expediency and propriety had both told her at the first, "You had better not write," and she had not heeded them in the least; but she did find it very difficult to silence the imperative, "*Thou shalt not!*" of conscience. Still, it was done. Then she reflected that Dick would get her letter on Saturday morning, and might possibly come to Woodsome on Sunday. It would, therefore, be expedient to let Yanna return to her own home the next day; and also to find some excuse for remaining from church on Sabbath morning.

"One little fault breeds another little fault," she thought, "but it is only for once." And she did not perceive that she had called disobedience to parents, and premeditated absence from the service of God, "a little fault"; far less did she calculate what great faults might obtain tolerance if measured from such a false standard.

However, the hours went by, as apparently happy and innocent as if there were no contemplated sin

beneath them; conversation and music made interchanging melodies; and again the beautiful moonshine brought silence, and beaming eyes, and all the sweet and indefinable interpreters of love. And this night Harry, also, felt some of that strange sadness which is far more enthralling than laughter, song and dance, to those who can understand its speech. Rose did not. "How stupid we all are!" she exclaimed; and Harry glanced down into Yanna's eyes, and pressed her arm closer to his side, and knew that words were unnecessary.

In the morning, Mr. Filmer came from town. He was a small, slender man, with an imperturbable manner, and that mystical type of face often seen in old portraits: a man whom Adriana rightly judged to be made up of opposite qualities, his most obvious side being that of suave, indifferent complaisance. He was exceedingly kind to Adriana, and spoke with real warmth of feeling about her father. "I count it a good thing to have come in contact with him," he said, "for I think better of all men for his sake. It is his religion," he added. "What a Calvinist he is! We had some talks I never shall forget."

He appeared to take no interest in the household affairs, and Mrs. Filmer did not trouble him about its details. He was, in fact, bookishly selfish; his only enquiry being one concerning the library and some boxes of books which he had sent. If the garden, the stables, the horses or servants were alluded to, he was miles away; for he had long ago explained to Mrs. Filmer that these things were not necessary to his happiness; and that, therefore, if she insisted upon being troubled with them, she must bear the worries and annoyances they were sure to bring.

He really lost little by this arrangement; for Mr. Filmer's cleverness and deep learning was the family superstition. Rose said she "felt as if a clergyman were present all the time papa was at home," and Mrs. Filmer and Harry spoke with mysterious respect of the great work which occupied Mr. Filmer's thoughts and time. Harry told Adriana that "it was a 'History of Civilization' rather on Mr. Buckle's lines, but much more philosophical." And it was evident Harry firmly believed in his father; which might not have been the case if the two men had been busy together, looking after other people's money, or telling smart, scandalous stories in the club windows.

In fact, if Mr. Filmer had deliberately selected a rôle which would bring him the least trouble and the most honor, he could not have done better unto himself. As it was, whenever he came out of his retirement, and condescendingly put himself on a level with the family dinner-table, he was the guest of honor; for usually his little delicacies were carried with elaborate nicety into the small private room adjoining the library. Every one tried to make him understand how great was the favor of his presence; and Adriana, though she knew nothing of his peculiarities, was able to perceive even in the passing conversation of the hour, a different influence. Harry generally set the key at that light tone which touches society in those moods when it chases gaiety till out of breath. There was always a deeper meaning in his father's opinions and reflections; and the family were apt to look admiringly at one another when their profundity was greater than usual.

In the middle of the meal, there fell upon the company one of those infectious silences which the "folk"

explain by saying "an angel passes"; but which Harry broke by a question:

"Why this silence?" he asked.

"Why this recollection?" Mr. Filmer immediately substituted. "What are you all remembering? Speak, my dear," he said to Mrs. Filmer.

"I was recalling the fact that I had not written a line in my diary for a month."

"I congratulate you, Emma! People who are happy do not write down their happiness. And you, Miss Van Hoosen?"

"I was remembering some boys that Mr. Filmer and I met in the wood this morning. They were rifling a thrush's nest. I begged them not to do it; but then, boys will be boys."

"That is the trouble. If they could only be dogs, or any other reasonable, useful, or inoffensive creature! But alas! a good boy is an unnatural boy. Now, Rose, where did your memory stray?"

"To Letitia Landon's wedding. She married Mr. Landon because he was rich, and I was remembering her old lover, Horace Key, standing in the aisle, watching the wedding. There were three at that wedding, I think."

"And in such cases, two is matrimony, and three divorce. As to your memories, Harry? Are they repeatable?"

"I was thinking of the insane pace and frivolities of the past season; and if I had not spoken, I should have got as far as a reflection on the bliss of a quiet country life, like the present."

"You must remember, Harry, that the 'frivolity' of the multitude is never frivolous—it portends too much."

"And pray, sir, in what direction went your memory?"

"No further than the ferry boat. It gave me, this morning, an opportunity of studying human nature, in its betting aspect."

"What did you think of it, sir?"

"I thought instantly of Disraeli's definition of the Turf:—'this institution for national demoralization.'"

"Is it worse than politics?"

"Yes. Loyalty to one's country is fed upon sentiment, or self-interest. Americans are a sentimental race—whether they know it or not—and Americans do not, as a general rule, want their country to pay them for loving her. Do you, Harry?"

"No, indeed, sir!"

"There are tens of thousands just as loyal as you are."

"When women get the suffrage," said Rose, "politics will be better and purer."

"Oh, Rosie! are there not politicians enough in America, without women increasing the awful sum?"

"We feel compelled to increase it, papa. *Noblesse oblige*, if you will read sex for rank. I intend to be a Socialist."

"Then you must become very rich, or very poor. Socialism is only permitted to the very great, or the very small."

"What of Republicanism, sir?"

"It is highly respectable, Harry. Men who would be gentlemen cannot afford to be anything else; and I have noticed they are more Republican than Harrison himself."

"Are you a Democrat now, sir?"

"I love Democracy, Harry; but I do not love Democrats."

"Do let us change the subject," said Mrs. Filmer, fretfully. "In a month or two, the election influenza will be raging. Let us forget politics among the June roses."

"Suppose we talk of love, then. Love is quite at the other end of the pole of feeling. What do you think of love in these days, father?"

Harry spoke in his lightest manner, but Mr. Filmer's serious face reproved it. "Love is a kind of religion, Harry," he answered. "We will not joke about it, as fools do. And it is the same divine thing to-day as it was in its exquisite beginnings in Paradise. Love is either the greatest bliss or the profoundest misery the soul of man can know." And quite inadvertently, his eyes fell upon Rose, and she trembled and resolved to take her letter to Dick Duval out of the mail bag.

But when she went for it the bag had been sent to the post-office, and she whispered to herself dramatically, "The die is cast!" and then she sat down and played a "Romanza," and wove into it her memories of poor Horace Key, watching his old love plight her broken faith to a rich husband. Swiftly Horace Key became Dick Duval, and she played herself into tears, thinking of his black, velvety eyes, and his love-darting glances.

Early in the morning Adriana's little visit was over. She had made no preparations for a longer one, and after all, the old rule with regard to visits is one that fits most occasions—a day to come, a day to stay, and a day to go away. She had also a singular feeling of necessity in her return home, as if she were needed there; and she was glad that Harry had to go to New

York, and that their adieu was public and conventional. "We shall meet again very soon," he said, as he touched Yanna's hand; and then he lifted the reins, and the dog-cart went spinning down the avenue, as if he had only one desire—that of escaping from her.

In another hour Adriana was at home, going through her own sweet, spotless rooms, with that new, delightful sense of possession that makes home-coming worth going from home to experience. There was only one servant in Peter's house—a middle-aged woman, whose husband had been killed in Peter's quarry; but she had the Dutch passion for cleanliness, and the very atmosphere of the house was fresh as a rose—the windows all open to the sunshine, the white draperies blowing gently in the south breeze, and every article of furniture polished to its highest point. Yanna ran up and down stairs with a sweet satisfaction. This dwelling, so simple, so spotless, so void of pretenses, was the proper home for a man like Peter Van Hoosen; she could not imagine him in a gilded saloon, with painted flowers and heathen goddesses around him.

They talked a little while, and then Peter went into his garden; and Yanna took out a white muslin dress which required some re-trimming, and sat down with her ribbons and laces, to make it pretty. She was tying bows of blue ribbons into coquettish shapes, singing as she did so, when she heard a quick footstep on the gravel. She drew aside the fluttering curtain and looked out. A stranger was at the doorstep—was coming through the hall—was actually opening the parlor door as she rose from her chair with the ribbons in her hand. He did not wait for her to speak. He took her in his arms, and said;

"Oh, Yanna! Yanna! Where is father?"

Then she knew him. "Antony! My brother Antony!" she cried. "Oh, how glad I am to see you! Oh, how glad father will be to see you! Come, let us go to him. He is in the garden."

This unexpected visit threw the Van Hoosen household into a state of the most joyful excitement; for around this youngest of his sons, Peter had woven all the poetry that is sure to be somewhere hidden in a truly pious heart. He was very proud of Antony, for he had accomplished the precise thing which would have been impossible to Peter. Antony's life had been one of constant peril, and his father was accustomed to think of him as heavily armed, and fleetly mounted, and riding for his life. The glamour of western skies, the romance and mystery of the Great Plains, the hand to hand bravery of defending forts from Indians—these, and many other daring elements, had woven themselves about the young man's struggle for wealth, and invested him with an unusual interest.

So unusual that Peter thought it no sin, on this "eve of the Sabbath," to break his general custom of private meditation, and listen to the tale of life his son had to tell him. For it was full of strange providences, and Peter was not slow to point them out. And though Antony was reticent on spiritual experiences that were purely personal, his father understood that in those vast lonely places he had heard *a Voice*, that never again leaves the heart that hears it.

There was a fine sincerity, a sincerity like that of light, in Antony's nature; his moral sense was definite, his words were truthful; he was another Peter Van Hoosen transplanted into larger atmospheres, and nourished in tropical warmth. Speaking physically,

he was not handsome; speaking morally, he was very attractive. His fine soul erected his long spare form, gave the head its confident poise, made the face luminous, and the step firm and elastic. It was like breathing in a high atmosphere to be with him; for he shared himself with his fellows, and poured his life freely into other lives. Was it, then, any wonder that Peter and Yanna gave themselves entirely, that first happy day of reunion, to a son and a brother, so lovable and so attracting?

There was no wonder, either, that in the cool of the evening, Yanna—with a conscious pride in her brother's appearance—asked him to walk to the post-office with her. She wished to experience some of that pleasant surprise which his reappearance in his native village was likely to make. But the girls she hoped to meet thought Antony was "one of the Yorkers from Filmer's place," and they kept on the other side of the street. Not always do our ships go by in the night; sometimes we see them pass in the daytime, and are too proud, or too careless, to hail them. One of these girls had been a dream in Antony's heart for years; he had really thought of wooing her for his wife. But she was envious of Yanna, and passed on the other side, and fortune did not follow, nor yet meet her, ever again.

Because the next day was the Sabbath, there was no visiting nor receiving of visits in Peter's house; though the young man was recognized at church, and welcomed by many of his old acquaintances. And early Monday morning Yanna began to expect Rose. She looked forward to her visit, and kept Antony by her side on many pretenses, until the day became too warm to hope longer. Then she wrote to Rose a

letter, and, in the cool of the afternoon, Antony went with her to post it. They were walking slowly down the locust-shaded street, and talking of the girl whom Antony had thoughts of wooing, when Harry, driving Rose, turned into the street a hundred yards behind them. Instantly, both were aware of Yanna and her strange escort.

"Do you see that?" asked Rose, with a wondering intensity. "Now, who can he be?"

"How should I know?" answered Harry—and he drew the reins, and made the horses keep the distance. He had himself received a severe check; he did not know whether he wished to proceed or to turn back.

"Yanna never told me about him."

"Girls never do tell *all*. Will you now call on Miss Van Hoosen?"

"Why not?"

"You might be the one not necessary."

"Indeed, I shall call. I told Yanna I would see her to-day. I shall not break my word, for any man. I dare say he is one of her father's builders, or architects, or—some one of that kind. I do wonder if Yanna is deceitful!"

"All girls are deceitful."

"They walk humbly after the men, in that rôle, Harry. Drive a mile up the road; then, as we return, we can pass Mr. Van Hoosen's house. If Yanna is at home, I shall see it, or know it, or feel it; and that fellow will doubtless have been left outside somewhere."

"That fellow," however, with Yanna at his side, was on the doorstep to welcome Harry and Rose. He lifted Rose like a feather-weight from the dog-cart,

and he was ready with outstretched hand, when Yanna said, "This is my brother Antony." The "brother-ship" was such a relief to Harry that it made him most unusually friendly and gay-tempered; and Rose readily adopted the same tone. They sat down on the piazza, behind the flowering honeysuckles, and amid broken little laughs and exclamations, grew sweetly, and yet a little proudly, familiar. After a short time, however, Rose said she "wanted to speak to Yanna very particularly." Then the girls went into the parlor; and the two young men lit their cigars, and walked through the garden to smoke, and to find Peter; but both, moved by the same impulse, made the same involuntary pause before the open window at which Rose and Yanna sat. Their faces were eager and serious, their hands dropped, their attitudes had the perfect grace of nature; they were beautiful, and the more so because they were unconscious of it. Rose was just saying to Yanna, as Harry and Antony glanced at them:

"Dick has written again to me, Yanna. I had a letter from him this morning."

"Is he not impertinent?"

"He is anxious and miserable. I fear I shall have to see him."

"If you fear it, you certainly ought not to see him."

"He says he is coming to Woodsome. Yanna, why did you never tell me about this wonderful brother of yours?"

"I have not seen him since I was a little girl. I did not expect ever to see him again. His coming was a perfect surprise."

"He is strikingly handsome."

"He is not handsome at all, Rose."

"He *is* handsome. I have never seen any one more handsome. He is like an antique man."

"Quite the contrary, he is the very incarnation of the New World. His loose garments, his easy swing, his air of liberty, all speak of the vast unplanted plains beyond civilization."

"*Pshaw!* I look deeper than you do. He is a man that could love a woman unto death. Is that not antique? He has a heart that would never fail her in any hour. You might tell him a secret, and know that fire could not burn it out of him. If you were at death's door, he would die for you. I have a great mind to fall in love with him."

"Not so, Rose. He is not of your world; and you would be wretched in his world. He is thinking of a girl in the village. You have described an ideal Antony. How, indeed, could you find out so much in twenty or thirty minutes?"

"The soul sees straight and swift."

"But you do not see with your soul, Rose."

"Yes, I do. What I have said is true. I don't know how I know it is true; but it is true. Father was saying last night that some people have a sixth sense, and that by it they see things invisible—he was referring to George Fox and Swedenborg—and then he began to wonder if we had not once possessed seven senses; he thought there was inborn assurance of it, because people quite unconsciously swear by their seven senses. But five, or six, or seven, I am inclined to fall in love with Antony Van Hoosen, with the whole of them."

"And Dick?"

"I had forgotten. Would you see him if you were me? or even write to him?"

"*Have* you written to him?"

Rose became scarlet and nervous. She could not tell a lie with that bland innocence of aspect which some women acquire; she had even a feeling of moral degradation, when she uttered the little word, "No."

"Then I would not write on any account. I feel sure your love for Dick is only sentiment."

"Do you know anything about love or sentiment, Yanna? You did not care whether Harry admired you or not. Harry felt your coldness; he thinks nice women ought to be sentimental, and I can tell you, he is accustomed to being thoroughly appreciated."

By this time it was growing dusk, and the three men were seen coming together towards the house. They were walking slowly and talking earnestly, and Yanna said:

"I wonder what subject interests them so much?"

"Politics or religion, I suppose; but whichever it is, they will utter nonsense as soon as we are within hearing. Here comes Harry with a laugh and a platitude!"

"Pardon us, Miss Van Hoosen; we quite forgot that time moved. Have you been very impatient, Rose?"

"We have both felt hurt. If you had been talking to Yanna and me, you would have been worrying about the horses, and about the steep roads, and the night miasma, and lots of other things; in fact, you would have had a bad, bad cough, by this time, Harry."

"I know it, Rose; and I beg you a thousand pardons. You must blame my hosts. I never enjoyed talking so much before." Then he gave his hand to Antony with a frankness that had something very confiding in it. "Shall I call for you to-morrow?" he asked. "We can get a good boat at the river side."

"Thank you," answered Antony, "I will go."

"Cannot we go also?" enquired Rose.

Then Harry hesitated. He wanted Yanna to say something, and she said nothing. That decided the question. "It is quite impossible, Rose," he answered. "We are going on the river to fish—a little dirty boat, and the blazing sun beating on the river—what pleasure could you have?"

"What pleasure can *you* have? I do not believe you are going a-fishing at all. You are going a-talking, and we could help you;" then, turning to Yanna, she asked: "When are you coming to Filmer again? Not for a week? That will never do. I shall go against your brother if he parts us for so long."

The last words were lost in the clatter of the horse's hoofs; and then there was a sudden silence. For the mere idea of departing stops the gayest conversation, makes the quietest person fidgety, the slowest, in a hurry; and introduces something of melancholy, whether we will or not. Perhaps, indeed, there is in every parting some dim foreshadowing of the Great Parting, and the involuntary sigh, with which we turn inward from a departing guest, is a sign from that language below the threshold we so seldom try to understand.

The acquaintance thus pleasantly begun grew rapidly to something more personal and familiar. Harry and Antony were constantly together; and the young man from the west exercised that peculiar influence over the city-bred man that a radical change in circumstances might have done. Antony was a new kind of experience. Out on the river, or wandering over the hills together, they had such confidences as drew them closer than brothers. And this intimacy

naturally strengthened those tenderer intimacies from which, indeed, their own friendship received its charm and crown.

For Harry soon fell into the habit of calling at Peter Van Hoosen's house for Antony; and in such visits he saw Adriana constantly, under the most charming and variable household aspects. It was early morning, and she was training the vines, or dusting the room, or creaming butter for a cake; but he thought her in every occupation more beautiful than in the last one. Or the young men were returning at night-fall from a day's outing, weary and hungry; and she made them tea, and cut their bread and butter and cold beef; and such occasions—no matter how frequently they occurred—were all separate and distinct in Harry's memory.

This familiarity also on her father's hearth invested Adriana with an atmosphere that a wrong or a trifling thought could not enter. Walking with her in the moonshine on the Filmer piazzas, he had ventured to say, and to look more love than was possible in the sanctity of her home and in the presence of her adoring father and brother. In fact, confidence in his own position left him; he began to have all the despondencies, and doubts, and sweet uncertainties, that lovers must endure, if they would not miss the complementary joys of dawning hopes, of looks and half-understood words, and of that happy "perhaps" that lifts a man from despairing into the seventh heaven of love's possible blessedness. This, indeed, is the best heart education a man can possibly receive. In it, if he be a man, he gets that straightness of soul in which he loses "I" and then finds it again in that other one for whom his soul longs.

Unconsciously as a tree grows, Harry grew in the school of love; and Adriana was also much benefited by this change of base in Harry's wooing. She had been learning too fast. It takes but a moment to drop the flower-seed into the ground; and it takes but a glance of the eye for love's wondrous prépossession to be accomplished; but seed and passion alike, if they would reach a noble fruition, must germinate; must put forth the tender little leaves that lie asleep at the root and the heart; must spread upward to the sunshine, before they blossom like the rose in beauty and in perfume. And for these processes time is absolutely necessary.

An experience similar in kind was in progress between Antony and Rose, but the elements were more diverse. Rose had had many admirers; and she had permitted herself a sentimental affection for Dick Duval, the most unworthy of them all. She knew that she was morally weak, and that the only way to prevent herself from committing imprudences was to keep to the roadway of conventional proprieties; and in the main she was wise enough to follow this course. Her feelings about Antony were conflicting; she did not consider him a conventionally proper lover. He was the son of a working man; he lived a life beyond social restraints; she supposed him to be rather poor than rich; he did not dress as the men she knew dressed; his conversation was provocative of discussion, it compelled a person to think, or to answer like a fool—a startling vulgarity in itself—and he was so obtrusively truthful.

In a lover, as yet unaccepted, she felt this last quality to be embarrassing. It made him incapable of comprehending those fine shades of flirtation by which

a clever woman indicates "she will, and she will not," by which she hesitates a liking, and provokes the admiration she can either refuse or accept. If she looked at Antony, with a sweet, long gaze, and then sighed, and cast her eyes down, Antony was moved to the depths of his soul, and he would frankly tell her so; which at that stage of proceedings was very inconvenient. If she permitted him to hold her hand, and walk with her in silent bliss under the stars, she was compelled at their next meeting to set him back with a cruel determination he could neither gainsay nor complain of. He was happy, and he was wretched. Often he determined to return westward forever, and then in some of the occult ways known to womanhood, Rose tied him to her side by another knot, more invisible and more invincible than the rest.

She loved him. She was resolved to marry him—sometime. "But I want one more season in society," she said to herself, one day, as she reviewed the position in her luxurious solitude—"though for the matter of that, it is the young married women now who have all the beaux, and all the fun. And if I were married, I should be safe from Dick; and I am afraid of Dick. Dick isn't good; on the contrary, he is very bad. I like good men. I like Antony Van Hoosen. I will let him propose to me. If I were engaged, or supposed to be engaged, all the young men would immediately fancy I was the only girl in the universe—but I never can find another lover like Antony Van Hoosen! The man would die for me."

She talked of him continually to Adriana, and hoped that Adriana would say to Antony the things she did not herself wish to say. She gave Adriana hopes that Adriana might give them to Antony. And then

Adriana was so provokingly honorable as to regard the confidence as inviolable. And, indeed, Antony was that kind of a lover who thinks it a kind of sacrilege to babble about his mistress, or to speculate concerning her feelings, even with his sister. His love, with all of joy and sorrow it caused him, was a subject sacred as his own soul to him.

Of course, Mrs. Filmer was not blind to events so closely within her observation; she was far too shrewdly alive to all of life's possibilities to ignore them. But she did not fear her own daughter. She made allowances for her youth, and therefore for her sentimentalities, which she thought were as much a part of it as her flexible figure or her fine complexion. "This primitive gentleman from the plains has had it all his own way," she thought. "If we had more company, he would have been less remarkable. But company would have interfered with Henry's great work, and it has been hard enough to keep the necessary quiet for his writing, as it is. However, we shall go to New York soon; and then *adieu!* Mr. Van Hoosen. He sings a song about the 'Maids of California.' I shall tell him it will be proper at his age to make a selection very soon from them."

Under circumstances like these, the summer and the autumn passed away like a vivid dream. Adriana was much at Filmer Hall; and Rose very frequently spent the day with Adriana in her home. Mrs. Filmer was too wise to oppose the constant companionship. She regarded it merely as a contingent of country life; and she quieted any irritable thoughts by the reflection that her daughter would marry early, and have other interests, and then put away her girlish, immature predilections of every kind. And in the meantime,

she was rather glad that Rose should have an "interest," for Rose could make herself very tiresome if she was without one.

At length the chrysanthemums were beginning to bloom, and Mrs. Filmer spoke decidedly of a return to the city. Mr. Filmer had written a whole chapter of his book, and felt the need of change and mental rest; and Mrs. Filmer reminded Rose that her costumes for the coming season were all to buy; and the house was not yet put in order for the winter's entertaining. Harry said they were leaving the country just when it was most charming; but even Harry was not averse to an entire reconstruction of his life. He was still deeply in love with Adriana, and strongly attached to Antony, but he was a little tired of walking, and driving, and boating. The idea of his club, of the opera, and the theatres, of dinners and dances, came pleasantly into his imagination.

Then arrived the time of displaced furniture, and of days sad with the unrest of packing and the uncertainties of parting. Harry began to think; and Antony thought more positively than he had ever before done. Adriana was silent and full of vague regrets; she had dreamed such a happy dream all summer; would the winter days carry it away? Rose was also quiet and a little mournful; but her regrets were flashed with hopes. She was looking forward to new conquests; and yet she was strangely averse to resign the one great heart that had been her worshipper through the happy summer months.

All alike were waiting for an opportunity. And the days went by, and it did not come, because it was watched for. But suddenly Mrs. Filmer resolved to give a "Good-bye Ball," and then, when everybody's

thoughts were on the trivialities of flowers and ribbons, destiny, one morning, called them to account for the love she had given. She wanted to know what harvest of joy or sorrow had been grown upon the slopes of the sunny summer days, and whether the love that had brightened them was to be homed forever in faithful hearts; or cast out wounded and forlorn, to perish and be forgotten on the hard highways of selfish and mercenary life!

CHAPTER III

It was the morning before "the Ball," and Mrs. Filmer was busy about the packing of some valuable bric-a-brac, which was to be taken with them to the city. She went into Harry's room, to see if the pieces adorning it had been attended to properly; and, glancing carefully around, her eyes fell upon a book of expensive illustrations. She determined to lock it away, and lifted it for that purpose. A letter fell from its pages, and she read it. As she did so, her eyes flashed, and her face grew passionately sombre.

"The idea!" she muttered. "The very idea of such a thing!"

She did not replace the letter, but taking it in her hand, went in search of Harry; and as she could not find him, she proceeded to Mr. Filmer's study. He looked up with fidgety annoyance, and she said crossly:

"Henry, I am sorry to disturb you; but I suppose your son is of more importance than your book."

"Is there anything amiss with Harry?"

"Harry is on the point of making a dreadful *mésalliance*."

"With whom?"

"That Van Hoosen girl."

"How do you know?"

"I found a letter in his room—a perfectly dreadful letter."

"Dreadful!"

"You know what I mean—a letter asking her to be his wife."

"It might be worse than that. If Harry loves her, I am glad he loves her honorably."

"Honorably! Such a marriage is impossible; and for once, you must take Harry in hand, and tell him so."

"Harry is of age. He is independent of me, in so far that he makes his own living, and has his own income. I can advise, but if you have your usual wisdom, Emma, you will not attempt to coerce him. I am sure the furnace needs attending to. This room is cold, and you know, when I am writing, I always do have cold feet." He was turning the leaves of his book with impatience, and a total withdrawal of interest from the subject of conversation. Mrs. Filmer left him with a look of contempt.

"The man has lost all natural feeling," she sighed. "He gets his very passions out of a bookcase. There is no use in expecting help from him."

She put the letter in her pocket, and tried to go on with the domestic affairs interesting her; but she found the effort impossible. A fierce jealousy of her son swallowed up every smaller feeling; she had a nausea when she thought he might at that very moment be "making an irredeemable fool of himself." But she took into consideration what Mr. Filmer had said, and acknowledged that, careless as he seemed about the matter, he had touched its vital point at once. Harry would not bear coercion. Her tactics would have to be straightforward and persuasive.

She sat motionless, with eyes cast down, considering them; and schooling herself into such control of her passion as would compel Harry to respect her objections. She resolved also to say nothing of her plans to

Rose. Rose had a romantic fancy for the girl's brother; and she was quite capable of justifying her own penchant behind Harry's. As she pondered these things, she heard the carpenters from the village preparing the ball-room. They were tacking up bunting and wreaths of autumn leaves, but though the designs were her own, and she had been much interested in them, everything about the entertainment had suddenly become a weariness. She felt that until she had an understanding with Harry, she could do nothing; no, nor even care for what others were doing.

Fortunately, as she stood at the window, gloomily looking into a future her own sick fancy conjured, she saw Harry coming slowly up the avenue. He had the air of a man in suspense or anxiety, and she whispered, "There! I know he has done something awful! He looks like it. It is a shame that a strange girl should come into my home and make so much trouble. It is, really!"

Her intense recognition of Harry caused him to look up, and she made a motion which he hastened to answer. For here it must be admitted that Harry had a certain fear of his mother—a fear all compact of love—a fear of wounding or offending her—a fear of seeing her weeping or troubled—a tender fear, which was partly the habit of years, and very much the result of a generous estimate of her many excellences, and of his own indebtedness to them. And from the beginning of time, men have desired to worship a woman; some men take naturally to the worship of the Blessed Virgin; others turn their religion of woman to motherhood, and find that among the millions of earth-mothers, there is no mother like the mother that bore them. Harry was one of these disciples.

He had been insensible so long to the charms of maidenhood, because he gave all the tenderness of his nature to his mother; and even his love for Rose was not so much on the ground that she was his sister as that she was his mother's daughter. And undoubtedly, this mother love had been hitherto the salt of his life. It had preserved him from all excesses that would grieve her, it had sanctified the idea of home in his heart; and if it had in a measure narrowed his nature, it had kept him from those gross vices men do not go from a mother's side to practice.

He came into the room with a conscious alertness, blaming himself for not taking more interest in the coming entertainment. Yet he had felt it hard to do so; in the first place, Yanna would not be present, her father having positive convictions about the folly—perhaps the sin—of dancing. In the second place, he had really written to Yanna; the letter in the possession of Mrs. Filmer being a mild draft of the one actually sent; so that the air of anxiety was a very natural one. He perceived at once that his mother was much annoyed, and his face was instantly sympathetic.

"I knew this thing was going to be too much for you, dear mother," he said, with an air of reproach. "I am so sorry you undertook it. It will be a bore altogether."

"Harry, it is not the ball—it is you! Oh, Harry! Harry! Look at this letter. I found it in your room. Naturally, I read it; and, of course, having done so, I think it honorable to talk with you about it."

Harry was fingering the letter his mother handed him, as she spoke, and when she ceased, he folded the paper and put it in his pocket. "Well, mother," he said, "you have discovered what I intended to tell you

as soon as this miserable ball was over. I love Yanna. I intend to marry her—if she will marry me.”

“No fear of that. The girl has been doing her best to secure you all summer long.”

“You are mistaken, mother.”

“Oh, Harry, 'such a marriage is impossible! You know how I adore you! You are my life! I cannot give you up to this strange girl. Besides, dear Harry, you have taught me to rely upon you, to trust to you, in all my cares and troubles. You have been my right hand, ever since you were a little lad. You have enabled Rose to take her proper place in society. Without you, everything must go to destruction.”

“Dear mother, I do not see any reason for such calamity. You give me too much credit.”

“I do not give you enough. Look at your father. He is wonderfully clever, but has he ever been of any use in business? You have had everything to attend to. If I had had the remotest idea you would marry, I should never have permitted the building of this house. We have sunk a deal of money in it. Without your income, we shall be quite unable to keep it up. Then just imagine how we shall be laughed at by the Giffords and all our set! It makes me shivering sick.”

“You knew, mother, that I would be likely to marry sometime.”

“Oh, yes! but not just at this time. You could not have chosen a more cruel time. How am I to manage with two houses on my hands, and no one to help me? Then, there is your little sister Rose! I hoped to give her a fair chance this season, to let her entertain, to let her realize her ideas in dress. She has been promised these pleasures; how can I tell her you are going to leave us to fight the world alone! You know, Harry

—yes, you do know—that Rose gets a great many invitations for your sake. If your engagement becomes known—and such things sift through the air—farewell to the Lennox dinners and dances! farewell to the Manns, and the Storeys, and the Wolseys, and a great many others! In fact, there is no use in opening the New York house at all. We had better stay here. Thank goodness! we can make your father's book the excuse."

Mrs. Filmer's eyes were brim full of tears, but she bravely held them back; and this bit of self-restraint touched Harry far more than if she had flown to pieces in hysteria. He looked much troubled, and sitting down at her side, he took her hand and said:

"Do you think I will desert you if I marry, mother? You have been the best half of my life. I could not live without you."

"You think so, Harry. But I know better. When a man gets a wife, he leaves father and mother for her. But do not leave me just yet, Harry! Do not leave me, dear boy, while I have so much to do, and to worry about! If I deserve any love or gratitude from you, do not leave me just yet! Oh, Harry! Harry!"

"I will not, mother. If Yanna loves me, she will wait for me."

"If she loves you, she will be glad to wait for you."

"You do not object to Yanna herself, do you, mother? Love her, for my sake, dear mother! Let me tell her you will. Is she not all you could wish for me? Is she not good and lovely, beyond comparison?"

"Indeed, I think she is very unworthy of you. I cannot love her yet, Harry. If you were thinking of May Hervey, or Sarah Holles, I could bear the loss of you better. Either of these girls would marry you for

a word. May is worth all of a million and a half, and Sarah nearly a million. In these days, matrimony ought to mean money. My dear son, do not leave your mother just yet! And if you must engage yourself to a girl so unworthy your position, at any rate keep it a profound secret. Even Rose must not be told. Rose is subject to sentimental confidences, and she is a little conceited, and will not believe me, if I tell her she is asked out for your sake, and not for her own. Harry, I love you so much! Will you help me a little longer, my dear?"

She was trembling with emotion, she was weeping very quietly; but Harry could see the tears dropping upon her clasped hands. But she did not for a moment let her feelings overstep her faculties; she knew right well that a woman ever so little beyond herself is a fool. She knew also that the modern gentleman is wounded in his self-esteem by a scene, and is not to be tenderly moved by any signs of mere pathological distress.

Her self-restraint inspired Harry with respect; and he felt it impossible to throw off the habit of consideration for "mother above all others." It had the growth of nearly thirty years; while his affection for Yanna was comparatively a thing of yesterday. He promised not to marry while his marriage would be injurious to his family; and he promised to keep his engagement a secret, if Yanna accepted him. Nor did he anticipate any difficulty in fulfilling these promises; while he told himself that, after all, it was only a little bit of self-denial, which would be amply repaid by his mother's and sister's happiness and welfare.

He did not think of Yanna, nor of how a secret engagement and a delayed marriage might affect her;

but he was annoyed because these conditions had not been alluded to in his letter to her. Yanna might suppose that he had purposely ignored them until her consent was gained; and such a supposition would not place him in a very honorable light.

The interview terminated in a decided victory for Mrs. Filmer, and there was something very like a tear in Harry's eyes when he left his mother with a straight assurance of his continued help and sympathy. At the door he turned back and kissed her again; and then she went with him as far as the room which was being prepared for dancing. But she did not ask him to stay with her; she knew better than to push an advantage too far, and was wise enough to know that when necessary words have been spoken and accepted further exhortation is a kind of affront.

At lunch time the subject was totally ignored. Mr. Filmer came out of his study, apparently for the very purpose of being excessively pleasant to Harry, and of giving his wife anxious warnings about exhausting herself, and overdoing hospitality, "which, by-the-by," he added, "is as bad a thing as underdoing it. Two days hence, you will not be able to forgive Emma Filmer for the trouble she has taken," he said.

"I hope we have not annoyed you much, Henry."

"I have calmly borne the upset, because I know this entertainment will be the first and the last of the series."

He spoke to hearts already conscious; and Rose said petulantly, "The ball will, of course, be a failure; we have bespoken failure by anticipating it."

"I never really wanted it, Rose," said Harry.

"That is understandable," she retorted. "Yanna does not dance; neither does she approve of dancing."

But all the sensible people are not Puritans, thank heaven! What are such ideas doing in an enlightened age? They ought to be buried with all other fossils of dead thought; and——”

“You are going too fast, Rose,” corrected Mr. Filmer. “You may scoff at Puritanism, but it is the highest form of life ever yet assumed by the world. Emma, my dear, if that tap, tap, tapping could be arrested this afternoon I should be grateful.” Then he bowed to his family, and went back to the Middle Ages.

They watched his exit silently, and with admiration, and after it Rose sought the dressmaker, who in some upper chamber was composing a gown she meant to be astonishing and decisive; one that it would be impossible to imitate, or to criticise. Mrs. Filmer, knowing the value of that little sleep which ought to divide the morning from the afternoon, went into seclusion to accept it. Harry wandered about the piazzas smoking, but shivering and anxious, and longing for the hour at which he had told Yanna he would call for her answer.

The day, pleasantly chill in the morning, had become damp and gray, and full of the promise of rain. And as he drove through the fallen leaves of the bare woods, and felt the depressing drizzle, he thought of the many lovely days and glorious nights he had let slip; though the question asked at the end of them was precisely the question he wished to ask at the beginning. He wondered if he had missed his hour. He wondered if he had misunderstood Yanna’s smiles and attitudes. He lost heart so far that he drove twice past the house ere he felt brave enough to take manfully the possible “No” Yanna might give him. “Men

understand so little about women," he thought, "and all her pleasantness may have been mere friendship."

For the first time in all his acquaintance with the Van Hoosen family, the front door was shut. Usually it stood open wide, and he had been accustomed to walk forward to the sitting-room, and tap there with his riding whip, if it was empty; or to enter with a gay greeting, if Antony or Yanna was there to answer it. To be sure, the day was miserably damp and chill, but oh! why had he waited all the long summer for this uncomfortable sense of a closed door in his face?

He drove to the stable, and when he went back to the house Peter was on the threshold to receive him. "Come in, Mr. Filmer," he said. "Antony has gone to New York. I believe in my heart, he has gone for fineries for your ball; though he called it 'business.'"

"I am glad Antony is coming, although I fully respect Miss Van Hoosen's scruples with regard to dancing."

"Yes, yes! On a road full of danger it is good to have scruples. They are like a pebble in the shoe, you cannot walk on it without a constant painful reminder; and if you lift the foot, then, you do not walk on it at all. Yanna has had no fight to make, no life and death issues to meet every day; and to those who live ordinary lives, a creed, and a straight creed, is necessary, yes, as much so as a wall is to a wheat field. Without external rules, and strong bonds, very few would remain religious. But with Antony it is different. He was churchless for ten years; but on many a battle field and in many a desert camp God met and blessed him. Such men have larger liberty than even I durst claim."

"I have talked much with Antony on religious subjects; I think it impossible to shake his faith."

"Antony's principles stand as firm as a Gothic wall. Duty, Faithfulness, Honor, and Honesty, are qualities independent of creed. You see, I am no bigot."

"You read too much, and too widely, for that character, sir."

"If I read nothing but the Bible, I should read a book that is at once the most learned and the most popular of all books. But at present you find me reading politics."

"To be sure! The elections are coming on, and they will do, and cause to be done, all kinds of disagreeable things. I generally keep my eyes shut to their approach." He had disliked to break in two a religious conversation with a personal question, but he had no such scruple about politics; and he added hurriedly, lest Peter should pursue the subject, "Where is Miss Van Hoosen? I hope she is well."

"She is in the dining-room. Once every year my cousin, Alida Van Hoosen, pays us a visit; and she came this morning, without any warning." As he spoke, a buggy was driven to the door, and there was a stir of some one departing through the front hall. Then Peter rose quickly, and said:

"Now you must excuse me, Mr. Filmer. Cousin always expects me to see her safely to the train. Yanna will be with you in a few minutes."

As Peter went out of the room, Harry rose. He could no longer sit still. His heart leaped to the light, quick steps of Yanna; and when she entered, smiling and rosy, her eyes dancing with the excitement of her visitor, her whole body swaying to the music of love in her heart, he met her in the middle of the room

with outstretched hands. She put her own hands in them, and her eyes met his, in a frank, sweet gaze, which he understood better than words.

Who can translate the broken, kiss-divided sentences, in which two happy souls try to explain the joy of their meeting? All through the summer days, this love had been growing; and suddenly, in a moment, it had burst forth into blossom. The dull skies and the chill gray atmosphere did not touch a flower, whose roots were in celestial warmth and glory. They forgot all about such mere accidentals. There was a new sun, and a new moon; there was a new world, and new hopes, and a new life before them.

They walked up and down the large room, telling each other when, and how, they first began to love—excusing their misapprehensions, chiding sweetly their doubts, and explaining the little cross-purposes, which had given them so many sleepless nights and miserable days. All their troubles were now over. They were to trust each other through everything. They were to help each other to grow nobler and better, and more worthy of this wonderful love; which both alike felt to be more wonderful, more true, more sweet, than any other love ever bestowed upon mortal man and woman.

It was a little let-down to this exalted condition that it had to come within the social bonds of their common every-day lives. Harry said he "must speak to Mr. Van Hoosen," and Yanna answered, "Yes, Harry, and at once. I cannot be perfectly happy until my father knows how happy I am."

The first ecstasy of their condition had demanded motion; but when Harry spoke of the necessary formalities of their engagement, they sat down.

"Your father has a right to ask me some questions, dear Yanna, which I think I can answer to his satisfaction. There are only two things I fear." She looked at him with an assuring smile, and he went on, "First, I cannot marry for a year at any rate, perhaps longer."

"Father will not count that against you. Nor do I. He will miss me every hour of his life, when I leave him. He will be thankful to put off the separation—and he has done so much for me, and we have been so much to each other, that I think I ought to give him a little more of my life."

Harry knit his brows. It already hurt him to think of Yanna giving thought and love to others, when he wanted every thought for himself. He drew her close to him, and with kisses and tender words vowed, "though it was dreadfully selfish, he should be wretched until he had taken her absolutely away from every other tie." Perhaps she felt a moment's pleasure in this singleness of her lover's desire, but it was only momentary.

"That is wrong, Harry," she answered. "It is a poor heart that has room for only one love. My love for father can never wrong you. He is the first memory I have. Before I was three years old, I remember him, carrying me in his arms every night until I fell asleep. When I was a school-girl he helped me with my lessons. He taught me how to skate, and to drive, and to row. We were always together. My mother did not care much for books and embroidery and drawing, but father watched my stitches and my pencil, and wondered all the time at his little girl's cleverness. I knew he made too much of his little girl's cleverness; but then, we love people who make

much of us in any way. And it is past believing how happy we have been since I left college! Oh, I love father so much, I never could love him less! Are your father and mother any less dear to you for loving me?"

This was a question Harry could not answer fairly. He remembered his mother's appeal but a few hours previously. He knew that under it he had been unfaithful to Adriana—knew that he had been willing to sacrifice her happiness to gratify a mere social exigency—knew that he had put Rose's interests before Adriana's interests—knew that he had been absolutely considerate of the old ties, and that he was now seeking the new one, not as the first and the last, the be-all, and the end-all, of his existence; but as some fresh, delicious element to be lost in the old element, some quick and piquant spice, with which to make keener and sweeter the old tedious, monotonous experience, which, after all, he was not willing to lose in the joyousness of the new one. He answered Yanna's question therefore guardedly; he had even a feeling that she ought not to have asked it.

"Of course, I love my family, Yanna, just the same as I ever did. My love for you is quite independent of that love. I have been practically the head of the house for many years, and to lose me is, therefore, like losing the head of the house."

"Hardly so, Harry. I think Mr. Filmer is quite able to take care of his family's interests, if it should be necessary for him to do so. Father said he never met a man at once so cautious and so honorable in business."

"In a matter of buying and selling, father is more than equal to his circumstances. I am speaking of our social life. In society, he is a perfect child; in fact, we continually have to shield his mistakes behind his

learning. It is for this reason, my own sweet Yanna, that mother thinks we ought to keep our engagement secret."

"Our engagement secret! Your mother thinks it! Did you ask Mrs. Filmer's permission to offer yourself to me?" As she spoke, she gently withdrew from his embrace and looked with a steady countenance at him. Harry was like a man between two fires; his face burned, he felt almost irritable. Why couldn't Yanna take what he had to offer, and be content?"

"Mother lifted a book in my room," he said, "and a copy of the letter I sent you fell out of it."

"And she read one of your letters? I am glad you have told me. I certainly shall *not* write to you, Harry. I withdraw my promise."

"Oh, nonsense, Yanna! It fell out of the book, and she looked at it; after that, any woman would have gone on looking at it."

"Very few women would have gone on looking at it."

"Mothers, I mean. Mothers feel they have a right, you know. I ought not to have left it there. It was my fault; but the whole house has been in such a miserable confusion, with the packing and the ball; and it has been Harry here, and Harry there, and the truth is, mother called me while I was writing, and she was in a great hurry, and I slipped the letter into the book, and when I got back I had forgotten where I put it. I looked everywhere, and as there was a fire burning on the hearth, I concluded that I had burnt it."

"Which you ought to have done."

"Yes; but then, Yanna, mother had to know."

"I wish I had known first. What did she say?"

"She thought we ought, for Rose's sake, to put off our marriage and keep our engagement secret."

"Yes. Why for Rose's sake?"

"It sounds egotistical to tell you, Yanna; but mother says that Rose is asked out a great deal more for my sake than for her own, and as she has made expensive preparations for the season, she wants Rose to have the full benefit of them; that is only natural. However, she thinks it impossible, if it is known that I am engaged."

"The whole affair is humiliating, Harry; but I hear father coming, and you had better speak to him. He will know what I ought to do under the circumstances."

"I would rather see him to-morrow. I want to talk to my mother again—to collect my thoughts—to explain myself better to you, dearest."

But Peter entered as he was speaking, and Yanna for a moment made no attempt to alter the significant position of Harry towards herself; for he was holding her hand, while his whole attitude was that of an imploring lover.

Yanna rose and left the room, as her father came forward. "Well, sir?" said Peter, not unkindly, but with an interrogative emphasis Harry could not pretend to ignore. He rose and offered his hand to Peter. "I have been telling Yanna that I love her," he said, "and she has promised to be my wife." The young man's hand lay in Peter's hand as he made this confession, and Peter led him to the fireside.

"Sit down, sir. I have something to say to you; and as you see, I am very wet. The storm was driving in my face." Then Harry looked outward, and saw the empty lawn blinded with rain, and the gray hills and the gray clouds meeting.

Peter removed his coat and shoes silently, but as soon as this act was done, he drew his chair near to Harry's and said:

"You must have known, Mr. Filmer, that I was not blind to the love you have acknowledged to-day. Nothing that affects Yanna escapes me."

"Then you do not disapprove of my love, sir?"

"I am glad that you love Yanna. I am glad that she loves you. I have not, either by look, or word, or deed, tried to influence Yanna this way or that way. I was resolved that Destiny undirected, and undisturbed, should work out her own ends. But now I may tell you, that a marriage between you and Yanna will bring back all the Van Hoosen lands into the Van Hoosen succession; and Yanna will only be going to her natural home."

"I do not understand you, sir."

"I will make what I say plain enough. All the land the Filmers own in this locality came from the Van Hoosens. The first white owner of it was a Peter Van Hoosen, in the year 1750. He owned nearly every acre between the two rivers, and when he died he left it equally between his son John and his daughter Cornelia. Cornelia married Abram Deitrich, and their only surviving child, Anna, married a man called Maas. They had many children, but the eldest bought from his brothers and sisters their shares of the land, and at his death left it to his only child, Martin. And it came to pass that Martin's daughter, called Mary, married your grandfather, Dominie Filmer, bringing him as her portion all the land which you possess near Woodsome."

"I remember well that my grandmother's name was Mary Maas."

"I am descended from the son of the original Peter Van Hoosen; and the son's descendants have been far less fortunate than those of the daughter Cornelia. All of them had many children, and their half of the land was continually subdivided, and turned into cash. I was born poor and landless, being the fifth in descent from my namesake, the first owner. Cousin Alida, however, has re-acquired much of the original tract, left to her ancestor John Van Hoosen, and this land, I know, will come to Yanna; so that your marriage with Yanna will, in a great measure, bring old Peter's estate intact into the family of his descendant.

"Knowing these things, I have watched the growth of love between Yanna and yourself with much interest; yet quite determined to leave affairs beyond my guiding, without my meddling. Your father knows the whole of our generations; we have talked it over often; and I think he is rather proud of the Dutch element in his nature. He told me it gave him the patient industry, and the love of detail, without which his great book would be a great failure. But this is aside from the question that fills your heart, I know. Speak to me, then, as freely as you wish, about Yanna."

"I love Yanna; I feel as if I had always loved her! I have no hope that does not drift to her."

"That is well, and as it should be. I also love her. I have no words to say how nor yet how much. But I do not wish to part with her just yet. Wait a little while."

"I must perforce wait, sir. I cannot marry for some time; my income is necessary to my family."

"For how long must you wait?"

"I know not precisely—but my sister's marriage will make a great difference."

"When does your sister marry?"

"As yet there is no prospect of her marriage. Doubtless this winter will make a change."

"Well, I do not complain of a circumstance that leaves my daughter to bless my own life. But there has been talk—a great deal of talk—people do not believe that it is Antony you come to see day after day, and week in, and week out. Adriana's name has been named with your name, and if her father and brother had not been at her side it would have been shadowed in the contact. Now to-morrow night you have a great entertainment; there could be no better time to announce your engagement. It will please your father to explain to the Woodsome people all that I have told you; and Antony can say in response all that is pleasant and necessary. To turn your ball into a betrothal feast would give Woodsome people a winter's conversation, and set Yanna where she ought to stand."

Harry was silent, and Peter looked at him with a changing face. At length the young man said: "I do not think that would do, sir. Father cares nothing at all for society, and he would most likely be delighted to take the romantic part you assign him. But mother would feel the situation cruelly. It would get into the papers, and we should never hear the last of it. I could not bear it for Yanna's sake. I do not like people discussing her antecedents and prospects. I do not like them to speak of her at all. Mother is indeed very anxious that we should keep our engagement secret for a short time. She thinks it will help Rose to a settlement, and so hasten her own marriage."

"Mr. Filmer, do you know what you are doing? You are asking my daughter to marry you, and then

you are asking her to tell no one you have done so. Your proposal is an insult; take back your offer. No honorable man would make it. No honorable girl could accept it."

"Yanna has given me her word. She has promised to be my wife."

Peter did not answer him; but throwing open the door, he called, "Yanna! Yanna! Come here to me!"

Something in his voice frightened Yanna. She came hastily downstairs, the tears she had been shedding still upon her cheeks. "Yanna," said her father, as he drew her close to his side, "Mr. Filmer wants to marry you—sometime. In the meantime, he does not want you to tell any one that he wants to marry you. Do you think that an honorable offer?"

"No!—but, father, Harry has reasons we cannot properly appreciate. Society is cruel to those who have to live in it."

"Right is right, and wrong is wrong, wherever and however men and women live! It is wrong to ask a woman to marry, and then say, 'Do not tell any one I have asked you.'"

"Sir!" cried Harry, approaching Yanna, "Sir! you state the situation most cruelly. It is not fair to me. I am in a great strait. Yanna, dearest Yanna! cannot you say a word for me?"

"There is nothing to be said," answered Peter. "Under no circumstances will I recognize a secret engagement. To do so is to engage my daughter to sorrow, and hope deferred, and miserable backbiting! Any engagement between Yanna and yourself, Mr. Filmer, must be openly acknowledged on both sides. I make no point of it being acknowledged at the ball to-morrow; that was perhaps an old man's romancing

—but if you will have no publicity, I will have no secrecy.”

“May I speak alone with Yanna, sir?”

“You may. I put no bond on Yanna’s words or actions, in any way. Honor will constrain her to treat herself, and her father also, with honor!” Then he went out of the room, and left Harry standing by Yanna’s side. He took her in his arms, and she did not immediately, or with anger, withdraw herself. She was more able than Peter to understand the ‘great strait’ in which the young man found himself. She suffered Harry to kiss the tears off her eyelids and to whisper anew his adoring affection for her.

“Cannot you trust me, Yanna?” he asked. “Cannot you trust me a little while, dearest one?”

“I will trust you, Harry; and you must trust me; for there can be no engagement between us until father is satisfied. Perhaps Antony will explain things in some better way to him.”

“No, he will not! Antony is perfectly ferocious on a question relating to any woman’s honor. I know that he loves my sister Rose to distraction, and I know equally well that if he ever dares to ask her to be his wife he will do so in the most straightforward, conventional manner. Once when I complained of the strictness of society’s rules about women, he said, ‘Considering the usual man, society could not make rules too strict.’ Antony will not help us by a syllable.”

“Then speak to your mother again. Our marriage may be delayed; but our engagement ought to be a recognized one.”

“But privately. Cannot we understand each other privately? Look in my eyes, darling, and see my promise there! Give me yours in a kiss.”

"Harry, why do you ask me to deceive my father?"

"You love your father better than you love me, Yanna."

She did not answer this accusation in words, though he saw the answer fly into her face; and he was so ashamed of his unreasonableness that he went into the hall and put on his overcoat, and she stood silent, watching him the while. In a few minutes he turned to her with his hat in his hand. "Well, then, Yanna, I am to go away without a promise from you? When may I come again?"

"When you love me with *all* your heart—when you can put me before every other human being. Please, Harry, say nothing of this event to Rose. Why should we trouble her? And as I have promised to be at Filmer to-morrow morning, it will be best, dear, if you can avoid meeting me. I shall not remain more than an hour or two."

"Very well. I will keep myself out of your way."

"You know what I mean, Harry. Why do you make my meaning worse than it is?"

"Good-bye, Yanna! I am too miserable to split hairs over a meaning."

He was really petted and humiliated, and even a lover in this mood finds it hard to be just and kind. Without another word, he went to the stable for his horse and buggy; and Yanna, watching at the window, saw him drive furiously down the avenue, without giving her any further recognition. For the young man—little accustomed to disappointment of any kind, and still less to a want of personal appreciation—had become angry at his failure. Though he had not permitted himself consciously to make any account of his superior social position, it had influenced his

estimate of his probable success; and yet he was forced to acknowledge that his wealth or social position had never been taken into account at all. His acceptance or refusal had hung entirely upon a moral question—the expediency or in expediency of a secret engagement. Altogether, he felt the situation to have been most unpleasant.

“Nothing has come of it,” he thought, “but an assurance of Yanna’s love; and what is the use of love that will not sacrifice anything for me?” And as he looked at this question only in its relation to Yanna’s sacrificing for him, he did not arrive at any just conception of his own duty in the circumstances.

Mrs. Filmer had been covertly watching for his return; and she was annoyed to find that he went directly to his own apartments, and did not reappear that night. Rose grumbled at his carelessness, and once she went to his door and asked him to come down and look at some of the arrangements; but he refused in the most positive manner. It was altogether a cross, unpleasant evening; the servants were quarrelling in every part of the house; Rose was worrying over Harry’s indifference; and Mrs. Filmer had a slight sick headache, and said more unkind things than she permitted herself when in good health. Mr. Filmer did not improve the general tone, for he sat quiet, in a provoking mood, watching the burning hickory logs, and listening to the fretful remarks flying between the mistress and her servants, and the mother and her daughter. Their plain speech and honest opinions amused him; and he complacently remarked: “My dear Emma, this little household discussion is very interesting to me. I always have said, ‘Let us be

sincere and truthful with each other, no matter how unpleasant we may make ourselves.' "

In the morning the storm was over, and there was a clearer atmosphere in the house. But Harry did not appear at the breakfast table. "It is a shame!" said Rose, with great sincerity. "If Harry was against the ball, he ought to have said so at the beginning. I wonder what is the matter with him!"

Mrs. Filmer knew what was the matter, and she privately gave Yanna the blame of all her worries. But for Yanna, Harry would have been enthusiastically busy about all the necessary details which were so annoying to her. She did not love Yanna for her interference; but she was a modern lady, and she was able to keep her dislike to herself. About ten o'clock Yanna arrived at Filmer Hall, and Rose, who had seen her approach, went to the door to meet her.

"Come upstairs, Yanna," she cried. "Come to my room, and I will show you something." She was all impatience and excitement, and Yanna's white face and serious manner did not impress her. With a little flourish, she flung wide the door of her sitting-room, and pointing to a garment lying upon the couch, cried:

"Is not that a dress worth living for, Yanna? It quite expresses me! Look at the opal tints in the silk, and the soft lace, and the pearl trimming! And in the greenhouse, there is the one flower possible to wear with it—a large, soft, feathery, white chrysanthemum! I love chrysanthemums! they give you an impression of poetic melancholy; they have the sadness of an autumn sunset! What do you think of the dress, Yanna?"

"It is beautiful."

"I hope Antony will like me in it."

"He admires you in everything you wear."

"He was not near Filmer yesterday."

"He was in New York."

"Do you know that Harry has become quite ugly about the ball?—every one is talking about the depression in trade; I am sure there is more need to complain about the depression in pleasure—he was eager enough at first about it, but now he thinks the whole subject a bore. Last night he would not even speak to us about it; and this morning he had breakfast in his room, and poor mamma has everything to look after."

"Perhaps he is saving himself for to-night."

"But that is so mean. Men ought to have a few domestic amenities. Miss Polly Barnard says the reformation of men will be the mission of the coming woman. I wish some woman would begin her mission with Harry!"

"Did Miss Polly stay long with you?"

"Only three days. She talked to the servants about saving their money, and improving their minds, and they said she was '*a perfect lady!*' A perfect lady is the highest praise servants have for any one they approve. We did not find her perfect. She scolded me about my worldliness, and called me a thoughtless little sinneress." Then suddenly Rose's face fell, and she covered it with her hands, and began to cry.

"Why, Rose, what is the matter?"

"I had such a sad dream last night. I cannot tell it; and I cannot forget it. I wish I could be good, and I cannot be good. We used to have such noble plans for our lives. We meant to be so useful and busy, and I have frittered this summer away in pure idleness. But after this ball is over, I am determined I will do

something better with my life than dress and dance, and eat and sleep, and listen to lovers."

"I also have come far short of what I intended, Rose. The summer has gone like a dream, but I feel this morning as if I had awakened from it."

"Well, I have made some good resolutions; and when the time comes, I intend to keep them. To-day, however, is predestined to folly, and I may as well have my share in it. When my conscience pricks me a little I always enjoy my pleasures the most. You know what is said about stolen fruit; it is that kind of a feeling. Why did Antony go to New York? Did he tell you that I had snubbed him the other day?"

"He never talks of you, Rose. Did you go to Mrs. Van Praagh's tea?"

"Unfortunately, I did."

"Was it not pleasant?"

"Do you know the kind of tea, where everybody calls every one else 'dear'?"

Yanna laughed.

"That explains the function. We were all women, and we were all 'dear.' No men were present but Grandfather Praagh and the young Adolphus."

She spoke scornfully, and Yanna said: "I thought you rather admired Adolphus Van Praagh."

"I did, until I met him at various tennis parties. Then I saw that he always wore dingy flannels. Is there anything more levelling in a man's dress than dingy flannels? Now, Harry's tennis suits are fresh, if he puts two suits on every day, to achieve the result. I think Harry is handsome in white flannels. Don't you?"

"Very handsome. Were the Bleeker Van Praaghs there?"

"Of course they were. Van Praaghs always flock together, and have done so, generation after generation."

"I think that is a fine family trait."

"I think so, too—for the family. Personally, I could have wished more of the Milton and Kent and Bannerman element, and less of the Van Praaghs. But I did not remain long. Nelly Milton wore a fetching costume. She said it was a Redfern marvel. I noticed nothing else, but that every one had feather boas round their necks, and that in consequence the doorsteps were strewn with feathers. I hope Antony will come to the ball. Do you think he will dance with me?"

"No."

"But with me? And in that dress!"

"I am sure he will not dance. He would rather lead a 'forlorn hope' or ride a hundred miles after hostile Indians, than go through a dance. It seems, even to me, so absurd to think of *men* mincing and capering about a room. I could sooner fancy Antony playing 'How Far to Babylon?' with the little children in the street."

"Nevertheless, I shall make him dance."

"I am sure you will not, Rose. Do not try. You will only wound and pain him, and disappoint yourself."

"We shall see."

After some more conversation, they went downstairs to look at the decorations; and greatly to Yanna's surprise, the lunch bell rang; and Mrs. Filmer came through the corridor towards the two girls. She kissed Yanna in her usual manner, and said: "We are going to have a very early lunch, Yanna; stay, and eat it with us."

"I promised father to be home at noon—I did not know it was so late—I must go home at once—I do hope you will have a lovely time to-night—I am sure you ought to have." She was talking with nervous haste, and only desirous to reach the door before any unpleasant remark could be made. Mrs. Filmer looked at her white face and embarrassed manner curiously; and turning to Rose, she said:

"Rose, go to Harry's room, and insist upon his seeing you. Tell him Yanna is here; and he must come down to lunch. He has just refused to do so," she added, "and I cannot imagine what is the matter." When Rose had disappeared, she turned to Yanna and said: "Perhaps you can tell me, Yanna?"

"Indeed, I cannot!" Yanna replied, making a motion as if to proceed to the door; which motion Mrs. Filmer prevented "by placing her hand lightly upon the girl's shoulder.

"Yanna, my dear, there is no need for deception. I know that Harry and you are engaged. Why, then, pretend that you do not wish to see each other? All I ask is, that you wait for a suitable time, and keep the engagement secret. Under the circumstances, *that* is as little as you can do."

"Mrs. Filmer, there is no engagement between myself and Mr. Harry Filmer; and, under the circumstances, there never will be. As for 'deception,' I cannot conceive of any condition in which I should resort to it."

"No engagement!"

"None."

"Do you mean that you have refused to marry my son?"

"Under the circumstances, I felt obliged to do so."

"Well! I think it was very inconsiderate, I may say very impertinent in you, to refuse Mr. Filmer. You have caused me much annoyance, Miss Van Hoosen. I hope we shall be able to avoid each other in the future."

"It will not be my fault if we do not. I am sorry to have grieved you, for you have been kind to me, and I shall only remember your kindness."

Mrs. Filmer bowed haughtily, and said, "Good morning, Miss Van Hoosen," and Yanna felt almost as if she had been civilly told to leave the house.

When Rose returned to the dining-room, Yanna had disappeared, and Mrs. Filmer was calmly sipping her bouillon. "Harry will not come down. He says he has a headache. Where is Yanna?" asked Rose.

"She was compelled to go home without delay," answered Mrs. Filmer. "She seemed afraid of her father—perhaps she has his dinner to cook."

"Oh, no! Betta does all that kind of work. I think Yanna was disappointed about the ball. It is too absurd of Mr. Van Hoosen!"

"I imagine the ball will proceed without Miss Van Hoosen. Indeed, I am rather glad we are going to the city soon, for life without the Van Hoosen flavor will be a pleasant change."

"I am sure, mamma, the Van Hoosen flavor has been a great help to us all summer."

"Well! The summer is now over."

"And Yanna is——"

"Oh, Yanna is everything charming! So is Antony! And even Mr. Peter Van Hoosen is picturesquely primitive. But the subject tires me to-day. Take your bouillon, Rose, and then try and secure a sleep." Mrs. Filmer was turning the salad, with a face of great

annoyance, and Rose felt that the conversation was closed.

In the meantime, Yanna drove slowly homeward. Her life seemed to be crumbling inwardly. She lingered in the empty wood thinking of Harry, and of the trial which had tested and found him wanting; suffering over again his pettish anger in their parting, and feeling Mrs. Filmer's polite scorn to be the last bitter drop in a cup full of bitterness. She was grateful for the quiet of nature, and not afraid to weep before her. She thought her sorrow to be as great as she could bear; for she was not old enough to know that there are griefs too great to find tears for.

Soon, however, she began to feel after that sure and perfect Love that never deceives and never disappoints, to utter those little prayers of two or three words which spring from the soul direct to God, and always come back with comfort and healing on their wings. She wept and prayed until her heart was like a holy well, running over with the waters of hope and consolation. Her love melted into her intelligence, and her intelligence became love; and this tempering influence and balancing power, gave her strength to keep the expression of her feelings shut up in a granite calm.

And when her father stepped out to meet her, when her eyes caught the pitying love in his eyes, and she went hand in hand with him into the pretty room, where the fire was blazing a welcome, and Betta, with smiles and excuses, was bringing in the dinner; she felt that her own home had plenty of those compensating joys of the present, which fill the heart with comforting thoughts, and the life with the sweet satisfactions and peace of possession.

“Home is a full cup, father!” she said. And Peter, standing at the head of his table, smiled at Yanna; and then lifted up his hands and asked God’s blessing on it!

CHAPTER IV

Fortunately for Adriana, the Filmers were not named at the dinner table. Antony had a new subject to discuss; for on the previous day, while in New York, an acquaintance had taken him to a Socialist meeting. The topic had been treated on its most poetic and hopeful side, and Antony was all enthusiasm for its happy possibilities. Peter listened without any emotion. He did not believe that crime, nor even poverty, would be abolished by merely new social arrangements.

"It is the *inner* change in individuals that will do it, Antony," he said. "I have heard, and I have read, all sides of the Socialism of the day; and I tell you, it is half brutal, and altogether insufficient to cure existing wrongs."

"But, father, if the framework of society, which is all wrong, is put all right, would not individuals in the mass take the right form? As far as I can judge, they are ready to run into any mold prepared for them."

"No. You may set all without right; and all within may remain wrong. It is the new heart and the new spirit that is required. Will Socialism touch the inner man and woman? If not, then Socialism is a failure."

"I do not think it hopes to do this at once; but wider education, more time, more money, more individual liberty——"

"Will only produce more license, more pride of intel-

lect, more self-will; and men and women will become as indomitable as the beasts of the desert; and a law unto themselves."

"Then, father, what would you propose?"

"I see the answer in Yanna's face. She knows, Antony, what I would say, if I could say the words as well as she can—'*So much the rather*'—go on, Yanna." And Yanna's face lighted and lifted as she repeated with calm intensity:

"So much the rather Thou Celestial Light
Shine inward! and the mind through all her powers.
Irradiate!"

"The Inward Light! That is what is needed. These reformers talk too much, and think, and do, too little. Were there many Americans present?"

"The majority were foreigners. They were not ill-natured; they were even cheerful and good-tempered. They had their wives and children with them. They had beer to drink, and tobacco to smoke, and a good band of music. I heard '*La Marseillaise*' played with a wonderful spirit. It set me on fire. I began to feel for my musket and to think of fighting."

"We don't want '*La Marseillaise*' here, Antony. We have our own national hymns. The '*Star Spangled Banner*' can set my heart thrilling and burning, without making me think of blood and murder. If social reformers will talk to the '*Star Spangled Banner*,' and '*The Red, White and Blue*,' they will do no harm, and perhaps they may even do some good."

"However, father, most of the men I heard speak appeared to have a great deal of information and much practical wisdom."

"They will need as much again to govern what they have."

"You are prejudiced against anything new, father."

"Perhaps I am, Antony. I am suspicious of new things, even of new planets. I have read of several lately, but I cannot say I believe in them. I find myself sticking to the old list I learned at school; it began with Mercury, and ended with Georgium Sidus. I believe they have given Georgium Sidus a new name; but I don't know him by it."

Antony—who rarely laughed—laughed heartily at his father's solid conservatism; and then the conversation drifted to and fro about the ordinary events of their daily life—the potting of plants, the village taxes, the shoeing of horses, and so forth. And Yanna's calm, serious face told Antony nothing of the suffering in her heart; nor did she desire he should know it. Culture teaches the average woman to suppress feeling; and Yanna had a great dislike to discuss matters so closely personal to her. She was not ignorant either of Antony's love for Rose, and his friendship with Harry had been hitherto without a cloud; why, then, should her private affairs make trouble between lovers and friends?

"At any rate," she thought, "circumstances alter cases; and Antony in his relationship with Rose and Harry must be permitted to act without any sense of obligation to my rights or wrongs."

Peter scarcely looked at the matter in the same temperate way; his sense of the family tie was very strong, and he thought if one member suffered injury all the other members ought to suffer with it. Yet he comprehended Yanna's sensitiveness, her dislike for any discussion of her feelings, her liberal admission that

Harry, brought up in a different sphere of life, and under social tenets of special obsequiousness, could not be fairly measured by the single directness of their line and plummet.

She understood from Harry's awkward attitude in his own home that he was suffering, and that he was likely to make others suffer with him. She had no special resentment against Mrs. Filmer. "Her behavior was natural enough; I might have been just as rude under the same provocation," she thought. So she said nothing whatever to her father of the little scene between Mrs. Filmer and herself; she was able to understand Mrs. Filmer's position, and she was satisfied with the way in which she had defended her own. "There is nothing owing between us," she reflected, "and, therefore, there will be no perpetual sense of injury. We shall forgive—and perhaps forget."

She busied herself all afternoon about her simple household duties; affecting to Betta a sudden anxiety about the usual preparations for winter; and she compelled herself to sing as she went up and down, putting away, and taking out, or looking carefully for the ravages of the summer moth. Peter heard her voice in one *bravura* after another; and for a short time he sat still listening and wondering. For effects are chained to causes, and he asked himself what reason Yanna had for music of that particular kind. By-and-by, he smiled and nodded; he had fathomed the secret of Yanna's mental medicine—though with her it had been a simple instinct accepted and obeyed—and he said softly:

"To be sure! The lifeboat is launched with a shout, and the forlorn hope goes cheering into the breach; so when the heart has a big fight to make,

anything that can help it into action is good. Artificial singing will bring the real song; anyway, it helps her to work, and work is the best gospel ever preached for a heart-ache."

The evening was brightened by Antony's metamorphosis into a man of fashion. His late frequent visits to New York were explained when he rather consciously came into the sitting-room. He was in full dress, and looked remarkably handsome; and Peter felt very proud of his son. It is a humbling thing to confess that he had never had such a quick, positive pride in him before. The potent and mysterious power of dress, and of a fine personal presence, jumped to his eyes, and appealed to his heart, with a promptitude Antony's bravest and most unselfish deeds had never effected. He stood up and looked at his son with a kindling pleasure in his face; and when Yanna sent him off with prodigal compliments, he privately endorsed every one of them.

True, he afterwards took himself to task for his vanity; and with expansive bluntness, told Yanna that her brother was just as fine a fellow in homespun as in broadcloth; but the broadcloth image remained with him, and he could not help some very pertinent private reflections on the value of culture and good society, as exemplified in his own family.

Yanna did not sleep much. All night long she heard the voices and the carriages of the people going to or coming from the ball; and the solemn stillness of the early morning was offended by their vacant laughter, or noisy chattering. She was glad to be called from restless and unhappy slumber, to the positive comfort of daylight and day's work. But she did not see Antony again until the dinner hour. He was

then in high spirits, and quite inclined to talk of the entertainment. "It was very like the Van Praags' and the Gilberts' affair," he said. "The same people were there, and I think they wore the same dresses—white and fussy, and flary, flowery things, you know, Yanna. But Rose Filmer was unlike every other woman."

"Was she handsome? Well dressed? In good spirits? Kind? and in all her other best moods?"

"Yanna, she was in every way perfection. Her dress was wonderful. And, oh! the lift of her head, and the curl of her lip, and her step like a queen's! She was charming! She was sweet, oh, so sweet!"

Yanna smiled at his enthusiastic admiration of her friend, but Peter said nothing until they were alone. Then he turned to his son, and asked: "Antony, are you thinking of falling in love with Miss Filmer?"

"I have been in love with her ever since I first saw her."

"You could not ask a girl like that to be your wife. She has been brought up to luxury; she could not bear poverty."

"I shall not ask her to bear poverty, father. If I had been a poor man I should have gone back west, long ago."

Peter looked inquisitively at his son, and Antony answered his query. "I have said nothing so far about money; because in your house it seemed mean to talk of my riches. I know that you have worked so hard for the competence you possess; and my good fortune has been simple luck. I had a few thousand dollars, and because the care of them troubled me, I made some investments without much consideration. Every one was flushed with success. Then I made

others, and again others, and I suppose my very ignorance induced fortune to bring in my ship for me. At any rate, she did steer it into a good harbor."

"I am glad! I am very glad, Antony! But why do you say 'fortune'?"

"Somehow—I did not like to say God—as if He looked after a man's real estate speculations."

"He looks after everything. The silver and the gold are His; the world and the fulness thereof. I have never read, nor yet ever heard tell, that He has grown weary of watching; or that His arm is shortened or weakened, or that He has delegated to fortune, or chance, or fate, or destiny, or any other power, His own work of shaping a man's life. If I did not know this, I should feel as all disbelievers must feel—alone and abandoned in the vast universe."

"In great things, father."

"In everything. Can you tell what things are great, and what things are little? From the most apparently trifling affairs have come wars and revolutions, which have turned the earth upside down, and 'glutted the throat of Hell with ghosts.' God gave you every dollar you have; and to Him you will have to render an account of its usage. Now, as to Miss Filmer. If you have money, I see no reason to fear you will not be acceptable. You are both branches from the same root—though she may be a bit the highest up; and I do think you are as good a man, and as handsome a man, as I know anywhere."

Praise so distinct and unqualified was a rare gift from Peter; and Antony looked into his father's face with grateful pleasure. The old man nodded slightly, as if to reaffirm his opinions, and then continued, "Talk to Mr. Filmer at once. It is the best plan."

"It is too early yet. I must have permission from Rose to go on that message. There is nothing definite between us."

"It is a pity. She goes to the city—into the world—other young men will seek her."

"Good! She must choose freely. I may only have been a country makeshift, and I do not care to be Hobson's choice with any girl. I would rather be left altogether."

"Right. Suppose you ride to Grey's Gate with me? There is a horse for sale there that I would like to buy."

So the two men went away together, and Yanna, sitting sewing at the window, lifted her head as they passed, and gave them a smile like sunshine. "She is a good, brave girl," thought Peter, and for a moment he was tempted to tell Antony about Harry Filmer's proposal. But he thought better of silence than of confidence, and he kept silence. In the end, Harry was sure to do all that was right to the woman he loved; and if the way to that end was shadowed and hard, it would not be mended by their discussing it. Besides, he felt that Yanna would be averse to such a discussion; and again Antony's own confidence with regard to Rose bespoke a caution and reticence concerning affairs in which there were complications it might be unwise to trouble.

In about an hour the Filmer dog-cart came at a rattling speed up the avenue. Rose was driving, and her pace and air indicated to Yanna her reckless high spirits.

"I am so glad to get shelter here, Yanna," she said. "At Filmer they are turning the house outside the windows; there is not a quiet corner to sit in, and think things over. Has Antony told you about the ball?"

"I think you were 'the ball' to Antony. He has named no one else."

"Yanna, he looked splendid last night; just like a hero out of a book. I made up my mind to completely conquer him, and he was so masterful, so not-to-be-gainsaid, or contradicted, that I could not manage him. In fact, he managed me. He made me say that I loved him. I do not know 'how' he did it; but he made me speak; and, the truth is, I liked it."

"Dear Rose, do not go back upon your word. That would be mean and cruel, for I am sure Antony has stayed in Woodsome all this summer only for your sake."

"Suppose he has! That is nothing! If a man wants you to live with him all his life, or all your life, one summer is a very little trial."

"Did you promise to be his wife?"

"Nothing so rapid, my dear. I do not give an inch and a mile in the same hour. I simply admitted that I might—could—would—or should—love him—perhaps. That was as much happiness as he was able to carry. It went to his heart like twenty bottles of champagne to the head. He is a delightful lover, Yanna! He will not take 'No.' You cannot say 'No.' His words are like flame, and you feel that he means every one of them. I have had lovers—oh, yes!—and their polite compliments and placid emotions were to Mr. Antony's eager seeking as the moonshine is to the noonday sunshine."

"Then be fair and true to him."

"Certainly! I intend to be so—in the long run. So we shall be really sisters, Yanna! And we shall not have to learn to love one another. It must be pretty

hard on a girl to give up her brother, and learn to love another girl at the same time."

"I never found it hard to love you, Rose. How soon will you give Antony——"

"I have given Antony all I mean to give him for some time. Mamma has made great preparations for me this season, and I intend to take the full benefit of them. It would be an awful disappointment to her if she found out that my heart was not my own. There is a sea of pleasure before me, and I mean to be in the full tide of the swim."

"And if in that 'swim' your foot tips the tangles, take care, dear Rose. You can never tell what depths there are beneath them."

"What do you mean by 'tangles'?"

"I mean unwise or unworthy lovers and companions—too much pleasure in any form—dancing, dressing, flirting, champagne drinking, and things of that kind. You know."

"Champagne drinking! Yes, it is delightful. It makes me feel as if my blood were made of flame. I am half divine after a glass of champagne. But I never take more than one glass. I know better."

"I would not take that one. If a thing is dangerous in large quantity, it is not safe in small quantity. I would not touch it at all."

"I could not induce Antony to taste with me, though I drank from the glass myself."

"Your drinking would only grieve him; it would not tempt him. Did you persuade him to dance?"

"He persuaded me to go into the conservatory with him, instead. I did not really care to dance. It was nicer to listen to Antony. Well, we are going away the day after to-morrow, and then, 'When shall we

two meet again?' How soon can you come to New York?'"

"It will not be soon, Rose. There are so many things to look after that only I understand. Father is lost without me, especially in the winter. In the summer, he has his garden."

"Where is Antony this afternoon? I expected to find him at home."

"Just before you came, I saw father and Antony drive away in the buggy. Remove your bonnet and cloak, and take tea with us. They are sure to be back by tea-time."

"Thank you for the invitation. I was just going to ask you to ask me. I will stay. It will be dark after tea; but then, Antony can drive me home."

"Antony can drive you home. And you know there will be plenty of moonlight."

"Do you remember that exquisite moonlight night last August, when we sent the carriage home, and you and Harry, and I and Antony, walked together through the woods? The air was full of the resinous odor of the pines, and it was sweeter than a rose garden. And the moonlight was like—I do not know what it was like, Yanna."

"Like the moonlight of '*The Midsummer Night's Dream*.' If we had not unpeopled the fairy world, we could that night have believed in *Peas-Blossom* and *Mustard Seed*. Could we not, Rose?"

Rose sighed. "It was during that walk I began to love Antony. What heavenly murmurings there were in the pine tops! and we stood still to hear a little bird repeating its song in its dream. And the sound of the waterfall! And the brush of the owlet's wing in the darksome path! Do you remember, Yanna?"

"I remember."

"And now, to think I am going into a world so different; a world where the milliner, and the modiste, and the tailor 'are throned powers, and share the general state.' Is that correctly quoted? Then, too, Harry will be in Wall Street; and you know what that means?"

"I do not think I do, Rose."

"It means men rushing through life, pushing and being pushed, splashing and being splashed, caring for nothing but money, willing to give up every book that was ever written, from Homer to Kipling, for a 'rise' of twenty cents. I will except the Bible; for your broker, as a general thing, respects God, though he does give his life to Mammon."

Thus they chattered on every subject which touched, or was likely to touch, their lives. And just before dark Yanna rose and lit the lamps, and Betta came in and swept the hearth, and piled more logs on the fire, and then brought in the tea tray. It was not then long before Peter and Antony came in together, and found Rose snugly resting herself in Peter's big chair. Her fair head made a light among its crimson shadows, and her little feet were stretched out before the blaze on a crimson cushion. The position was not an accidental one. Rose knew it was becoming, and when Antony stood entranced and speechless, he only paid her the compliment she expected. Then there was a pretty little scene with Peter. She acknowledged her invasion of his rights, and insisted on placing him in his own chair; and this she did with so many charming words and attitudes that both Peter and Antony were delighted to be obedient to the lovely despot.

In fact, she had purposely come to win all hearts, and to leave behind herself a memory without a shadow; and Yanna was womanly and sweet, and divined her intent, and helped her to accomplish it. She put out of her mind her own disappointment; she rose to her highest cheerfulness, she made opportunities for Rose to exhibit all the best and cleverest sides of her character; and until she had sent her away shawled, and wrapped, and safely tucked in by Antony's side, she never suffered her heart to fail her.

Not even then; for Peter had to discuss the visit and the visitor, and he did so with an interest that astonished Yanna, for she was not aware that her father regarded Rose, not only as an hereditary Van Hoosen, but also as a future daughter-in-law. Afterwards he had to tell Yanna about the horse, and the man who had the horse to sell. "No created creatures," he said, "are so eulogized as horses are by their owners. And when a man has a horse to sell, you would think, Yanna, that horse flesh was better than human nature. However, I bought the animal, and as Antony says, if it is half as good as warranted, I have bought a horse with which I can live happy ever after."

In such homelike confidence the hours passed, until at length the moment came which released Yanna from her self-imposed repression and her gracious office of happiness-maker. She had not grudged the effort, and she had not missed the strength and consolation which any healthy self-denial imparts. "Your merry heart goes all the day." Yes, and this truth came from one who knew how much a merry heart may have to carry. But once within her own room she let all go—all her heartache, all her wounded love, and wounded self-esteem. She had hoped, she had surely

thought, that Harry would come again; and all that day her ear and eyes had been on the watch.

Yes, it had been—

“From rosy morn to evening grey
A waiting day; a day of fear,
Of listening for a footfall dear,
That came not.”

The watch was over; and she was so weary that she could not weep nor think nor pray. She could only send one tired hope upward, whose whole plea was—

“Because I pray not, seek not, give Thou heed.”

Now Yanna was built silently on her trust in God, and on the strength of her day's work. Hitherto, her trust in God had been very like that of a child who takes its father's love as easily and carelessly as its daily bread. But her disappointment in Harry had made her cling to the Never-Failing One with more intelligent reliance. Certainly the loss of confidence in her lover and his palpable shortcoming had left her shaken to her inmost being; but she was still erect. No dropping of daily duty! No folding of her hands to weep! No enervating luxury of self-pity troubled this girl, whose feet stood on the rock of Eternal Love, and who had the healthy habit of her ancestors—a frank, unconscious way of doing her household tasks, without incessantly looking after her heart, or making inquiry of her feelings.

True, her ear and heart were on the watch for the sound of one step, and one voice; and she would have been most happy if that ache of listening had been answered. But the morning passed, and Harry neither came nor yet sent any message. She dared

not hope that the afternoon would be more fortunate, and yet surely, surely, he would not leave her without any attempt to make the future possible. Soon after dinner her anxieties were complicated by a message from Mrs. Wyk, an infirm lady who was related to Yanna by her mother's side, and to whom Yanna was accustomed to render many services. Mrs. Wyk sent a messenger to say that "she had a new novel, and she wanted Yanna to come and read it to her."

Yanna was much disturbed by the decision she was now compelled to make. If she went to Mrs. Wyk's Harry might call while she was from home, and then he would be certain her absence was premeditated. Yet if she did not go to Mrs. Wyk's, she would neglect an evident duty for an uncertain personal pleasure; and then, if Harry did not come, she would have disappointed her relative, she would "be out" with herself, and yet have done nothing towards being reconciled to her lover. The child who brought the message stood looking at her impatiently. It was near the school hour, and the answer was to be taken back, and Yanna was one of those women who hate to be hurried.

She could not decide with that restless boy looking into her eyes and standing on tiptoes to be gone. She said, "Wait a moment, Willie," and she ran into the parlor, shut the door, and stood silently in the darkened room to consider. Her hands hung clasped before her, her eyes were cast down, and in a painful suspense of self-seeking, she asked her heart, "What shall I do? What shall I do?" Thus she waited; wistful, intent, sorrowful, until the answer came. It came from her own conscience:

"One can always do right!"

"True!" She accepted the response immediately. "One can always do right! That settles the most difficult question. And it is right to put the pleasure of the sick and aged before my own pleasure. I will go and read to Aunt Wyk."

She thought it no violation of duty, however, to hurry her departure, and thus be able to get the reading finished by three o'clock. Then she began to put on her hat and cloak, and Mrs. Wyk said: "What are you in such a hurry for, Yanna? Sit down, I want to tell you about my winter apples. I have been so badly used by old Van Winkle."

"I am in a hurry this afternoon, auntie. The Filmers are leaving Woodsome, and I think some of them will want to see me. Rose was at our house yesterday—but——"

"Oh, yes! the Filmers! the Filmers! Nobody but the Filmers! Your own mother's kin is not to be thought of if the Filmers but ring at your doorstep."

"Dear auntie, you should not talk in that way. I will come to-morrow afternoon and finish the book."

"Thank you! But the Filmers may want you." And the old lady made no response to Yanna's kiss, nor did she answer her twice repeated "Good afternoon, aunt."

It was precisely such a result as most frequently follows a conscious exercise of self-denial; but it depressed and vexed Yanna. Her cheeks flushed to the sense of wrong, and she could hardly keep the tears out of her eyes, as she walked swiftly homeward. When she was nearly at her own gate, she heard the rattle of the Filmer dog-cart, and her heart beat rapidly, and she began instinctively to hurry her footsteps, and then consciously to moderate them to her

normal pace. Should she turn her face to the passing vehicle or not? The question was quickly answered. Not to do so would be pettishly self-cognizant. It stopped when near her, and she turned towards it. Harry flung the reins to his servant, and in a moment was at her side.

"I was just coming to see you, Yanna. May I walk home with you? Or has your father forbidden you to receive my visits?"

"That would be very unlike father, Harry. He leaves your visits to your own sense of honor; and to my loyalty to his wishes. I think he can trust both."

"I have been so utterly wretched since I saw you last, my dear."

"I have not been happy, Harry."

"Yanna, I am going into a life full of excitement and temptation. Will you not straighten me for it by the promise I ask for?"

"Have you spoken to Mrs. Filmer again?"

"How could I? You know what a state of turmoil we have been in. But just as soon as we are settled in New York, I mean to have a good talk with mother about our marriage."

"Then if she is willing for our engagement—our public engagement—you can come and tell father so; and you know how happy I shall be."

"If our engagement should be made known in Woodsome, do you think it would reach New York?"

"Yes. Half a dozen of our Woodsome families are in New York some part of every winter. But that is not the question. What cannot be known in New York cannot be known in Woodsome. I should not like my Woodsome friends to believe we were engaged, if in New York they constantly met you behaving as if

we were not engaged. If you have any imagination, you can see what a painful position a half-engagement would put me in."

"Now, Yanna, you are getting impossible again. You will not do anything to meet me. In disagreements, people generally each 'give in' a little."

"Not on such a question as this. I will have all of love's honor and service, or I will have none of it. I hate secrecy in anything, I fear it in love. Besides, my father says, it is a wrong to me. His decision includes mine, Harry."

"Then I suppose my visit is utterly useless. Mother said it would be."

"So you *have* been talking to Mrs. Filmer again?"

"Oh! you do press a poor distracted man so hardly! Mother talked to me. And she seems a little bitter about you. What did you say to her, Yanna?"

"Ask her what she said to me, Harry."

"Of course, I shall work with all my power to get our engagement on a footing to please you, Yanna. But you know, a mother is a mother, and it is hard to go against her when she is working for the good of your sister, and your family, and all that; and——"

"Our engagement! We are not engaged!" They were at the door by this time, and Yanna said: "Will you come in, Harry?"

"Of course I will come in. What do you mean by saying, 'We are not engaged'? You said you loved me. You said you would marry me. Is not your promise an engagement?"

"Only under certain conditions; which conditions you are not willing to fulfil."

"Not able! not able! Yanna."

"Nonsense! If you are man enough to ask a

woman to be your wife, you ought to be man enough to do it with all customary honors. There is no use in further discussion, Harry. From the position I have taken, I cannot, in justice to myself, move a hair's breadth."

"Is a man not to honor his mother, and help her, and so on?"

"A man is to honor his mother with all his heart. He is to help her in every way he can; but he is also to honor the woman he asks to be his wife. It is a poor rose-tree that can only bear one perfect rose; it is a poor heart that has room only for one perfect love;—but I will not even seem to plead, for what ought to be rendered with the utmost spontaneity. We had better say '*Good-bye!*' "

She rose with quiet dignity, and stood with an expectant air. Harry also rose, and began to button his gloves, and as he did so, said: "Surely, you will write to me! I do not hope for love letters, but just sometimes a few kind, wise words! You will write, Yanna?"

"It would not be prudent. It would not be right."

"Prudent! Right! Oh, Yanna! How provoking you can be!"

"It would not be good form, then. Do you understand that better?"

"You will do nothing for me?"

She did not answer. She was very pale, her eyes were cast down, her mouth trembled, her hand clasped nervously the back of the chair by which she stood. She did not dare to look at Harry. He was so troubled, so reproachful, so handsome.

"Will you at least shake hands, Yanna?" he asked, coming to her side. Then she looked into his face,

and he held her a moment to his heart, as with kisses on her sweet, sad mouth, he murmured, "*Yanna! Yanna!*" ere he went hastily away.

And as soon as he was gone, a quick realization of all she had lost, or resigned, reproached her. The most beautiful points in Harry's character came to the front—his love, his generous temper, his kindness to women, his cheerfulness, his physical beauty and grace, his fine manners! Oh, he had been in so many respects a most charming lover! No other could ever fill his place. Even his fault towards her had sprung from a virtue, and though in its development it showed him to be lacking in just perceptions and strength of character, were these indeed unpardonable faults?

This was the trend of her feeling in the first moments of her misery; and it was followed by a sentiment very like anger. She sat still as if turned into stone. All her life seemed to be suddenly behind her, and her future only a blank darkness. "And it is my own fault!" she thought passionately. "The bird that sang in my heart all summer long has flown away; but it was my own hand that sent it out into the world, and there, doubtless, some other woman, more loving and less wise, will open her heart to its song. Alas! alas!" And a great wave of love drifted her off her feet; she lost all control of her feelings, and sobbed as despairingly as the weakest and most loving of her sex could have done.

In the meantime, Harry was making himself utterly wretched in much the same manner. The presence of a servant being intolerable, he sent his man on a message to the express office, and then, as he drove homeward, deliberately tortured himself with a consideration of all the sweet beauty, and all the sweet

nature, he had lost. "And what for?" he asked, with that quick temper which is one of the first symptoms of disappointed love. "That Rose may have more dances, and a little more *éclat*, and that I may play the elegant host at my mother's teas. Father ought to do the civil thing in his own house. It is too bad that he does not do so. It is not fair to him. People must talk about it. As for writing a book! Pshaw! Nobody considers that any excuse for neglecting social duties—and it is not!"

He shook the reins impatiently to this decision, and then suddenly became aware of a bit of vivid coloring among the leafless trees. It was dusk, but not too dark to distinguish Rose's figure, wrapped in her red cloak, with the bright hood drawn over her head. She was leaning on Antony Van Hoosen, and Harry walked his horses and watched the receding figures. Their attitude was lover-like, and they were so absorbed in each other that they were blind and deaf to his approach.

"Oh—h—h! So that is the way the wind blows! What a shame for Rose to take a heart like that of Antony Van Hoosen's for a summer plaything! I know exactly how she is tormenting the poor fellow—telling him that she loves him, but that this, and that, and the other, prevent the possibility, etc., etc.,—killing a man while he looks up adoringly, and thanks her for it. Poor Antony! Such a good, straightforward fellow! And I know Rose means no more than she means when she pets her poodle. Well, thank goodness! Yanna did not try to make a fool of me. She is, at least, above that kind of meanness. She has a heart. And she is suffering to-night, as much as I am—and I hope she is! She ought to!—Well, Thomas,

how did you get here before me? Been at the express office?"

"Yes, sir. Nothing there, sir. I met Jerry coming from the mail, and he gave me a lift."

Then Harry threw down the reins, and went into the house. It looked very desolate, wanting the precious Lares and ornaments which Mrs. Filmer took with her wherever she meant to dwell for any time. She was accustomed to say that "there were certain things in every family which took on the family character, and which gave the family distinction to their home." "It is the miniatures and the carved ivories, and the little odds and ends of old furniture and of our own handiwork, that give the *Filmer-y look* to the house," she had said that afternoon to Rose, who was fretting at the "uselessness of dragging the old-fashioned things to and from the city, when they had now a home of their own in the country."

The whole tone of the house was fretful and restless; the halls were crowded with trunks; the dinner was belated; and Mrs. Filmer had a nervous headache, and was weary and suffering. She looked reproachfully at Harry when he came to the table, and Harry understood the look. He had been needed, and he had not been present, and the newly roused sense of his father's responsibility made him answer the look relatively.

"It is too bad that you have everything to do, mother. Why do you let father sneak away to the city?"

"Do not talk absurdly, Harry. Your father did not 'sneak away.' You know I begged him to go. The disturbance of the ball and the packing after it would have knocked him to pieces for the whole winter."

At this moment Rose entered. She was radiant and innocent-looking, and full of apologies for her three minutes' tardiness; and she answered Harry's keen, interrogative look with one of such guileless listlessness that Harry was compelled to wonder whether it really had been his sister in the wood at that hour. All dinner time his thoughts wandered round this uncertainty and the certainty that Antony, at least, was a positive case. And then, if it was not Rose, whom could Antony have been making love to? For Harry had no doubts as to the occupation of the couple.

When they were alone, Harry suddenly turned to his sister and asked: "What were you doing in the wood so late this evening, Rose?"

"Me! In the wood?"

"Were you not in the wood with Antony Van Hoosen?"

She shrugged her shoulders scornfully and answered: "Mamma can tell you what I have been doing all afternoon."

"Indeed, I can, Harry. Rose has had to look after many things you might have attended to for her; but then, Rose," added Mrs. Filmer, turning her head languidly to her daughter, "there were the Van Hoosens to look after. Your brother is mad that way. If he cannot see the girl, he fancies he sees her brother. Thank heaven, we shall be rid of them to-morrow!"

"Oh, mamma! I think you too have Yanna and Antony on your brain."

"Well, Rose, I have undergone them all summer; and I may now say frankly that I do not like them."

"You have a sick headache, dear mamsie. Do go to bed. Shall I help you? No? Well, then, I will go myself. For I am tired, and so forth."

She went off with a kiss, and an airy recommendation to follow her good example; and Harry rose as if to obey it. His mother opened her heavy eyes and said: "Wait a few minutes, Harry, my dear. You look miserable. You eat nothing. You have been to see Yanna. Can you not let that girl alone?"

"The girl has let me alone. She has refused even to write to me. I *am* miserable. And I do not feel as if anything, as if anything on earth, can atone for the loss of Yanna's love."

"Not even my love?"

"That is a thing by itself. It is different. I understand to-night what is meant by a broken heart."

"The feeling does not last, Harry. In New York you will soon wonder at yourself for enduring it an hour—these bare dripping woods, this end-of-all-things feeling, is a wretched experience;—but a broken heart! Nonsense!"

"Mother, there is no use talking. I am miserable; and I do think that you are to blame."

"Me!"

"You have wounded Yanna's feelings in some way, I know."

"Yanna's feelings!" cried Mrs. Filmer.

"Yes; and they are very precious to me; more so than my own feelings."

"Or than mine? Speak out, Harry. Be as brutal as you want to be. I might as well know the worst now as again."

"I do not care for New York. I do not care for the preparations you have made. I will not go out at all. I have given myself to this society nonsense, because it pleased you, mother; but I can do so no longer. How can I dress, and dance, and make compliments

when I wish I were dead? Yes, I do! Life has not a charm left."

"Your father, your sister!"

"Oh, mother! they are not Yanna. If you are perishing for water, wine will not take its place."

"You are very ungrateful, and if I call you ungrateful I can call you nothing worse. Remember how I have planned and saved; how I have bowed here, and becked there, in order to gain the social position we now enjoy. Without my help, would you have got into the best clubs? Would you visit in the houses where you are now welcome?"

"I know; but I do not value these things. Yanna has taught me better."

"Harry, you make me lose all patience. It is a shameful thing to tell me now, after my labor, after you have reaped the harvest of it, that you do not care; to put that Van Hoosen girl in the place of all your social advantages, and of all your kindred. It is outrageous! Why, the man I bought my chickens from was a Van Hoosen! And I was so magnanimous that I never named it to Miss Van Hoosen. Any other lady would have asked her if he was a relative, just for the pleasure of setting her down a little. I did not."

"You might easily have asked Yanna. She has no false pride."

"Now, Harry, you have exhausted my patience. We will have no more of this 'Yanna' nonsense, if you please. I have had as much Van Hoosen as I can endure."

"My dear mother, your husband is a Van Hoosen. Ask father if it is not so. Father, and Rose, and I are descended from the daughter of the first American Peter Van Hoosen; and Yanna is descended from his

son. That is all the difference. We are the same family."

"Do not be absurd!"

"Ask father."

"I do think you might have a little pity for me. I am suffering in every nerve. I am trembling, and faint, and utterly worn out, both in mind and body; and then you come and wound me in my dearest loves and hopes; stab after stab. But I am only your loving, foolish mother! I am not Yanna! and—and——" Then she rose, looking steadily at Harry the while. And she really was ill and suffering. Distress, physical and mental, was written on every feature; her eyes were tearless, but full of anguish; and she was hardly able to stand when she rose to her feet. What could Harry do? His anger vanished. His sense of injustice vanished. He went to his mother and comforted her with kisses. He supported her to her room, and so left her, once more absolutely mistress of the situation. But all night long, whether he was asleep or awake, his heart kept up the same longing, pitiful cry of "*Yanna! Yanna!*"

Yanna was even more miserable. Peter wondered at her fretfulness, until she told him that Harry Filmer had called to say "Good-bye." She told him with a slight air of injury, and Peter felt that much talk on the subject would then be unwise. He could have reminded her that to those who suffer patiently the suffering is less; but the indulgent love and wisdom of the good old man taught him that there are occasions when it is better to leave the wounded to the strength of silence than to offer them the balm of sympathy. So he listened quietly, while she wished she had been more sure of herself—more sure that Harry was wrong

—more sure that she was absolutely right—that she had been more considerate of their different educations—more patient of his shortcomings. All her reproaches of herself tacitly included her father, but Peter knew it was not yet the time to defend himself. He made no reply to her querulous accusations and regretful wishes until she said:

“I trust that when we act foolishly and turn our backs on happiness God will not condemn us to our own choice. I wonder if I pray to God to send me once more the good I refused, if He will hear me?”

“We must never pray merely selfish prayers, Yanna,” answered Peter sadly. “God might be angry enough to grant us our prayers. It is better to say, ‘Thy will be done.’”

Then she rose up hastily and went out of the room, but still more hastily returned, and lifting her father's head—which was bowed upon his hands—said: “My dear, dear father! My precious father!” And Peter stood up then, and kissed her, and blessed her, and said: “Let the light of His Countenance be upon you, my dearest!”

Was she happy then? Ah, no! Her heart was wounded all over. She felt as if it were bleeding. As she entered her room the picture of the thorn-crowned Saviour met her eyes, and she went close to it, and looked thoughtfully at the Man of Sorrows. Resignation, mournful and simple, yet full of lofty heroism, spoke to her; and the personality of which it was the ideal seemed to fill the room; but she was not comforted. She undressed herself slowly, feeling at length the tears she had so long restrained dropping upon her fingers as they trembled about their duty.

But when she laid her head upon her pillow, and the

room was dark and still, suddenly her grief found a voice that she could understand; and she sobbed, "Oh, mother! mother! If you were here this night! If you were only here! You would know how to pity me!" And so sobbing, she went to sleep; and in her sleep she was comforted. For the golden ladder between heaven and earth is not removed; and the angels going to and fro must meet on their road many mothers called earthward by their children's weeping, and hastening to them "with healing on their wings."

CHAPTER V

"All, then, has come to an end; and I feel as if I had buried every sweet day we lived together!" These were Adriana's first thoughts in the morning. However, she had slept heavily, as God often permits those to sleep for whom sorrow lies in wait; and she was stronger to bear the burden of the days before her. They were very dreary and monotonous for many weeks; for the fall was a wet and sunless one. Yet it was not the heavy atmosphere and the melancholy heavens that depressed her; it was rather the mental and moral drizzle of the household; and for this she was herself much to blame.

She restrained all confidence; she would not talk to her father or brother about the Filmers; she responded to no effort to amuse her, and she would not permit herself to weep. And as tears and laughter and mutual confidence are the means appointed to stay life's overflow, and to give the full heart ease, she missed the natural comforters of her position. And as she gave no confidence to Antony, Antony also kept his hopes and doubts, his joys and sorrows, to himself. If Adriana had spoken to him of Harry, he would have gladly discussed with her Rose's heart-breaking ways with him—her advances and retreats, her kindness and her cruelty, her love and her disdain.

But brother and sister alike kept silence, and Peter did not feel at liberty to comfort uncomplained-of

suffering; nor yet to offer advice in circumstances of which his children presumed him to be either ignorant or unsympathetic. Nevertheless, he suffered both mentally and really with them; for most houses adopt more or less of the mental aspects of the dwellers in them, and the old happy contentment which had filled Peter's home with sunshine in all weathers was invaded by many shadows. The order of his life was broken-up, and its very pleasures were robbed of their sweetness. Dinner-time, and bed-time, and all the times and seasons of domestic existence went on undisturbed; and the books were brought out, and Peter read aloud with even an exaggerated interest; but the heart was out of all Adriana's duties and amusements; and Peter, try as he would, felt it difficult to control a feeling of anger against the strangers who had entered his home only to make those he loved miserable.

For a month Antony vibrated between Woodsome and New York; but finally he resolved to stay in the city. He said something to his father about "western securities, and the opportunity he had for making money in them," but both Peter and Adriana knew that his real object was Rose Filmer. His desertion had, however, one good result, it made Adriana feel that she must resume her old companionship with her father. She could not now suppose that Antony was with him, or that her father was with Antony, or if they were really together, slip away to her own room, on the presumption they did not want her company in order to discuss the country, or the horses, or the best time to plant.

She accepted the duty with much of her old, sweet cheerfulness. "We are alone again, dear father!" she said, "and I am going to see how happy I can make

you." And Peter's swift acceptance of this promise, the joy on his face, his ready oblivion of all her neglect, his eager interest in all she proposed, went to her heart like the wine of gladness.

"Suppose I teach you chess, father!"

The proposal made Peter happy as a child. He answered that there was nothing he wished to learn so much. He said he would go to New York that very day for the men and the board—Staunton men and board—nothing cheaper. He kept his word. He brought back the plain, sensible pieces and their mimic battle-field in his hands. He was as enthusiastic a pupil as any teacher could desire, and yet he was brimming with conversation of all that he had seen in the city, and on the train, and the ferry boats. And at last, when the little table was drawn to the hearth and the two sat down to the game, it was wonderful to see how eager and how receptive he was!

"It is the grandest bit of play in the world, Yanna," he said, when at last the pieces were reluctantly restored to their box. "You have given me one of the happiest evenings I ever had in my life!" and his eyes shone with love and gratitude. "My girl is the best of all girls! May God Almighty bless her!"

And without extenuations or exceptions, Adriana had also one of the happiest evenings of her life. No one can gain a great victory over self and not be happy. Adriana walked upstairs erect, with a smile on her lips, and a glow in her heart, such as she had not felt for many weeks. She undressed with her old alertness and method; she knelt down in happy confidence, feeling that she could ask to be made happy when she had made others happy.

From this brave new beginning, there was no back-

sliding—or at least none that Peter was permitted to feel. For Adriana was ashamed of herself when she realized how much of the pleasure of other lives she had sacrificed to her own selfish sorrow. Peter appeared next day to be ten years younger. Betta was bright and busy as a summer bee; the two old house-dogs came back confidently to the rug before the fire; the stable-man got a smile through the window, and then ventured to ask a favor for his wife.

“How cruel I have been!” she said. “How much happiness for others I held in these two hands—and then withheld!” and she spread out her palms, and tried to realize how full they were, and how niggardly she had been of the God-given blessings in them.

But she was no longer so. Whatever effort it cost at first, to put aside her own pain and disappointment, gradually became easy. She did not forget; she only compelled memory to take counsel with justice and generosity. The past, which had usurped the places of both present and future, was gradually relegated to its proper domain; and in the exercise of the will-power necessary for this control of her daily life, she resumed the power to control those higher conditions which relate to the moral and mental existence. In a week the nobler influence ruled, and the ignoble atmosphere of self rarely chilled that confidential communion which ought to exist between all the members of one household.

So the time went on, until it was nearly Christmas. Then, one morning, destiny knocked at Peter's door, and let in Miss Alida Van Hoosen. She had always been accustomed to call about the New Year, but her visit so much earlier was unexpected, especially as they had been informed some weeks previously by the

"Woodsome Local" that Miss Van Hoosen had left her beautiful home for her winter residence in New York City. But her visit, though unexpected, was very welcome to Adriana. For she liked her cousin, and she was heartily glad of any social event to break the monotony of her daily life.

"I saw Cousin Peter in the village as I came through it," said Miss Alida. "What do men find to talk about? They never seem to be bored in the stupidest place."

"Oh, cousin, I am so glad to see you! I did not expect you so soon."

"The logic of events, Adriana! And you cannot oppose their arguments. Selina Zabriski has made up her mind to go to Florida. Now, as you know, I have stayed with Selina for sixteen winters; and her absurdity throws me out into space, as it were."

"Are you coming back to the country?"

"To the country! In December! No, Adriana. I have rented Selina's house, and her man-servants, and her maid-servants, her dogs and her cats, her carriages and her horses; and I want you to come and stay with me. Will you?"

"Cousin! It will make me the happiest girl in the world to do so. Do you think father will be willing for me to go?"

"Fathers are persuadable. I have some excellent arguments. I want you, at once, though."

"I shall be glad to go at once. Still, father will be very lonely. I ought to think of that."

"Cousin Peter will not let his loneliness interfere with your pleasure, or else I do not know Cousin Peter. And also I think Antony Van Hoosen would be better here than haunting operas and theatres, and

every spot by night and day, where Rose Filmer beckons him. Oh! I know that Filmer girl; and the more I think of her the less I think of her. She has Antony's heart under her foot, and she turns and turns her French heel on it, as if it were a worm. But if Antony must be in New York, he shall have a home from which he may command the Filmers. At least, I shall offer him this advantage."

"Command!"

"I think so. If there is one thing Emma Filmer aspires to, longs for, covets, and hankers after, it is to step within the charmed chalk circle, which encloses the central reserve of what she calls 'society.' Selina Zabriski is one of this potent reserve, and your poor cousin has a kind of, a sort of, a power in it. Oh! I know Emma Filmer! And Henry Filmer, also—poor fellow! In New York we don't think much of husbands, but we don't often drive them to writing books about—*civilization!*"

She was silent for a moment or two, then she resumed: "When I was a slip of a girl, Adriana, I had a 'thoughtful' feeling about Henry Filmer. The old Dominie used to say to me, 'Henry is a good lad, Alida, and there is a kind of providence in the way your lands lie. Land and love is fair matrimony, you may depend upon that, Alida.'"

"Then, cousin, did you once intend to marry Mr. Filmer?"

"As I say, I had got as far as 'thinking.' But Henry Filmer wrote poetry, and I am not poetical. Emma Colbert set his poems to music, and sang them! What man could resist such tactics? With her 'Ohs!' and her 'Ahs!' and her tinkling piano, she took him captive. Poor Henry Filmer! I do not suppose she

has sung him a single poem since they were married. So, you see, I might have been your mother-in-law."

"Cousin Alida!"

"Yes, it is better 'cousin'. But there is no need to 'keep from' me. I used to see young Filmer and you driving and walking together, and as I have my eyes, and my senses, I may say, as Corporal Nym said in a delicate matter, 'There must be conclusions! Well, I cannot tell!'

Then Adriana opened her heart. This kindly brusque woman had evidently in the past suffered something from Harry's mother. That made an instant sympathy between them; perhaps, indeed, Alida had divined the trouble, and had told her own experience to induce Adriana's confidence. At any rate, she gave it freely. She made nothing better, and nothing worse, as regarded Mrs. Filmer's opposition; but she did unconsciously idealize Harry, and she did make excuses for his pusillanimity.

Miss Alida was disposed to encourage this attitude. In the first place, she found it agreeable to be in opposition to Mrs. Filmer. In the second, she had set her wishes on this union of the two branches of her family. In the third, she had been pleasantly impressed by Harry's face and manner. She, therefore, encouraged Adriana's apologies. She said, in the present day it was a wonder to find a young man disposed to put the welfare of his family before his own gratification; and though she admitted Harry to have been prominently "gay," she considered his attitude as natural an expression of disappointment as Adriana's gloomy melancholy had been. "You went to the house of mourning, Adriana," she continued, "and Harry went to the house of feasting; and, my dear, I boldly affirm

that in some cases the house of mourning is just as selfish and wicked as the house of feasting. When did you hear from Rose? Has she written to you lately?"

"Yes; but her letters are different. They are not less kind; but they are less confidential."

"Well, I admire that she writes at all. When I was a girl I durst no more have written to a person whom my mother did not approve than I durst have lifted the fire in my hands. Does she say anything about Antony?"

"Sometimes she fills her letters with Antony; again, she never names him. Her letters have a strange tone, I may say, an indiscreetness that amazes me."

"She is indiscreet. I hardly know how to say softly enough the words necessary to explain this condition; but the fact is, she ought not to touch wine, and she does touch it. A certain Mr. Duval has a bad influence over Rose Filmer. I never see them together but there is a champagne glass in proximity. Dancing leads them to the wine, and the wine leads them to the dance; and the reiterated transition becomes disagreeable to the onlookers. One night last week I saw Antony go to her, and after a perceptible word of import to Duval, take Miss Filmer away on his arm. The affair was so rapid that few saw it; and fortunately, those few supposed it to be a love quarrel between the men. But I, who am a looker-on in Vanity Fair, often see more than meets the eye; and in this case I had a family feeling both as regards Rose and Antony. In fact, I had gone to that ball specially to observe them."

"Where was Mrs. Filmer?"

"Mrs. Filmer was devoting herself to a titled English lady. Harry was talking with a pretty widow.

None of Rose's friends, but myself, saw the embryo tragedy. My dear, we are finite creatures, but the tricks we play before high heaven are infinite in their folly and variety. I see Cousin Peter coming. Stand to your wishes, Adriana; and teach your tongue to say what it really wants."

There was little need for this encouragement. Peter understood what was required of him, and before Miss Alida had finished her request, he was looking into Adriana's face with a smiling assent. Certainly the assent implied much self-denial; but not altogether self-denial. He was pleased that his daughter should have this great social pleasure; the more so, that she had been practically ignored in all the village festivities. Her education, her tastes and her manner were out of order with the smartness and giggling, setting the tone of the usual sleigh-rides and ice-cream parties. Even the literary society of Woodsome felt ill at ease when airing its learning before her. She had been educated above her surroundings, and it was less unkindness than a principle of self-defence which made her surroundings shy of her.

In some respects Peter was much gratified, then, at the invitation. Miss Van Hoosen was the bright particular star of the local celebrities of Woodsome; for though her residence was some miles beyond the village, she owned much property in it; and her influence was marked, and always favorable. For himself Peter had never boasted of their cousinship; but he could not help being a little uplifted at Adriana's recognition. And if he thought of the gratification he would find in just naming the affair, in an incidental way, before Bogart and others, it was a bit of pride so natural and so unselfish as to merit a smiling toleration.

It was then decided that Adriana should go to New York on the following Monday; and Miss Alida went cheerfully away with the promise. "I hope to have Antony to meet you," she said, as they parted, "for I shall write to him this very night." And then turning to Peter she added, "I look forward with great delight to this new experience; for I have a large maternal instinct, and I intend to make myself believe that I have a son and daughter to settle in life."

"I hope that your intention will bring you nothing but pleasure, and that it will end well."

"I know not, Cousin Peter." Her face became thoughtful, and she added, with some seriousness:

"The thing we intend is sure to bring with it lots of things we did not intend, and often of far superior importance; but——"

"Our times are always in His hand. We do not shape our own destiny, cousin."

"Oh, indeed! I should like to dispute that point with you; but the train is no respecter of persons, so we must let its settlement wait on our convenience."

With these words she waved an adieu to Adriana, and Peter drove her away. Then Adriana sat down to try to realize the change that had so suddenly come over her circumstances. Her first thought was the glad one that she had voluntarily made her father happy before this invitation came. How mean she would have felt if she had not done so! He might then have been pleased to get rid of her sad face and melancholy ways; and she could not have written to him about her pleasures in New York. She would have been ashamed to do so. And on many other accounts, she understood at this hour that unselfishness pays no one so well as it pays those who practice it.

It was Friday afternoon, and the interval was full of pleasant talk and anticipations; though naturally on the Sabbath the tone of both was subdued to the day and its holy observances. In the bare old Dutch Reformed Church, Adriana was an object of interest to the maidens worshipping there; almost as much so as if she were going to be married. A strange destiny had fallen upon this girl, who had been their playmate and schoolmate, and they could not help wondering what quality she possessed capable of attracting to her so much good fortune. She was pretty, but then they also were pretty; some of them lived in larger and finer homes than Adriana's; and as for her plain tweed gowns, they thought their own styles far superior.

"It must have been something she learned at college," said one speculative girl, in their future discussion of this subject. "No," said another, "it is the Dutch in her. Mother says the Van Hoosens have always stuck together. There never was a poor one among them, or, if there was, they all helped him until he could stand on his feet and fight his own battle."

And certainly Alida Van Hoosen's interest in Antony and Adriana—only very distant relatives—seemed to warrant this explanation. For a good family tree has far-spreading branches and roots, and the crown of leaves on the topmost branch, and the tiniest fibre that offshoots from the trunk, are part and parcel of the same life. And no other tree is just like it. Now, Alida Van Hoosen was one of those women who ripen well and improve by keeping—a much sweeter woman at sixty than she had been at forty; for though age turns a frivolous nature into a hard one, it makes

a serious woman tender and tolerant and humanly sympathetic. And Miss Alida, having wearied her capacity for travel and change, was fortunately in need of a living object on which to bestow her time and her affections. So that the unlooked-for appearance of Antony, and the handsome appearance of Adriana, allied with circumstances so singularly fitting into her love of race and family, supplied her with an interest promising to be both sufficiently active and sufficiently lasting.

"Here am I," she said to herself, "provided by my good fortune with two sons and two daughters, just at their most interesting age; all their childish tempers and troubles over, their education finished, and their love affairs pleasantly tangled up. I am grateful to Peter Van Hoosen and Henry Filmer for finding me a vocation so suitable for my age and my position as the good genius of the Van Hoosens." And with this pleasant idea underlying all her other ideas, she awaited the arrival of Adriana.

Monday morning proved to be fine and frostily exhilarating; and Peter took his daughter to the train in a cheerful mood. He knew better than to offer her advice about a life of which he was entirely ignorant; besides, he had faith in Adriana's religious nature and clear judgment; and he felt it to be sufficient as he held her hand at parting to say: "Be a good girl, Yanna, 'unspotted from the world'—you know what that means, my dear. And try to do something for Antony."

She smiled assent to both commissions, and with this comfort at heart, Peter drove leisurely home, and began to settle his life to its new order. He was resolved to work more in his barn and his greenhouse,

and to begin writing a little book, which he had long contemplated, upon the culture of bulbs. On the whole, he was sure he could manage to enjoy his solitary life very well; for love destroys all egotisms; it can be happy in the happiness of others.

Antony was the first person Adriana saw when she reached New York. He had come with the carriage to meet his sister, and he was smiling a welcome to her, before he had any opportunity to speak it. "What do you think?" he said to Yanna, as soon as they were together. "Cousin Alida sent for me on Saturday, and when I answered her note, she entreated me to be her guest during this winter. She told me she expected you to-day, and that a gentleman in the house was necessary for comfort and safety—and respectability. She pretended to be afraid of burglars and servants, and made out such a hard condition for herself and you that I finally consented to accept her invitation. But I am afraid I have done a very foolish thing."

"Indeed, you have not, Antony. You are looking pale and ill; certainly you want some one to care for you. What is the matter, dear brother?"

"Nothing."

"Do you mean Rose Filmer, when you say 'nothing'?"

"Far from it. Rose is everything."

"You love Rose so much? Tell me about it, Antony. It will do you good."

"I love Rose so much, Yanna, that I only live to love her."

"Well, then, you will soon meet her often, and under very favorable conditions. She will be sure to visit me, and in the quiet of Cousin Alida's house you may influence her when you could not do so in a crowd."

"I have thought of that. And, oh, Yanna! you must help me to keep my Rose sweet and pure. She has so many temptations; she is so weak, and you are so strong. Surely you will help me to help Rose!"

"With all my heart. Miss Alida told me——"

"Do not mind what you are told—the dear girl is in danger, and I love her all the more. Oh, Yanna, the love has got into my soul, and whatever Rose is, or whatever she does, cannot affect it. Deep down, below all the folly and cruelty she is sometimes guilty of, she loves me. Do I mind, then, the accidentals of her position? Not at all. Her heart is mine. Some day she will find that out. I am not to be discouraged by pouts or tempers—no, nor yet by graver faults."

And Yanna felt at once that there was no reasoning with a love like this. Also, it had her most living sympathy. Just in this unreasonable way, she would fain have been loved herself. She looked with admiration on the man capable of it. As he talked of Rose, of her beauty, her sweetness, her facile temper responding to every breath of opinion, to every whim and wish, he talked with an astonishing eloquence; for the highest poetry is struck from the eternal strings of the human heart, and every word Antony said came thrilling from them. It was evident that he had learned this eloquence in the school of pain; Yanna could see through his shy, sensitive, uncomplaining manner that he had suffered, and was still suffering from the conditions he described so graphically.

"We are at home," he said at length. "And, oh, Yanna! it has done me so much good to speak to you. I have never said a word to any one before. I felt this morning as if my heart must break."

"Come to me with every fresh joy or sorrow, Antony. What is a sister for? See, there is cousin at the door!"

"Welcome, children!" was Miss Alida's cheerful greeting. "Was the train late? I expected you an hour ago. In fact, I have been looking for you, Adriana, ever since last Friday. Come, I will show you your room. I am sure you have a headache, they heat those cars so ferociously. Did Antony attend to your trunks? Is it not a charming day? And after lunch we will go out and do some shopping. There is always shopping to do—that is the one interest never lacking. How is Cousin Peter? Did he fret at parting with you?" So she talked, as she stirred the fire, and pointed out the comforts of the apartment ere she left her guest to rest and refresh herself.

When the door closed, Adriana sat down with her hat in her hand, and looked around her. The house was large, lofty and furnished with all the splendid taste of the present era; and its atmosphere was singularly quiet and cheerful. It gave her that sense of contentment which comes from satisfied ideals; and she wondered vaguely at the chain of circumstances which had brought Antony and herself under Madame Zabriski's roof. Antony in no way appeared out of his place; and yet culture, in its educational sense, had done nothing for him. But he possessed naturally that serene, self-contained, courteous manner which is the essence of good breeding; and in outward aspects he had been wise enough not to trust his own judgment, but to wear what his tailor decreed. Antony, therefore, was well-dressed, calm and leisurely; the latter excellent society trait having been acquired to perfection in the long, hot days of ranching life, when

lounging was the only thing possible, and a very little exertion went a very long way.

As for herself, Adriana had no fears. She anticipated no social contingency to which she would not be equal; and she found in her relationship to her hostess all the surety she needed for her position. But she did consider the propriety of rich costumes in rooms so magnificent, and admit that Miss Alida's proposition concerning shopping was a necessary one. So the time went swiftly by, as she noted down her own ideas on the subject; for in spite of all her efforts, her mind would wander. She thought of Harry, she thought of Rose, and she wondered how and when they would meet. So before she had completed her list, the lunch bell rang; and she saw Antony at the foot of the stairs waiting for her. He looked at her with proud satisfaction, and slipping a piece of paper into her hand said: "You will want lots of fine things, Yanna; you must let me get some of them for you."

When they entered the dining-room there was an old gentleman present—a fiery professor of some kind, who was sipping his bouillon, and contradicting Miss Alida with an apparently equal satisfaction. She seemed to be enjoying his unconventional manner. "Professor," she was saying as they entered, "you seize every opportunity to lecture the universe. Will you regard my adopted children? They are Mr. Antony and Miss Adriana Van Hoosen—cousins, sir, and a little more than cousinly." He bowed to the young people, smiled, nodded, and then said brusquely to Miss Alida:

"Dutch, too, I perceive."

"Pure Dutch, Professor. Look at them. They may be descendants of John de Bakker, or of Madame

Wendelmost Klaas; or they may be of the same blood as the Cromelins, Laboucheres, and Van Overzees, for aught even your wisdom can tell. For the race is pure on their side."

"And all is race. There is no other truth; because it includes all others. I admire the Dutch, madame; and I am lost in wonder when I consider Holland."

"You may well be that, Professor," cried Miss Alida, as she lifted daintily for him a Joseph-portion of the tempting salad, "for the sublime thing about Hollanders is that they have created a country for themselves. If you had ever stood on the town house of Leyden——"

"I have stood there."

"And what did you see?"

"I saw streets, where there was once the open sea. I saw cornfields, where fish had once been caught. I saw an orchard, where there had once been an oyster-bed. I saw a fair province, covered with a web of silvery waters."

"And yet they say that Dutchmen are prosaic and phlegmatic! Holland is in itself a poem!"

"Yes," said Adriana, "for some poet must have seen beneath the salt waves the land flowing with milk and bristling with barley."

"And then," added Miss Alida, all aglow with enthusiasm—"and then came the heroes! and they dived into the turbid waters and brought the vision to the light of day."

"Very good!" said the Professor; "but what I like about the Hollanders is their religion. Holland was nothing till all of a sudden the Gospel made it sublime. The Hollanders knew the worth of their souls. In their politics, they thought of eternity—a thing

statesmen do not usually take into account; and seeking first the kingdom of heaven, they struck such bold strokes for freedom as would make common heroes falter."

"Yes," answered Miss Alida, "the Dutch are a religious people, but they have always hated religious rituals. You could not get Antony and Adriana Van Hoosen, after all their American generations, to take an interest in church millinery and such trivialities."

"Race! race! my dear madam. The Dutch do not comprehend the truths hidden in symbols—that is all."

"But why," asked Antony, "should we have symbols when we may have realities?"

"Why? why? Always why! I think I will write a grand treatise on the Martyrs and Heroes of Holland."

"Better, then, begin at once. Miss Witsus contemplates just such a book. She tells me that she is certain she can write it."

"Let her cherish the simple faith to the latest day of her life. Do not encourage her in any audacious attempts to reduce it to practice. She will only lose a pleasant illusion. For my part, I spoke presumptuously, and I most humbly repent it."

"Let us change the subject. How do you feel about the elections, Professor?" asked Antony.

"I take them as I take the weather, or any other matter beyond my control."

"The principles of Democracy——"

"Oh, sir!" interrupted the Professor, "the principles are all right; the trouble is in reducing them to practice, for Democracy degrades statesmen into politicians."

"The trouble is," said Miss Alida, laughing, "we want more Dutchmen in office. They have some fixed

ideas about religion and politics, and they stick to them like grim death."

"Dutch again!"

"Yes, sir. And I may tell you that I am thinking of founding a Woman's Holland Society. Have you any idea of the wealth and intelligence united in the Men's Holland Society of New York City? Do you know how they honor their noble fatherland? They eat, and drink, and make merry; or they interest themselves in preserving a few old relics. But if the Dutch women form a Holland Society, the Dutch men may prepare to give, and to do, or else to take a lower place. The Dutch Women's Holland Society will found schools and orphanages, and look after the sick and the stranger within our gates. They will encourage Dutch talent and Dutch cleanliness; and stand up for the plain, primitive religion."

"My dear madam! Has the millennium indeed arrived?"

"There is something in the idea, however, Professor?"

"Yes; but we must leave it for future discussion. I have a dear friend waiting for me in your outer vestibule."

"A dear friend of yours! And waiting for you in the outer vestibule! Why did you not bring him in? You must have known that he would be welcome."

"My friend is my dog Sultan; a noble mastiff, a thorough gentleman, a Republican and Protectionist of the proper sort. He allows no strange dogs to prowl about the place, and grub up his buried bones. Cats, in his eyes, are unfit to cumber the earth. Cows and other dogs he does not permit even to look over the fence. A dog of worth; and when I come again, I

will introduce him to you; but for the present—
adieu!”

They sat still a little to praise the Professor, and then the ladies prepared for their afternoon shopping. They were full of anticipation, and Adriana was radiant with those pleasant hopes that only stir the heart of youth. Among the silks and laces, the gowns and cloaks and trimmings, they had some happy calculations; and when they left Arnold & Constable's, it was already dusk and cold. They passed out of the store quickly, Yanna looking straight before her, and having her muff raised slightly towards her face. So neither of them saw the young man who bent eagerly forward from a passing hansom, and looked at them with amazement, and yet with an intense interest.

It was Harry Filmer on his way home; and if the driver had not known his home, he would certainly have passed it, so astonished was he at what he had seen, and so lost in speculation as to how such a thing could be.

“Whom do you think I met driving with Madame Zabriski this evening as I came home?” he said to his mother and Rose, as soon as an opportunity offered.

“Madame Zabriski's friends are called legion,” answered Mrs. Filmer; “but I am sure we know no one who is on driving terms with the proud old woman.”

“Nevertheless, it was a great friend of yours, Rose—in fact, it was Yanna Van Hoosen.”

Mrs. Filmer turned round and looked at her son with scornful incredulity. “The thing is absurd!” she said. “You have been mistaken. Miss Van Hoosen has quite a common face.”

“It was Yanna,” persisted Harry, sulkily. “I

should think I know Yanna when I see her. I have good reason to do so. Her face was clear as light against the winter gloom. I can tell you, it gave me a shock."

"In the Zabriski carriage? I cannot understand it. Was Madame Zabriski with her?"

"I have never seen Madame Zabriski except at the opera. Women look different in their carriage wraps."

"I am almost certain that I heard, or I read, that she had gone with a party to Florida. You are sure it was Miss Van Hoosen?"

"Positive."

"Then," said Rose, "I think Yanna is acting very strangely. Why has she not written to me? I sent her a long letter last week, and she has not answered it. However, I shall probably see her brother this evening, and he will tell me whatever there is to tell."

Thus it happened that Antony received a smiling invitation that night into the Filmers' opera box; and that he was translated into the seventh circle of delight by Rose's amiability and preference. To other visitors she was delightfully cordial, but she kept Antony at her side, and treated him with a familiar confidence she gave to no one else. Even Mrs. Filmer was more polite. She had noticed between Antony and her daughter a very intimate and apparently interesting conversation, and she perceived that Rose was much impressed by its tenor; and that she treated her lover with an unusual consideration. It was therefore likely that something strange had occurred; and she wisely accommodated herself to the mood it had induced.

But there was no conversation on the subject until

they were at home. Then Mrs. Filmer, in her dressing-gown and slippers, went to Rose's room to receive her confidence. The girl was sitting half-undressed before the fire, with a soft, happy expression on her face. She sighed and smiled when her mother entered, and then began to uncoil her hair, and to spread it loose over the back of the chair on which she sat.

"It is too long, Rose," said Mrs. Filmer, passing the shining locks through her fingers. "You ought to have it cut a little."

"So many things ought to be done that are neglected. You came to hear about Yanna, eh, mamma?"

"What did Mr. Van Hoosen say?"

"Yanna and he are both staying with their cousin, Miss Alida Van Hoosen—you know papa sold her some land in Woodsome last summer. Miss Van Hoosen has rented the Zabriski house, with all its belongings, servants, carriages, opera box, etc."

"Now I begin to understand. This Miss Van Hoosen and Madame Zabriski have been friends since their school days. They are together every winter; and every one thinks it necessary to speak of their 'lovely friendship,' and so on. And so she is a relative of the girl you know? Why did you not tell me this before?"

"They are only cousins—distant cousins—and Yanna never said much about her. We often passed her house when we were driving; and if we saw her at the window, or in the garden, we bowed to her. She appeared to be a very good-tempered old lady, and she must be so, for she has invited Yanna and her brother to stay with her until Easter."

"Well! Wonders never cease! It may, however, be a good thing for you, Rose. This lady must know

many of the Zabriski set; and she will doubtless give some entertainments to her cousins. And somehow you are not popular with our own acquaintances, so that it would be a little triumph for you to step up from among them. I should go and see your friend in the morning."

"I intend to do so. I promised her brother I would be there early. He said he was sure that Yanna had written to me."

Then she rose, laid down the hairpins she had been idly fingering, and going to a closet, took out of it a bottle and a small wine glass. Mrs. Filmer instantly arrested her hand. "What are you doing, Rose?" she asked, angrily. "You took enough wine before coming upstairs. Do you know that Harry said to me yesterday, 'Rose takes too much wine for a young girl; she will spoil her complexion.'"

"Tell Harry to mind his own complexion. I really have a pain—an indigestion, mamma. I always suffer from it when I eat a lobster salad, and I foolishly ate one to-night. I am only going to take a teaspoonful as medicine."

"Why, Rose! My God! Rose, it is brandy! Give the bottle to me at once! What do you mean? Are you mad?"

"Not at all. I am only tired to death, and not well."

Mrs. Filmer had the bottle in her hand, and she sat down with it, and began to cry hysterically. The fear, the doubt, that had been for some time couchant, hushed, hidden, had suddenly sprung like a wild beast at her heart. She felt as if she must choke, but in the midst of her anguish, she clung to the bottle with the desperation of a mother who holds back death from her child.

For some minutes Rose stood watching her, not affected by the grief she witnessed; only conscious of an indifference she could not master, and whose foundation was anger and annoyance. But when her mother had sobbed her passion of grief away, and lay white, still and exhausted in her chair, Rose went to her side, and kissed the tears off her cheeks, and said with an accent of deep injury:

"Mamma, dear mamma! You are making your head ache for nothing at all. Every one of the girls I know take a teaspoonful of brandy now and then, when they are tired and sick. Harry does the same thing very often. Why should he blame me? And then for *you* to act as if I had committed some dreadful crime! It is too bad! You might have faith in your daughter. No wonder so many people treat me shyly, when you come to my room to insult me. Oh, mamma, it is too cruel! It is too cruel! It is, indeed!"

Then mother and daughter wept together, and things were said between them far too sacred to be put into words—confessions, that had no articulate form; promises, that were never to be broken; sympathy, alliance, love invincible, hoping all things, believing all things! And when at length "good-night" was kissed, not spoken, there was an air of solemnity on Mrs. Filmer's face that the world had never seen there, not even in church; and Rose was white as a lily, and her fair head drooped, and her heart was heavy, though not quite uncomforted. Long after her mother had gone away, the girl sat quiet as a stone, half-undressed, with sleep far from her eyes and her conscience wide awake; and it was not until the clock of a neighboring church struck three that she roused herself and began to finish her preparations for sleep.

“It is so hard to be good, and yet I do so long to be good!” she muttered; and then, because it had been her life-long custom, she fell upon her knees and clasped her hands; and a sacred fear suddenly encompassed her, and she was quite silent. Nevertheless, the struggling soul—sleepless and foreseeing—cried out to the All-Merciful; and so, though she knew it not, she prayed.

CHAPTER VI

Miss Alida might well congratulate herself on the interesting entanglements which she had voluntarily brought into her own placid life. Day by day, they grew into her heart, and gave that human zest to her employments and amusements, that their mere forms could never have done. A ball-room in which Rose was to watch, and Antony was to advise or sympathize with, was something more than a space for dancing. In the theatre or opera, there was a personal drama under her observation, in which she played no subordinate part; and even at her own fireside and table, she found that in many ways she could direct and advise and control events, to the end she thought most desirable.

For she had definitely made up her mind that the marriage of Rose to Antony would be the girl's salvation; and she was resolved to accomplish it. That Mrs. Filmer actively, and Mr. Filmer mildly, disapproved the union only filled her design onward to its completion. She believed Emma Filmer's affections to have "undergone the world" and become dead to all but worldly considerations of position and money. And as for Henry Filmer's opinions on any living question, she thought it might be as profitable to consult a mediæval ghost. In both of these conclusions she was wrong; but it would have been very difficult to have convinced her of her error.

Adriana's affairs in some respects gave her less trouble. Adriana felt no special interest in any of the

gentlemen inclined to feel a special interest in her. Only to Professor Snowdon did she show herself in that sweet home abandon which was her great charm; to all others, she was grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool. The ordinary young man was a little uncomfortable in her presence. She had none of the ready platitudes which were the current coin of his conversation; and in the spaciousness of her nature, he got bewildered and lost.

This attitude was a trifle provoking sometimes. "You are too large-minded, Adriana," said Miss Alida to her one morning, as they sat talking. "That comes of measuring yourself by Cousin Peter all the time. But though it is right that old people should think for themselves, youth ought to be conventional. What harm is there in dancing? And why can you not go to the Filmers' dance?"

"There is not, perhaps, any harm in the act of dancing; but father says no one can dance and think at the same time, and that way mischief lies. When you dance, your brains are in your toes, and you let consideration slip. You are at the mercy of your emotions also; and that is a kind of thing to rot the moral fibre. I quote father, and you need not hold up your hands at my 'consideration.' As for going to Mrs. Filmer's, I have a personal reluctance to do so. She practically bowed me out of her house not so long ago."

"But Rose did not know it. And Emma Filmer is a woman of the world, and appreciates people according to the company they keep. As far as I have known her, she periodically deserts her old friends for more eligible new ones. She thought she had done with you, and she wished to be done with you, because you interfered with Harry."

"So, then, if I go to Rose's dance, she will be sure I have done so for an opportunity to interfere with Harry once more."

"Then go for that very purpose. I would. I am provoked to death with the young man. He has refused all my invitations—very sorry to do so—but—"

"But he did not want to come. He evidently does not care to meet me again. It is very humiliating."

"He *fears* to meet you again. And I think, Yanna, you made him drink a very humble cup. Men do not readily forgive such wounds to their self-esteem."

"Harry has disappointed me. I hear nothing good of him."

"I wouldn't quite believe all Rose said on that subject. It is true that he is running a fast rig with a lot of gilded goslings, whose money came from industrious, economical ancestors. And it is also true that Harry has but a small inherited income, and must depend largely upon the results of his transactions in Wall Street; and that, therefore, he is simply going to poverty in very swagger company. But nothing else will cure him of his folly; not his father's advice, nor his mother's tears, nor love, nor honor, nor any good thing. Only poverty cures extravagance. Some day he will doubtless be sorry enough. Harry's great want in life is a friend who will make him do what he can do."

"It is a want we all share."

"Then be a friend, and make me do what I can do."

"You can do the thing you sketched out for yourself and others to Professor Snowdon. Bring together all the pure Dutch gentlewomen you know. Then begin your benevolent Holland Society. You are a fine

organizer, and excel in setting every one around you either to work or play."

"Now, Yanna, it is my turn. Your duty is to forgive Emma Filmer, and to do good to her just because she did evil to you—which is a nice way of saying, go to the Filmer ball, and be as lovely to Harry as possible."

"You know father does not like me to go to dances; and Mrs. Filmer will not understand my presence in the light you put it. She does not think I have been badly used, and she would not consider my being 'lovely to Harry' a kindness. I would rather talk no more on that subject."

"Very well." Miss Alida said the words with an air of disappointment, and then walked to the window to recover herself. In a few minutes she turned round, and said pleasantly:

"What will you do with your afternoon, Adriana?"

"I thought of going to see sister Augusta. I have not been near her for nearly two weeks. Antony spoke of one of the children being unwell."

"Would you like me to drive you there? I can do so as I go for Mrs. Daly."

"No, cousin. Augusta would think I was putting on airs, and would scold me for it. I will take the cars or walk."

"Give my remembrance to her, and ask if she will join our society."

In half-an-hour Adriana was ready for her visit, and Miss Alida watched her going down the avenue, walking swiftly and erect, with her head well up, and her neatly-folded umbrella in her hand. The afternoon was bright and pleasant, warm for the season, and Adriana was much exhilarated by the walk, when she

reached her destination. It was in that part of Second Avenue which still retains many traces of its former aristocracy,—a brick house at the corner of a street leading down to the East River. The whole first floor of the building was occupied by her brother-in-law's grocery, the dwelling was immediately above it. An air of definite cleanliness pervaded the stairway to it, and as soon as she entered the house the prim spotlessness assailed her like a force; the presence of a wind could not have been more tangible.

Augusta herself, with her fair, rosy face, her smoothly braided hair, and her exquisite, neat dress, might have been the genius of domestic order. Her whole house had the air of having been polished from one end to the other; and the table-cloth in which Augusta was darning "a thin place" was whiter than snow, and ironed as if for a palace. She kissed Adriana with affection, but also with that air of superiority which her position as an eldest sister gave her. Then they sat down and talked over their home affairs—of the brothers in Florida, who were doing so well, of their sister Gertrude, who had bad health, of Antony, of their father, and of John Van Nostrand's election to the Assembly. In a little while, the children came in from school—six rosy, orderly boys and girls, who knew better than to bring in a speck of dust, or to move a chair one inch out of its proper place.

The eldest girl soon began to lay a table with the utmost neatness and despatch, and the eldest boy having said a short grace, all sat quietly down and waited for their portions. Then Augusta put aside her sewing, and standing among her children, cut them beef and bread, and poured into the christening cups of each child its measure of milk; while they

talked gaily to her of their lessons and their play. One little girl showed her the medal on her breast, and received a smile and pat on her curly head for the honor; and a little lad of ten years old shyly exhibited a tear in his jacket, which he had got in a fight about his skates. The mother heard what he had to say, and looked gravely at him. "Did you whip Gustav Bok for changing your skates?" she asked. "Not to-day, mother; but I will whip him to-morrow." "After that I will mend your coat," she answered. "You must, of course, punish him, Adrian." The little dialogue was a matter only for Adrian and his mother, the other children took no part in it. The whole scene was one of unconscious beauty, and Adriana thought she had never beheld anything fairer than Augusta among her children, with the loaf of bread or the pitcher of milk in her hands. So confidently were the little faces lifted to her; while her countenance—large, fair, and benignant—looked a blessing into each.

Suddenly, as Adriana watched her, she remembered her cousin's message, and gave it. Augusta listened to the proposed plan of the new society with patience, but without a shadow of interest; and when Adriana ceased speaking, she waved her hands slightly, and answered:

"You see for yourself. I have my children, and my house, and my good John Van Nostrand to look after. With my cleaning, and my baking, and my sewing, and my cooking, these hands are full. Shall I neglect one duty, which is my own duty, to do another duty I know not who for? No. I will not do that. It is very well for Miss Van Hoosen, who has no duties such as I have, to look after the poor Dutch women and children, and the stranger Dutch who come here and

who have no friends. I say it is right for Miss Van Hoosen, and for you also, Adriana, if you are not going to marry yourself to some good man. What for do you not marry yourself?"

"Good men are now scarce, Augusta."

"It is now, as it ever was, and always will be; good and bad men, and good and bad women, and as many good as bad. In our family, it is so, is it not? Theodore got himself a very good wife, and I have got myself a very good husband."

"But what of Gertrude?"

"Gertrude does very well. She does not see more faults than she can help. Wives should remember they have eyelids as well as eyes."

"Is Gertrude's husband kind to her?"

"Can I know? If Gertrude has picked up a crooked stick, she does not go about telling everybody so."

"Then there is brother George. He is making money, but you can tell from his letters that he is not happy with his wife."

"I am not sorry for George," answered Augusta. "When you were at college, George came here, and he told my John about his wife. He thought she had money, and she thought he had money, and both of them were mistaken; so—as my John said to me—when the rag doll and the stuffed elephant got married, they found each other out. But John and I married for love; and so must you marry, Adriana."

"There is so much trouble in any marriage, Augusta." And Augusta again waved her hands over her boys and girls, and answered with unspeakable pride: "There are the children! Husbands you must take your chance with; but the little children! You make of them what you will."

"Then you will not join Cousin Alida's club?"

"I will not. John has three clubs; and the money is spent, and the time is spent, and who is the better for it? I have my own club with my boys and girls; and for them, all I can do is too little."

As soon as the short winter afternoon began to close in, Adriana bade her sister "good-bye," and turned westward. She took the quietest streets, and felt a little thrill of vague wonder and fear, as she puzzled her way through Gramercy Park and Madison Square to Fifth Avenue. There she encountered life and bustle, and the confusion of many vehicles of many kinds going northward. As she waited for an opportunity to cross the street, some one came to her side; some one said:

"Yanna! Dear Yanna!"

"Harry!"

The recognition was instant; they met before they knew it, in each other's eyes; hand slipped into hand, and almost unconsciously Harry led her across the street. Then he leaned towards her and whispered: "At last, dear Yanna! At last!"

"But why not before, Harry? It is your fault."

"Ah, I have been so weak! I have been so wicked, Yanna. Pass it by without a word. No words can explain or justify me. I have nothing to trust to but your gentleness and love. Do you yet love me?"

She looked at him, and he understood the light on her face, and the heavenly smile on her lips. It grew dark, but they knew it not; it grew cold, but they felt it not; the busy thoroughfare became empty and still, but they were aware of nothing but the song in their hearts. What they said to each other they could not afterwards remember at all. In the delicious, stum-

bling patois of love, so much was said, and so much understood that was beyond their power to reduce to mere syllables. Only, when at last they parted, a great weight had been rolled from each heart.

For Harry had spoken freely, as soon as he found Yanna willing to listen. All his burdens and temptations, his remorse, his resolutions, and his inevitable slips again and again into sensual mire were confessed; and in spite of all, he had been made to feel that life still had the lustre of divine dignity around it, and of divine duty before it. He left Adriana full of hope, and she stood a minute at the door to listen to the clear ring of his steps on the pavement; for steps are words, and Harry's steps were those of a man who has been turned into the right road, confident and purposeful.

Then she ran lightly to her own room. She stood quiet there, with clasped hands and radiant face, and told herself in so many audible words: "He loves me yet! He loves me yet! Oh, fluttering heart, be still! Be still!" And constantly, as she bathed her face and dressed her hair and put on her evening gown, she chided herself as tenderly as a mother the restless babe she loves, saying softly, "Be still! Be still!" And she was lovelier that night than she had been for a long time, for since her parting with Harry at Woodsome, her life had been out of harmony; but now heart and life were in tune, and she could live melodious days once more.

After leaving Adriana, Harry walked rapidly towards his home. He did not think of calling a cab; there was a necessity for motion in his condition, and walking is the natural tranquillizer of mental agitation. He had not gone far before he met Antony Van

Hoosen. Now, the young men were still warm friends, though the exigencies of society had kept them more apart than at first seemed necessary. But Harry affected a set of young men outside of Antony's toleration; and their social engagements very rarely brought them together. At this hour, however, Harry was particularly delighted to meet Antony, and as they were in the neighborhood of a good hotel, he urged him to enter.

"Let us dine together, Antony," he said. "I want to tell you something particularly good—for me. I have just left Yanna."

Antony heard him with singular indifference. "Harry," he answered, "I will go with you, for indeed I have something particular to tell you. I wish I could say it was good, but it is not."

"Then do not tell me anything about it, Antony. I am so happy to-night."

"But I ought to tell you. It relates to your sister."

Harry was instantly speechless.

"Will you come back with me to Miss Van Hoosen's? We can reach my room without disturbing the ladies."

"No. If you are not cold, we will walk here. What have you to tell me about Rose?"

"You know that I love her?"

"I have known that a long time."

"Well, every man loves in his own way; and mine is a way you may not understand. However, I cannot live if Rose is long out of my sight; and so I have seen some things—Oh, dear Harry! need I tell you?"

Harry shook his head, and was gloomily silent.

"I saw Rose go into Delmonico's this afternoon, after the matinee. There was a person with her who

has often been with her lately—that is, when Rose is without Mrs. Filmer's company."

"Who is he?"

"I do not know him. I have not liked to ask any questions about him. He is tall, with a supple, languid figure. He has the face of a fallen angel, handsome and wicked. I have noticed his eyes particularly, because, though he is dark as a Mexican, the eyes are a calm frosty blue—cold and cruel."

"I know whom you mean. His name is Duval. So Rose was with him to-day?"

"You see what a position this confidence places me in—an informer against the girl I would die for. But I do not speak without good reason. I followed them into the restaurant. They had a bottle of champagne; then this scoundrel rang for another, though it was evident Rose had already taken quite enough."

"Well, Antony? Speak out, man."

"I went up, then, to Rose. I said, 'Miss Filmer, I am sent for you. You must return at once. There is no time to lose.'"

"Well?"

"She trembled, and asked: 'Is my father ill? Has anything happened to Harry? What is the matter, Mr. Van Hoosen?' And I said, 'You had better hasten home, Miss Filmer.'"

"What did Duval say?"

"He bowed and palavered, and got out of the way as quickly as possible. Poor little Rose was sick and white with fear; he understood my meaning well enough. I left Rose at her own door. I did not wish to explain to Mrs. Filmer then. But I must speak to you, Harry, for Rose is in danger. I love her, and will devote my life to her welfare. She loves me,

though she will not trust her heart when it tells her so. To-morrow I am going to see your father and mother, and make an offer for your sister's hand. But I find it impossible to point out the danger in which this dear little Rose lives. Yet they should know it, for, oh, Harry! her salvation may depend upon their knowledge, and their willingness that she may be taken out of temptation."

"Can you do this?"

"I can."

"Will you do it?"

"I will. I shall live for her, and her alone."

"Pardon me, Antony, if I suggest that cash may have a great deal to do with this proposal."

"I am rich. I shall spend all I have to save her. I shall take her to Europe for a year. All that love and money can do to make her strong shall be done."

Then Harry let his hand seek Antony's hand, and they understood each other, without words. But Harry was very unhappy and also very angry. His betrothal to Adriana had been interfered with because it was supposed to be inimical to the social interests of his sister; and now the joy of his reconciliation to his love was shadowed by Rose's misconduct. Yet he felt that some steps must be taken at once to prevent the evils which would certainly result from her selfish weakness, if it were unchecked. For, after all, the sin resolved itself into the black one of selfishness; Rose was determined to have the pleasure she desired, though she should tear it through the hearts of all who loved her, though it should bring her personally only misery and shame.

Such thoughts were natural enough to Harry, and they irritated as well as wounded him. It scarcely

needed his mother's look of reproach and querulous question as to "why he had forgotten the dinner hour," to make him speak the truth, with almost brutal frankness.

"Where is father?" he asked, impatiently.

"Your father has been all day hard at work in the Astor Library. He came home perfectly worn out, and had his dinner served in his study. He did not feel able to dress for the table to-night."

"It is perfectly absurd. Father has some duties to his family, I think. For instance, if he would remember he had a daughter. Where is Rose?"

"Rose is with that angelic young person, Miss Van Hoosen. And it is not your place to call your father 'absurd.' Some day, you will be proud of him."

"My dear mother, Rose is not with Yanna."

"*Yanna!* Rose told me that she was going to the matinee with Miss Van Hoosen. I suppose she is spending the evening with her also."

"Rose is at home. She was brought home by Antony Van Hoosen, in a cab. He took her from that fellow Duval. They were taking wine together in a restaurant. Now do you understand?" He spoke with gathering passion, and Mrs. Filmer looked frightened and anxious, but she answered scornfully:

"No, I do not. You must speak more plainly. Is Rose sick? Is she hurt? Why should Mr. Van Hoosen interfere with Miss Filmer?"

"Mother, go and ask Rose 'why.' I cannot say what I intended to say. I shall go to father; perhaps I can talk to him, if he will listen to me."

Mr. Filmer was surrounded by slips of paper which he was arranging with so much absorbing interest that he did not at once look up. But as Harry

remained standing before him, he said fretfully: "I have to arrange these data while the facts are fresh in my mind. What do you want, Harry?"

"I want to tell you about Rose, sir. You must put down your data and listen to me. It is the most important duty you have."

Then the attitude of the elder gentleman changed as quickly as a flash of light. He cast the slips of paper upon the table; his thoughtful countenance became alert; he turned round, faced his son, and asked, sharply: "What do you want to say about your sister?"

Then it was as if some seal had been taken off Harry's heart and lips. He spoke from the foundations of his being; he said: "Sir, my dear sister is on the way to mortal and immortal ruin; and both you and mother shut your eyes to the fact. I also have refused to see what others see. I have said to myself, when mother speaks, when father speaks, it will be time enough for me to do my part. Sir, Rose takes too much wine; she takes it at improper times, and with improper people. This afternoon Mr. Van Hoosen found her with that nephew of Folletts—you know the man."

"Richard Duval?"

"Yes, sir."

"Go on, Harry. Tell me all you know. What had Antony Van Hoosen to do with the matter?"

"He saw that she was taking too much. And he loves Rose better than his own life. So he invented an excuse to get her home."

Mr. Filmer bit his lips passionately, and Harry saw that he was disposed to settle his anger upon the innocent. "Sir," he said, "Antony did our family a great kindness. I met him on the avenue afterwards,

and we had a long conversation. He is coming to see you in the morning. He is anxious to have the right to watch over Rose—to protect her——”

“God in heaven! Has not Rose a father, and mother, and brother?”

“We have hitherto done nothing to help, or to save, the girl. We have each and all trusted to the power of social laws and judgments. Mother and I have certainly suspected, feared, divined something wrong for a long time; and we have both acted as if we thought by ignoring the danger we could destroy it. Antony loves her better than we do. He is ready to marry her at once. He will take her to Europe, and watch over her constantly, until the temptation is dead, and the memory forgotten by every one.”

“Harry, we do not want a stranger to do our duty, do we? If Rose is to be taken away, her father and mother are the proper persons to go with her.”

“Not in this case, father. When a man of Antony’s spotless character, good lineage, and great wealth makes Rose his wife, every one’s mouth will be shut by the honor done her. People will recall the old reports only to say, ‘There must have been a mistake! Rose is so excitable!’ And no one will eventually, in the face of such a fact as her marriage, trust their own sight or memory about what they think they have seen or heard. If you are Rose’s friend, my dear father, listen to what Antony Van Hoosen says, and make Rose marry him.”

“Make? Who can make a woman do what she is resolved not to do?”

“Then, let us go back to Woodsome; there we may be better able to protect Rose from herself and others.”

"Yes. We can go back to Woodsome."

"But even that will not be sufficient, sir."

"Do you think I am unaware of my duty, Harry? If Mr. Van Hoosen is willing to devote his life to watching and guarding Rose, what am I capable of? I, her father! I will leave my studies; I will put every thought out of mind but Rose. The Saviour who went out into the wilderness after the stray lamb shall be my example. All the other ninety-and-nine interests of life shall be forgotten, if so I may accomplish this one." He rose as he said the words, and stooping to the table, swept the slips of paper into an open drawer; and his face, though solemn, was full of light and purpose.

"We should have spoken plainly to each other before this hour, Harry," he said, "and you were wrong not to have come to me before. A matter of such vital importance ought not to have been trusted to the per-adventures and influences of society. We ought to have looked the danger in the face; we ought to have acknowledged it to each other, and never suffered the possibility of such a sorrow and shame to have become even a probable event."

"My dear father, it is not surely too late. I will help you in any way I can." And then Mr. Filmer's eyes met his son's eyes, and, oh, how well they understood each other!

"And the way being the way of duty, Harry," he answered, "we shall not miss it; for duty is the commandment exceeding broad."

At this point Mrs. Filmer entered, and Harry, after placing her in a chair, left the room. For a few minutes she sat quiet, looking into the fire with that apathetic stare which follows exhausted feeling.

Then Mr. Filmer put his chair beside hers, and taking her hand, said:

"My dear Emma, we must bear and fight this trouble together. Harry has told me all. And I do think, if Mr. Van Hoosen will marry Rose, it is the very best thing for the dear girl. He will take her to Europe, into entirely fresh scenes,—and marriage buries so many imperfections and offences."

"Pray, what has Mr. Van Hoosen to do with Rose?"

"He wishes to marry her. He wishes to have the right to watch over and protect her."

"Mr. Van Hoosen marry Rose! What an idea! Rose is exceedingly angry at him. She says he interfered with her in the most unwarrantable manner, and frightened her until she has been quite sick from the shock."

"He did well to frighten her. On that awful road leading down, and down, nothing but a fright will arrest attention. If Rose will not put herself in a loving husband's care, then we will shut this house and go to Woodsome to-morrow night."

"Such nonsense!"

"I say, we will leave New York to-morrow night for Woodsome, or else we will take the next steamer for Europe. There are these two alternatives; these two, and no other."

"And you will permit your daughter to marry the son of the mason who built our house?"

"The mason who built our house is of my own kindred. He is as fine a gentleman as ever I met. He is honorable and well cultured; and his son, Harry says—and he knows him well—is worthy of his father."

"Nevertheless, Rose will not marry him. And as for breaking up the house now, it is not to be thought

of. People will say that we had been compelled to do so, either by Rose's misconduct or else by our own poverty. It is simply ruinous to our social standing to leave the city now."

"If Rose is not inclined to marry Mr. Van Hoosen, we shall leave the city to-morrow evening. For I do not believe I shall be able to afford the European alternative. At any rate, not for a few weeks; and those few weeks we must spend in Woodsome."

"You are simply talking, Henry."

"To-morrow, I shall simply act. I do not often go against your wishes, Emma, but in this affair, as surely as I live and love, I will take my own way! What did Rose say to you? What excuses did she make for herself?"

"I think there has been a great deal too much made of the affair. Rose says, Adriana Van Hoosen had partly promised to go to the matinee with her, and she went to ask her to redeem her promise this afternoon, as Irving was in a Shakespearean character. But Adriana had gone out—gone to see her sister, who is married to a Dutchman keeping a little grocery on Second Avenue. So then Rose intended to come back home, but met Mr. Duval, and he persuaded her to go to the matinee with him. After they came out, they went into the restaurant for a cream and a glass of wine, and while they were taking it Antony Van Hoosen came to her in a hurried manner and told her she must return home at once. Rose was terrified about you. We are all terrified about you, when you are out of our sight—studying so much as you do, we naturally think of apoplexy, or a fit of some kind,—so the poor girl feared you had had a fit, and she was too terrified to ask questions."

"But why did she not see you as soon as she came home? for Harry says you did not know she was home until he told you."

"She says she ran upstairs to take off her bonnet, and that she felt suddenly so ill that she lay down a moment to collect her feelings before seeing any one; and that she fell asleep, or into a faint—she does not know which. She had hardly come to herself when I spoke to her. The poor child has been crying her eyes out, and for a little while she could say nothing but, 'Oh, mamma, is not this dreadful, dreadful!' And when I told her you were not sick at all, and none of us were sick, she was naturally very angry at Mr. Van Hoosen for frightening her in such a way; and I think myself it was a very great impertinence."

"Emma! Emma! You know it was a kindness beyond the counting. If Mr. Van Hoosen had not brought her home, would Mr. Duval have done so? Dare you think of the possibilities of such a situation? As for me, I count Antony Van Hoosen to have been a friend beyond price. A man able to meet such an emergency, and brave enough to face the responsibility he assumed, is a noble fellow; I care not whose son he is. I hope, I pray, that Rose may not fling her salvation from her."

"But, my dear Henry, if she does, it will not do; it really will not be prudent to leave New York till the proper time. I promise you to go with Rose wherever she goes."

"I shall take her out of the way of temptation. When a poor, weak soul is *in* temptation, it is too late to reason or entreat; and Rose will not be frightened again. She must marry Mr. Van Hoosen, or else we shall return to Woodsome to-morrow. That is all about it."

"I cannot be ready to-morrow. It is impossible to move at a moment's notice."

"I was at Woodsome last week, and the house is warm and comfortable. Every necessity can be procured in an hour. I will stay with Rose, and you can return and arrange for the transmission of your dresses and such other things as you wish to remove. You know how to manage well enough, Emma."

"To overdo is always a man's way; and I tell you in this matter, to overdo is to underdo."

"I am sure I am right, Emma. Ask your heart, and tell me honestly if you think Rose is in danger or not?"

"I will watch her carefully."

"Then you think she is in danger?"

"Oh, Henry! Henry! What can I say? How can I tell? I love Rose so dearly! I love her so dearly!"

"So do I love her! I am sorry that I have not looked better after our little treasure."

"But I cannot—I cannot let her marry. I cannot give her up—and to that man!"

"If we have been recreant to our duty, Emma, and he is willing to assume our arrears, and do it for us in the future, we deserve to endure loss and obligation because we did not honor our office as parents."

"I am sure I have never had a single thought but for my children."

"Well, well! In the morning we shall perhaps understand things better. Trouble, like a turbid river, runs itself clear in the night."

They talked thus for hours, but nothing further was reached. And Rose was just as wretched and restless. As they passed through the dining-room, which was under Rose's room, they heard her slowly pacing up

and down the floor, though it was then long past midnight. For Rose's conscience was still very quick, and she was quite capable of estimating the sin and folly of her afternoon's escapade, so that the tide of self-reproach went on rising, until she could not struggle against it. A disgust of all things, but especially of herself, darkened both the past and the future; and she felt the wretchedness of a combat where defeat had followed defeat, until her thoughts were all remorse. Those few hours of the past afternoon—dull enough while she possessed them—returned to her memory only to make her feel how much more they might have given. She had disappointed and deceived her mother to obtain them, and what had they brought her? Nothing but an intolerable shame and remorse.

Spiritually, she felt a prostration worse than death. She told herself that she had prayed, that she had asked God to help her, and that he had not done so. If God had so willed, it need not have been thus with her. But alas! accusing God brought her no comfort; her conscience continually reminded her of what she had done, and what she had left undone—of her selfishness—her lost time—her idle languors—her hypocrisy—her rebellion against God,—all these sins she realized, and she hated herself for them.

Still, this very activity of despair was hopeful; for it is not despair, but the sombre inertia of despondency, that is fatal to improvement. It was the happiest thing in the world for Rose that she was capable of being unhappy. For when she met with herself thus, she felt the need of meeting with God. If she had suffered less, she might have been content to leave God in heaven; but this utter sense of misery and weakness made her at last fall humbly before "the Father

which is in heaven," and murmur, "Have mercy upon me!" And with that prayer, she slept.

Very early in the morning Antony called on Mr. Filmer. But there was no need to apologize for the hour. Mr. Filmer was possessed by the necessity for rapid action, and he welcomed Antony the more warmly for his promptitude.

"I am a lover, Mr. Filmer," said Antony, "and you know lovers run ahead of the clock. I love Miss Filmer most sincerely, and I desire to make her my wife. Of course, this desire implies the means to support her in the position to which she has been accustomed, and I have therefore brought you this schedule of my income to examine."

Mr. Filmer lifted the paper and read its contents with the caution and respect the circumstances warranted. He laid it down with an air of pleasure and astonishment. "This is an extraordinary record of property for so young a man as you are, Mr. Van Hoosen."

"I have had extraordinary good fortune, sir. As you see, my share in the hotel, of itself, insures Miss Filmer's adequate support; and I am desirous to make over to her absolutely, for her own use in any way she wishes, the income from the Aladdin Reef mine. It is now worth from eight to ten thousand dollars yearly. I only ask that our marriage may not be delayed, as I desire to go to Europe early in April; and if I could take Rose with me, I should count myself the most fortunate man in the world."

"You have my full consent to all you desire, Mr. Van Hoosen. Perhaps I ought to say something about Rose. Do you know my daughter well enough to make her your wife? She is not without faults, sir."

"Neither am I without faults, Mr. Filmer. I think perhaps those who have something to forgive may love the best. If Rose will take me with my faults, I shall be most favored and fortunate."

"Then, Mr. Van Hoosen, go and ask her."

"Sir, I will call this afternoon for her answer. It may be that in the interim you can say a word in my favor; and I must not lose a single aid to success. I had hoped to have won her without calling in the question of my wealth, but there are now reasons which seem to make delay inadvisable. Therefore, I must gain all I can from any circumstance."

"I shall say everything in your favor that is possible, sir; but at the last, you know, it is Rose that must decide."

Still Mr. Filmer was well aware that Antony had acted with great discrimination. No one is insensible to the power of wealth and all that wealth can give, and Antony's fortune was sufficiently large to command respect. When Mrs. Filmer followed the suitor, she found her husband walking excitedly about the room.

"Do you know, Emma," he said, "that Rose has the opportunity to make a stupendously fortunate marriage? The man is worth a couple of millions, and his property is of that kind that grows while he sleeps and plays. He owns half of one of the largest hotels in this country, ranches and cattle, and a good deal of excellent mining stock. He has real estate in most of the growing towns on the Pacific coast, and a lot of property in San Francisco. Why, the man actually proposes to settle about ten thousand dollars yearly on Rose, to simply do as she likes with. I am amazed! I am grateful beyond measure!"

"The idea! Who could have imagined that man owning anything of consequence? And yet, he always had that air of sublime indifference which rests itself upon a good bank account. I do hope Rose will be reasonable."

"He wishes to marry immediately, for he desires to take Rose to Europe early in April, for a year's travel. The prospect for the dear girl is all we could desire—and such a good, honorable, strong man, Emma! He will be Rose's salvation. I am sure he is a lover that even her good angel would approve."

"We shall see. Rose will need some management. She is often very cross in the morning, and disposed to dislike every one."

This morning, however, Rose was in her sweetest and most obliging mood. Something of the night's struggle yet lingered in her subdued and conciliating manner; and Mrs. Filmer fortunately chose the subject most suitable for the condition—her daughter's weary look, and the necessity for some rest. "Your father was talking seriously about going back to Woodsome," she said. "I never saw him more determined about anything."

"That would be so ridiculous! You never would do such a thing, mamma, not for two or even three months?"

"He spoke of going in a day or two. He finds the city's noise and exigencies very trying. But you need not go, unless you desire."

"And pray, who would chaperon me?"

"Perhaps Miss Alida Van Hoosen."

"Oh, mamma! You know she has Yanna with her; and besides, their way of living is unutterably dull and stupid—lectures and concerts, and such

things. I could not endure it, and they could not endure me."

"Your father had an offer for your hand this morning; but, of course, you will refuse it."

"Of course I shall if the offer came from Antony Van Hoosen, as I suspect it does."

"The man really thought that his enormous wealth would count with you; for he must have known it could not affect your father."

"His enormous wealth! Pray, when did Antony become enormously wealthy?"

"He must have been rich for some time. Your father says he brought him the evidences of millions—fancy it, Rose, *of millions!* And he offered to settle a large yearly income on you, just to do as you please with."

"He did?"

"Yes."

"Hum—m—m!"

"Your father was quite firm with him. He said the decision was yours entirely, and that he would have to take your 'yes' or 'no' in the matter."

"I should think so! The idea of going to father at all!"

"As for that, it was right to show your father his position. Money is such a wonderful thing! I am sure I wish I had some of his millions! For, do you know, Rose, Harry's rapid life lately has been a dreadful thing for us. I relied upon Harry doing as much as he always has done, but my hopes have all been vain. He talks about the depression of business; but, my dear, it is the expansion in his own life. Club after club, and all of them cost a living. And then he has other expenses, which I do not care to

name to you. I think Harry has been cruelly forgetful of us. Just look at that pile of bills on my table. They make me sick."

"Why do you not carry them to papa?"

"They are bills for costumes and such things. Your father would take a fit over them. Harry has always helped me out of such dilemmas before. But he has been running an awful rig this winter."

"It would have been better if he had married Yanna."

"Do not name the girl. I wish I had never seen her. And now, her brother wanting to marry you! It is too absurd!"

"I—do—not—know—about—that. You say *millions!*"

"Millions! That is what your father told me, and he saw the vouchers for them. People like the Van Hoosens, with all that money! and *we* on the verge of bankruptcy!"

"Most of the Van Hoosens are rich. Look at Miss Alida. Father says no one can keep an acre of land for her. Where is Antony's property?"

"It is in San Francisco, chiefly. My dear, he owns half an hotel, and has nothing to do but sit still in New York, or Paris, or anywhere, and get the results sent to him. And he has property in mines, and cattle, and land, and lots of real estate, all down the Pacific coast. The man is vulgarly rich."

"Antony is not vulgar, mamma. One ought to give even the devil his due. I have often noticed him in a room, and he wears a dress suit as well as any one. Besides, you know, he really does belong to a very good old family."

"Well, he is going to Paris, London, Vienna, St. Petersburg, Rome, and I know not where else; so he

will doubtless acquire some foreign polish. He is an old friend of the California grand dame who queens it over the American colony in Paris, so he is sure to be a great favorite at the French court. Oh, it takes Europeans to appreciate California millionaires."

Rose was silent for a long time, and Mrs. Filmer took out her accounts, and laid a file of bills at her side, and then began to add up her check book, and to look very grave and hopeless over it.

"I do not wonder your father talks of Woodsome," she said, "and I am sure we have had very few entertainments, and have been as economical as possible; yet I do believe my bank account is overdrawn. Can you remember the amount of your last check, Rose?"

"No, I cannot, mamma. Millions are a great deal of money."

"I wish we had a quarter of only one million. We should be happy, and free from care."

"Why does Antony want to be engaged when he is going away for a year? A girl would not wait that long for him, unless she were awfully in love—or had no other offer."

"Well, Rose, it is funny, and presumptuous, and impatient, and thoroughly manlike, but this lover of yours wants to be married at once and take you to Europe with him. I suppose he thinks you will make a very lovely bride, and so add to his eclat."

"Nothing as selfish as that ever entered Antony's head, I am sure. He is not mean or conceited; he is just troublesome and interfering. I suppose I would make a lovely bride!"

"An exquisite one."

"Some people think brides ought not to wear diamonds."

"Diamonds and white satin would be the proper thing for you. I dare say you could outshine any bride that ever knelt in Grace Church, if you wished to do so; but there are lots of things that go to a wedding besides white satin and diamonds. I must go and talk with Madame Celeste about her bill. It is shameful! It is simply outrageous! Will you drive with me? You were saying you wanted a new pair of dancing shoes. We can get them if they are really necessary; if not, Rose, I must ask you to do without them; our shoe bill is already frightening me."

"I do need them, mamma; but I shall not go out this morning; I have a slight headache, and I want to think a little."

Mrs. Filmer then rose in a hurried, preoccupied manner, but at the door she turned, and with her eyes still on her shopping list said, "Do not wait lunch for me. I may go into Cousin Martha's for lunch. I shall be near her house; and, Rose, I would not read much; your eyes look like one of your bad headaches."

"Mamma cares for nothing but the house and the bills!" thought Rose, as the parlor door closed upon her. "One would imagine such an offer as Antony's was worth a little talking about. But she always did dislike Antony—from the first—and I am sure I do not know why, unless because he is Yanna's brother. Well, Yanna is tiresome; that is the truth! No wonder mamma does not like her. And what Harry sees in such a cold, stately, pious girl, I cannot understand! I think I will go and make myself look a little pretty. One likes to leave a fine impression, even on a lover that is to be refused. But shall I say 'No' to Antony? To have millions of money! and diamonds to my heart's content! and the finest wedding of the

season! and a year's European travel! and how the Greyson, and the Helper, and the Manton girls will envy me! and lots of others—and Dick! I do not care a cent for Dick! he sneaked away like a dog when Antony spoke to me. I hate Dick! I shall never notice him again. He will doubtless get an invitation to my wedding from some one, and if he feels heart-sick, it will serve him right."

To this soliloquy she slowly mounted the stairs to her room, and there she stood a few minutes, considering. The result of this reflection was the withdrawal from her drawers of an exquisite gown of pale gray cashmere, and a little tippet of Delhi mull and Valenciennes lace. The ineffable softness and repose of this combination pleased her. "I look my sweetest in this gown," she thought, "and Antony has never seen it; but it will suit him, I know."

Indeed, the dress affected Antony like a contrition and a confession. She looked, oh! she looked everything he could desire or imagine! And as Rose was always sensibly affected by the dress she wore, she naturally toned herself to her lovely and gentle appearance. The dress was in every way a fortunate one. It put Rose in the proper mood, and it gave Antony the proper courage. The one advantage reacted on the other; and Rose suffered her heart and her best instincts to lead her. For Antony brought to this question all the force of his character; he pleaded eloquently, with love in his eyes and on his tongue; nor did he neglect such material advantages as his wealth and his ability to grant her every one of her wishes gave him. He was perhaps disappointed that they had so much influence; but he was a patient, self-relying man, and he told himself that he must be grateful

for Rose as she was, and trust to the future for the Rose that he foresaw as possible.

So he took things on their present level, and talked so enthusiastically that Rose caught the mood from him, and their happy faces, leaning towards each other, shone with the thought of the joy before them. For Antony's desire—like all strong hopes—had fulfilled itself by its own energy. His love found its way to his face and to his gestures, made him expressive and impressive, and gave him that quality few can resist, which we call "presence."

So they knew not how time went, until Mrs. Filmer came home, weary and cold and heart-anxious from a round of profitless shopping and visits. The first glimpse of the lovers was joyfully reassuring. She gave a little gasp of relief, and had some difficulty to preserve her usual equanimity. Indeed, she could not do so, when Antony, holding Rose's hand, came to her and begged a little love for himself and a blessing on her daughter's love for him. She was compelled to sit down and cry a little, but she said her tears were tears of happiness; and she was very gentle, and lovable, and sympathetic.

Then they went together to Mr. Filmer's study. But this day he was neither reading nor writing; he was simply waiting the logic of events. And oh, how welcome were the intruders! for when the load fell from his heart, he knew by the release how heavy it had been. He rose and met them half-way; he kissed his daughter and his wife, and shook hands with Antony; and then, while the tears were in his eyes, and the smile on his lips, he said, with a little dramatic gesture:

"Still in immortal youth, Arcadia smiles!"

CHAPTER VII

Rose's happiness was now running at full tide, and she was carried with it, amid the sympathies of those who loved her and the congratulations of all her acquaintances. Mr. Filmer abandoned his great book until after the marriage. Harry took pride in introducing his future brother-in-law to his best club acquaintances, and then was agreeably surprised to find Antony's financial standing well known to the magnates of the money world. Mrs. Filmer spoke with well controlled elation of their satisfaction in the intended marriage, of the bridegroom's fine character and great wealth, and of the old Dutch ancestry which he shared with Miss Alida and the eminent Van Hoosen family.

On Antony's side, the marriage gave equal satisfaction. Peter had a pleasant memory of the bright girl; and Adriana thought far more of Rose's good points than of her evil ones. With Miss Alida, she planned all kinds of sweet surprises for the bride elect; and busied herself continually concerning the details of the ceremony and the preparations for it. And without a word to each other on the subject, there appeared to be a tacit agreement among all who loved Rose that she was not to be left to herself; and that all temptation must be kept out of her path. This was an easy thing to do under the circumstances; there was so much shopping to attend to; and there were the won-

derful wedding and travelling costumes to prepare, and the dresses of the eight maids to be decided on, and all the exact paraphernalia of a fashionable wedding to accomplish. Rose was wanted everywhere. She had suddenly become the most important person in her little world. Her tastes and inclinations settled all disputed points; and perpetual offerings, of many kinds, were made to her.

Indeed, each day brought her some token of remembrance or congratulation from relatives and acquaintances; and Antony's gifts realized all of even Rose's exacting ideas concerning the proper evidences of love. Certainly, if jewels could typify affection, Antony's must have been very great; for when at length the bridal satin and lace were assumed, her favorite gems fastened its veil, and glittered in her ears, and sparkled round her throat, and clasped her snowy belt. There was a crowded church to witness the wedding, and the atmosphere was sensitive with interest and pleasure, with the odors of flowers, and the bright reverberations of joyful music. Antony, also, on this occasion, was singularly handsome—as a man ought to be on his wedding day; he walked as if he were all spirit, and too happy for words. And yet many remarked his emphatic speech in the bridal ceremony; his serious assumption of all it demanded; and the proud tenderness with which at its close he turned to Rose and said, "My wife!"

So the affair was handsomely and happily over, and Peter Van Hoosen—who stood by his son's side—admitted that it was "a very pretty spectacle." And yet, even while it was in progress, his memory had gone back with a graver pleasure to his own marriage with Antony's mother. He remembered her as

young and as fair as Adriana, standing in her gown of white muslin, with no ornaments but the white roses in her hair and the pretty Bible in her hand. Loving and proud as Antony was that day, he had been equally so; and the bare kirk, and the solemn charge of the minister, and the kindly smiles of the friends who stood by them, seemed even at this hour just the kind of marriage he would prefer, if he were a young man again with Antony's mother beside him.

There was a grand wedding breakfast, at which Miss Alida took a prominent part; and then the young couple went off to sea together; and the company sighed and departed; and when the sun set, the bridal day was quite over. Mr. and Mrs. Filmer sat talking, a little sad, and yet gratefully satisfied. Harry was with Miss Alida and Adriana, and disposed to talk of his own marriage. Nobody wanted dinner; they had a cup of tea by the parlor fire, and as they were drinking it and talking over the events of the day, Professor Snowdon came in.

"Well, well!" he cried, rubbing his hands gleefully, "the great performance is over; and it is evident the modern bride and bridegroom profit by the old stage direction: '*Flourish of trumpets! Alarum! Exeunt!*'" Then he looked at Peter, who was Miss Alida's guest for the night, and Adriana said: "This is my father, Professor."

"I am glad to see you, sir. What were you talking of? Do not let me interrupt the conversation."

"I was talking, as old men will talk, of their youth, and of my own marriage in the old Dutch kirk at Woodsome."

"I thought so. I meet many old men, and all of them, no matter how successful their later years have

been, like best of all to talk of their life in childhood and early youth upon some farm; to recall the

'—whistling boys and lowing cows,
And earthy sounds of cleaving ploughs;'

or the

'Youthful love and maidens gay,
And bliss that found its wedding day,'

and when they do so, a different look comes into their faces, and their laugh grows young again—that is the strange thing. And I myself, I too, remember love in my sweet youth."

"If any one has ever loved," said Peter, "he cannot forget. Nothing goes to heaven but love."

"Is it not heaven? We have a way of inferring that heaven is far off and walled in, but really all eternal things are so very near to us that a single step, a sudden 'accident' brings the disembodied spirit into an immediate recognition of them."

"Then," said Harry, clasping Adriana's hand, "let us live now, for time is short."

"No, sir," answered the Professor, promptly, "man has forever."

"If in spiritual things, we could only see with our eyes and hear with our ears!" said Miss Alida.

"And if so, madame, what grace would there be in believing?"

"Who does believe?" asked Harry. "The great German philosopher, Frederick Gotfield, says, all religions are alike dead, and there is no faith left in the heart of man; no, nor yet capacity for faith."

"Well, Mr. Filmer, the disciple is not above his master. If you sit at the feet of Mr. Frederick

Gotfield, you cannot rise above his doubts and scoffing."

"Harry does not sit at the feet of any such master, sir," explained Adriana.

"I am glad of it; for Mr. Gotfield is not in search of salvation; his way leads—but we will not talk of him. Oh, for a generation perplexed with no vague fears, worn with no infinite yearnings, perfectly happy and healthy, and aiming at the noblest ends! How good it would be!"

"However," said Harry, "whether we believe or not, we can love."

"Then love wisely. I have read that St. Bernard thought that at the Last Day we shall not be asked what we have done, nor yet what we have believed, but *what we have loved*. That will indeed be a supreme test of character."

Harry became very thoughtful, and clasped Adriana's hand tighter; and just then Miss Alida's lawyer called, and she was compelled to leave her company for a while. So the Professor and Peter began to talk of Free Will and Calvinism, and Harry and Adriana withdrew to the curtained window, where they sat in happy silence, listening to that speech which is heard with the heart, and yet dimly conscious of the argument in progress. This way and that way it veered, Peter holding grimly fast to his stern plan of sin and retribution; the Professor doubting, qualifying, extolling free grace, and averring he would "consider the burning of all Calvin's books to be most justifiable Libricide"—making the statement, however, with such sweet, calm good nature, that it was impossible to be angry, even had Peter desired to be so. But Peter was far too firmly fixed on his foundation to feel anger; his oppo-

sition took the form of a sublime confidence, and he closed the discussion with a sudden outburst of enthusiasm it was impossible not to respect.

"Say what you will about the deadness of our faith, Professor!" he cried, "there is life in the old kirk yet!"

He rose to his full stature with the words, his face kindling, and his head thrown back and upward with the aspiring assertion. Adriana felt the magnetism of his faith and stood up also, and the Professor answered, gently:

"Mr. Van Hoosen, I respect your sentiments with all my intellect and all my heart. One thing in your sturdy creed makes it omnipotent—the utter absence of such an enfeebling thought as that this life was meant for a pleasure-house. How, indeed, could it fit into a world of pain and sorrow? and yet, to make life happy, to have a purpose, is not this the question of existence to a man?"

...y, not pleasure, was John Calvin's central idea. ...to obey, not to grumble, or to desire. We are ...ive all life's ills as plain facts of discipline:

'Willing from first to last to take
The mysteries of our life as given;
Leaving the time-worn soul to slake
Its thirst in an undoubted heaven.'

Then Miss Alida's entrance broke up the conversation, and the Professor bade them "good-night." And in some way he made them feel that he had received help and strength, and not merely pleasure, from the interview. The clasp of his hand went to the heart, and both in his eyes and in Peter's eyes there was that singular

brilliance which is the result of seeing, as in a vision, things invisible.

Suddenly every one was weary. Harry went away with the Professor, promising to come early the following evening, which was to be the last of Adriana's visit. The next day she would return to Woodsome with her father, and her trunks were already packed for the fitting. However, a week or two later Miss Alida was to follow her, and in the interval Adriana looked forward with some pleasure to a life of reflection and rest. She meant to cast up accounts with herself, and see whether she had been a loser, or a gainer, by the winter's experience.

The next morning both the ladies were silent and weary, and not inclined to movement. They preferred to dawdle over their coffee, to wonder whether Rose was seasick, and to discuss the smaller details of the ceremony, that had been too insignificant for the first prime criticism. Then the newspaper accounts were to praise and to blame, and the morning passed in a languid after-taste of the previous day. In the afternoon the sun was bright and warm and New York in one of her most charming moods. "Let us have a last drive in the Park," said Miss Alida, "for we shall have to content ourselves with woodland ways and dusty roads for the next few months. Put on your hat and your new suit. We may meet Harry, and if so, we can bring him back with us."

Full of pleasant expectations, Adriana dressed herself in the sunshine, and came downstairs in an unusually merry mood. Miss Alida looked curiously at her. "How fond she is of Harry!" she thought, "and he is not worthy of her." But worthy or unworthy, it was evident that Adriana was watching

for and expecting her lover. "It is so unreasonable of me," she said to her cousin, "for I told Harry last night that I should not leave the house to-day. He wanted me to drive with him, and I said, 'No.' My last drive with him was so happy I feared to spoil its memory. One never knows what might occur to do so—a shower, a cold wind, a bit of temper, or a tight shoe, or something, anything, for which neither of us would be responsible."

"To be sure!" answered Miss Alida, vaguely. She had a feeling that Adriana had a feeling, and that there was an unacknowledged presentiment between them. So they drove, and drove, and Adriana's high spirits suddenly left her. Miss Alida also became quiet, and the hour grew monotonous and chilly and gray, and as the best carriages were leaving the drive she gave the order to return home.

They were nearing the Plaza when Miss Alida directed Adriana's attention to an approaching carriage. It was in a glow of color, and as it drew nearer the colors became robes and wraps of gorgeous shades, and reclining among them was a certain well-known operatic divinity. Harry was with her. His eyes were looking into her eyes, and his whole being was absorbed in the intoxicating sensuous loveliness of his companion. He never saw Adriana. She looked directly at her recreant lover, and he never saw her. There was no need for words. The event was too positive and too flagrant to admit of doubt or palliation.

"To-morrow I shall go to Woodsome," said Adriana, as they stood a moment in the hall; "to-night, dear cousin, make an excuse for me, if you please."

But Miss Alida followed Adriana to her room and

answered: "Make an excuse for you! Nonsense! See Harry, and tell him what you saw. I hate those sulky quarrels where people 'think it best to say nothing.'"

"How can I tell him?"

"The plainest way is the easiest way. Tell him you saw him driving in the Park, and ask him very sweetly whom he was driving with. If he tells a lie——"

"I will not tempt him to lie. What could he do else?"

"I would humble him to my very feet."

"Then I might as well say, 'Farewell forever,' for a man at my feet could never be my lover and husband. Oh, cousin, I must say 'farewell' in any case. I am so wretched! so wretched!"

"Poor girl! I have always told you not to put your trust in a broken reed—alias man. You did so, and you have got a wound for your pains. But, Yanna, my dear, what is now the good of crying for the moon; that is, for a man who is not a broken reed? I advise you to see Harry."

"I cannot. See him for me. Please."

"What am I to say? You know how apt I am to speak the uppermost thought."

"You will say nothing wrong. Do not tell father anything."

"There I think you are wrong. Cousin Peter has intuitive wisdom—woman's wisdom, as well as man's craft."

"However, say nothing to-night. Make some excuse for me; for I must be alone."

So Miss Alida left the sorrowful girl; but as she disrobed herself, she muttered: "What a miracle of ill-luck! I thought something unpleasant would come of Yanna's high spirits—the girl was what the Scotch call

fey. Harry Filmer is a born fool, and a cultivated fool, and a reckless fool, and every other kind of a fool! Indeed, he is not *a* fool, he is *the* fool of the universe. Everything in his hand, and he could not hold it! I will give him a lecture to-night—if he comes to-night, which I doubt. That siren has him in a net, he will go to the opera to see her dance; he will forget Yanna, and then, to-morrow, he will talk of a headache—or an important engagement—and Yanna will despise him far more than if he told the whole truth. To-morrow, of course, for I am sure he will not come to-night; and it is Yanna's last night in the city, too. Men take the heart out of you if you mind their goings-on."

Miss Alida was right. Harry did not call, and Peter sat and talked with Miss Alida, worrying a little all the time about his daughter's sickness. And he was glad when Yanna sent to ask him if he could be ready for the early train; for Peter felt that the end of the visit had come, and that no pleasure could be obtained by drawing out what was already finished. So, while it was yet very early in the morning, Peter and Yanna went away; and Yanna was unavoidably sad, and yet, in the midst of her sadness, she was conscious of that strange gratification which we may call a sense of completeness. Even to the painful events of her visit, it gave her that bitter-sweetness that all experience when they watch a lover out of sight or the last red spark die out of the gray ashes that were once love letters. One chapter of life was finished. Yes, she told herself, quite finished in some respects. She had watched Harry leave her in a way that she felt must be final. And Antony and Rose had gone to their own life. When they returned, Antony would be

changed, and Rose would be changed, and she also would be changed. Nothing could ever again be just as it had been.

A few hours after Peter and his daughter had left the city, Miss Alida was sitting with an open book in her hand. Her life had not been without love and lovers, and she was remembering rather than reading when she saw Harry coming up the steps to the door. She knew that he expected to take lunch with Adriana and then go with her to the Railway Station; and she smiled faintly at the disappointment in store for him. As he came near the parlor door, she let her eyes fall upon the book, and she did not lift them until Harry said:

“Reading, Cousin Alida! Pray, what interests you so early in the day?”

“For my sins, I am reading a philosophical novel. Our very story-tellers are getting serious and instructive; and as I read for amusement, I shall turn to Talmage’s sermons.”

“Where is Yanna?”

“Yanna left for Woodsome early this morning. She is at home by this time.”

“That is too bad! She promised to let me go to the train with her.”

“She expected you last night.”

“I could not possibly come. I was ever so sorry.”

“Why could you not come?”

“I was engaged—unexpectedly—and I was not feeling right. You know very well there are things that a man must attend to, whether he wants to do so or not.”

“Harry Filmer! You are a worse moral coward than the first of your kind. You cannot even say: ‘The woman beguiled me.’ Generally speaking, a man in a

mess can get out of it by throwing the blame on the woman with him."

"Oh, if it comes to that, I hope I am not cad enough to put my sin on any woman. How much do you know, Miss Van Hoosen? Who has been telling tales?"

"We were in the Park yesterday afternoon, and we met you driving with——"

"I know. Was Yanna with you?"

"Yanna was with me."

"Confusion! What did she say?"

"Not much. She went home by the first train this morning."

"She will never forgive me!"

"I should say, never."

"I did not mean that. She will be angry, of course, but she will not be angry forever. I am awfully sorry to-day. But how can I tell her so? What would you do? Come now, cousin, you are a sensible woman, and you know men must have a little latitude—and really, I was caught so suddenly—and if you would listen, you would understand that there is some excuse for me."

"None at all, sir! What is temptation for but to resist?"

"I thought I would just take a short drive, and be here to dinner, but I was not very well."

"You mean that you dined and drank wine with Madame Z——, and that you could not come afterwards."

"She would not let me leave her, and so——"

"I thought you would get as far as Adam before you were through with your apology. 'She would not let me!' Just so."

"It is too bad to take me up so quickly, when I am distracted with shame and sorrow. What shall I do?"

"I would advise you to go to Woodsome and tell Yanna so. She may forgive you, but I doubt if she will ever love you again."

"She cannot help loving me. And if she loves, she will forgive."

"Do not be too sure of that. Yanna has the stubbornness of the Dutch moral character, and her conscience is strictly Calvinistic. She finds it very hard to forgive her own little peccadillos."

"Are you also angry, cousin? You have seen life, and you ought to make allowances."

"Right is right, Harry Filmer; and wrong is wrong, even to me; and I am angry and greatly disappointed with you. I have looked forward with so much pleasure to your marriage with Yanna, for you see, sir, it was to me not only a union of hearts and hands, but a union of lands. Yanna is to have all I possess, and if you inherit your father's land, old Peter Van Hoosen's estate will be nearly intact again. Now that simple, conscientious old Dutchman is my hero. His likeness hangs in my private sitting-room, and I have constantly promised him that I would try and put the land he loved all right before I joined him. You need not look at me, Harry, as if you thought I were crazy. I can tell you that there is a motive in working to please the dead, which working for the living has nothing to match. Anyway, they are not always overturning your best-laid plans."

"I was only astonished, cousin."

"Whenever I manage to buy back an acre, I feel it to be a joy beyond most earthly joys to stand before the mighty-looking old burgomaster and say: 'Another

acre put right, Father Peter.' And the canvas speaks to me, and I dream of the old man, and I know that he knows; and that is all about it! So then, you see, I am not the only one you have disappointed. I am sure your ancestor is thoroughly ashamed of you this day."

Miss Alida spoke with a singular calm intensity, and Harry was affected by it. Some one tugged at his heart-strings whom he had never before thought of, and he said humbly: "I am sorry! I am very sorry! I will go and see Yanna to-day."

"Not to-day. Wait a little. Write to her first. She must have time to understand herself. I expect my friend Selina Zabriski to-morrow, and after her arrival I shall not be long in the city. When I return to Woodsome, I will speak to Yanna for you. I do not say she ought to forgive you, but I will ask her to do so. And I do not thank you, Harry Filmer, for making me plead such a case. And you need not thank me, for I am afraid there is more expediency than sympathy in my offer."

Fortunately, a man's own soul is his best oracle, if he will but listen to it; and Harry's inmost feeling was that he ought to go and see Yanna. He went by the first train, the next morning; and walking up to the Van Hoosen house, he came unexpectedly upon Peter, who was standing by a large oval bed of magnificent tulips.

"Sir," said Harry, "I want to speak to you. I must tell you something at once, or perhaps I may not have the courage to tell you at all. I have offended Yanna; and she has a right to be very angry with me. I made an engagement to dine with her on the last evening she was in the city, and instead of keeping it

I went driving with another lady, and afterwards dined with her. I have no excuse to offer. I was simply met by a sudden temptation, and conquered by it. But I am sorry. I repent the folly most sincerely; and as far as I can promise for myself, I will never repeat it."

Peter stood looking at the young man. He spoke with a nervous impetuosity, as if he feared he might not say all he wished unless he said it at once. His handsome face was flushed and serious, his voice full of feeling; and the hurry of his journey added to his general air of uncomfortable solicitude. There was something very attractive about the penitent youth; and such anger as Peter had felt melted under the warm, anxious gaze which accompanied his entreaty.

For even while Harry was saying: "I have no excuse to offer. I was met by a sudden temptation and was conquered by it," the voice of the inner man was thus instructing Peter: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted!"* So that, when Harry ceased speaking, Peter put out his hand to him and said:

'Let us walk down the avenue, Harry. It is evident that while you were going quietly on your way, thinking no evil, temptation, for which you were quite unprepared, presented itself, and before you knew, you were in the dust, fallen. Well, then, you were 'overtaken in a fault,' and the large charity of the Law of Christ tells me that in such case the sinner is to be forgiven. It tells me, also, to forgive in the spirit of meekness; for anger is sin, Harry, and sin cannot drive out sin. I like your confession of fault; it comes

* Galatians 6, 1-2.

from a desire to be true; and I do not think you will find Yanna more unforgiving than you deserve."

"I will try not to err in the same way again, sir."

"Do not; for just as a noble character is slowly elaborated by a constant repetition of virtuous acts, so a base character is the result of a perpetual repetition of unworthy ones. You cannot, therefore, afford to do things which compel you to say frequently: 'I have sinned, and I am sorry.'"

"I trust that I know the value of a good character, sir."

"Indeed, Harry, character pure and high is the best thing a man can have. To have got it is to have got all; to have missed it is to have missed all."

"I had no pleasure in my fault. I should have been infinitely happier with Yanna."

"Pleasure seekers are never pleasure finders. Pleasure seekers are always selfish; and self never yet sufficed for self. The essence of all sin is the making of self the centre, round which we would have everything revolve. To be delivered from this desire is the turning-point in moral progress and in spiritual renewal."

"I will try and do my whole duty in the future. I will, sir!"

"Duty! that is the great law. But it must be an ever-present consciousness. It must lie close to all your thoughts. It must haunt your very being. And I can tell you, Harry, that your sensual nature will shrink from such company. But be not discouraged, for when duty has become an habitual law, then obedience to it will be a choice and a delight."

"Will you say a word to Yanna for me, sir."

"I will walk with you to the door. That will be

sufficient. Speak for yourself; you speak to a tender heart."

So they walked together through the garden, Peter delaying a little at the various beds of spring blossoms, for he wished Adriana to see that he had quite forgiven Harry's offence, and taken him into favor again. And such forgivenesses are better thus understood; nothing is gained by discussing faults which are admitted, and for which there is no apology but the pitiful one of an unconquerable temptation. Peter's talk was of the flowers, and of the fine spring weather, but Harry was hardly conscious of what he said; for he felt that his future had been brought to the fine turning-point of a single word. Would Yanna speak it?

Peter led him into the parlor and called Yanna. Then he said something about the strawberry beds and left the lover to plead his own cause. There was a few minutes' delay, which Harry employed in walking about the room; then the door opened, and was softly closed, and Yanna stood in his presence, pale as a lily, but lovelier in his sight than she had ever before been.

He held out his hands to her. His eager face was a prayer. And though she stood very still, her heart was stirring and throbbing and sweetly urging: "*Forgive him! Forgive him!*" Then her eyes filled with a soft, blue light; and a smile that you might have felt in the dark spread like sunshine over her white face—and her hand clasped his hands—she was within his arms—something wonderful and instantaneous took place—everything was confessed in a look, and forgiven in a kiss, and love was satisfied without a word.

And the bliss and the strength of the next two hours

convniced Harry that he could no longer bear to be separated from a woman so near to his best self, and so necessary to it. He prayed Yanna to marry him at once, that day—well then, that week—or, if not, then certainly that month—when Miss Alida came back to Woodsome, and not a day later. And just how it happened neither knew, but when Harry went back to New York it was with Yanna's promise to make their wedding day at a very early date.

On the journey he naturally thought of his mother, and he resolved to face her anger at once. "The day has been fortunate; I will take all it can give me," he said. And so, as soon as he reached his home, he inquired for Mrs. Filmer. She had been making calls all the afternoon, and the woman who can return from that social duty in a state of serenity has not yet been evolved from nineteenth century conditions. Mrs. Filmer was not only tired, she was cross. "I feel as if I had been turned into a pincushion," she said. "All the afternoon the wind blew the dust into my face, and the women pricked me in every place they thought a pin-point could hurt. They have condoled with me about Rose's marriage until I could scarcely keep the tears in my heart, and congratulated me on it until my face burned like a flame. I never before knew that words could be stilletos. But if you had only been with me, Harry, it would have been different. Where have you been all day? I called on Miss Van Hoosen, and she had not seen you."

"I have been to Woodsome."

"It was unnecessary. Your father was there two days ago. All is ready for us."

"I went to see Yanna. I want to induce Yanna to marry me very soon—in fact, this month."

"I must be going crazy. Another marriage this month! Another marriage into that Van Hoosen family! I will not hear of such a thing! I will not listen to you! It is outrageous!"

"I feel that Yanna is necessary to my best interests. She keeps me right. I am ashamed to say that I fell under the Z——'s spell again last Thursday. I lost money, too, after the opera, at cards; I lost far more than money—I lost my veracity, my honor, and my self-respect. Yanna only can keep me out of temptation."

"It seems even she fails."

"You ought to be glad, mother, that Yanna is willing to marry me, and help me to do what is right."

"I am profoundly sorry and angry. Pray, where are you going to live? That woman shall not enter any house of which I am the mistress. I will have nothing to do with her—nor with you either."

At this point Harry heard his father going through the hall. He called him into the room and re-stated his intentions.

"Well, Harry," answered Mr. Filmer, "if you choose to make your mother ill and miserable, I cannot prevent you doing so. But it does occur to me that we have had quite a surfeit of the Van Hoosens lately."

"You ought not to speak of Antony in that way, sir. You know the circumstances."

"I think perhaps I do *not* know them. I think perhaps that your mother was right, and too much was made of the circumstances. However, I must say that I do not feel equal to another wedding. My work has been thrown back and out of order, and I did hope and look for a little peace and comfort now."

His air was worried and yet decisive, and as he sat

down by Mrs. Filmer and began to talk of their removal to Woodsome, Harry perceived that his affairs had been dismissed. He rose, went to his room, dressed for the evening, and then went to call upon Miss Alida. Her friend Selina Zabriski had just returned, but she was weary and invisible, and so Harry had Miss Alida's company without interruption. She wondered at his visit, but instantly connected it with Adriana. "Have you written to her?" she asked, with a knowing smile.

"I have been to see her. She is going to marry me as soon as you return to Woodsome."

"I told you to write. Why did you not follow my advice?"

"I bettered it."

"That is yet to be seen. Is Cousin Peter willing?"

"Yes. But my mother is very angry indeed, and greatly to my surprise, father is almost equally so."

"Henry Filmer has only a certain amount of good sense; he used it up on his daughter's affairs. Pray, what has Mrs. Filmer to say against your marriage?"

"She says I am her only son, and that it is very hard to have me taken away from her."

"She took Henry Filmer, who was an only son, from his father and mother."

"She does not like Yanna."

"It is not she who has to marry Yanna."

"She does not like the Van Hoosens."

"The Van Hoosens live and flourish without her liking. Now, Harry, what do you wish me to do?"

"We wish you to be glad with us—to approve our marriage."

"Your marriage suits me exactly. I am politely sorry it does not suit Mr. and Mrs. Filmer, but I like

it. The sooner it takes place, the better I shall like it. When is it to be?"

"This month."

"Where?"

"In Woodsome. I was much pleased with the description Yanna's father gave of his wedding in the old Dutch church there; and we have resolved to have the same kind of simple ceremony."

"I am glad of that. I will stand by you. You are a couple of foolish young people; but your folly fits my wisdom, and so is warrantable. Where are you going to live?"

"We have not considered that question yet."

"The sparrows and the tom-tits have more sense than you have. They do build a nest before they go to house-keeping."

"We shall find a nest."

"What faith! You will find a nest! Go, then, and buy the rings, and get your wedding suits, and speak to the Dominie, and look to Providence for a roof to cover you. You may say 'good night' now, Harry. Lovers never know the clock. They come too soon, and they go too late, and they talk about months when they mean ten or eleven days. Good night, sir!"

But as it is ordained that lovers, like other men, have only feet and hands, and not wings, Harry could not accomplish his marriage as soon as he desired. There was law, as well as love, to consult; there were also milliners and dressmakers to wait upon, and domestic and financial matters to consider; so that it was the middle of June before the wedding day arrived. It might have been still later, had not Miss Alida suddenly resolved to spend the summer in Europe. This resolve left her handsome house vacant, and she said

frankly to Harry that "it would be a great kindness to her if he would borrow it for his summer residence." Nothing could have been more delightful, and it simplified other considerations at once, and gave to the bride and bridegroom an idyllic retreat for a long honeymoon.

"I said there would be a nest found for us!" cried Harry joyfully; and Miss Alida laughingly answered "that she had been driven from house and home, and sent to wander over the face of the earth, in order to find them a nest." But, in reality, the arrangement was convenient and pleasant on both sides.

The wedding day was one of royal sunshine, and the little church was crowded with sympathetic neighbors and acquaintances. People generally forget to be envious and ill-natured at a wedding, for the very presence of visible love seems to hold in abeyance evil thoughts and feelings. So, when Adriana, in a brave white satin dress, slashed with sunshine, walked up the aisle on her father's arm, and Harry followed with Miss Alida on his arm, there was a murmur of admiration and good will. The bride was so lovely and the bridegroom so handsome, and both were so radiantly happy, that every one present caught joy from them.

Through the open windows came the scent of lilacs and the twitter of birds, and the old pines, like mystical trees, waved to and fro in the open spaces. The breath and the hope of the morning hours were yet in the air; the minister's smiling face and strong, cheerful words, went to the heart like wine; and an air of religious joy sanctified the rite. Blessed even to tears, the new husband and wife turned to each other, and then to the world, with hopes bright as the morning and purposes holy as their vows.

There was a large wedding breakfast at Miss Alida's, and then she had but just time to catch the train which would serve her steamer; and after her departure, one by one the visitors went away; so that, before sunset, Harry and Adriana were alone in their new home. Only one thing had marred the pleasure of the day; Harry's parents had refused to share it. Mr. Filmer had no special dislike to Adriana, but his wife had; and Mr. Filmer wisely considered that his summer's comfort and peace probably depended on his apparent sympathy. And with his great book on hand, how could he face the prospect of a prolonged disagreement on a subject so much beyond his control?

So he was investigating the Plantagenet influence on the social life of England while his son was being married, and he quite forgot all about the circumstance. But Mrs. Filmer was fretting in every room of her fine house, and feeling the ceremony in every nerve of her body and pulse of her heart. Her restlessness indeed became so great that she drove through the village in the afternoon, determined to be very gracious to any one who could talk to her on the subject. She met no one who could do so; though, for some time, society in Woodsome divided itself very broadly into Mrs. Henry Filmer's friends and Mrs. Harry Filmer's friends.

Anyway, the Filmers, old and young, kept the village folk and the summer residents in delightful gossip and partisanship; for when a lady was tired of one side, or considered herself slighted by one side, she easily turned to the other; and thus, and so, the Filmer controversy lived on through the season. At the close of it, the old Filmers were in the ascendant. Mrs. Henry had given many fine entertainments, and people

liked them, for each fresh invitation contained the possibility of being a reconciliation party; and each failure of this hope renewed the life of the old grievance and the interesting discussion of it.

On the contrary, Harry and Adriana were provokingly satisfied with their own company. They were seen driving or riding together; and people caught glimpses of them strolling among the flowers and shrubs, or sitting together on the shady galleries; but they gave no balls, or lawn parties, or afternoon teas, and they did not seem to care whether friends called upon them or not. For new married couples have generally a contempt for the rest of the world, and to love and to be wise at the same time is a blessing rarely granted.

So the days danced away with down upon their feet, and there was no talk of anything between Harry and Adriana than their own great love and happiness—not at least for many weeks. But, as the dusty summer waned, they began to think of the future, and to plan for its necessities. In the winter they would certainly have to live in New York, and it seemed, therefore, best to make their home there. Harry was busy looking at houses for sale, and Adriana constantly going into the city to examine their advertised perfections. An element of unrest came into the beautiful summer nest, and something of that melancholy which haunts the birds just before their migration. The May of their lives was past. The time of labor and care was at hand. Even financially, Harry began to be aware that the love that had made him dream must now make him work.

So they watched eagerly for Miss Alida's letters. Hitherto they had been full of traveller's gossip and

complaints; but there had been no mention of her return, and so far they had not been sorry for the delay. But September brought a different feeling. Harry wanted to go to the city. His visits to it made him long for the financial fray, for society, for his old duties and amusements. He began to fret at his inaction, to be a trifle irritable with Miss Alida for her long visit, and at last to stop in the city for two and three days at a time.

"I wish Miss Alida would come home," said Adriana to her father one morning. She had driven herself to the post-office, and called at Peter's on her way back. "I wish she would come. We have had no letter from her for two weeks. I am uneasy about her—and about Harry."

"Why are you uneasy about Harry?" asked Peter.

"He stays in the city too often. He says 'business' demands his presence. Father, I do not like it. I want to be in the city with him. I am sure I ought to be. Why does he stay there? He could come home if he wished to do so."

Peter looked gravely into his daughter's anxious face. He could see the unshed tears in her eyes. He had himself suffered from her mother's over-love and jealous care, and he said earnestly:

"Yanna, my best loved one! Before all other advice about your husband, consider some words I am going to give you. I gave them to Gertrude and Augusta, when they first began to worry about this thing—a *wife should have eyelids as well as eyes*. Do not see too much. Do not hear too much. Do not feel too much. And be sure not to imagine too much. God made both men and women, and they are not alike. Remember that, dear girl—they are not alike." He

clasped her hand, and she smiled through her tears, and with a brave little nod turned her horse's head and drove slowly home.

When she reached the Van Hoosen place, she found that Miss Alida had returned. The old lady came to the door with a "Good morning, Mrs. Harry Filmer! Why was not Harry at the dock to meet me?"

"We did not know you were coming. Oh, I wish we had! We would have both been there."

"I thought so, and as I hate a fuss, I just dropped home without a word. Do I look ten years older? I feel twenty. No place like home! your own home! I hope we shall all have our own homes in heaven—country ones, too. I should tire awfully of that great multitude on the golden streets. Oh, Yanna, how good it is to see you! Where is Harry?"

"In New York. He has to go there very often now. He says it is business."

"It is business, undoubtedly. Here is the cup of chocolate I ordered. Sit down and talk to me, while I drink it. Then I will go to sleep, and you can take off your driving gear."

But she found it impossible to sleep; she had so much to tell, and so much to show. And suddenly she raised herself from an open trunk, and holding out a case of Apostle spoons, said, "These are a present from Rose. When did you hear from her?"

"She has written very seldom to me lately. But I thought perhaps she had been influenced by her mother. That would be quite natural. Did you see her?"

"Yes."

The reply had in it a touch of anger. Adriana looked up, but was silent.

"I saw her—in Edinburgh."

"Is she happy?"

"I suppose she is happy in her way; for she indulges her every mood and temper to her heart's desire."

"How is Antony?"

"God alone knows. To speak plainly, Rose is enough to drive him to destruction of some kind or other. Her vagaries, her depressions, her frivolities, her adoration of him one day and her hatred of him the next day, are beyond my comprehension. She prides herself on doing outrageous, unconventional things, and poor Antony feels that he must stand by her in them. My heart ached for the man."

"There is nothing really wrong, though?"

"Well, Yanna, there is always a dreadful debasement of nature, following violations of popular morality. Antony's face of calm endurance made my heart ache. Its patience, and its unspoken misery, reminded me constantly of a picture by Carlo Dolci, called *The Eternal Father*."

"How could any one dare to paint the face of God?"

"In this case the painter has been penetrated with an awful reverence. And, Yanna, what do you think his idea of the Divine Father was? A grand human face, full of human grief and loneliness and patience, the eyes sad beyond tears, as if there were an unutterable sorrow in the Eternal Heart."

"How strange!"

"No. If God is Love, how can He be ineffably happy and glorious while his sons and daughters are wandering away from Him and the whole world is broken-hearted? It did me good, it comforted me, to think of a God who could suffer; and I am sure it had done Antony good, for it was he who told me, when I

was in Florence, to be sure and go to the Gallery and see the picture."

"I hope Rose is not taking wine."

"I saw nothing of the kind. But I suspect much from her variable temper—and other things."

Then they were both silent. Miss Alida lifted some lace and went with it to a certain drawer; and Adriana looked at the silver Rose had sent her, and as she thoughtfully closed the case, she said to herself:

"I am glad Antony comprehended that picture; glad that he understands an Eternal Father who pities His children, because "He knows their frame, and remembers that they are dust."

CHAPTER VIII

No life is the same to-day as it was yesterday; and the passage of a year necessarily makes many changes, though they may not be noticed by the careless observer. Thus to all her friends Adriana Filmer's life appeared to be precisely what it had been when Harry first brought her to their pretty home near Central Park. But there were many vital differences, though they were not readily detected. Adriana herself had become still more grave and tender. She had been down into the Valley of the Shadow of Death for her first-born son; and such a passage cannot be made without leaving traces of its danger and suffering. Physically, it had perfected her beauty; her face had some new charm, her attitudes and manner were informed with a superb dignity; and spiritually and mentally, it had added to the serious strength of her fine character.

Harry was also changed. He yet loved with a sincere devotion his beautiful wife and child, and he loved none other with the same noble affection. But Adriana knew that there were lesser loves—firtations with reputable ladies who liked to drive with him—who enjoyed his society on a pleasure yacht or a race course—who thought it quite respectable to send him little messages, to accept from him small services or such transitory gifts as flowers or sweetmeats. And Harry liked this kind of popularity. Without con-

sciously wronging Adriana, he loved to sun himself in some beauty's smile, to be seen with some young married siren, or to escort a party of gay girls to a merry-making.

Usually he told Adriana of these affairs, and she was too wise to show the pain the confidence gave her. Her state of health, as well as her principles, kept her from many social functions, and if Harry did not feel compelled to respect her condition and scruples, she knew that it would be impossible to fret or scold or even reason him into sympathy. She had been aware of the diversity of their tastes when she married him; how, then, could she justly complain of circumstances which she foresaw and accepted by the very act of marriage? Only once had she spoken, and it was to her wise father. She could have gone to no more loving and prudent guide; and Peter's answer was but the echo of her own feelings.

"In marriage, Yanna," he said, "there is a tie besides love—it is patience. There is a veil for faults better than blind admiration—it is forgiveness. There is a time for everything, so if you have patience and forgiveness, your hour will come."

Thus the first eighteen months of her married life had passed not unhappily away; and she lived, and loved, and hoped for the time when Harry would put from him entirely the gay, dancing, playing, flirting, immature existence, which was so unbecoming to his domestic and civil honor as a husband and a father. Indeed, he was himself beginning to be aware of the incongruity; for he said to Adriana one evening at the close of October:

"I saw Cousin Alida to-day. She is in town for the winter."

"What did she say, Harry? When is she coming here?"

"She will call to-morrow. She hoped I would not compel her to go into the gay places of the world this year. I do believe the old lady went out so much last season just to watch me, just to make me wait upon her, and so keep me out of temptation. Fancy Miss Alida as my chaperon! It was very good of her—but fruitless."

Adriana smilingly asked: "What did you say about the gay places, Harry?"

"I told her I was going to have my fling this year, and after this year you and I would settle down to a sensible career. I told her, indeed, that I intended to go into politics."

"You have a great ability for politics, Harry. Professor Snowdon says you are a natural orator. How I should like to hear you make a great political speech!"

"Well, pet, some day perhaps you may have your desire. I think of taking lessons in elocution this winter."

"Do not, Harry. Your own speech and gestures are better than acquired ones. I am sure you will make a great debater."

Harry was much pleased. He cleared his throat, and straightened himself, and quite unconsciously struck an attitude. Then he kissed his wife tenderly, and said: "If I am a little late to-night, do not mind, dear. I have to preside at a supper given to our new opera stars. I will come home as soon as I possibly can." And she smiled him out of sight, and was ready to give him the last smile when he turned at the door of the lighted hall for it. But he did not see her fly to her boy's cradle and lift the child to her breast, and

with tears welling into her eyes, comfort herself with its smiles and caresses.

The season thus inaugurated proved to be one of great temptation to Harry, and of much sorrow to Adriana. Vague rumors reached her through many sources, some friendly, and others unfriendly. Miss Alida's visits were suspiciously frequent; and her manner was too protective and sympathetic, and Adriana could not help wondering after every visit what fresh wrong her cousin had come to comfort her for. But hitherto the comfort had been inferred; Miss Alida had never said one definite word against Harry, and Adriana would have disdained under any ordinary circumstances to complain of her husband.

One morning in December, however, she was compelled to listen to a positive accusation. Mrs. Henry Filmer called at a very early hour with it. There had been an apparent reconciliation between the two households; but neither on Mrs. Filmer's nor yet on Adriana's side was it very real, for Adriana had in truth some honest grievances against her mother-in-law. She made constant demands on Harry's purse, and she was still more unreasonable about his time. Often when Adriana's state of health particularly demanded a husband's sympathy and society, Harry had been compelled to leave her in order to escort his mother to some dinner or opera party. "Your father is so busy, and inefficient in company, so, dearest Harry, you must give mother just one hour to-night." Such messages were very frequent, and if Adriana thought Harry only too ready to answer them, there are many desponding women who will be able to pity her. Indeed, his mother's influence over Harry was great and never used for a kindly end. Every occa-

sion when Harry was with her was also an occasion to drop an evil thought against Harry's wife; and such a conversation as the following, varied slightly with varying circumstances, was the usual trend of their discourse:

"I suppose Adriana made a fuss about your coming to me for an hour, Harry?"

"Indeed, she did not! She is quite alone, and she let me off very cheerfully."

"Ah! she does not appreciate you as she ought to do! I grudge every minute you are not with me. I only live the few-and-far-between moments we are together."

"My dear mother!"

"I dare say that old maid has managed to put all kinds of ideas into her head about your sinfulness—and you are your old mother's dear naughty boy after all. What is this that I heard concerning pretty Cora Mitchin and Harry Filmer?"

"*Hush*, mother! I hope you put a stop to any such rumors. I would not have Yanna hear about Cora for the world. Yanna is not very strong lately."

"She will nurse her child, and she goes on about it as if it were the only child in the universe. People say all kinds of things about her secluding herself because she has a baby. Her behavior is a tacit reproach on every mother who condescends to do her duty to society."

"She is as foolish about little Harry as you are about me."

"She is quite incapable of feeling as I feel. She is a mere marble woman. I wish she could feel, for then she might understand what I suffer in your desertion. Oh, dear! If in anything she would act like other

women! Every one pities you!—you, that have always been the very flower of courtesy and of all that is socially charming!”

“No one need pity me, mother. I consider myself the most fortunate husband in New York. And you ought not to permit people to talk in that way. It is a great wrong to me.”

“I do not, Harry. You may be sure I stand up for you.”

And such conversations, even if Harry did not repeat them, were divined, either from his manner or from some unguarded remark he let fall. It required all the strength of Adriana’s broad character to prevent her divinations from finding a voice—to bear patiently wrongs she could not permit herself to right—and to wait with unabated love for that justification sure to come to those who leave it to the wisdom of their angels behind them.

On this December morning Mrs. Filmer’s visit was unexpectedly early. She met Adriana with a worried face, and barely touching the fingers of her outstretched hand, said, “I have a letter this morning, and I think you ought to know about it, Adriana. It concerns your brother. I am sure it has been the most wretched thing for my poor Rose that she ever met the man.”

“That statement would be hard to prove,” answered Adriana.

“You need not draw yourself up like a tragedy queen because I feel so bitterly the mistake my daughter has made. Rose has been a miserable wife from the first day of her marriage, and there is no use in denying the fact. And if her misery has led her to unwise ways of seeking relief, she is hardly to be

blamed. She says, too, that she has never had a day's health since the birth of her baby. And you know what a stern, unsympathetic man her husband is."

"I know that Antony has a heart of infinite love and forbearance. Few men would have endured what he has borne without a complaint. Rose is unreasonable, petulant, and, in fact, unmanageable. Several people who saw her last summer have told me about her caprices. They can only be accounted for on the supposition that she had been 'seeking relief.' "

"I have no doubt Antony is as bad as she is."

"Antony is absolutely temperate in all things."

"Antony is, of course, an angel."

"I think he is. Certainly he has had more than mortal patience with and love for a most ungrateful woman."

"All the Van Hoosens are angels; nevertheless, no one can live with them."

"Mr. Filmer is a Van Hoosen, and you have managed to live with him. Harry is a Van Hoosen, and I find it very delightful to live with Harry."

"Oh, I can tell you that Harry is no saint. I wish you could hear society laughing at the way he deceives you."

"There is nothing for society to laugh at; consequently you are mistaken."

"You blind woman! You poor blind woman! Everybody knows that Harry never stops with you one hour that he can help. He is devoted to that lovely Cora Mitchin."

"Madam! if you came here to insult my husband, I will not listen to you."

"I came here to enlighten the stupidest woman in New York."

"I know all I want to know; and I know nothing wrong of my husband. There is no happier wife in America than I am. I believe in Harry Filmer. It is beyond your power to shake my faith in him. Good morning, madam."

"Stop one moment. Rose is coming back. We must all, every one connected with Rose, do our best to surround her with proper influences. Miss Alida helped to make the unfortunate marriage, and I shall expect her to countenance and stand by Rose."

"You must tell her so. I am sure she will do all that she conceives to be right for her to do."

"I want you to tell her that she ought, that she must, give a party to welcome Rose back. Indeed, she could get Madame Zabriski to be the hostess if she likes, and she should do so."

"Why should she do so?"

"Madame Zabriski's favor would silence all the false and ugly reports people have brought from the other side. I look to you, Adriana, to carry this point."

"I prefer not to interfere with Madame Zabriski's entertainments."

"You owe Rose something."

"I owe Rose nothing but anger for the way she has treated my good brother. Poor Antony! My heart bleeds for him."

"Poor Rose! It is Rose that is to be pitied. But you are an immensely cruel, selfish woman! It used to be Rose here, and Rose there, until you had stolen Rose's brother. Now you will not even say a word for Rose; though a few words from you might get her into the best society."

"I do not think society is the best thing for Rose, at

this time. Will you kindly excuse me? I hear the nursery bell. My son wants me."

"My son! Yes! One day some woman will take him from you."

"When that day comes, I pray God that I may have wisdom, and love, and justice enough, not to treat that woman as you have treated me."

"Harry is my son yet."

"Harry is my husband. And a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife. That is the Word of God."

"I shall tell Harry of your temper! I shall!"—but she found herself talking to an empty room, and she picked up her fallen gloves and went away.

It was evident, however, when Harry returned to his home in the evening, that she had told Harry many things that had annoyed him. He was silent, unresponsive, and had an air of injury or offence. Adriana was only too familiar with this particular mood. Her first thought was to defend herself; her second reminded her of the hopelessness of the effort, or at least of its imprudence. Mrs. Filmer was not above the common tactics of talebearers; and she had before accused Adriana of being the informant, when, on the contrary, she had been mercilessly subjugated to information she had no desire either to hear or to discuss.

Therefore, if she told Harry that his mother had come to her with the tale of Cora Mitchin, and Mrs. Filmer had already told him that Adriana had been complaining to her on the same subject, whom was Harry to believe? The presumption was in his mother's favor; but any rate, it put him in the miserable position of deciding between his mother and his wife. And she remembered that on one occasion when

she had proved her innocence beyond a doubt, Harry did not appreciate the removal of the doubt; he had worn an air of annoyance and depression for some days afterwards, and had been specially attentive to his mother, as if her conviction required his extra sympathy to atone for it.

So they had a wretched dinner, the only subject on which Harry was inclined to talk being the illness and the return home of his sister. He had caught the tone of Mrs. Filmer, and her commiseration for Rose; and he spoke of her only as "the poor dear girl" and "the sad little girl," while his silence with regard to Antony was one instinct with disapproval and almost anger.

"Mother thinks I had better look for a house," he said. "Rose asked mother to attend to the matter, but she seems to be worn out, and unfit for the work."

"Is it to be furnished or unfurnished?" asked Adriana.

"Furnished, if possible. And it must be very large and handsome. They are going to build, but in the meantime they must rent. Can you not look for what is required, Yanna? Mother came to ask you to help her this morning, but she appears to have had but scant welcome in my house."

"I am not able to endure the fatigue of house-hunting, Harry; and baby is very poorly and cross. He has a high fever to-night."

"Mother told me I would find you unwilling to do anything."

"She did not ask me."

"She had no opportunity. You left the room."

"If she told you so much, Harry, I hope she was honest enough to tell you *why* I left the room."

"Well, Yanna, if you will listen to idle reports, and

then fret mother about them, you cannot expect her to join you in complaints against me and my conduct. She at least trusts me!" Then Harry, with a magnificent air of being wrongly accused, rose; and Adriana saw that he was about to leave the room.

"Harry," she cried, "was that really what mother told you? How could she? How could she?"

"I shall not return until late. Do not wait for me."

And so, with this evil impression—without caring for her explanation—Harry was gone. He had evidently been inspired with a sense of wrong, and he showed it; he had been led to believe that Adriana doubted and complained of him, and he was determined to make her feel that he resented her complaining. And oh! how bitter were the hours she sat alone, pondering the cruel situation in which the wickedness of others had placed her! Nor could she help a feeling of resentment against Rose. In every crisis of her life this girl had interfered to bring her sorrow. "She is my evil genius," she said angrily, "and not only mine, but Antony's also. Poor Antony! He has to suffer like me every wrong and injustice, and yet to hold his peace." And her heart was heavy, and she felt a dark despair and a fretful anger striving with her prudence and affection, and urging her at all risks to set herself clear in Harry's eyes. "But to what purpose?" she asked. "He does not believe—that is, he does not want to believe me. My patience has brought me only injustice; and in vain, in vain, have I washed my hands in innocence."

But youth finds it possible to hope that such dark hours must be followed by day, and after a sleep Adriana thought, "Things will wear themselves right by to-morrow." They did not. It was an unfortunate

time for a dispute. Harry was looking for a house for Rose, and was nearly constantly with his mother, and all his sympathies were enlisted for his "poor dear sister." He was working for her comfort, and therefore he loved her; and nothing was in his heart or on his tongue for the following week but Rose, and a house for Rose, and when it was secured, the preparations necessary to make it suitable for her habitation.

As the time approached for the arrival of the steamer, it was a continual sending and looking for telegrams. Mrs. Filmer was in a fever of expectation. She spent the last day in doubting, fearing and watching, until she was almost hysterical. That she had a husband who ought at such times to be her stay did not seem to enter her mind; and Harry was kept at his mother's side, or sent off to the dock or the shipping office, continually.

"The steamer is expected to be at her dock about ten o'clock, and you had better be at Rose's house to welcome her there," said Harry, as he took his early and hurried breakfast, and kept every one fidgety by his haste.

"I cannot do that and do my duty to my own house and child, Harry. The doctor will not call to see baby until eleven."

"The doctor and the nurse are surely enough for one morning. I shall feel it to be a great slight to Rose if you are not there to welcome her."

"Very well, if you wish it, I will leave baby and go to Rose."

"And do try and be kind and sympathetic, and let the dear girl feel that she is welcome home again."

"I shall not fail, Harry."

Then he came back and kissed her; and she smiled

with a sad pleasure as she took her way to the nursery, and went over and over to the woman in authority there the symptoms to be detailed and the questions to be asked when the physician arrived.

Then she dressed herself with care, and drove to the house which had been prepared for Mrs. Antony Van Hoosen. It was large and in a fashionable locality, and there were fires in all the splendid rooms, and a full staff of servants in possession. Adriana disturbed their elaborate breakfast, and they were inclined at first to be impertinent and injured. But her manner soon convinced them of her authority, and she occupied the waiting hours in altering this cushion, and that picture, and in trying to give an air of home to mere upholstery and bric-a-brac.

She expected the travelers by noon, but some delay occurred, and it was two o'clock when they came up the silent Sabbath street, with carriages and express wagons, and a certain clatter and *éclat* which brought every one, far and near, to their windows. Antony was the first to alight, though Harry immediately followed. Harry assisted his mother, Antony took Rose on his arm and tenderly helped her up the low, broad steps. They were both greatly changed; Antony looked ten years older, and also as if grief, and not age, had robbed him of his youth. Rose was still beautiful, but her face had lost its childlikeness, and gained something more dominant. She was thin and restless; but quite the woman of the world. As soon as Antony had placed her on a sofa he went back rapidly to a third carriage, and took from the arms of a French nurse within it a little bundle of white silk and swan's-down.

His gentleness and care, his encircling arms, his face

bent with such infinite love, made Adriana's eyes fill with tears. She went to meet him, and, with inexpressible pride, he withdrew the veil that covered the small face. "Oh, what a lovely child!" This was the exclamation from every one present. Indeed, the babe was exquisitely beautiful, as it lay smiling in Antony's arms, dimpled and rosy, with large blue eyes full of heavenly memories, and soft little rings of golden curls, lying like sunshine on its brow. Mrs. Filmer cried over the beauty of the infant, and Harry kissed it again and again; and Adriana felt her heart swell with tenderness. And while they were all doing homage to the infant, Mr. Filmer came in; and he let slip all his acquired restraints, and forgot every other consideration in the child. He would have it in his arms. He would kiss its tiny hands and its rosy mouth, and he said it was "the loveliest image of humanity he had ever seen!"

And in spite of herself, all this enthusiasm depressed Adriana. Her own child had never been much noticed, she thought even Harry had given Rose's baby more admiration than he had given his own. To be sure, little Harry was not lovely, as little Emma was lovely; but Harry was a boy, and also he had in his sturdy, large-limbed babyhood more resemblance to the Van Hoosens than to the more refined Filmers. Being a mother and a woman, she could not avoid feeling these things; but having a nature thoroughly just and loving, she speedily put down all thoughts that were not unselfish and worthy to be entertained.

Rose's attitude also pained her. She was indifferent and even proud, and she seemed to take a pleasure in snubbing Antony before her family. So Adriana made her adieus as quickly as possible, and hastened back to

her child; for he was just then cutting his teeth at the peril of his life. Never had the little one been so precious to her. She did not permit her lips to utter a complaint, but there was a great unspoken sense of injustice at her heart; and she was hardly comforted by Harry's return to dinner in high good temper; for he could talk of nothing but Rose, and Rose's baby, and the beautiful presents she had brought for every one.

This was but the beginning of a life which did not promise anything but a constant trial of patience to Adriana; for Rose had that power which some women possess of engaging every man they know to do them service. "There is only Harry that can help me in arranging my social affairs," she said. "Antony employs his whole time in nursing me and the baby. Sometimes I wish for a reasonable husband, such as you are, Harry. How Yanna must enjoy being left to herself sometimes!" she cried; and then, with a cunning little laugh, "Mamma tells me you are just as naughty as ever! For shame, sir!" And Harry laughed back, not unpleasantly; and then he offered to help his sister in any way he could.

"Mamma says that Yanna refused to ask that old maid to get me into her set, but I would not be in her set for anything. It is too stupid, and it is proper beyond endurance. We want something Frenchy and funny, and just a little rapid; nothing wrong, of course, Harry, the proper road; only a gallop, and not a crawl, on it."

On these lines dinner followed dinner, and dance followed dance; and pretty Mrs. Van Hoosen became the leader in the set her ambitions leaned towards. The giddiest girls, the young sporting men equally

frivolous, who lived only to have what they called "a good time," gathered round her. To such entertainments it was the merest form to ask Adriana, and as her health was delicate, she had a suitable excuse without bringing her principles forward to be made a matter of mirth. But with Antony it was different.

"It is a long watch, and a weary one, for I am on guard day and night, Yanna," he said to his sister one afternoon. They had met in a fashionable store, where Rose was shopping; and standing a little apart, it had been possible to answer thus Adriana's query, "Why do you not come to see me, Antony?"

"Why do you permit——"

"Ask me no questions, Yanna. A doctor cannot prevent symptoms, he can only watch for them, and be ready to fight danger when he sees it. I am in that position, hour after hour. That is all."

"But it is misery for you."

"Yes; but I am watching for the soul of one I love better than myself."

"How long is it to last?"

"God knows; to the end of my life, if needs be."

Then Rose called Yanna sharply, and both went to her side. "I am coming to see you to-morrow, Yanna," she said. "I have something to tell you, dear," and she spoke with the old bewitching smile; and Yanna answered:

"Do come, Rose. You have never yet seen my baby."

Then at a word Rose turned to her purchases, and apparently forgot both her husband and her sister-in-law. Adriana had no heart to buy what she had come to buy. She passed out into the cold, dirty street, and drove back at once to her home.

It was fully two weeks before Rose remembered her promise; then she came suddenly one morning when Harry had gone away "queer" and the baby was suffering and cross, and the whole house a little affected by the tone of the heads of it. Rose was also cross, though she was sumptuously clothed in green velvet and golden beaver. She looked rather contemptuously round Adriana's parlor. "I wonder you put up with this house, Yanna," she said. "Harry ought to be ashamed of himself."

"I am very well pleased with my house, Rose; and very happy in it. You have grown used to palaces abroad. And Antony is so much richer than Harry."

"Harry could do better than he does. I do not understand how you endure his behavior."

"Rose, if you love me, say nothing wrong of Harry."

"He behaves too badly for anything. Mamma says the money he spends is dreadful! How do you bear it? I am sorry for you!"

"I am not the only one who has to bear. Constantly, I feel sorry for Antony."

"What do you mean? What has Antony told you? At least Antony is true as gold to me. I would not suffer a husband like Harry. I would divorce him. Why, Cora——"

"Rose! You must cease at once, or I must leave you. You have nothing to do with my husband."

"He is my brother, and the whole town talks of him."

Then Yanna left her sister-in-law, and in a few minutes she heard her carriage go clattering up the street; but she sat still and tearless in the little low chair which stood by the nursery fire. Her boy was

taking a drive with his nurse, and she was quite alone in the room sacred to his innocent life. She kept the anger in her heart behind her closed lips, but she reflected that patience might cease to be a virtue; and that the time had come to demand from Harry some explanation of the rumors and accusations that had reached her.

"Mr. Van Hoosen is here, ma'am, and wishes to see you," said a servant.

Adriana thought of her brother with a sense of comfort. She felt that she could open her heart to him. But it was not Antony, it was Antony's father who came towards her with outstretched hands, and a blessing that fell like rain upon her hot heart.

"God has sent you, father," she said solemnly; "for I am in a strait, in such a strait as no one but you can help me out of." Then she told him all her sorrow; and it was evident to Peter that the sting of her grief was her husband's frailty. "If Harry were only good!" she cried despairingly. "I could bear the loss of his love."

"But, Yanna, my dearest one! what man is good? Was any one ever exempt from sin but the Son of the Virgin?"

"Oh, father!" she cried passionately, "will you be like the rest of the world, and take a man's view of this question, just because you are a man?"

"My dear one, neither must you take a woman's view just because you are a woman. The common law and the social law may regard sex; the commands of God are issued to man and woman alike; though our merciful Creator, no doubt, will judge us according to our circumstances and our temptations."

"If Harry wrongs me, or I wrong Harry, the sin is the same against God."

"It is. But it is not the same against each other. Harry could never wrong you as you could wrong Harry."

"Oh, father! How can you say such a thing?"

"Think a moment. The infidelity of a husband injures a wife's good name far less than the infidelity of a wife injures her husband's good name. In one case the wife is only visited by the pity of her acquaintances, in the other case the husband is an object of derision; yes; in every age the world has thought the deceived husband worthy to be derided and sneered at. Socially then your sin would hurt Harry worse than his sin could hurt you. Between a man and his Maker, and a woman and her Maker, the cases are to judge; but between a man and his wife infidelity to marriage vows is not as hard on the wife as it is on the husband. I am speaking now, Yanna, as the sin affects daily life."

"Oh, what must I do? What must I do?"

"You must be patient and forgiving. If the Holy One, in whose sight heaven itself is impure, can bear with Harry, can you not also bear? Have you fulfilled the seventy-and-seven times given for a brother's forbearance, and was there any limit given for a wife's forbearance? Has Harry yet done a wrong that your pardon cannot reach? Are you more strict to mark his offences than his Maker is? To be sure, you are blameless where Harry is guilty, but, oh, Yanna! is chastity the only conjugal virtue? Where are charity, patience, sweet temper, cheerfulness? In these pleasant home virtues have you never failed? My dear one, there is an egotism of wifely sorrow that drives a man to sin. Your mother made me unhappy very often with just such jealous affection."

"You are very hard, father. I thought you would stand by me."

"Not yet, not yet, Yanna! You must stand for yourself; stand on your own merits, your beauty, your rights; stand on Harry's love for you, and your great, patient love for him; stand on your faith in God, your desires for the happiness of others, and your measureless charity for all. Oh, Adriana, when a wife cannot lean on her husband, she must stand alone until she can! Interferers only bring sorrow."

"It is all so dark and void and lonely, father."

"Put your hand out into the darkness, and you will find *The Hand* that you can safely clasp; that will lead you and Harry into confident and satisfied affection. There is much good in Harry; there are many years of great love and happiness in store for you both, if you, Yanna, do not get weary in well-doing. Is there any sin for which a man may not be pardoned? Is not the Gospel built on unlimited forgiveness?"

As Peter was speaking Miss Alida entered. She looked at him, and then at Yanna, and shrugged her shoulders with an understanding glance at the pale, troubled woman. "Well, Cousin Peter," she said, "I am glad to see you; but I doubt if you are the best adviser for Yanna, at this time. Suppose you leave us a little. I have some words for my girl that I do not want you to contradict until she has had time to think them over." Then Peter went out, and Miss Alida set her chair down with a vigorous little thump close to Yanna's side. "I called on Rose this morning," she said, "and I heard from Antony that she had come here, so I guessed what she had come to say. Now, Yanna, we are going to have some straight, sensible talk, and then, if you make a little fool of yourself

afterwards, it will not be Alida Van Hoosen's fault. Rose told you about Harry's fondness for certain society?"

"Yes."

"And made more of her information than there was need to—that of course. What have you been telling Cousin Peter?"

"I said to father that Harry would make a great complaint if I behaved with certain gay men as he behaves with certain gay women. I told him I thought the sin in both cases just alike, and that I was tired of bearing wrongs which would send Harry to the divorce court."

"Hum—m—m! What did your father say?"

"He said Harry's sin towards God was the same as my sin would be in like circumstances; but that Harry's sin to me was less than the same sin on my part would be towards him. And he told me to pray, and forgive, and hope, and wait, and so on," she added with a weary sigh.

"Good, as far as it goes. We are going further, and we must not look in a one-eyed manner at the question. To begin at the beginning, none of us supposed, not you, nor I, not yet your father, that Harry was before his marriage to you, a model of morality. Before your marriage, antecedent purity was not pretended on Harry's side; and your family never inquired after it, I dare say. Unfortunately, though early marriage is rare, early depravity is not rare; and I will venture to doubt if one youth in one hundred struggles unpolluted out of the temptations that assail youth. Whatever future obligations were imposed on Harry by his marriage, nobody thought of blaming him for the past."

"I do not permit myself to consider Harry's past. In our marriage he was bound by the same vows and obligations as I was. When he breaks them he is precisely as guilty as I would be if I should break them."

"Not quite so. The offence of a married woman changes purity to impurity; the offence of a married man usually only makes what was impure a little more so. That is one difference. Your father pointed out the social difference—pity for the woman, scorn and derision for the man. I will go still further, and remind you that society in blaming the woman so much more than the man acts on a great physiological truth, affecting not only racial and family characteristics, but the proper heirship of large properties and the successions to vast estates. The infidelity of the husband inflicts no spurious children on his wife. If a woman has no other married privilege, she has that of knowing her own children."

"That is not the whole of the question. A bad man may not be able to impose spurious children on his wife; but that does not prevent him from imposing them on his friend and neighbor."

"That is a case between man and man, not between a man and his wife; and we have nothing to do with it. I am only trying to convince you that Harry is not as bad as you think he is."

"And I say that it is wrong to expect purity from wives and not also from their husbands."

"My dear Yanna, we shall have to call justice to our aid. There are certain virtues that belong peculiarly to men, and others which belong peculiarly to women. For instance, bravery is to a man all that chastity is to a woman. The want of courage that disgraces a man is no slur to a woman. If a ship is going to pieces,

men postpone their own deliverance until all the women have been saved; and if they did not, they would be infamous forever in the eyes of their fellow men. In the hour of death or danger, women faint and cry out, and it is no shame to them, it is only womanly, and they are loved the more for it; but if men were to so far forget themselves, what a measure of contempt would be justly given them! Yet men do not complain of this apparent unfairness; they know that being men, they must suffer as men, and not claim the privilege of a woman's immunity."

"One sin cannot excuse another, Cousin Alida."

"It is not only one, there are many other points, which are just as remarkable; for instance, there is the dishonor of being found out cheating at cards. Men laugh at the fault in women; they call them 'pretty little frauds,' and go on with the game. But if a man is caught in the same act, he is quickly sent to Coventry, or to Halifax, or to some other shameful limbo."

"Women are proverbially weak, and men assume to be their superiors in strength of character. They ought to prove it."

"Come, come, Mrs. Filmer! If a woman's weakness is an excuse, then the vigor, the strength, and the temptations of men are a much larger one. Their very excess of life makes them powerful to *do*, and impotent to resist. It is clearly unreasonable to expect men to be both as they are and as they are not. Simple justice demands that we should be more tolerant with men than with women on the score of those offences, which are the death-blow to a woman's good name. You see, then, that each sex has a right to plead certain extenuations not permissible to the other sex."

"I see that it is the privilege of the male sex to wound and to injure the female sex; and the privilege of the latter to bear and to forgive."

"Well, then, Yanna, to forgive is a noble privilege, a safe and blessed generosity. And I can tell you, that I have known many pure, chaste wives who were just as bad wives as you could possibly find—cruel, selfish, spiritually-proud, intolerant women, filling their husband's days with the bitterness of their tempers, or else giving way to an egotism of despair and weeping worse than all the wrongs they complain of."

"My dear cousin, I do hope that you do not include me in that list."

"I hope not, Yanna. I hope not. There are certain things that can only be got by renouncing them—your own way, your own desire is usually one of these things."

"What am I to do then? I cannot bear things as they are."

"If you cannot bear your troubles, you may be able to bear their remedies. You ought to have for Harry such a love as masters Time, and the infelicities of Time. Have you this love?"

"Yes, I have."

"You can bear to think of loving Harry and living with him eternally?"

"I should be miserable if I thought death would separate us."

"Good gracious, child! And yet you have suffered the word 'divorce' to pass your lips. Just remember that men do not marry women because they are very beautiful, or very clever, or very good, indeed; they generally marry them because there is 'something nice about them.' Now, let Harry always find there is

'something nice about you.' You do not complain of Harry to any one, do you?"

"I have not, until this morning; nor have I listened to any report about him."

"Quite right. To talk of matrimonial troubles is to burn the dirtiest chimney ever set on fire. But there are sins of omission as well as of commission. You have stayed at home too much. You ought to go out with Harry while his mood is to go out."

"I cannot go with the set that Rose and he prefer."

"You can go with my set. Harry must really be forgetting how you look in anything but tweed and China silk. Put away every appearance of being an injured wife. Be a happy wife. Let him always come into an atmosphere of good humor. No man can resist that."

"Rose and Mrs. Filmer drop so many unkind words about me."

"Drop kind ones about them. The incongruity will eventually strike him."

"His family have always tried to make sorrow for me."

"Of course. A wife's foes are to be found in her husband's family. Let them plot and plan, and you be sincere. Whatever is sincere invariably conquers. A week to-day we are going to have a grand dinner-party. Wear your wedding dress, and I have brought you my sapphires and diamonds. Dress your hair high. Dress to the utmost of your conception of what is splendid. Then march on Harry, and take him anew by storm. One-half of men's passion for pretty actresses is grounded on their picturesque dressing. If they saw the same girls in a housemaid's cotton gown and apron, they would not look at them."

"Such a low side to touch Harry on!"

"Oh, dear me! Can you build a marble palace without the rough wood scaffolding? Do but be bright and cheerful and handsome and patient, and my word for it! you will see how swiftly Harry will tire of meaner women. For the rapid transformation whereby carnal love is turned into carnal hatred is one of the most wonderful things to consider. Now mind, you are to conquer all before you next Thursday night!"

So the invitation was formally sent, and Adriana announced her intention of accepting it. Harry was a trifle annoyed. He had grown accustomed to going out alone, and feeling a kind of safe repose in the idea of the wife watching on his hearthstone.

"Do you think you had better go, dear?" he asked. "Is little Harry well enough to leave? And there is your dress! I suppose it will be a very fine affair."

"Cousin Alida made a point of my being present. I must go for dinner. I need not stay long after."

"I have an engagement at the Union Club that very night—rather an important one—I wonder how I can manage?"

"You can take me to the Zabriski house, and make your apologies in person to Cousin Alida. After your dinner at the club, you can call for me. I dare say I shall be ready to go home."

"Those Zabriski affairs are so very stupid."

"Still, we like to have the invitations."

"If you do go, Yanna, dress as Mrs. Harry Filmer ought to dress."

"Certainly, Harry, I will." And then with renewed hope she made her preparations. They were so successful that her face was radiant with delight when she

pressed her cousin's large, capable hand and whispered:

"Harry said I was the most beautiful creature he had seen this season."

"You are," answered Miss Alida, looking with pride at the stately woman robed in white satin and lace, and sparkling with jewels. Fortunately, she had Professor Snowdon for a companion; and he brought out the brightest and sweetest traits of her nature, so that she recaptured all that old charm of presence which had once made her irresistible. So swiftly grew her confidence in her own powers again that she was easily persuaded to take a share in the music that followed the dinner; and when Harry came to escort her home he found her standing by the piano, and singing to its wandering, penetrating melody, with a delightful voice:

'Love in her sunny eyes doth basking play;
Love walks the pleasant mazes of her hair;
Love does on both her lips forever stray,
And sows and reaps a thousand kisses there."

And as she sang, she caught Harry's beaming glance; and so she sang to him, thrilling his heart with the passionate melody till a love like that of his first betrothal swayed it.

When she went away, Miss Alida put her face under the pretty pink hood, and whispered: "Good night, Yanna! You have done everything I wished and hoped. Harry is saved!"

But Miss Alida knew only the probable ways of men and women. This exquisite Adriana clothed in satin, and gemmed with sapphires, seemed to her the proper

angel of the recreant husband. But the wisdom of The All Wise had ordained a very different woman; even one of those poor souls expected by theologians to be damned, but intended by God to be an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER IX

One afternoon towards the end of March, Adriana was riding down Broadway. At Twenty-third Street there was some obstruction and delay, and she saw Duval and Rose together. They were coming up Fifth Avenue, and their walk was lingering and absorbed, Duval's attitude being specially earnest and lover-like. Rose was listening with a faint smile, and Adriana noticed that she was dressed with great care, and that she had flowers both at her breast and in her hands. Adriana's first thought was to alight and join the pair; but her second thought was a reproof of her suspicion—"Charity thinketh no evil," she mused, "and Rose may have simply met the man and permitted him to walk at her side."

Then she reflected that she had never heard Rose name Duval since her marriage; and that the man had been conspicuously absent from the Van Hoosen entertainments. She knew also that Rose was vain and sentimental, and that one of her dear, dangerous pleasures was to make every man think "it might have been." But she did not know that on the subject of Mr. Duval Rose and her husband had a passionate, intermitting quarrel, that Rose put Duval's name on every list of her guests, and that Antony always crossed it off, with peremptory positiveness, and that consequently there was in Rose's heart a secret partisanship which had a dangerous romance about it.

For it was impossible for Antony to prevent Rose from meeting the man in the houses of friends, in the crowded foyers of the theatre or opera, on the street, on the drive in the park; and on all such occasions a glance, a word, a lingering hand clasp, conveyed to Rose a meaning she ought not to have understood, and won from her in return an interest or sympathy she ought not to have given.

For once that this secret understanding was established, she found it hard to escape from its influence; gradually, almost unconsciously, the intimacy grew; and Rose, feeling sure in her heart that she meant nothing wrong, was quite off her guard, and only sensible of the pleasure that the secret, silent romance gave her. Love, however, that believes itself favored, is not long satisfied with such results, and Duval had grown more bold, more exacting, more dangerous, with every meeting. For he was actuated by motives not to be easily dashed, and he was resolved to carry his point. First, he admired Rose; second, he was poor, and Rose had at least \$10,000 a year entirely at her own disposal; third, he hated Antony; and for these reasons, to induce Rose to leave Antony had become the passion of his life—a passion so eager, earnest, and pervading, that Rose was frightened at its strength. The man had gained a point at which he could both coax and threaten, and the poor weak woman—really loving her husband and adoring her child—was led, and ordered, and pleased, and tormented, by the whimsies of this sentimental affair, which she thought was driving Duval either to ruin or to death.

Of this condition Adriana, as well as all others who loved Rose, was entirely ignorant. Yet the sight of

the couple, and their absorbed manner, forced itself again and again on Adriana's consciousness; and she resolved to name the circumstance to Harry that night. Harry listened, and looked much annoyed, but he answered finally:

'I do not believe there is anything wrong, Yanna. It is imprudent of Rose, and not right; and I wonder at her, for Antony told me an hour ago that little Emma was seriously ill. What a worry he does make over that baby of theirs!'

"It is such a frail, lovely little creature; and Antony has such a tender heart."

And Rose does not hover over her nursery, as you do, Yanna."

'But you think there is nothing wrong, Harry?'

"In a legal sense, nothing. But, nevertheless, it is a shame for Rose to carry on such intrigues; and I will see her in the morning and give her some plain words. Antony is too careful of her feelings. I am glad she is not my wife."

Then the subject was dropped, and Adriana did not entertain it again. In her secret heart, she felt that she might forgive Rose if she were driven to deceive her husband by the force of a strong passion; but for this silly, weak drifting into sin and danger on little currents of vanity and sensual romance, she had no toleration. Refusing consciously to reason out the exact turpitude of Antony's wife, anger at the erring woman lay at the bottom of all her thoughts, as she moved about the household duties of the day. "Such a good husband! Such a lovely little daughter! How can Rose wrong them both so shamefully?" These unspoken words rang to and fro like a fretful complaining in her inner self.

While she was taking lunch, Rose came to see her. She entered the room with much of her old effusiveness; she kissed and petted her sister-in-law, and said: "Give me a strong cup of tea, Yanna. I am worn out. Baby was ill all night, and Antony would neither sleep nor let any one else sleep."

"But if Emma were sick you would not be able to sleep, I am sure. And she must be better, or you would not have left the little one at all."

"Mamma is watching her. I just ran over to see you. It always rests me and makes me strong to see you, Yanna. I know what you are going to say—that I might, then, come oftener—so also I might go oftener to church. But I do not love you the less, Yanna; when I am good I always love you."

'Dear Rose, I wish you were always what you call 'good.'"

"I wish I were! I do long to be good! I am so weak and silly, but there is a good Rose somewhere in me. Do you think baby is really very sick?"

"Babies all suffer dreadfully, Rose, in teething. I often wonder how grown-up people would endure half-a-dozen teeth forcing their way through sore, inflamed gums. There would be swearing among the men, and hysteria among the women, and we should all do as Burns did when he had only one troublesome tooth—kick the furniture about—really, or figuratively."

'Poor Emma! I do love her! I do love her! If there is anything on earth I love, it is Emma. But Antony is simply absurd. He insists on the whole house teething, too. He will have no company; and some one has to sit by Emma's cot all night because, he says, 'she must need cold water often,' and when I told him this morning that we had all gone through the

same suffering once in our lives, he looked at me as if he thought I was a brute. I was only trying to aggravate him. He ought not to tempt me to aggravate him; for I cannot help doing it. And of course, I love Emma far better than he does. I nearly died for her. I was provoked with Antony this morning."

"What does the doctor say?"

"He says baby is to go to the mountains, so we are to have the Woodsome house; and papa and mamma are going to Europe. Papa wants 'authorities.' I should think the British Museum may perhaps satisfy him."

"We are going to Woodsome also, this summer. How soon will you leave the city?"

"That is what we are disputing about. Antony wants to go at once. I want to give one, just one, farewell dance before shutting myself up for months. I wish you could have seen Antony's face when I proposed it. I just wish you could! It was awful! He said 'No,' and he stood on 'No,' and nothing short of an earthquake could have moved him. I simply hate Antony, when he is so ugly; and I told him I hated him."

"But it is not right to dance and feast when your child is so ill, Rose."

"My baby is no worse than other babies in the same condition. I am so weary of all the trouble. I feel like running away and hiding myself from every one. I wish I were in some place where Antony, and mamma, and Harry, and every one, could not be perpetually saying, 'You must not do this,' or, 'You must do that.' The other day I heard of a heavenly land, where the sun always shines, and the flowers always bloom, and loving and dancing and singing and feasting make up the whole of life."

"Oh, Rose! Rose! That is a very earthly land, indeed."

"A woman has no youth in this country. And I shall only be a very little time young now. I do grudge spending my young days in gloom, and sorrow, and scolding. It is too bad. If I should fly away to some wilderness, would you take care of my baby, Yanna?"

"What nonsense are you talking, Rose?"

"Of course, it is nonsense; and yet I might die—or commit suicide—or something. If anything happened you, I would take little Harry and make him my very own. Would you take little Emma if anything happened to me? I might die."

"My dear Rose, you are not likely to die."

"I know I am not—but things happen."

"What things?"

"Accidents—and such things. One never knows. It does seem a silly thing to ask, but I have a sudden feeling about it, Yanna. If I should die—or anything should happen—you are to take Emma and bring her up to be good—I mean pious—I mean not like her poor, silly mother. How absurd I am! Whatever is the matter with me? Am I going to be ill, I wonder? Am I going to have a fever?"

"I saw you yesterday on Broadway. What a pretty suit you had on! Mr. Duval was with you."

"Mr. Duval! Yes. I had forgotten. Yes, I met Dick as I came out of a store, and we walked up a block to Twenty-third Street. Do you know that store under the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where they sell such lovely jewelry? I was going there."

"I do not think Antony would like you to go anywhere with Mr. Duval."

"Antony will just have to dislike it then. He has gone as far as I intend to let him. The past two weeks he has wanted me to sit by the cradle, day and night, and night and day. I love my child, but I do want a breath of fresh air sometimes."

"I was speaking of Mr. Duval."

"Harry has also been speaking of Mr. Duval this morning. I told Harry to mind his own affairs. I say the same to you, Yanna. It is too much, when a married woman cannot speak to an old friend, cannot walk three or four blocks with him, without having her whole family suspect her immediately of breaking—or at least cracking—the ten commandments."

"You know how Antony feels about that Duval."

"I know Antony is an idiot about him. I know his behavior has been shameful to 'that Duval.' Poor Dick! What has the man done but dare admire me? A cat may look at a king. Many women would give Antony a lesson on that subject—they would not be accused for nothing."

"But not you, Rose! Not you, dear Rose! Do not be impatient. Baby will soon be well, and Antony does love you so——"

"Do hush, Yanna! Antony loves nothing about me. But I must go now, or else I shall get another scolding for leaving baby so long; or a look worse than words; or silence, and Antony ostentatiously walking Emma up and down the floor; and mamma sighing; and the doctor solemnly standing by; and the nurse tip-toeing about the room; and the room so dark, and smelling of drugs, and full of suffering—it is all so dreadful! For I want to be out in the fresh spring air, and wind, and sunshine. I want to dance and run in it. My blood goes racing through my veins like

quicksilver, and it is a kind of torture to sit still, and talk in whispers, and see baby's white waxy face, and smell nothing but drugs. When I went to show myself to Antony yesterday in my new suit, and held the lovely roses to his face, he turned away as if I were a fright, and put the flowers from him, as if they hurt. Such ways I cannot understand!"

This conversation rather quieted than increased Yanna's misgivings. She thought she understood the restless woman. Beautiful, and longing to exhibit her beauty, full of the pulse and pride of youth, excited by dreams of all sensuous delights, romantic, sentimental, and vain, she was resentful at the circumstances which bound her to the stillness and shadow of the sick room, because she was incredulous of any necessity for such devotion. For the latter feeling Mrs. Filmer was much to blame. She had not the keen intuitions regarding life and death which Antony possessed; she had dim remembrances of her own children's trials, she had the experiences of her friends on the same subject, and she did not honestly believe little Emma was in any special danger. Consequently, she had supported Rose in her claim to regard her own health, and go out a little every day. And if Antony had been asked for the reason of his great anxiety, he would not have cared to explain it to his wife or his mother-in-law. Both these women would have smiled at what he had learned through the second sight of dreams, in that mysterious travail of sleep, by which the man that feareth God is instructed and prepared for "the sorrow that is approaching"; because, if apprehension of the supernatural is not in the human soul, neither miracle nor revelation can authenticate it to them.

So Antony bore his fear in silence, and told no one *the Word* that had come to him; strengthening his heart with the brave resolve of the wise Esdras: "Now, therefore, keep thy sorrow to thyself; and bear with a good courage that which hath befallen thee."

About ten days after this event, Rose left her home early one morning to complete the shopping necessary for their removal to Woodsome on the following day. Mrs. Filmer promised to remain with the sick child until her return; but she urged Rose to make all haste possible, as there were various matters in the Filmer household to attend to ere Mr. Filmer and herself could comfortably leave for Europe on the Saturday's steamer. With these considerations in view, she was annoyed at Rose for positively refusing the carriage. "I want to walk, mamma," she said crossly; "and if I get tired, I will take the street cars."

"But you may be delayed by them, and time is precious now."

Then she kissed her mother affectionately, and stooped to little Emma's cot, and with a long, soft pressure of her lips to the lips of the fragile-looking child, she went away, promising to be home certainly before noon. But she was not home at one o'clock; and Mrs. Filmer and Antony ate their lunch together, both of them with a hot, angry heart at Rose's indifference. At two o'clock Rose was still absent, and a singular feeling of alarm had taken the place of anger.

"What keeps Rose so long, mother?" asked Antony, in an anxious voice.

"I do not know, Antony. She could have been back in an hour. It is four hours since she left."

"Can you think of anything? Have you not some idea where she is?"

"She was very tired and low-spirited. She may have gone to see her father, and then—being so tired—have taken a glass of wine, and lain down to rest in her own old room. I can think of nothing else."

"She would not be likely to make calls?"

"Make calls so early! in a shopping costume! and without a carriage! She would not think of such a thing."

"May she have gone to Yanna's?"

"I should say not. She does not care for Yanna as she used to do."

"Will you go home and see if she is in her old room resting? I have a strange, unhappy feeling about her."

"I will go at once. I shall find her at home, no doubt."

But though Mrs. Filmer spoke confidently, she was by no means sure of her affirmation. She went home with a trembling, sick heart, and found that Rose had not been there at all. For a moment or two she was unable to think or to act, and she was going blindly to Mr. Filmer's study when she met Harry.

"Oh, my dear boy!" she cried, "you are just the one person needed. I am almost distracted, Harry. Rose went out this morning at ten o'clock; and she has not come home, and we are wretched about her."

Harry took out his watch. "It is not quite three, mother. Rose has perhaps gone to see Yanna, or some of her acquaintances; or she may be at her dressmaker's, or——"

"Harry, there is something wrong. You cannot reason the certainty out of my heart. I am sick with fear."

"Dear mother, there is nothing wrong at all. Go

and lie down, or talk to father, and I will bring you word that all is well in an hour. Sure."

"Where are you going?"

"I am going home. Yanna will know something."

He took a cab at the nearest stand, and drove rapidly to his own house. Adriana started, and stood up quickly, as he entered. "What is the matter, Harry?" she cried.

"Rose seems to have got herself out of the way. She left home at ten o'clock this morning, and has not returned. Mother is quite nervous and ill about her. Has she been here?"

For a minute Adriana stood motionless, as one by one the thoughts flashed across her mind which led her to the truth; and when she spoke, it was in the voice of a woman who had pulled herself together with the tightest rein. "Harry," she answered, "while I put on my hat and cloak, have the carriage made ready. Do not lose a single moment."

"Where are you going?"

"To pier sixteen, East River."

"What in heaven are you going there for?"

"The Cuban steamer."

"The Cuban steamer?"

"Have you forgotten? Duval is a Cuban. I know now who told Rose of a land all sunshine and flowers—and misery and cruelty," she added passionately, as she ran to her room with a hurry that sent Harry to the stables with equal haste.

When the carriage came to the door, Adriana was waiting. Harry was stepping to her side, but she shook her head positively. "You must go for Antony," she said. "Bring him to the steamer. It is the only way."

At a very rapid pace the carriage was driven to the foot of Wall Street. It was, however, to Adriana a tedious journey, and often interrupted; and she sat wringing her hands in impotent impatience at every delay. When she reached the pier, she found herself in all the tumult and hurry that attends a departing steamer; but the gangway was clear, and she went straight on board *The Orizaba*. The first persons she saw were Duval and Rose. They were leaning over the taffrail, with their backs to Adriana, and Duval was talking impetuously, holding Rose's hand in his own. Her attitude was reluctant and hesitating, and when Adriana said, "Excuse me, Mr. Duval, I have come for Mrs. Van Hoosen," Rose turned with a sharp cry, and put her hand in Yanna's.

"Pardon, madame," answered Duval in a passion, "Mrs. Van Hoosen chooses to remain with me."

"Rose, dear Rose! think of your little daughter. Turn back, dear one, for God's sake! turn back! Have you forgotten your mother and father, your brother and your loving husband? Rose, come with me. Fly for your life! Fly for your soul! Come! Come! There is no time to lose."

Duval was urging the foolish, distracted woman at the same time, pleading his misery, and contrasting her dull, unhappy life in Woodsome village with all the joys he promised her in Cuba. And Rose was weeping bitterly. It was also evident that she had been taking wine, and very likely some drug in it. For her mind was dull, and her conscience was dull, and she seemed too inert to decide so momentous a question herself.

But as they stood thus together, and Rose was weakly clinging to Yanna's arm, Antony came towards

them, swift and stern as Fate. He put his hand on Rose's shoulder, and turned the dear wretched sinner round till she faced him. He had no need to speak. She looked piteously at Yanna, and said, "Tell Antony why I came—there is nothing wrong." And then she laughed so foolishly that Adriana thought the laugh far more pitiful than tears.

"Mr. Duval is going to Cuba," said Adriana to her brother. "We will now say 'farewell' to him."

"Mrs. Van Hoosen is going to Cuba also," said Duval, with a mocking air. "Come, Rose, my love!"

Then in his throat Antony gave him the lie, and with one back-handed blow, struck him in the mouth and sent him reeling backward like a drunken man.

Ere he could recover himself, Rose and Antony, followed by Adriana, were going down the gangway, and a sailor was ringing a bell, and bidding all not for the voyage to make for the shore. Duval did not make for the shore. He waited until Antony was putting Rose and Adriana in the carriage ere he shouted after Antony scandalous epithets, which he did not deign to notice. But they went like fire into his ears; and he looked into Rose's apathetic face, sullen and angry, with a sense of such shame and misery as he had never before experienced.

Silently they drove to Adriana's house, and then Antony kissed her, and said with some difficulty, "I can never thank you enough, Yanna," and Yanna, smiling sadly in reply, turned to Rose and said, "Good-bye, Rose. I shall see you at Woodsome, I hope, soon."

Rose did not respond in any way. Her eyes were cast down, she seemed to be lost to sense and feeling, except for a perceptible drawing away from her

husband when he took the seat which Yanna had vacated. Furtively she glanced into his face, and she was aware of, though she was not sorry for, its utter wretchedness. Indeed, in no way did she evince the slightest contrition for her offence. Antony, however, doubted whether she was in a condition to fully realize it. With soulless eyes, she gazed on the panorama of the streets, and if she had any just knowledge of sin committed, it lay in some corner of her conscience, far below the threshold of her present intelligence.

It seemed a never-ending ride to Antony. The familiar streets were strange to him, and his own house was like a house in a dream. He fancied the coachman looked curious and evilly intelligent. It was not that his body burned, his very soul burned with shame and pity and just anger. He gave Rose his arm, however, up the flight of steps, but she withdrew herself with a motion of impatience as soon as they entered the hall, and she was not at all aware of a feeling, an atmosphere, a sense of something sorrowful and unusual, which struck Antony as quickly as he passed the threshold. The next moment a door opened, and the family physician came forward.

Antony looked at him and divined what he was going to say. "She is worse, doctor?" he whispered.

"She is well, sir. Well, forever!"

Then, with such a cry as could only come from a wounded soul, Antony fled upstairs. Rose sank into the nearest chair. She had not yet any clear conception of her misery. But in a moment or two, Antony returned with his little dead daughter in his arms. He was weeping like a woman; nay, he was sobbing as men sob who have lost hope.

"Oh, my darling!" he cried. "My little comforter!

My lost angel!" and with every exclamation he kissed the lovely image of Death. Straight to the trembling, dazed mother he took the clay-cold form, which had already been dressed for its burial. And when Rose understood the fact, she was like one awakening from a dream—there was a moment's stupor, a moment's recollection, a moment's passionate realization of her loss; and then shriek after shriek, from a mind that suddenly lost its balance and fell from earth to hell.

Fortunately, the physician was at hand, and for once Antony left Rose to his care. His sympathy seemed dead. He had borne until his capacity for suffering was exhausted. He lay down on the nursery couch, close to his dead child, and God sent him the sleep He gives to His beloved when the sorrow is too great for them. On awakening he found Mrs. Filmer at his side. She was weeping, and her tears made Antony blind also. He drew his hands across his eyes, and stood up, feeling weak and shattered, and ill from head to feet.

"Antony," said Mrs. Filmer, "you have behaved nobly this day. I cannot thank you as I would like to."

"Emma is dead!" he answered. "Dear mother, that is all I can bear to-night. Such a sad, little, suffering life! If I could only have suffered for her! If I could only have been with her at *the hour*. I watched for that favor. I grudged to leave her, even to eat or sleep—and I missed it after all! For I hoped at the moment of parting to have some vision or assurance that her tender little soul would not have to pass alone through the great outer space and darkness. Where is she now? Who is her Helper? Will Christ indeed carry her in his bosom until her small feet reach the fields of Paradise? Mother! mother! I am

broken-hearted this night. Who was with her when she died?"

"It seems that she died alone. The nurse thought she was asleep, and she went downstairs to make herself a cup of tea. When she came back Emma was dead. The doctor says she had a fit and died in it."

"No one to help her! No one to kiss her! It is too cruel! My dear one would open her eyes at last and find no father—no mother—no one at all to say 'good-bye' to her!"

"Come, come, Antony! The doctor thinks she never recovered consciousness. He says she did not suffer. You have saved Rose. Go and say a word to her. She is in despair."

"I will speak to her as soon as I can. I cannot see her until—until the child has been taken away from me."

Mrs. Filmer pressed him no further. She thought it best to leave him much alone. His thin, worn cheeks, and sunken eyes—showing pain, anxiety, and sleepless nights—were touchingly human. They said plainer than any words could, "Trouble me no more until I am stronger; until my soul can reach that serene depth where it can say, 'Thy will be done,' until, indeed, I can turn to Romans, the eighth chapter and the twenty-eighth verse, and stand firmly with its grand charter of God's deliverance in my hand."

When the child was buried, Antony made an effort to speak to his wife. But she would not speak to him. She had assumed an attitude quite unexpected—that of an injured woman. She complained to her mother that an infamous advantage had been taken of a trifling escapade. "I simply went to see an old friend off to Cuba; and Yanna—because of a conversation I

had with her a few days previously—is sure I am going to desert my husband and child. She races down to the steamer, and makes a scene there; and Antony follows to bring on a grand climax! No! I will not forgive either Yanna or Antony.”

“What had you said to Yanna?”

“Just a little serious conversation—such as I wanted to be good, and so on—and I asked her if anything happened to me to look after baby. Feeling always makes a fool of me. I won't feel any more. I won't want to be good any more.”

“You had no necessity to ask that woman to look after baby. Was not I sufficient?”

“I was in one of my good moods. I wanted Yanna to think I was lovely. I do not care now what any one thinks.”

And she acted out this programme to its last letter. She was either despondently or mockingly indifferent to all that was proposed. After some delay, her father and mother went to Europe. Yanna and Harry went to stay with Miss Alida; and Antony made what preparations were necessary, and removed his household to the Filmer place at Woodsome. Rose took no part in the removal. When she perceived that the house was to be closed, she accompanied Antony to the country. But no good resulted from the change. She refused to see visitors; if she went out, it was entirely alone; and she passed Yanna and Miss Alida as if they were utter strangers to her. A spoiled, wilful girl, who had never felt the bit on her life, she had suddenly thrown off all control but that of the evil spirit which had taken possession of her.

Still she preserved a kind of decorum. There was a general impression that she had nearly lost her reason

about her child's death; and people excused and pitied her aberrations in consequence, or if rumors of the real truth permeated society at Woodsome, it was quickly discredited. Men and women alike pointed to the devotion of Antony and refused to believe it; and in some way the sorrowful shake of Miss Alida's head at Rose's name, and Yanna's painful silence, impressed on the community an idea of Rose's suffering rather than of her wickedness. Sometimes a servant would say boldly that Mrs. Van Hoosen was ill-tempered and took too much wine, but no one credited the judgment, except those who hated Rose and wished to believe it.

Indeed, in the latter respect Rose's temper had had a good result. Antony would have neither wine nor liquor of any kind in his house, and as Rose refused to visit, her opportunities for indulging the taste were limited. She did not appear to mind this deprivation as much as might have been expected. Her insane indulgence of temper swallowed up every other vice. She had drunk mainly to induce that exhilaration which she fancied added so much to her beauty, and to excite that boundless flow of repartee which made her the center of a crowd of silly young men who liked to have their small wits tickled, and who hoarded her jokes to retail as their own.

She had now no little circle to entertain; she did not care to please any one in Woodsome; she even took a pleasure in displeasing Antony, and her one daily excitement was to try to meet Yanna and Miss Alida driving, and embarrass their movements, or pass them with insolent disdain. Peter Van Hoosen was the only person she treated with her old kindness and charm. To him she was gentle and sad, and one morning she

wandered an hour with him in his garden, listening to his words of comfort about little Emma, until they were both ready to weep. So that when Peter saw his son next, he spoke sharply to him about Rose, and frankly told him he was not worthy to have the charge of such a little, proud, sensitive heart; indeed, Peter was quite sure that Rose would have been an excellent wife under such guidance as he would have given her.

So the summer went away and Rose had the satisfaction of feeling that she had made all her friends as wretched as she had made herself. Yet there was no apparent effort to do this; and there was no need of effort; for the power of those indirect influences which distil from a life are greater than effort, and Rose had only to wander about the house and grounds, a picture of woe, lonely and uncomplaining, to destroy the summer sunshine and set every one on the edge of quarreling about her. For she had really a strong personality, and her unhappy moods affected the household as perceptibly as rain affects the atmosphere.

For weeks Antony endeavored to understand and conquer this attitude. He followed her in her lonely walks, and she listened to what he said as if she heard him not. Or she permitted him to walk at her side, and yet behaved precisely as if he were not there. If he visited her in her own apartment, she made him just the same nonentity. She heard no question he asked; she answered no remark he made. Kind or reproachful words fell alike upon her consciousness, and she made no sign of being touched by them; for to Antony she had ceased even to pretend to be an angel.

In this abandonment of her duty there was but one hopeful sign—she never neglected herself or her

appearance. Whenever she permitted Antony to see her she was beautifully dressed. Her black and white garments were of the loveliest materials, and were so made and worn as to give an air of plaintive pathos and elegance to all her movements. Every day Antony, furtively watching her going out and her coming in, was touched and smitten afresh by loveliness so near and dear to him, and yet so far beyond his power to influence. And yet, every day he grew more hopeless, for Rose's sin was now very different from what it had been. Her temptation to drink had been in his sight a deformity, a disease, a calamity, but while Rose sinned against her will he did not call it a sin; he was as ready to forgive as she was to be sorry. But this indulgence of a defiant temper in the face of her actual transgression, was a sin having its origin in *the will*; and it was, therefore, in all its essence and results devilish and sorrow-making.

Towards the close of this unhappy summer a lady in the vicinity gave a masked dance, and Antony and Rose received invitations. Antony regarded them as mere courtesies, for they were still in mourning, and it was hardly possible Rose would deny and defy all her summer attitude by accepting them. As she was passing him in the hall he said, "Rose, Mrs. Lawson has sent us invitations to her mask dance. Of course they are merely complimentary."

There was no answer.

"Mrs. Lawson knows we are in mourning; and besides, we may be in the city before the twentieth."

Rose was leisurely walking upstairs, but she heard the words, and a sudden resolve to cap all her contradictions by going to the dance entered her mind. It gave her such a fillip of mischievous pleasure as she

had not felt for a long time: and the following day she went into New York and bought what she desired for the occasion. Antony sent a polite refusal, and thought no more of the matter. Indeed, on the day before the dance, he began to prepare for a return to the city; and on the twentieth he went into New York to make arrangements for the continuance of his lease, as his own house was not finished. He did not return until a later train than usual, and Rose was in hopes of escaping his notice until her object had been accomplished. Then, of course, there would be a scene; and she enjoyed the prospect of it. She was brewing a storm, and delighting herself in the hellish concoction.

When Antony came home he saw the carriage at the front door, and the coachman waiting by the horses. "Where are you going at this time of night, Clemens?" he asked.

"Mrs. Van Hoosen is going to Mrs. Lawson's dance, sir."

Then Antony turned into the parlor, and leaving open the door, waited for his wife's approach. Very soon a maid ran down with her carriage wraps, and then there was a light step, with a vague waft of perfume, and Antony went to the foot of the staircase. Rose was descending with her mask in her hand. Her fair auburn hair was loose and crowned with poppies. Her short and scanty dress was of vivid scarlet and black, her hose were of scarlet silk, her slippers of black satin, and her arms covered to above the elbows with black gloves. She was, as she mockingly said, "a *diabliesse* in scarlet and black."

Antony looked at her, and his face burned with shame; then with a grasp she could not resist, he led her into the parlor, turned the key in the door, and

put it in his pocket. At that, she found it possible to speak to her husband.

"Let me out, sir!" she cried, passionately. "How dare you lock me in any room?" And she was wickedly beautiful as she imperiously ordered her own release. Sensitive to her influence, and trembling under her power, Antony defied it.

"You shall not leave this house to-night," he answered. "You shall never leave it in such a shameless garb. You outrage yourself and all who love you by it."

"As I intend to remain unknown, the precious self-respect of anybody that loves me will not be hurt. As for myself, it makes no matter. Give me the key, sir."

"I will not."

"Then I shall go out by the window."

"You will do nothing of the kind. I am going to remain here with you. You will not surely compel me to use force."

"You are brutal enough to use force."

"Rose, I must save you from yourself. Some day you will thank me for it."

"I wish you would let me alone. I do not want you to save me. I wish I had never seen you. I hate you from morning to night. I wish you would go where I could never see your face or hear your voice again!"

"You are angry now, Rose. But have you not been cross long enough? Come, sit down, and let us talk, not of the past, but of the future. Let us try and make it happier."

He was approaching her as he spoke; and she put out her hands and waved him away. "Do not dare to come near me!" she cried. "Not one step further!"

You shall not put a finger on me. I will not listen to your voice. Let me go away from your presence."

He sat down, covering his face with his hands, and he was still as a stone. But Rose felt that he was on guard, and that resistance or entreaty would be alike useless. So she threw herself on a sofa, shut her eyes, and began to sing.

The whole appearance and atmosphere of the woman were now repellant; and a great indignation burned in Antony's heart. He said to himself that he had done wrong to tolerate so long the evil spirit in his wife and home. He had forgiven practically what he ought to refuse to forgive at all. He had encouraged sin by enduring it. And he had done so because he loved the sinner. "But I shall do what is right in the future!" he said.

Then he rose up, and Rose, who was watching him from beneath her nearly closed eyelids, was startled by the new man she saw. He looked taller, his countenance was stern, and he told the coachman to take away the carriage in a voice that was quite new to her. But she went on humming her song, and watching developments. So all the night the gas burned, and Antony sat guarding his wife, and his wife looked at him, and sang at him, and paraded herself about the room to irritate him. But about three o'clock she was very weary, and she fell into a deep sleep. Then Antony rose and looked at her. Her head was hanging off the pillow, and one of her feet nearly touched the floor. He lifted it gently, placed the dear poppy-crowned head comfortably on the pillow, threw an Afghan over the sleeping form, and with one long farewell look went quietly out of the room.

The dance was then over, and the bitterest night of

his life was over. He had watched against Indians; he had watched against death in mines, and camps, and lonely gorges in the mountains; he had watched the life-breaths of his little daughter pass away, night after night, in weary painfulness; but such a terrible watch as this one, beside his wilfully wicked wife, he had never conceived of as possible. He was weary to death, and her cruel words remained in his heart like arrows.

He went to his room, and after writing for some time he drank a cup of coffee and left the house. At the stables he got a horse and buggy, and drove over to Miss Alida's. He met Harry just outside the gate, and he called him.

"I was trying to catch the early train," explained Harry. "Is anything wrong? Why are you here before seven o'clock?"

"Come with me. I have something to say to you, Harry."

Then Harry sent back his own buggy, and seated himself beside Antony. "Where are you going?" he asked; "there is no station up this road."

"It is quiet. That is enough. Listen, Harry." Then he gave his friend and brother a brief outline of the life he had led, and of Rose's behavior on the previous night. He made few complaints, he merely stated facts; but Harry understood what was not told.

"She says she hates me. She never wants to see my face again. She never wants to hear me speak to her more. I think my presence irritates her and makes her cross and cruel. I am going to my place in the Harqua Hala Range. I ought to have been there long ago. They are finding gold there. When Rose is sorry, you will let me know?"

He was quietly weeping, and not at all conscious of the circumstance; and Harry was burning with anger at his wrongs. "It was a bad day for you, Antony, when the Filmers came into your life," he said. "You have flung your love away on Rose, and your gold away on me. I do not know what I shall do without you. You are the greatest soul I ever met. Do not go away, Antony!"

"There is nothing else to be done. I have worn out her patience, and she has worn out mine. Be kind to her; and when you have an opportunity, say a kind word for me."

Far into the morning they talked, and then Antony drove to the station, and went his lonely way, too miserable to think of adieus, too oashamed and heart-broken to bear more, either of advice or consolation. Harry watched his thin, sorrowful face out of sight; and at the last moment lifted his hat to so much departing love and worth. Then he drove as fast as his horse could take him to the Filmer place.

Rose had awakened from her sleep, and had had her breakfast. She was miserable in all her being. Her head ached; her heart ached. She was humiliated and chagrined, and the thought of Antony haunted her and would not let her rest. Also the house was miserable. Everything was waiting on Antony. Some of the things to be taken to the city were already packed; others were lying on the chairs and tables, and the servants were each and all taking their own ill way about affairs. Rose could think of nothing but an order to let the packing alone until Mr. Van Hoosen returned; but there was a most unsettled feeling through the house, and she was quite aware nothing was being done that ought to be done.

She was greatly relieved to see Harry coming. Harry was the one member of her family whom she regarded. He had not offended in the Duval matter, and so it was generally through Harry she was influenced to do what was required of her. But this morning Harry gave her back no smile; he did not answer her greeting, and when she offered her hand, he put it crossly away.

"Rose," he said, "you have managed to behave abominably for a long time. But your conduct last night is unpardonable. If you were my wife I would shut you up in a madhouse until you put your senses above your temper."

"Thanks! I am not your wife, I am happy to say. No one but the divine Adriana could——"

"Stop your foolish chatter! You have driven your husband from you, at last. Now I hope you are satisfied."

"So he has gone, has he? And pray, where has my lord gone?"

"To Arizona."

"I am glad he has gone so far."

"Now, madam, you will have to fight the world without him. There is not a decent woman who will notice you."

"What have I done wrong? And I do not believe Antony has gone. He will come trailing home to-night."

"He will not. And as to what you have done wrong, if there were nothing against you but that Duval affair it shuts you out of society."

Then she rose in a passion, and snapped her fingers in his face. "You!" she cried, "you dare to come here and reproach me with Duval! Pray, what about

Cora Mitchin? It is the devil correcting sin for you to talk virtuously. And the divine Yanna is just as bad to live with you. I would not. I would have respected Antony if he had turned on his heel when he saw me with Duval on the steamer; if he had turned on his heel and left me forever, I would have respected him! As it is, I despise him. Arizona is the best place for him."

"There is no use, and no sense, in putting your fault and mine on the same level, Rose. Society will teach you who is the worst next winter."

"What do I care for society? Society is not Jehovah; and being a *man* will not help you, sir, at the Day of Judgment. You are a great deal worse than I am. You are not fit for any woman's company; and the sooner you leave mine, the better I shall like it."

And Harry went. He had nothing further to say. He was convicted by his own conscience, and by the swift passage through his mind of certain words that came from the Blameless One—"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

CHAPTER X

It was near Christmas, and New York had the sense of its festivity in all her streets and avenues. The store windows were green and gay, and the sidewalks crowded with buyers. The crisp, frosty air and bright sunshine—full of promise and exhilaration—touched even Rose Van Hoosen, and made her consciously subject to the pervading influence. She had been to see her father and mother, who had just returned from Europe, and she was going to the loneliness of her own handsome home. No letter had come to her from her husband; but his lawyer brought her every month the liberal income which had been left in his charge for the maintenance of the Van Hoosen household.

As yet she had lived in seclusion, but her mother had advised a different course. "You must give some small but extremely fine dinners and entertainments, Rose," she said. "Nothing stops gossip like hospitality. People will want to come to your little parties, and they will pooh-pooh all ill-natured reports, for their own sake. To-morrow we will talk over this plan, and arrange the most suitable functions."

"But they will wonder at Antony's absence, mamma."

"They will hardly take it into account. His indifference and his refusal to dance were always cold water on your social efforts. As far as they are concerned, he is better away. And what more promising excuse can you have than that gold has been found on

his place. It has a rich sound, and, of course, he has to look after it. No one will think further than that. How are Harry and his wife getting on?"

"I think Yanna has quite spoiled Harry. Will you believe that I used to meet him driving with the baby last summer; and he trotted to meeting every Sunday with Yanna. I can tell you, mother, that your day is over. Yanna has Harry quite under her thumb now, or I am much mistaken."

"And the Cora Mitchin affair?"

"I should say it is dead and buried. I do not see the girl's name at any theatre, and her picture is not staring you in the face from every window this season. She has been retired evidently."

"We shall see. Now, Rose, throw aside this nonsensical air of seclusion and sorrow. Get some pretty costumes, and prepare gradually to open your house. A woman with your income aping the recluse is ridiculous."

"You do me so much good, mamma."

"Well, my dear, there is nothing for wrong but to try and put it right. I think you have been to blame, but there is no use going about the world to accuse yourself. You must try and make your peace with your husband. It is such bad form, this quarreling. Send for Yanna and Miss Alida, and ask their advice—just to flatter them. You *must* have the support of your family."

"I do not speak to either of them. I have made a business of offending them. Yanna was the inventor of the Duval romance; and Alida Van Hoosen thinks her thoughts. They have been living together."

"I am awfully sorry you have offended them. Can you not be friends with Yanna?"

"I don't want to be friends with her. I have quarreled with Harry, too. The idea of Harry coming to tell me my sins! I suppose Yanna sent him. Well, he heard the truth about his own sins, for once in his life! Mamma, I have quarreled with every one but you."

As she was speaking, Harry entered. He took his mother in his arms, and then turned to Rose. "Good morning, Rose," he said pleasantly. But Rose looked past him, and without a word in reply, she left the house.

"I am sorry you have quarreled with your sister, Harry," said Mrs. Filmer. "If ever she needed your countenance and aid, it is now."

"It is not my fault. Has she told you about the last——?"

"I have heard a dozen versions of the affair. Poor girl!"

"Mother, you ought not to condone her sins."

"You made no objections to my condoning your sins, Harry—much more flagrant ones, too. And I do not think your wife need to put on so many airs about poor Rose."

"Rose has wantonly wounded Yanna's feelings very often."

"Poor feelings! I wonder how they endured the pretty Cora's extravagances of every kind."

"Mother!"

"Well, Harry, there is no use in our quarreling. Where is Antony?"

"In Arizona."

"It is a great shame. I shall make your father go and see him."

"There is no necessity. A word of contrition from

Rose will bring him home. Without that word, nothing will bring him. You had better get Rose to write to him. A dozen words will do."

"She will never write one."

"Then she had better get a divorce."

"And lose all Antony's money!"

"She has behaved shamefully to Antony. I will not talk any more about her."

"However, she is going to entertain quietly; and her own family *must* support her. You may tell your wife I said so."

"Did you have a pleasant summer, mother?"

Then Mrs. Filmer began a long complaint of the weather, and the weary hours her husband spent in the libraries, and the exorbitant charges, and the dreadful laundry work, and finally she opened one of her trunks, and took out of it some presents for Yanna and the child. So the morning went rapidly away, and Harry stayed to lunch with his father and mother, and then went downtown and attended to some business for them; so that the day was all broken up and spoiled, and he resolved to go home and take Yanna her presents.

When he entered the parlor of his own home, he was astonished to see Yanna sitting at a little Dutch table, drinking tea with a woman in the regulation dress of the Salvation Army—astonished to see that she had been weeping; and still more lost in amazement when the guest stood up and faced him, for it was undoubtedly Cora Mitchin.

She looked with grave eyes straight at Harry, who had paused in the middle of the room, and said: "Mr. Filmer, I came here to-day to ask Mrs. Filmer's pardon. You may see that she has forgiven me."

"Miss Young," said Adriana, rising, "it is my wish that you tell Mr. Filmer all that you have told me. He will be glad to hear it." And then she went quietly out of the room, leaving the two alone. For a moment Harry was angry. He did not like standing face to face with his transgression; and he was quite inclined to escape from the position in some way or other, when Cora said:

"May I tell you what has happened?"

"Is there any use now? If I can do anything, Cora——"

"No! no! Mrs. Filmer asked me to tell you. May I?"

Harry sat down, but not very graciously; and the young woman stood by the table, with her hand grasping the back of the chair from which Yanna had just risen. She was a very pretty young woman, and her peculiar dress was by no means unbecoming. If it had been, Harry perhaps might have been less willing to listen; though, as it was, he had a wandering idea that Cora was playing a trick—that she might have taken a wager she would enter his house and drink tea with his wife—that she might have wondered at him for not seeking her out, and contrived this plan to engage his attention. In fact, he did not at all believe in any confession Cora had made to his wife; and he was resentful of her presence under any guise on his hearthstone. So, though he sat down to listen, he did it ungraciously, and his voice was irritable as he said:

"I do not understand your little game, Cora; and I wish you would explain it as quickly as possible."

"Do you remember Mary Brady, one of the ballet girls?"

"Yes."

"She is dead. She sent for me one night in July. She was dying without a friend, and without a cent. I did what I could. I did what there was no one else to do, I tried to pray with her, and to tell her about a pitiful God and Christ."

"You!"

"Me. For I am the child of parents who loved God, and I have two little sisters whom I have sinned for, lest they should become sinners. I know I ought to have trusted God, but I thought He was never coming to help me—and so I took the devil's help. No one knows what the devil's wages are until they have earned them. Mary has taken his last coin, which is—death."

"Poor little girl! She was a merry sprite."

"Mirth was part of her bargain. She was dying while she was laughing"—and the face of the speaker was so instinct with grief that Harry suddenly found that all his suspicions were vanishing, and an irrepresible interest was taking their place.

"Well, Cora?"

"My name is Hannah—Hannah Young. My father and mother gave me that name, in the old meeting-house at Newburyport. It was the name registered in God's Book, and I would not see it on a play-bill; so I called myself—the other one. As I was telling you, I tried to talk to poor Mary, as I knew my mother would have talked to me. Alas! alas! it was too late!"

Harry looked up startled and uneasy.

"She had suffered so long and so cruelly, without anything to help or to relieve her pain. I brought her cold water and fruits and a doctor, and I told her that Christ saw all her trouble and pitied her, but she only said, 'It is not true! If He loved me He would have

sent me help, when help might have saved me.' Then I got the Gospel, and I read it to her, and she cried wearily, 'I have heard it all before! I know He was loving and good, but that is all so long ago!' I said, 'Mary, if you could only pray!' and she asked angrily, 'To whom? To the fine ladies on Broadway, or to the men who preach now and then in the mostly closed churches?' I told her, 'Christ waits in this very room,' and she began to wail and cry out, 'It is not true! It is not true! Christ would have touched and healed me long ago!' Yes, in her very last moments she whispered, 'He does not know.' I shall never forget her eyes; no, not as long as I live. She went quite hopeless down the hard road to the grave; but I do believe now that the moment she touched the other side Jesus met and comforted her."

Harry did not answer. His eyes were cast down, and he was holding his right hand in his left, with a nervous, restless motion.

"After Mary's death I could not be the same. I felt that I would rather hire myself out to wash dishes than earn another sinful penny. The day of her burial I went back to her room to pay the pittance due for its wretched shelter; and I sat and talked with the woman who owned the house a long time, so it was growing dark when I turned out of the court into the main street. It was a poor, quiet street, and the people were sitting on their doorsteps, or leaning out of their windows; and I saw a little crowd coming toward me, and they were singing. And as I met them, they ceased; and a woman a little in front, with an open Bible in her hand, cried out:

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And her clear, sweet

call went down into my heart, and I began to weep and to pray as I walked through the streets; and after I got to my room, I locked the door and threw myself on my knees, on my face, and pleaded with Christ to forgive me and save me from my sins and myself. Oh! how I longed and wept for the purity I had lost and the faith I had cast aside! I was weary, fainting, but I would not rise. In a little while, I could not rise. I felt that the Savior was in the room. It seemed to me at first as if He would not be entreated, as if He would go away. But I had hands that clasped his feet, and caught his robe, and I would not let Him go until He forgave me."

"You knew that you were forgiven? How?"

"I knew it by the joy that filled my heart. I did not feel my body at all. I walked up and down, clasping my hands and saying, 'Christ, I thank Thee! Christ, I thank Thee!' And when the dawn began to break, a great, a wonderful peace came all over me; and I lay down and slept such a happy sleep; and when I awakened, I knew that the old life had passed away, and that I was a different woman. Do you believe me, Mr. Filmer?"

"Yes," answered Harry, very softly, "I believe you."

"Then I went to the Salvation Army. Such gifts as God had given me, I gave back to Him. And I have been very happy ever since."

"What made you come here to my wife?"

"I had wronged her. Against her my sin was great and particular. I came to her, and I told her what I have told you. She wept with me. She forgave me freely. She made me tea with her own hands; she did more than that—she ate and drank with me. It

was as if Christ again put His hand upon the leper, or went to be guest in the house of a man that was a sinner. I shall never forget her goodness. I wanted you to know——”

“What?”

“That there is mercy for sin—that there is joy and gladness in repenting—that God is ‘the lover of souls.’ ”

“It is a strange thing to hear you talk in this way to me.”

“I talk to you now because I shall not accuse you at the Day of Judgment. I have been forgiven, and I have forgiven you. But, oh! if you remain unforgiven, will you accuse me then?”

“No; I only am to blame.”

“Now I will go. It is not likely we shall meet again until the Day of Judgment. At that Day, I shall be glad that I have spoken; and I hope that you will be glad that you have listened.”

Harry tried to answer, but he knew not what to say, His soul was in a chaos of emotion. There seemed to be no words to interpret it; and before he could find words, the woman was gone, and the door was shut, and he was quite alone.

He did not wish to see Yanna just then; and she, being a wise wife, probably divined this feeling, for she did not intrude herself or her opinions on the event at that time. She knew what Hannah Young would say to him, and she understood that such words need neither commentary nor explanation. She was rather satisfied than otherwise, when she heard Harry go out; and as she had promised to dine with Miss Alida, she went there alone—there being already an understanding that Harry should come for her at eleven o'clock.

So their next meeting was in a company who were discussing Browning with an extraordinary animation. Miss Alida stopped in the middle of her declaration "that she would rather have her teeth drawn than be compelled to read *Sordello*," to smile a welcome; and Yanna's look of pleasure drew him to her side; where he stood leaning on her chair and watching Professor Snowden, who was holding a book open at the likeness of the poet.

"What a brave countenance!" he cried. "How honest, and thoughtful, and kindly! And what a pleasant shrewdness in the eyes! It is a perfect English face."

"Oh, indeed!" said a scholarly man who stood by Miss Alida; "if Browning had an English body, his soul was that of some thirteenth-century Italian painter. Does he not say of himself:

'Open my heart and you will see
Graved inside of it—"Italy."'

Now it is a prejudice with me, that if an Englishman is to open his heart to us, we ought to find *England* written there. Shakespeare, who is at home with all people, is never so mighty and so lovable as when depicting the sweet-natured English ladies who became his 'Imogenes,' 'Perditas,' and 'Helenas,' or dallying with his own country wild-flowers, or in any way exalting England's life and loveliness, majesty and power."

"And pray, sir," asked the Professor, "who but a man with an English heart could have written that home-yearning song:

'Oh to be in England
 Now that April's there;
 And whoever wakes in England,
 Sees, some morning unaware,
 That the lowest boughs, and the brush-wood sheaf
 Round the elm tree bole, are in tiny leaf;
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough,
 In England—now! "

"There is somewhere a still finer home-thought," said Harry. "I remember learning it when I was at college;" and as Adriana looked backward and smiled, and the Professor nodded approval, and Miss Alida said, "Let us have the lines, Harry," he repeated them without much self-consciousness, and with a great deal of spirit:

"Nobly, nobly Cape St. Vincent to the westward died away;
 Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
 In the dimmest north-east distance, dawned Gibraltar grand
 and grey;
 "Here and there did England help me,—how can I help Eng-
 land?"—say,
 Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa."

There was a hearty response to Harry's effort, and then Miss Alida's favorite minister—who had been silent during the whole discussion, much to her disappointment—spoke.

"A poet's nature," he said, "needs that high reverence which is to the spirit what iron is to the blood; it needs, most of all, the revelation of Christianity, because of its peculiar temptations, doubts, fears, yearnings, and obstinate questionings. Mr. Browning has this reverence, and accepts this revelation. He is

not half-ashamed, as are some poets, to mention God and Christ; and he never takes the name of either in vain. He does not set up a kind of pantheistic worship. No one has ever told us, as Browning has in his poem of 'Christmas Eve and Easter Day,' how hard it is to be a Christian. Do you remember its tremendous dream of the Judgment Day:

'When through the black dome of the firmament,
 Sudden there went,
 Like horror and astonishment,
 A fierce vindictive scribble of red
 Quick flame across; as if one said
 (The angry Scribe of Judgment), There,
 Burn it!'

And who can read the pleading of the youth who has chosen the world, and not recognize the amiable young man of to-day, unable to put the cup of pleasure utterly away, but resolving to let

'the dear remnant pass
 One day—some drops of earthly good
 Untasted.'

Do you want to know the end of this choice? Browning has told us in words no young man should be ignorant of."

"Go on, Doctor," said the Professor. "It will do us all good."

"God reserves many great sinners for the most awful of all punishments—impunity. We can despise the other life, until we are refused it. This youth got the world he desired. A Voice tells him it is—

'Flung thee freely as one rose
 Out of a summer's opulence,
 Over the Eden barrier whence
 Thou art excluded. Knock in vain!'

He is made welcome to so rate earth, and never to know

‘What royalties in store
Lay one step past the entrance door.’

So he tries the world, tries all its ways, its intellect, and art; and at last, when everything else fails, he tries love. Surely love will not offend; and he looks upward to *The Form* at his side for approval. But its face is as the face of the headsman, who shoulders the axe to make an end. Love? Asking for love, when He so loved the world as to give His only beloved Son to die for love. Then lost and bewildered, and weary to death, the youth cowers deprecatingly, and prays that at least he may not know all is lost; that he may go on, and on, still hoping ‘one eve to reach the better land.’” And the minister’s eyes were full of tears, and his voice was full of despair, and there was a moment’s intense silence. Harry broke it. “Surely, sir,” he said, “the poet did not leave the youth in such hopeless distress?”

“He knew his God better,” was the answer. “I will tell you in the youth’s own words what happened:

“Then did *The Form* expand, expand—
I knew Him thro’ the dread disguise,
As the whole God within his eyes
Embraced me!”

“If you are not tired of Browning,” said the Professor, in a singularly soft voice for him, “I will give you from him a picture of the world in the highest mood it has ever known, or perhaps ever will know—under the Cross. It is only the ‘Epitaph in the Catacombs’:

WAS IT RIGHT TO FORGIVE?

'I was born sickly, poor, and mean,
 A slave; no misery could screen
 The holders of the pearl of price
 From Cæsar's envy; therefore twice
 I fought with beasts, and three times saw
 My children suffer by his law;
 At last my own release was earned;
 I was some time in being burned,
 But at the close a hand came through
 The fire above my head; and drew
 My soul to Christ; whom now I see.
 Sergius, a brother, writes for me,
 This testimony on the wall:
 For me, I have forgot it all.'

Could any picture be more perfect? Christ has made of the poor sick slave a hero; and he speaks dispassionately from the other side. At last his release was earned. He was some time in being burned. Sergius writes—it is not he—he has forgot it all. These words light up an infinite picture, and surely the poet, who with one light stroke can smite such a statute from the rock, is a Master crowned, and worthy of our love."

Every face was illuminated, every soul expanded, and the Professor, burning with his own enthusiasm, laid down the book. Then Miss Alida, smiling, but yet with tears in her large gray eyes, turned to a pretty young woman who had a roll of music in her lap. "Mrs. Dunreath," she said, "we cannot bear any more of Mr. Browning's strong wine; give us one of your songs of Old Ireland—some that you found in Munster, among the good lay monks and brothers. And the lady lifted her mandolin, and touched a few strings to her strange musical recitative:

"A plenteous place is Ireland for hospitable cheer;
Where the wholesome fruit is bursting from the yellow barley
ear.

There is honey in the trees, where her misty vales expand;
And her forest paths in summer are by falling waters fanned;
There is dew at high noontide there, and springs in the yellow
sand

On the fair hills of holy Ireland!

"Large and profitable are the stacks upon the ground;
The butter and the cream do wondrously abound;
The cresses on the water, and the sorrels are at hand;
And the cuckoo's calling daily his note of music bland:
And the bold thrush sings so bravely his song in the forest
grand,

On the fair hills of holy Ireland!"

The song made a charming let-down from the loftier tension; and some one said that it was just the sweet lament for the good time past, suitable for a race which like the Irish "had seen better days." "But," said Miss Alida, "you would never find an old Dutch or Norse song so destitute of hope or self-reliance. Their spirit is one that does not look back to the dead and gone; or even forward for some expected Helper. They sing the present, and the best possible present. That is the noblest kind of song, and there will be hope for Ireland when she sings no longer about the *having been*, but determines *to be*."

However, in spite of all diversions, Browning had the evening; for no one could escape from his influence. And all the way home Harry spoke of Miss Alida's minister, and of the poem he had quoted from. He was longing to say, "How strangely the experience of the youth in the poem fitted into Hannah Young's fear that Christ would go away and not forgive her, until the moment of pardon revealed Him through the

dread disguise a God of mercy and forgiveness!" He wished also to speak for himself, but it was very difficult to do. In the first place, Adriana was tremblingly afraid of explanations. She passed from one person to another, and one subject to another with so much haste and interest that it was finally clear to Harry she did not wish him to allude to the great event of the day.

But his heart was full of love and sorrow, and as he walked by her side from the carriage to the drawing-room he came to a decision. Adriana stood a moment before the fire, and there Harry unclasped her cloak, drew her head towards him, and kissed her fondly.

"Yanna!" he whispered, "Yanna, truest and best of wives! I love you, and I love only you! I have wandered often, but never have I been happy away from you. Forgive me once more. The things I have heard to-day I shall never forget. Never will I be less worthy of your love than I am at this hour; never again!"

And she put her arms around his neck and kissed him. No earthly words were loving enough and happy enough, but something exquisite and certain passed from eye to eye, and from heart to heart—some assurance in that language of love whose sweet symbols happiness uses so well. And Adriana knew that her true affection and noble patience had conquered; and that the slow, calm years would flow on henceforth in glad content, bringing them in their season all things good.

CHAPTER XI

The next morning Adriana called on her mother-in-law. In her wedding Bible, Peter had written the words of the pious Raguel—"Honor thy father and thy mother-in-law, which are now thy parents; that I may hear a good report of thee"—and she had conscientiously tried to fulfil this domestic law. But Harry's marriage had never been quite forgiven by his parents, and in some way both of them had convinced themselves that Harry was not to blame for it. Adriana had cast some spell over him—or won some advantage—or Miss Alida, to further her own plans, had used some underhand influence which they felt it as hard to understand as to forgive. But Mrs. Filmer was much too polite and conventional to permit the public to share her dissatisfaction. However cold and formal she was to Adriana, she talked of her daughter-in-law to her acquaintances as "a most suitable person for her son's wife."

"The match is the realization of my husband's desire to unite the two branches of the family and consolidate its wealth," she said to every one. And in her heart she did acknowledge not only this advantage, but also the many virtues and charms of Adriana; for it was not her reason that was disappointed; it was her maternal jealousy that was offended.

On this morning she was unusually pleasant to Adriana. She had not seen her for some months; she had brought her some handsome souvenirs, and been

soothed by her satisfaction and gratitude; and she was very desirous to make peace between Adriana and Rose, and so induce Adriana to give Rose the benefit of her influence and countenance in society. The visit was, therefore, so confidential and affectionate that Adriana, in a moment of unguarded emotion, resolved to tell Mrs. Filmer about the change in Harry. Naturally she thought it would delight his mother; and she considered the momentary reluctance that assailed her as a selfish feeling.

"Mother," she said, "I have something very good to tell you about Harry."

"What is it? Gracious knows, I ought to hear something pleasant about Harry; for Rose's affairs are enough to break my heart." Her tone was querulous, rather than interested, and Adriana wished she had not spoken. A sudden fear that she was violating a sacred confidence troubled her, for where there is no sympathy, spiritual confidences are violated and wronged by being shared. It was, however, too late to be silent, but she involuntarily chose the person most removed for the opening of the conversation.

"Do you remember Cora Mitchin?"

"I remember nothing about such people."

"Unfortunately, Harry knew her, and I have——"

"Adriana, let me tell you one thing, a wise woman does not trouble herself about her husband's private friends. Harry is kind to you. He keeps his home handsomely. He is seen at your side both in church and society, and it is quite possible to ask too much from a good husband. Harry is young yet—too young to have so many obligations and cares as he has."

"I think you mistake me, mother. Have I made a complaint of Harry? Not one. I was only going to

tell you that the girl I spoke of has been genuinely reformed and has joined the Salvation Army."

"I cannot believe in such reformations. I thought it was of Harry you had good news to tell."

"The girl came to see me at our house, and as Harry came in while she was present, she told him about her conversation; and the circumstances have had a great influence upon him. I do not think Harry will err in that respect again." But Adriana spoke coldly, and felt unable to enter into details; Mrs. Filmer's face was so unresponsive and even angry.

"The girl came to your house! What an impertinence! And you received her and allowed her to talk about her—conversion! I am simply amazed at you, Adriana! And you think Harry will err no more? You poor deluded woman! The girl was probably hunting Harry up. I have no doubt she considers her visit to you a most excellent joke. Did you see no look of understanding between Harry and this converted young woman?"

"I left them alone to converse."

"Excuse me, Adriana, but I cannot comprehend such romantic puddling folly—such quixotic generosity! It was wrong, both for Harry and for yourself."

"I am sure it was not wrong, mother. I know that Harry was greatly moved by the girl's experience. I can trust Harry for the future. With God's help he is going to be a very different man. He told me so this morning. I believed him. And I did hope you would be glad to hear it."

"Of course I am glad. If he keeps his intentions it will be a good thing—but men never do."

"If they trust to themselves, they fail, of course; but Harry knows better than that."

"I only hope he will not grow too good. One saint in the family is sufficient;" and with a smile which did not quite take away the sting of the mock compliment, Mrs. Filmer put Adriana—who had risen—back into her chair, saying:

"You must not go yet, Adriana. I want to consult you about Rose. Her affairs seem to be in a very bad way. We will waive all discussion of the causes for this condition at present, and just consider what is best to be done."

"Antony will return for one word of contrition."

"But if Rose will not say that word?"

"She ought to say it."

"Never mind the 'ought.' We have to work with events as they are. Now, she is too much alone. I am afraid of solitude for her. She will be in danger of flying for comfort or oblivion, where it is destruction to go. You understand?"

"Yes."

"Yes. But 'yes' does not mend matters. She says she has not been out of her house for a month. That will not do. She must have the world round her. She must go to church. To go to church regularly will keep the world her friend; and I will see that she performs that duty. Can you not help me in other matters?"

"Rose has not spoken to me since—the day that her baby died. I do not think she will speak to me. I will do anything I can. What do you propose?"

"I want her to open her house—to give a few quiet receptions or dinners—such events as are quite proper in her circumstances. Of course I shall be with her, and if you could get Miss Alida Van Hoosen to come to her initial dinner, it would give the stamp necessary

for their respectability. Of course, you and Harry will be there."

"Mother, I do not believe Rose will ask us; but if she does, we will overlook the past."

"For heaven's sake, do not talk about 'overlooking' things. Take up life where it was pleasantly dropped, and bury the interval. Will you get Miss Alida's promise to endorse Rose?"

"I will ask for it. She is a very determined woman, and Rose has been obtrusively rude to her."

"None of you seems to have understood Rose, or to have remembered how broken-hearted she was about baby's death. Something may be excused on that account, I think. Will you go now and see Miss Alida? I should like to know who I can depend upon."

Then Adriana went. The duty set her was not a pleasant one, especially as Mrs. Filmer was certain she ought to succeed in it. At this crisis she found it easy to recollect the tie of blood, and to expect from Miss Van Hoosen as a right what Adriana was doubtful of obtaining even as a favor.

She found Miss Alida in, but dressed ready for her drive, and in a radiantly good-natured mood. So Adriana, hoping everything from a woman so cheerful and affectionate, said at once:

"Cousin Alida, just give me five minutes, will you?"

"Ten, twenty, sixty, my dear, if you want them."

"I have just left Mrs. Filmer."

"Has she made you feel like a flayed woman in a furze bush?"

"She was very nice to me. She is wretched about Rose."

"I should think she ought to be."

"I can see that she fears Rose is——"

"Drinking too much. Don't mince the words, Yanna. They are ugly enough to make one hate the sin they describe."

"Her mother thinks she is too solitary. She is going to make her go to church, and she hopes that you will stand by her in society."

"I will do nothing of the kind."

"Dear cousin, if she has a quiet little dinner party, and her mother and Harry and I are present, I am sure you will also go."

"No! I shall not!"

"She is such a foolish, spoiled woman; it is not worth your while remembering her rudeness to you."

"I care nothing about her rudeness to me. It is her treatment of Antony I resent. I shall not countenance her in any way until she confesses her sin to her husband, and he forgives her. If Antony can forgive her, I suppose I may try and endure her."

"Dear cousin——"

"Nonsense, Yanna! You know me well enough to understand that having made up my mind on this subject, I shall not unmake it for any other terms but the ones I have accepted as reasonable and right. Confession, my dear, and then forgiveness. Everything must be done in its proper order. Do you not find me in a remarkably happy temper? Do you not want to know the reason? Harry has been here this morning, and he has told me a very wonderful story. I don't know when I have been so pleased. I have been saying to myself ever since that there is no change in Our Redeemer. The world outgrows its creeds, but it is still blessedly true that they who 'seek for Him with all their heart find Him.' My dear, I feel to-day that there is a God. I always know it, but to-day I feel it.

That is the reason I am so happy. I like that woman Hannah Young. I am going this day to the Salvation Army Headquarters to find her. The devil gave her the means to make her mother and sisters happy; and I intend to show her that God can do more, and better, than the devil."

"Have you no pity for Rose?"

"Not for Rose proud and wicked and unrepentant. When Rose is sorry for her sins, when God forgives her, I shall have no right to be angry. And what do you ask me to do? The worst possible thing for a woman like Rose—surround her with circumstances that enable her to forget what she ought not to forget for one moment. I—will—not—do—it!"

This disappointment did not, however, deter Mrs. Filmer from carrying out her plan; and invitations were duly sent to such of Rose's old friends as it was supposed would give prestige and dignity to the occasion of her first dinner. Miss Alida sent a curt refusal; and all of the people whose presence was most desired did likewise, with varying politeness. Some "regretted very much," and others simply "regretted." Some had "previous engagements," others did not lay this flattering excuse to the wound of their declining; but the fine dinner was, after all, prepared for guests who had been asked as "secondaries," and whose absence would not have been regretted. In some way—probably through the kitchen door—the true story of Antony's absence had been blown about by every wind of gossip; and Rose's dinners, however she might regard them, were not important affairs to a class of people to whom dinners meant lofty and irreproachable social intercourse.

Mrs. Filmer was greatly humiliated by this failure,

but not inclined to abandon her plan; and Rose pretended to be well pleased that she had been "cut by such a dreary crowd of purple and fine linen Pharisees. However," she said, "as I have opened my house, I intend to fill it. Young men and young women who want to dance will go anywhere, if there is a good floor, with good music and plenty of wines and ices. If I cannot be exclusive, I can at least be popular. If you do not like my company, mamma, you need not endorse it. I shall take no offence at your scruples. As for Harry and his excellent wife, I never will pretend to be glad to see them any more as long as I live. When society declines to accept Mrs. Antony Van Hoosen, you cannot make it accept her, mamma."

"I am sure, Rose, there are plenty of people in the best society who have been talked about in far worse fashion than you have."

"That is true enough; but society, now and then, gets very moral and thinks it necessary to have a scapegoat whom it can punish for all the rest. At present it is laying its sins on my head, and driving me out to the wilderness; though it has plenty inside its high fence just as bad as I am, mamma." Then she was suddenly quiet, as if remembering. "Mamma, when I was in London I saw a picture of myself." Mrs. Filmer looked at her curiously and inquiringly, and she went on, with a kind of desperate indignation:

"It was in a gallery. It was called *The Sacrificial Goat*. The poor tormented creature was plodding with weary feet through the quaking wilderness, under the crimson rocks of Edom, and by the shores of the Dead Sea. I could not keep away from that picture. I felt as if I could do anything to give the fainting animal a drink of cold water. No one feels that about me"—

and she flung herself among the satin cushions of her sofa and began to sob like a lost child.

"Oh, Rose! Rose! How can you say so? What would I not do to make you happy?"

"Leave me alone, dear mamma. Do not be miserable about me. I am not worth worrying over; and I do not care the snap of my fingers for your society! Only, do not tell papa anything against his little Rose. He will never find out I am sorrowful and despised unless you say it in his very ears."

"Rose, go and speak to your father. He is a wise man; and he has a heart, my child."

"Yes, as good a heart as can possibly be made out of brains. But I do not want to trouble papa; and I do want him to believe I am all that is lovely and admirable. You never told him about Duval, did you?"

"No. Why should I?"

"And what have you said about Antony?"

"What you told me to say—that gold had been found on his place, and he had to look after things. It quite pleased him."

"Will Harry say anything—wrong?"

"Nothing at all. I have spoken to Harry."

"Poor dear papa!"

"Oh, Rose! My Rose!"

"And poor dear mamma, too!"

"If you would only write one word to Antony."

"I will not."

This conversation indicated the way Rose was going to take, and she made haste to carry out her determination. There is always a brilliant ruff of good society who are eager for pleasure—so called—and ambitious to achieve the trumpety distinction of 'smartness'—dissipated, devilish men, and rapid,

realistic women; and with this class Rose found it easy to fill her fine rooms. It was to outward appearance a highly desirable set, gorgeously dressed, and having all the insignia of the uppermost class. There was no sign of anything but the most exact virtue at the dinner-table, and the earlier dances were beautiful and proper; but as the evenings wore on, and the wines and ices began to influence conduct, the tone fell lower; men and women talked louder, and danced more recklessly; and at the last hour it was necessary to be a little blind and a little deaf.

But it is the eternal law, that where sin is, sorrow shall answer it; and in all this tumult and riot of feasting and dancing, Rose was sad and disconsolate. It was not alone that she was aware of her distinct loss of social estimation—aware that old friends shirked speaking to her if they could; and that even her mother lost patience with her vagaries and imprudences—it was not even the total silence of her husband, and the appalling sense of loneliness that chilled her whole life—there was a want greater than these, for it is not by bread alone we live; there is a certain approval of conscience necessary even to our physical existence, and without its all-pervading cement, this wondrous union of self is not held healthily together. Rose had not this blessed approval; and the flatteries of the crowd she feasted did not make up for the sweet content that follows duty accomplished and love fulfilled.

She had taken into her confidence a young girl called Ida Stirling. She was exceedingly pretty and witty and sympathetic, and quite inclined to share in all the mitigations of Rose's private hours. They had luxurious little meals together, and they told each other their secrets as they ate and drank. In this way

Rose betrayed herself; she gave to a stranger a confidence she had not given as fully to her mother, and put her heart into her hands, either to comfort or to despise. For a little while, the two women were inseparable; and on Rose's side, at least, there was nothing hidden from her companion.

All January and February passed in this constant succession of public and private entertaining; and the "affairs" began to pall, even upon those who had nothing to do but enjoy them. The Van Hoosen household grew notorious for its extravagance and its disorder, and an indefinable *aura* of contempt and indifference began to pervade those who came together in Rose's fine reception rooms. They no longer respected their hostess, they were often barely civil to her; and yet they were only fulfilling that condition Rose herself had anticipated—allowing her to find them a good floor, good music, and wines and ices for their refreshment. During February she suspected this feeling, but Ida Stirling, with many assurances, had pacified her doubts. A little later, however, she realized her position thoroughly; and she smarted under the sense of the contemptuous acceptance of her hospitality.

"I shall put a stop to the whole thing," she said to herself, one morning in March. "I shall not stay in New York until Easter. I shall ask Ida to go with me to Europe, and we will travel quietly with a maid and a courier." She permitted this idea to take possession of her until she suddenly remembered that even Ida had not appeared to be as fond of her society as she used to be. With a profusion of apologies and regrets, she had refused several invitations to shop and drive, and stay all night with her friend. Perhaps she would

not go to Europe. In such case, Rose resolved to travel with her maid only.

Absorbed in this new idea, she went out one day to attend to some shopping necessary for her plan. It was a lovely afternoon, full of sunshine, and a soft, fresh breeze. The windows were gay with spring fashions and preparations for Easter, and Broadway was crowded with well-dressed men and women, happy in the airs of spring, and in the sense of their own beauty or elegance. When she came out of Tiffany's, the temptation to join in this pleasant promenade was so great that she sent her carriage forward to Vantine's, and resolved to walk the intermediate distance. The sense of resurrection and restoration was so uplifting, the cheerfulness, the smiles, the noise of traffic and the murmur of humanity were altogether so restorative to her jaded heart that Rose felt a thrill of genuine natural happiness. She thought of the fresh sea and the queer, splendid old towns beyond it, and she hoped Ida would be willing to start by the first possible steamer.

To such thoughts she stepped brightly forward, her garments fluttering in the wind, and a large bunch of daffodils in her hands. As she approached Seventeenth Street, she felt a sudden impulse to answer an unknown gaze; and she let her eyes wander among the advancing crowd. In an instant they fell upon Ida Stirling and Mr. Duval. They were walking together, and their air was that of lovers; and Rose felt that they were talking about her. For a moment she was stunned; her soul was really knocked down, and her body felt unable to lift it. The next moment she stumbled on, with flaming cheeks, and ears so painfully alert that they heard every tone of the mocking

little laugh which saluted her in the passing. Ida was looking into Duval's face, and affected not to see Rose; but Duval stared insolently at her, without a token of recognition. She had herself, in the momentary pause, made a faint inquisitive smile, a slight movement that she could not restrain, but which she instantly felt to be the most shameful wrong to herself. It was answered—if at all—by that mockery of a laugh which entered her ears like the point of a sword and reached her heart through them.

Blindly, breathing in short gasps, she reached her carriage; and with a great effort gave the order "home." She was distracted. Her anger burned inward, set her blood on fire, and shook her like an earthquake. Her lover and her friend, both false! All her confidences betrayed! Her poor heart laid bare for their scorn and mirth! It was impossible to endure so abominable a wrong. She was struck dumb with it. She knew no words to express her distress. She could not rest a moment, sleep fled from her; her inner self was in a chaos of indescribable suffering.

In the morning she was physically ill; a great nausea, a burning fever, and a pain in every limb subdued her. All night her soul had seemed a substance made of fire; in the morning, it was dulled and numbed by her bodily agony; for pain is indeed perfect misery, and the very worst of mortal evils. Mrs. Filmer and a doctor were sent for; and Rose lay nearly two weeks, stunned and suffering from the soul-blow she had received. Much of the time she was hardly conscious of the present, moaning and fretful when awake, and when asleep lost in the unutterable desolation of dreams, full of portentous shapes and awful

suggestions. Her life had lost its balance, and she had lost her foothold on it in consequence.

"Am I very ill, mamma?" she asked mournfully, one midnight.

"Not very, my dear Rose. You are beginning to get better. The doctor thinks you have had a severe mental shock. What was it? Antony?"

"No; not Antony. Antony is not brutal. Am I strong enough to talk, mamma?"

"It may do you good to talk—to tell me what made you ill."

"I met Ida Stirling and Mr. Duval walking together. They laughed in my face as they passed me. And I had told Ida everything—everything!"

"Do you mean about Antony?"

"Yes; and about that dreadful day when you all thought I intended to go to Cuba."

"Rose, I never have understood that affair."

"And yet, without understanding it, every one, even you, thought the very worst of me."

"Then why did you not explain?"

"I don't know. I was too angry. I felt wicked enough to let you all think whatever you chose. And then baby was dead, and Antony treated me as if I were her murderer."

"You did not intend, however, to go to Cuba?"

"No more than you intended to go."

"What took you to the steamer then?"

"Mr. Duval had some letters—foolish, imprudent letters—and I was miserable about them; because whenever I did not meet him, or send him money, he threatened to show them to Antony. He promised, as he was going to Cuba, to give them to me for \$500. I had only three days to procure the money, and I did

not succeed in getting it until noon of the last day. Then I went to the Astor House, where Mr. Duval was waiting for me, and because I wanted to keep him in a good temper, I took lunch with him. He said he would give me the letters after lunch. I did not take but two glasses of wine, yet they made me feel strange, and when I was told that his luggage had all gone to the steamer, and that I must go there for the letters, I could not help crying. When Adriana spoke to me, I was begging for my letters, and he was urging me to go to Cuba with him. He wanted my money, mamma, and I knew it. He was cruel to me, and I had become afraid of him. While he was talking, I was listening for the bell to warn people ashore, and I should have fled at the first sound."

"He might have prevented you, Rose. My dear, what danger you were in!"

"I thought of that. There were several passengers on deck, and the captain was not far away. I would have thrown myself into the water rather than have gone to Cuba with Mr. Duval."

"Did you get the letters?"

"No. Yanna came interfering, and then Antony. I let them think what they liked. Duval said I intended to go with him. It was a lie, and he knew it; but Yanna and Antony seemed to enjoy believing it, and so I let them think me as wicked and cruel as they desired. Not one of you took the trouble to ask me a question."

"We feared to wound your feelings, Rose, by alluding to what could not be undone. And you were fretting so about your child."

"Not one of you noticed that I had taken no clothing, none of my jewelry, not a single article necessary

for comfort. Was it likely I would leave all my dresses and jewels behind me? If Mr. Duval thought I was going with him, was it likely he would have suffered me to forget them?"

"Why did you not tell me all this before, Rose?"

"I do not know 'why,' mamma. I enjoyed seeing Antony miserable. I enjoyed humbling Yanna's pride. I used to laugh at the thought of Harry and her talking over my misconduct. A spirit I could not control took possession of me. I did not want to do wrong, but I liked people to think I did wrong. I suppose you cannot understand me, mamma?"

"Yes, I understand, Rose."

"When I was quite alone, I used to cry bitterly about the sin of it; but all the same, as soon as Antony, or you, or Yanna, or any one that knew about Duval, came into my sight, I tried to shock them again."

"You will do so no more, Rose?"

"The desire has gone from me. I do not even fear Mr. Duval now. He can send all the letters he has to Antony, if he wishes. I am naturally a coward, and cowardice made me sin many a time. If I had only been brave enough to tell Antony what the villain made me suffer, I need not have endured it. Antony is generosity. Duval is cruelty."

This explanation gave Mrs. Filmer great relief, and doubtless it tended to Rose's quick recovery. She no longer bore her burden alone, and her mother's sympathy, like the pity of the Merciful One, was without reproach. But it was now that Rose began to realize for the first time that love teaches as the demon of Socrates taught—by the penalties exacted for errors. For every hour of her life she felt the loss of her hus-

band's protecting care. Her sickness had compelled her to leave everything to servants; and the house was abandoned to their theft and riot. Waste, destruction, quarreling all day, and eating and drinking most of the night, were the household ordering. She found it difficult to get for her own wants the least attention; and the light, nourishing food she craved was prepared, if at all, in the most careless manner. Her orders were quarreled over, disputed, or neglected; and withal she had the knowledge that she must, for the time being, endure the shameful tyranny. But, oh, how every small wrong made her remember the almost omniscient love of her husband, and the involuntary and constant cry of her heart was, "If Antony were only here!"

Her loneliness, too, was great; she was unaccustomed to solitude, and she was too weak to bear the physical fatigue of much reading. So the hours and the days of her convalescence went very drearily onward. She could not look backward without weeping, and there was no hope in the future. Alas! alas! our worst wounds are those inflicted by our own hands; and Rose, musing mournfully on her sofa, knew well that no one had injured her half so cruelly as she had injured herself. With how many tears her poor eyes did penance! But they were a precious rain upon her parched soul; it was softened by them, and though she had as yet no clear conception of her relationship to God, as a wandering daughter, far from His presence—but never beyond His love—she had many moments of tender, vague mystery, in which, weeping and sorrowful, she was brought very close to Him. For it is often in the dry time, and the barren time, that God reaches out His hand, and puts into the heart the

hopeful resolve, "I will arise and go to my Father!" In some sense this was the cry that broke passionately from Rose's lips on one night which had ended a day full to the brim of those small, shameful household annoyances, through which servants torture those whom they can torture.

"I will arise and go to my husband!" That was the first step on the right road, and the resolve sprang suddenly from a heart broken and wounded, and hungry and thirsty for help and sympathy.

"In Antony's heart there is love and to spare," she cried. "He would not suffer me to be tormented and neglected. He would put his strong arms round me, and the very south wind he would not let blow too rudely on my face. Oh, Antony! Antony! If you only knew how I long for you! How sorry I am for all the cruel words I said! How sorry I was even while saying them! I will go to Antony. I will tell him that I cannot forgive myself until he forgives me. I will tell him how truly I love him; how lonely and tired and sick and poor and wretched I am. He will forgive me. He will love me again. I shall begin to go *now*—at this very moment."

She rose up with the words, and felt the strength of her resolve. She looked at her watch. It was not quite nine o'clock. She rang the bell and ordered her carriage. The man hesitated, but finally obeyed the order. She was driven directly to her father's house. Mrs. Filmer had gone out with Harry and Adriana, but Mr. Filmer was in his study. He was amazed and terrified, when he saw Rose enter.

"My dear Rose! what are you doing here?" he cried. "You are ill, Rose."

"Ill or well, father, I want you. Oh, I need you so

much!" and she covered her face with her hands, and wept with all her heart. "I have been ill, but you have never been to see me, father—did you not know how ill I was? Do you not care for me?" she sobbed.

Mr. Filmer pulled a chair to his side. "Come here, my girl," he answered, "for I cannot come to you. Look at my bandaged foot, Rose. I have not stepped on it for a month."

"Oh, father! I am so sorry for you—and for myself."

"I fell, my dear—fell down those spiral stairs in the library, and sprained myself very badly. Did you imagine I had forgotten?"

"Mamma never told me—yes, I believe she did tell me—but I thought it was only a little hurt. I have been so selfishly miserable. And, oh, father! it is such a disappointment to me. I wanted you to take me to Antony."

"That is folly, my child. Your husband is about his business. He will come home as soon as he can leave it; and you are not fit to travel."

Then Rose remembered that her father had but a partial knowledge of the truth regarding her real position, and she hesitated. Lame and unable to help her, why should she make him unhappy? So she only said: "There is something a little wrong between Antony and me, and I want to talk to him. Letters always make trouble. I thought perhaps you might go with me; but you are lame—and busy, too, I see."

"Unfortunately, I am lame at present; but if you are in any trouble, Rose, I am not busy. What is this to you?" he asked, lifting some manuscript and tossing it scornfully aside. "It is only my amusement; you are my heart, my honor, my duty! I would burn every

page of my book if by so doing I could bring you happiness, my child."

"There is nothing to call for such a sacrifice, papa," she said, while the grateful tears sprang to her eyes; "but somehow, I do not seem to have any friends but you and mamma; none, at least, from whom I can expect help."

"In trouble, Rose, you may always go to God and to your father and mother for help. From them you cannot expect too much; and from men and women in general you cannot expect too little. Your mother will be home soon, so remain here to-night, and have a talk with her about this notion of going west to Antony. She will tell you that it is very foolish."

"If I stay I must send home the carriage, and then no one knows what may happen if the house is without any one even to give an alarm. But I am glad to have seen you, papa. And it was good to hear you say you would burn your book for my sake. I feel ever so much better for having heard you say such splendid words."

So Rose went home, without having made any advance towards her intention; but she was strengthened and comforted by her father's love and trust.

And she said to herself, "Perhaps I had better not be rash. I will be still, and think over things." Yet she was sensible of a singular impatience of delay. "Delay might mean so much. Her evil genius might have foreseen her effort, and resolved thus to defeat it. Harry might go with her. She might go by herself. Had she not contemplated a journey to Europe alone?" Until long after midnight she sat considering the details of her journey—the dress she ought to wear—the words she ought to say—and, alas! the possibilities of disappointment.

"No! there must be no delay," she whispered, as at last, weary with thought, she laid her head on her pillow. "I will go to-morrow, or, at any rate, on the day following." And with this determination, she fell asleep.

Just in the gray light before the dawning, she leaped from her bed like one pursued. She was drenched in the sweat of terror; the very sheets which had wrapped her were wet with the unhappy dew. To the window she ran, and threw it open, and leaned far out, and looked up and down the dim, silent street, sighing heavily, and wringing her hands like a child in terror, lost and perplexed. It was strange to see her walk round the room, touch the chairs, the ornaments, lift her garments, and finally go to the mirror and peer into it at her own white face.

A few hours later she was in Woodsome, talking to Peter Van Hoosen. Memories and fears that she could not endure were pressing her so sorely that she must needs tell them, and there seemed to be no one at once so strong and so sympathetic as Antony's father. He was listening to her story with an almost incredulous silence, as with tears and shame-dyed cheeks, she confessed her many sins and contradictions against her husband. Peter sat with eyes cast down, but ever and anon he lifted his searching gaze to the penitent's face; and anger and pity strove for the mastery.

"I think I was possessed of a devil," she said, and she looked hopelessly at Peter, with the self-accusation.

"You were possessed of yourself, Rose Van Hoosen; and there is no greater mystery than to be possessed of self."

"I know. I never cared for Antony's happiness. It was always what I wanted, and what I thought. That is the reason I must go and tell him how sorry I am."

"You must go further and higher than Antony. You must feel as David felt when he cried out to God, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned; and done this evil in Thy sight.' It is not Antony, but God, you will have to answer. You have lived as the fool lives. You have not remembered that every day is bringing you closer to that Great Day when this heaven and earth shall pass away like a burning scroll. Then Rose, you yourself will have to tell what you have done with the love and the time and the money that have been loaned you. If God sent you away from His presence forever, how could you bear it?"

An awful fear came into her eyes; she was white as death, and she trembled visibly.

"I have been where God is not," she said, in a whisper full of horror. "I was there this morning. I was not dreaming. I was there. I was in the Land of Evil Spirits."

Peter bent forward, and took her hand between his hands, and said:

"Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

"There was no God in that Land of the Shadow of Hell. It was desolation unutterable, and the light of it was darkness. I saw nothing but bare black mountains, and dead pits of black water, and wretched huts, wherein the evil ones crouched and crawled. There was a dreadful smell everywhere, I could not escape from it; and it was worse than all the other horrors. And I knew that it came from dead and dying souls and putrid sins and I tried to hide in caves, or climb

the dark mountains, but I could not get beyond its sickening influence. I can not understand. Can you?"

"I think so, Rose. No sense we have is more closely connected with the sphere of the soul than the sense of smell. If it is a direct avenue for the soul's approach to God, may it not lead also the other way? It is certain that because of its far-reaching power over the deep things, and the hidden things of the heart, the Bible is full of images appealing to this very sense. I can understand why the Land of the Evil Ones has the odor of death unto death."

"I tried in vain to flee from it, for I could not move fast. Some Power seemed to be dragging me slowly down; a Power like a huge loadstone, patient, because it was sure of me, and therefore able to wait. I knew prayer could help me; but I could not pray. Suddenly I saw an angel, very tired, and scarce moving her wings in the black air. I knew it was my Guardian Angel. Her eyes were full of pity, and she seemed so loth to leave me. Then in an awful terror I stretched out my hands, and called to her; and so calling, I came back to myself. And I flew to my window and looked out, and I touched all the things in my room, for I wanted to be sure that I was still alive; and as I dressed I said continually, 'Thank God! thank God!' I must go to Antony and tell him how sorry I am; then perhaps God will forgive me. Will you go with me to Antony?"

"I will."

"Can you start to-morrow?"

"To-day, if you wish. We can reach New York by three o'clock, and leave by to-night's train for the west. I will see your father and mother, and do all

that is necessary about your property, while you pack such clothing as you require. Now shall Betta bring you a cup of tea, for you look weary to death?"

"I have had nothing to eat to-day."

"Do you know where Antony is?"

"My lawyer knows—somewhere in Arizona, I think."

"No, he is nearer Denver. He went to Denver a month ago, about the sale of some mining property, and in his last letter he told me he had bought a shooting lodge south of Denver, from an English gentleman who was returning to England, and that he intended to spend the summer there. Through his agent in Denver we can find out the precise location." Then he spoke hopefully to her of God's love, and of her husband's love, but she was exceedingly depressed and sorrowful; and though she drank her tea, she made it bitter with tears. For she could not rid herself of that vision of her angel, hovering so tired and hopeless, on the verge of a limit beyond her holy care.

"Oh, father!" she cried, "if I could only once more know that my head was covered with her white wings! If the dear and great angel would only let me feel her guarding me—me, out of all the world! I used to know something about my Guardian Angel, but I had forgotten it for many years, until this very moment. Just as I spoke to you, the last lines flashed into my mind, as if all their letters were made of light. Listen :

'Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low,
And lay my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garments spread?'"

So, with many tears and sad reflections, she drank a little tea; and then Peter induced her to sleep an hour, because the journey would be long and hard for

her. But every mile of it was a tonic, and when she reached the high tableland of Colorado, the color came back to her cheeks, and she was able to eat and sleep, and in some ways enjoy the travel. Peter watched over her with a father's care; nay, it was more like a mother's never-wearying anxiety for her welfare and happiness; and when Denver was reached, both were full of hope, and cheerful in their hope. Here Peter would have delayed a few days; but Rose was eager to go forward, and the next morning they were on the Southern Line, and feeling that a few hours more would bring them face to face with Antony.

It was mid-afternoon when they reached the small station at which they were to alight, and Antony's lodge was about half a mile up the mountain. Trees hid it from view, but the mail-man walked with them to the timber, and showed Peter the trail through it, which would lead them directly to Mr. Van Hoosen's door. During this walk Rose became very silent, and one not in sympathy with her would have thought her cross. But Peter knew that all the issues of her life had come to this one point; and he felt keenly for her. Rose looked frequently into his face, and she held his hand tightly; but she was really incapable of speech. Indeed, she was incapable of thought. All her nature was absorbed by feeling.

The walk was not a long one, for in about ten minutes they came in sight of a pretty log-house, gabled and fancifully roofed, and of quite pretentious dimensions. Wide piazzas ran around its one story; and there were a few low, broad steps opposite the door. A man sat on them sewing a buckle on a leather strap, and he did not cease his employment or stand up as Peter and Rose reached him.

"Is Mr. Van Hoosen in?" asked Peter.

"Well, he is, and he isn't, sir. He was here an hour ago; but he's gone to ask a few trout to take supper with him. I'm Jim Laker. Sit down, both of you. Perhaps the lady would like to go inside."

But Rose positively declined this offer, and the man brought her a rocking-chair and a glass of milk. Then Peter began to talk to Jim about the wild-flowers of the district, and Rose sat watching and waiting, and heart-sick with anxiety.

"Mr. Van Hoosen is longer than usual." "I thought he'd be back an hour ago!" "'Pears like there must be something out of the ordinary!" Such were the explanations made every now and then, for the satisfaction of the visitors; and Rose had just begun to think Antony must have seen her, and slipped back to the woods, when a long, clear whistle was heard.

"That's him! He's coming down the mountain. I reckon he'll find the door at the other side." With these words the man lifted his mended strap, and walked through the house to its opposite door. Peter followed him.

"I am Mr. Van Hoosen's father, Jim," he said, and Jim answered with prompt good-nature, "I might have known. Your talk is just as likely."

They met Antony as he entered the house, and their exclamations embraced each other:

"Antony, my son! God bless you."

"Father! Why, father! This is a happy surprise!" and the young man put his hands on his father's shoulders and kissed him.

"Is anything wrong, father?"

"Why not ask, is everything right? Right is as

likely as wrong, is it not? There is some one on the front gallery, waiting to see you. I am going to the stable to look at your stock."

"Do. The horses are pretty good. I'll come to you in a few minutes. Jim! Jim Laker! Hère are the trout. Get us a good supper, as soon as you can."

He was putting his rod and line in place, and hanging up his hat, as he spoke. Peter lingered, and looked at him wistfully; until Antony—running his fingers through his hair—turned to the front door; then he said:

"As I told you, Antony, there is some one waiting to see you. I would not forget that '*His compassions fail not,*' and that '*His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.*'"

The strange charge made Antony start, struck the blood into his face, and set his heart beating wildly. He walked quickly to the front of the house; and his eyes immediately fell on the slight, black-robed figure of his wife. Rose had heard his approaching footsteps, and had stood up to meet her fate. Her head was bare, her hands dropped, but her eyes gazed straight at him. And there was a look in them, and in the thin, pathetic face, that melted Antony's heart to tears. He went towards her with open arms; but she lifted her hands, palms outward, and cried:

"Oh, Antony! Let me say I am sorry, before you forgive me. So sorry! so ashamed of the past! I have been nearly dead with shame and grief! Can you forgive me? Will it be right to forgive me?"

"My dear one, I have forgot it all."

"No, no! You must first think of it all—think of everything I did wrong—of every scornful word and act, of every unkindness, of every time I made you

ashamed of me. Is it right to forgive me? For I am not good, I am only trying to be good; and perhaps I shall fail very often. But God has spoken to me; and men and women have punished me on every hand; and I love you. Yes, I love you so much, Antony, that if you send me away I shall die of love and grief."

"You love me?"

"Yes, I love you."

"Then, my dear Rose, that is enough for all. We will bury every sad memory in love. Forgive all for love. Trust all to love." So he gathered her to his heart, and kissed the tears off her eyes, and the love off her lips; and said to her with sweet solemnity:

"My darling Rose, this is our real marriage. Oh, my wife! My dear wife! My dear, dear, dear wife!"

THE END

