

on, until he became so deeply involved in ruin that it was too late to draw back.

Not infrequently Walter remained out the whole night. One morning he returned at dawn. His face was pale and haggard. He seemed ill and broken in spirit. He did not work that day, nor the three days following, but remained at home without going any where.

"Mother," he said at last, "I have ruined myself and you by card-playing. I must leave this town to escape from certain men in whose power I have fallen. This house and property I have mortgaged to borrow money. All is lost. Helen and you will be able to get along better without me."

Helen and Mrs. Williams were not surprised at this; they had expected as much. Though they did not much relish Walter's going away, they quietly and sadly assisted him in his preparation for departure on the morrow. It was sundown when a dark, sallow-complexioned man knocked at the door. Walter went out to him and in a short time returned for his hat.

"O, don't go away with him," begged Helen; "Stay home this night at least, since it is your last with us."

"I must go," returned Walter, "at any cost.—Mother, there are yet some clothes in my wardrobe up stairs that I would like you to pack in my trunk."

"Walter," said Mrs. Williams, "do you intend to go off with that ill-looking fellow. Really I am not surprised to see that—"

The reproach was lost upon Walter, for he had already dissappeared. One o'clock had struck before Walter reappeared. He was more pale and haggard than he had ever been before; in fact he had a wild and startled look whenever his mother and sister addressed him. He sat nervously in his chair and rose up every few minutes to glance out the window, until, at length, he staggered up to his room.

Just before dawn, two other visitors knocked loudly at the door. Helen got up to see what they wanted. To her dismay, they entered boldly into the house and asked in an abrupt manner to be led to Walter's chamber. Terrified beyond expression,