

"But your mother," I exclaimed.
 "I will speak to mamma; if she sees that my heart is set on your remaining she will yield to me."

"But mamma wishes me to return home soon; she is not well," I urged gently.

"Soon! oh well! in a little while you will go, but not yet—not yet!" There was such painful eagerness in her tones that I yielded, and promised to remain at Upfield for the present if Mrs. Godfrey consented. Surely I could have given Helen no greater proof of my deep love for her—had she known it—for my own desire and longing was now to get away from Upfield, and shut out forever the most unhappy and humiliating period of my life.

I expected to receive notice from Mrs. Godfrey that my services were no longer required; but the hours passed on, and no such intimation was given to me, nor did my aunt in the slightest way allude to the encounter of the previous night. I supposed that Helen had pleaded for my continued presence at the manor, and though grateful for her love I felt depressed at the thought of remaining. Indeed so low-spirited did I become that it was with difficulty I could restrain my tears during the solemn and trying hour of dinner.

I knew not how soon everything would be changed, nor of the exciting and sad events through which I was destined soon to pass.

After dinner, I went up to Helen's room and remained with her till bed-time; she said she felt much better, but she did not look so. Her face still wore the weary, haggard look it had had in the morning; and I felt more and more puzzled by her manner; there was in it a greater kindness and tenderness than usual, and yet—I missed something in it—something which I could not define; but its absence worried me and made me feel more depressed than ever; for I thought that perhaps, though my cousin, out of the natural sweetness of her nature, had forgiven my deception, she yet censured me in her inmost heart; and I could not brook the thought that I was less to her now than I had been yesterday. Oh! if I had but known! Poor little Helen!

I was restless and wakeful that night and tossed and turned on my pillow till my head fairly ached and my eyes were strained and sore with the effort to close them in sleep. At last I could endure it no longer, and sprang out of bed, wrapping my dressing gown around me; for though only the end of August, it was a raw, damp night, and the dreary wind howled mournfully around the old manor, rattling the windows with ghostly hands and whistling down the chimneys; then, with an angry shriek, sweeping away to wreak its vengeance upon the leafy giants of the park. I drew aside the curtain and looked out. Ah! how dark it was! Not a star to be seen in the inky sky; only thick dark masses of clouds.

"It will rain before morning," I muttered, and shuddered at the dreariness without. Casting my eyes below, I was startled by a gleam of light from the window of the library. The curtains were not drawn quite close.

It was an unusual thing for anyone to be there as late as this—it was nearly twelve o'clock.—Mrs. Godfrey and Helen kept very early hours except when visitors were in the house; as a general thing by eleven the whole manor was shrouded in darkness and all its inmates in bed.

I stood by the window a long time, it seemed to me—in reality it could not have been more than ten minutes—anxiously watching that little tell-tale ray of light. I wondered fretfully who could be in the library at that hour. It must be Mrs. Godfrey; it could be none other, save Helen, and she was ill; besides, I had left her sleeping soundly. Yes; it must be Mrs. Godfrey; but what could take her there at this hour? Vainly I told myself it was not at all strange that she should choose to go into her own library at half-past eleven at night. She probably had important business letters to get ready for the early post. So I reasoned, but as I gazed, fascinated at the light in the window, a wild restlessness took possession of me, an unconquerable desire to see with my own eyes the interior of the library. The impulse was too strong to be resisted; I jumped up, and slipping my bare feet into a pair of soft velvet slippers, I was soon gliding noiselessly through the corridor. I descended the stairs without making the slightest sound, and pushed open the drawing room door; the door leading into the library was closed, and beneath it I saw a gleam of light. Softly returning to the hall, I entered the dining room, and from thence

passed into a little room adjoining, which was known as the red room. Here a door opened on to the veranda. Softly turning the key in the lock and then drawing it out and locking the door on the outside, I was soon hastening along the veranda, unheeding the cold and dampness, spurred on by one great desire which left no room for nervous fear.

Arrived at the steps at the end of the veranda, I descended and ran quickly to the lawn. I feared to lift my eyes lest the light should be gone from the library window. But no it was there still! Another moment I stood beneath the window and looked within.

I drew a long breath and clenched my hands to stifle the cry that arose to my lips. Despair, rage, hatred, filled my soul, and I cried once more "Now indeed all is lost."

Kneeling at the cupboard—as I had done the night before—books and papers strewn around her, an eager intensity in the expression of her face, was Mrs. Godfrey!

She suspected then! She was searching for the will! "And she will find it too," I cried despairingly, for something told me it was there. Ah! how unfortunate I had been! One-quarter of an hour more last night, and the will had been in my possession.—I did not doubt it was there, and now she—this treacherous woman—this interloper, my enemy, would find and destroy it, my instinct told me; and thus indeed we would be cast out from our just inheritance forever!

As I gazed at the scene in the library, the storm that raged in my bosom was in unison with the elements without, but I heeded not the thick dampness that penetrated my insufficient clothing, nor the cold wind that howled around me and swayed and shook the trees above. Crouching on the topmost step, my hands, numb with cold, though I knew it not then, clutched the frame-work of the window, as with strained eyes and bated breath, I awaited the result of Mrs. Godfrey's search.

She had emptied the cupboard of its contents, and, imbued with the same idea which had possessed me; namely, of the existence of a secret recess, seemed to be feeling round the inside of the cupboard. Suddenly the motion of her arm ceased, a triumphant smile played for an instant about her thin, bloodless lips; her eyes turned in the direction of the window, and for a moment I half fancied she had seen me. I shrank back and crouched still lower. When I ventured to look again, she was standing upright, a written document in her hand, which her eyes eagerly devoured. It was the will, I felt sure!

I wanted to cry out and tell her that I saw her every action, and to demand the document from her; but I could not move nor utter a word that would betray my presence. So great was the dread with which this woman had inspired me, that, had she turned her baleful eyes upon me and approached the window where I was, I would have fled from her into the black night, as one would flee in terror from an evil spirit in a dream.

It was a moment of supreme agony! My heart beat with a dull thud against my breast, my breath came in quick, short gasps, and drops of cold dew started to my brow and around my lips.

She read the document through, many times it appeared to me, and then folded it and stood for a moment, as though hesitating what to do with it.

A sudden hope darted into my mind. Would the good in her triumph over the bad? Would she act justly and fairly to my father? That question was soon answered. With a quick movement she bent over the table and deliberately held the paper in the flame of the candle that burned there. Mutely I gazed as the precious document was being thus slowly consumed before my very eyes; yet the hand that committed the crime never trembled, the cruel, hard face that bent over the destructive flame never changed from its fixity of purpose, until the door of the library suddenly opened, and like a spirit from another and purer world, Helen Godfrey came slowly into the room.

(To be Continued.)

A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
 Its loveliness increases; it will never
 Pass into nothingness, but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
 —[Keats.]