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have been instantly drowned. No doubt was cast on any portion of the story Mrs. Frayd related, but in the truth of what Steven had confessed, Derry never for one moment had the very faintest belief.

Mrs. Frayd had watched Mr. Bassett go at eight o'clock, she resumed, and had warned him of the danger of bathing on such a morning. Mr. Katchell had met and spoken to him as he went down to the beach through his farm at a quarter past eight, and at two o'clock, Fitz was still sitting on his master's dry garments in that little nook, while his master had met his death in the sea. So the story went on, until Derry could not even hear.

In the evening Mrs. Frayd came in with further tidings. The detectives had persisted in it that Mr. Bassett had never been in the sea at all, and had escaped in other clothes, but a fisherman—Leppard by name—had been up to Harrack's with soles to sell, and had mentioned having rowed past just as Mr. Bassett was swimming out, and spoken to him and asked him if he would have the boat, and Leppard was going into Thawton then, to make this known. At night-fall she brought further news. The account of Steven's random confession of having himself stabbed his cousin Miles had been told to old Mrs. Bassett early in the day, and had given her a shock from which she had not strength to rally. Before they had ventured to tell her of his death, she died, having uttered only four words—

"And he a Bassett."

PART VI.

CHAPTER I.

DAY after day went by, and though a strange unrest possessed Derry, she never went anywhere out of sight of Harrack's. Mrs. Frayd certainly spared no words in urging her young lodger to take a drive, or to call at the Tower or at the Pines, but even many words could not stimulate the girl to her former habits. She was not to be persuaded even to go into the village, following her old habit of dropping in to listen wher-

ever she could make the opportunity; and by the end of the week there had grown a pained, puzzled look on the beautiful, frank face.

Ella saw it when at last she drove up to visit her sister, and it made her try even more persuasive arguments than she had yet used to prevail upon Derry to return to town.

"I'm all right," said Derry, and never guessed that the smile with which she said it was as unlike her old smile as moonshine is to sunshine.

"It is doing you harm to be here so much alone," persisted Ella, with real entreaty in the sweet, cold voice. "Do go back to father."

"Give him time to finish his Sara," returned Derry, lightly. "Come, Sambo, tell me about yourself. It is so long since I have seen you."

"I could not help it, dear. You know I always have a difficulty with Aunt Crystal about coming here, and she is even worse than ever since that dreadful confession of Steven's. It has been a great trial to me."

"You believe it, then?"

"Believe it, dear? What do you mean?"

"I don't know," said Derry, pushing in the beautiful hair from her forehead as if its weight oppressed her.

"What is the matter?" Ella questioned, gazing at her sister. "Is there any reason for you not believing Steven's own words?"

"Sambo, you must forgive me, though I can not forgive myself. I am mad with myself because I—can not believe it."

"Not believe what he said himself?"

"No! No! Not a word of it."

"But, Derry dearest, are you mad?"

"Yes—I think so."

"Would you say of the dead that he had lied?"

"Yes, I would say that he had lied a thousand times, rather than that he had done that."

"Then why should he say he had?" inquired Ella, plaintively.

"I don't know. Don't ask me. I can not think now. I believe I have lost the power of thinking. I am trying to get it back; I sit here all day, and try and try and try all night, but—it will not come. Sometimes I think it is because I tried too much when I came here first. Some-