

ing spirit Stepping from the sheltering trunk against which he was leaning, he stood strong and erect.

The winds were hushed as if expectant in the branches above—

"Dennis Fleet," he said, "you must put your foot on this folly here and now."

He bared his head and looked upward.

"O God," he said solemnly, "if this is contrary to Thy will—Thy will be done."

He paused a moment reverently, and then turned on his heel and strode resolutely homeward.

A gust of wind crashed the branches overhead together like the clash of cymbals in victory.

The early spring dawn was tinging the eastern horizon before the mansion of the rich brewer was darkened and the gay revel ceased. All the long night, light airy music had caused late passers by to pause a moment to listen, and to pity or envy the throng within as disposition might dictate. Mr. Brown was a man who prided himself on lavish and rather coarse hospitality. A table groaning under costly dishes, and every variety of liquor that diseased appetite could crave, was the crowning feature, the blissful climax of all his entertainments; and society from its highest circles furnished an abundance of anxious candidates for his suppers, who ate and criticized, drank to and disparaged, their plebeian host.

Mrs. Brown was heavy in every sense of the word, and with her huge person encased in acres of silk and festooned with no end of black lace, she waddled about and smiled and nodded good-naturedly at everybody and everything.

It was just the place for a fashionable revel, where the gross repulsive features of coarse excess are veiled and masked somewhat by the glamour of outward courtesy and good-breeding.

At first Christine entered into the dance with great zest and a decided sense of relief.

She was disappointed and out of sorts with herself. Again she had failed in the object of her intense ambition, and though conscious that through the excitement of the occasion, she had never sung better, yet she plainly saw in the different results of her singing and that of Dennis Fleet that there was depth in the human heart which she could not touch. She could secure only admiration, superficial applause. The sphere of the true artist who can touch and sway

the popular heart, seemed beyond her ability. By voice or pencil she had never yet reached it. She had too much mind to mistake the character of the admiration she excited, and was far too ambitious to be satisfied with the mere praise bestowed on a highly accomplished girl. She aspired—determined to be among the first, and to be a second rate imitator in the world of Art was to her the agony of a disappointed life. And yet to imitate with accuracy and skill, not with sympathy, was the only power she had as yet developed. She saw the limitations of her success more clearly than any one else, and chafed bitterly at the invisible bounds she could not pass.

The excitement of the dance enabled her to banish thoughts that were both painful and humiliating. Moreover to a nature so active and full of physical vigor, the swift, graceful motion was a source of keen enjoyment.

But when after supper many of the ladies were silly, and the gentlemen were either stupid or excited, as might be the action of the "invisible spirit of wine" upon their several constitutions—when after many glasses of champagne Mr. Mellen began to effervesce in frothy sentimentality, and a style of love-making simply nauseating to one of Christine's nature, she looked around for her father in order to escape from the scenes that were becoming revolting.

Though of earth only in all the sources of her life and hopes, she was not earthy. If her spirit could not soar and sing in the sky, it also could not grovel in the mire of gross materiality.

Some little time therefore before the company broke up, on the plea of not feeling well, she lured her father away from his wine, cigars, and a knot of gentlemen who were beginning to talk a little thick and incoherently, and making their adieux amid many protestations against their early departure, drove homeward.

"How did you enjoy yourself?" asked her father.

"Very much the early part of the evening, not at all the latter part. To sum up, I am disgusted with Mr. Mellen and these Browns in general, and myself in-particular."

"What is the matter with Mr. Mellen? I understand that the intriguing mammas consider him the largest game in the city."

"When hunting degenerates into the chase and capture of insects, you may style him game. Between his champagne and silly love-making, he was as bad as a dose of ip-eacac."

Christine spoke freely to her father of her