

Such was the storm that wildly raged in her torn and shattered heart; until her mother, ah, how many balmy words have fallen upon bleeding hearts from the angel lips of *mother*, ventured to whisper very softly in her ear, lest she should be overheard, "Perhaps the Masons are not so bad, after all, as we have thought;" and when she had said it she looked frightened, and cast a furtive glance at the cat upon the floor, and at the canary on the wall, as though suspicious that they might prove telltale, and repeat her words. She could not divine herself, why she had said it; the words seem to come to her as the whisperings of some unseen angel; and without pondering them, she had at once breathed them out.

Will she repent their utterance? Whether she does or not, they brought a light into Sarah's eyes, a color to her cheek, and a hopefulness into the expression of her whole face, of which they had been entirely innocent since she heard the sad news, two days before. And oh, how much of life is sometimes crowded into the brief space of forty-eight, or even twenty-four hours.

The evening of that day was the usual one for Charley's visit to the home of the Brownell's. He went now to pour into the ear of his beloved, the bitter anguish of his own broken spirit: flattering himself that there was one heart that would sympathize with him, as would the heart of his own dear mother, was not her place occupied by another at the family hearth. He went fresh from his mother's grave, imagining that he could almost hear her words of consolation, now that his own father had become his enemy.

Filled with these thoughts, in which sunshine and shadow so weirdly played at hide and seek, he was totally unprepared for the reception that awaited him.

Mr. Brownell answered his familiar rap, presenting himself in person at the door, instead of bidding him enter, as had been the custom; and so startled him that he staggered back, and clutched the gateposts for support, by the unexpected words: How dare you, villain, presume to set foot on my premises again, after joining those wicked Masons. Would you make us accessory to your guilt? There is no one here who wishes to see you; your presence is pestilential; Sarah despises you, and we all hate you. Begone, and let us never see your face, nor have occasion to speak your name again."

The young man waited not for a second invitation; he went, bewildered, not knowing whither, as one laboring under the incubus of a nightmare. And all, before Sarah, to whom this proceeding was as unexpected as to her lover, had sufficiently recovered from the shock it gave her, to utter a word. With a wail she at last said, "Oh father, how could you do that?" and flew to her room.

We will draw the curtain around the bed of both, for that night: only a demon could witness their emotions with the least degree of satisfaction.

The acts in the drama,—might it not be styled a *tragedy*—succeeded each other rapidly.

Next came charges against our hero, before his church. Next a trial; conducted by bigotry and relentless prejudice, headed, and led on by the devout, and pious Mr. Allwise; some hearts throbbed with sympathy, but who, but the charged himself, dare say a word in opposition to their pastor?