

"What was the matter with her, Janet?"

"Oh! I think 'tis only one of her old attacks of weakness, Miss Enis; I've seen her so many a time."

"If she should ask for me in the night or early in the morning, be sure to let me know, Janet."

"Oh! yes Miss, I will."

"Has Mrs. Godfrey retired to her room yet, do you know Janet?"

"Yes Miss Enis; she went to her bedroom just a minute or so before you came here."

"Oh! then I think I will go to bed also; are you going to sleep here to-night?"

"Yes miss, so as to be near if Miss Godfrey should want me in the night."

"Well good night Janet."

"Good night Miss."

I returned to my room and waited till the cathedral bell rang over the hour of mid-night, and then putting on my dressing gown, and taking the candle and matches, I extinguished the light and left the room.

There was a night-light burning in Helen's boudoir, and I could hear Janet's loud breathing, as I stood a moment listening. Again I stood a moment and listened intently at Mrs. Godfrey's door; all seemed silent and dark within; and so I went cautiously down-stairs, and through the drawing-room and on to the library.

When I had drawn the curtains and lighted my candle, I unlocked the door of the cupboard and was soon busily rummaging amongst the musty old books and papers.

So absorbed did I become that I forgot my fear of being discovered, forgot the flight of time, forgot everything but the object of my search.

I had very nearly emptied the cupboard when all at once a sudden fear made my heart stand still, an awful consciousness of some presence in the room caused me to raise my eyes from my work.

What I saw turned the blood cold in my veins and utterly paralysed my every faculty.

Standing there before me, clad in a flowing white wrapper, her light hair falling around her shoulders and her pale eyes gleaming maliciously from out her cruel, thin face—was Mrs. Godfrey!

With a book grasped tightly in both hands, paralysed with a terrible fear, I knelt and gazed at her, my eyes glued to her face by some awful fascination; for there was something—a sort of treacherous cunning—in that face which I had heard and read was always the expression on the countenance of mad persons. It was a relief to me when she broke the silence, even though she hissed forth her words rather than spoke them.

"What do you here at this hour?"

To this question I could make no answer; I was speechless. My tongue numbed by fear, absolutely refused to perform its functions.

She repeated her question, and when still I did not answer she came a step nearer and stretched forth her hand to take from me the book I still held.

The touch of her cold hand on mine aroused me from my trance; with a half-smothered cry I sprang to my feet, and turned to flee from the room; but she laid a detaining hand upon my arm.

"Answer me girl; for what were you seeking in yonder recess?" she hissed again.

This time I muttered something about sleeplessness, and taking a fancy to lock through the cupboards as I had often rummaged through them long ago.

"Oh, indeed!" she said with a sardonic smile, "I am sorry to have cut short your nocturnal fancy; however I will now trouble you to return these books and letters to the cupboard, and then you will return to your bedroom where I trust you will be able to sleep till morning."

I tremblingly obeyed, and she stood watching me till the last book was replaced, the cupboard locked, and the key hung upon the nail.

"Now go," she said, pointing to the door, and I went; slowly at first, and when I reached the hall I quickened my steps into a run and flew up-stairs as though pursued by an evil spirit.

Reaching my own room I locked the door and then crept, weak and trembling, into bed, and when I laid my weary

head upon the pillow I told myself with a bitter cry that all—*all* was lost!

When I awoke in the morning from the heavy, dreamless sleep into which I had fallen, my head ached, and a dull, dazed feeling prevented my recalling at first the events of the past night. But gradually it all came back to me and I shrank from going down-stairs and meeting Mrs. Godfrey.

My heart was heavy with its bitter disappointment, the hopes and dreams of many months were shattered in an hour! All my scheming and planning, all the petty humiliations and trials to my self-respect, which I had endured had been utterly in vain, and I had nothing now to hope for, nothing to look forward to in the dreary future! I could not now even explain to them all at home my real motive for coming to Upfield. Papa, Herbert and Hetty, even yet blamed me for coming, and now I had lost the hope of clearing myself in their eyes. Gone too was my cherished dream of returning to them with the lost will in my hand, and the glad news that Upfield was ours again and our hardships and poverty a hideous dream of the past. Upfield would never be ours again—never—never! My father would wear his life out in the struggle for bread, and mamma—poor mamma! would fade—fade before our eyes for want of the luxuries we could not give her!

After breakfast—which Mrs. Godfrey and I had eaten in unbroken silence—Janet came and asked me to go up to Helen's room as she wished to see me.

I went at once and found my cousin in bed propped up with pillows. She looked pale and haggard, and there were great dark circles beneath her eyes. She flushed a little when I entered, but smiled and held out her hand to me.

"Good morning Enis." Though she smiled yet her voice faltered, and there was a perceptible constraint in her manner.

I felt puzzled but could only account for it by supposing that Mrs. Godfrey had told her all. But this supposition was wrong as a few minutes conversation showed me. What then was the cause of her altered manner? As I sat by her there came to me a sudden resolve to tell her everything. And so I did; beginning with my first dream of the old library and ending with the events of the preceding night.

"And now"—I added—"now dear little cousin, that my dreaming and scheming has come to naught, I want to hear you say that you forgive me and that—that you do not blame me altogether; for oh darling! it was not for myself—and then I will leave Upfield, and never trouble your happy life again, dear."

She was lying, back on her pillows with a perfectly colorless face, and closed eyes; but when I ceased speaking she started up and throwing out her arms in a despairing way cried mournfully:—

"I happy! oh! Enis—Enis! I am one of God's most unhappy creatures!"

"No, no dearest," I cried, "you must not say so; have you not got Douglas? think Helen of the happy future that awaits you as his wife."

She looked steadily at me for a moment without speaking and then said quietly, while a dull red flush mounted to her brow—

"I do not forget Douglas; he—he was here yesterday, did you know?"

It was now my turn to blush, but I answered calmly:—

"Yes, I met him in the park; I intended to mention it to you, but you know I did not see you afterwards."

"But Helen you have not said that you forgive the deception I practised in coming here; you do not know how despicable I am in my own eyes; but it was to obtain justice for my father—to win a home for my dear mother—and the end seemed to me to justify the means; but Helen believe me, though I have acted deceitfully toward you, yet I have loved you none the less dearly; and it will be the heaviest punishment I can bear if you do not forgive me before I go."

"Dear, I freely forgive you; I can understand what prompted you to act so; but oh Enis! why did you not confide in me; I would have aided you in your search; you know I would not wilfully withhold Upfield from your father."

"I know, I know; you are very good," I faltered.

"Enis," she whispered when I at length arose to leave the room—"you must not leave Upfield; at any rate, not just yet—promise me."