

have your little cross to carry. No, dear, it is all right. And, John, you will have the best of me in our Lillie. She looks like me: but, John, she has your good heart; and she will be more to you than I could be. She is just as sweet and unselfish as I *was* selfish. I don't think I am quite so bad now; and I think, if I lived, I should try to be a great deal better."

"O Lillie! I cannot bear to part with you! I never have ceased to love you; and I never have loved any other woman."

"I know that, John. Oh! how much truer and better you are than I have been! But I like to think that you love me,—I like to think that you will be sorry when I am gone, bad as I am, or *was*; for I insist on it that I am now a little better than I was. You remember that story of Undine you read me one day? It seems as if most of my life I have been like Undine before her soul came into her. But this last year I have felt the coming in of a soul. It has troubled me; it has some with a strange kind of pain. I have never suffered so much. But it has done me good—it has made me feel that I have an immortal soul, and that you and I, John, shall meet in some better place hereafter.—And there you will be rewarded for all your goodness to me."

As John sat there, and held the little frail hand, his thoughts went back to the time when the wild impulse of his heart had been to break away from this woman, and never see her face again; and he gave thanks to God, who had led him in a better way.

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And so, at last, passed away the little story of Lillie's life. But in the home which she has left now grows another Lillie, fairer and sweeter than she,—the tender confidant, the trusted friend of her father. And often, when he lays his hand on her golden head, he says, "Dear child, how like your mother you look!"

Of all that was painful in that experience, nothing now remains. John thinks of her only as he thought of her in the fair illusion of first love,—the dearest and most sacred of all illusions.

The Lillie who guides his household, and is so motherly to the younger children; who shares every thought of his heart; who enters into every feeling and sympathy,—she is the pure reward of his faithfulness and constancy. She is a sacred and saintly Lillie, springing out of the sod where he laid her mother, forgetting all her faults for ever.