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knows not why, for never yet has a thought of love for him entered her soul. She only knows that he to her is the dearest, best of friends, and Greystone Hall the loveliest spot on earth, but the wish that she might ever be its mistress has never been conceived.

With the coming of the holidays the lessons were suspended for a time, for there was to be company at the hall, and its master would need all his leisure.

'I shall miss you so much,' he said to Maggie, as he walked with her across the fields which led to her humble home. 'I shall miss you, but the claims of society must be met, and these ladies have long talked of visiting us.'

'Are they young and handsome?' Maggie asked involuntarily.

'Only one—Miss Helen Deane is accounted a beauty. She is an heiress, too, and the best match in all the city of L—,' answered Mr. Thornton, more to himself than Maggie, who at the mention of Helen Deane felt a cold shadow folding itself around her heart.

Alas poor Maggie Lee. The world has long since selected the proud Helen as the future bride of Graham Thornton, who, as he walks slowly back across the snow-clad field, tramples upon the delicate footprints you have made, and wishes it were thus easy to blot out from his heart all memory of you! Poor, poor Maggie Lee, Helen Deane is beautiful, far more beautiful than you, and when in her robes of purple velvet, with her locks of golden hair shading her soft eyes of blue, she fits like a sunbeam through the spacious rooms of Greystone Hall, waking their echoes with her voice of the richest melody, what marvel if Graham Thornton does pay her homage, and reserves all thoughts of you for the midnight hour, when the hall is still and Helen's voice no longer heard? He is but a man—a man, too, of the world, and so, though you, Maggie Lee, are very dear to him, he does not think it possible that he can raise you to his rank—make you the honoured mistress of his home, and still lower himself not an iota from the station he has ever filled. And though his mother loves you, too, 'tis not with a mother's love, and should children ever climb her knee calling her son their sire, she would deem you a governess befitting such as they, and nothing more. But all this Maggie does not know, and when the visiting is over and Helen Deane is gone, she goes back to her old place and sits again at the feet of Graham Thornton, never wondering why he looks so oft into her eyes of brown, trying to read there that he has not wronged her.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another year has passed, and with the light of the full moon shining down upon him, Graham Thornton walks again with Maggie Lee across the fields where now the summer grass is growing. The foot-prints in last winter's snow have passed away just as the light will go out from Maggie's heart when Graham Thornton shall have told the story he has come with her to tell. With quivering lips and bloodless cheek she listened while he told her indifferently, as if it were a piece of news she had probably heard before, that when the next full moon should shine on Greystone Hall, Helen Deane would be there—his bride!

'This, of course, will effectually break up our pleasant meetings,' he continued, looking everywhere save in Maggie's face. 'And this I regret—but my books are still at your disposal. You will like Helen, I think, and will call on her of course.'

They had reached the little gate, and, taking Maggie's hand, he would have detained her for a few more parting words, but she broke away, and in reply to his last question, hurriedly answered, 'Yes, yes.'

The next moment he was alone—alone in the bright moonlight. The door was shut. There was a barrier between himself and Maggie Lee, a barrier his own hands had built, and never again, so long as he lived, would Graham Thornton's conscience be at rest. Amid all the pomp of her bridal day—at the hour when, resplendent with beauty, Helen stood by his side at the holy altar, breathed the vows which made his forever—amid the gay festivities which followed, and noisy mirth which for days pervaded his home, there was ever a still, small voice which whispered to him of the great wrong he had done to Maggie Lee, who never again was seen at Greystone Hall.

Much the elder Mrs. Thornton marvelled at her abence, and once when her carriage was rolling past the door of the little store, she bade her coachman stop, while she herself went in to ask if her favourite was ill. Miss Olivia's early call at Greystone Hall had never been returned and now she bowed coldly and treated her visitor with marked reserve, until she learned why she had come, then, indeed, her manner changed, but she could not tell her how, on the night when Graham Thornton had cruelly torn the veil from Maggie's heart, leaving it crushed and broken, she had found her long after midnight out in the tall, damp grass, where, in the wild abandonment of grief she had thrown herself; nor how, in a calmer moment she had told her sad story, exonerating him from wrong, and blaming only her.