

by day. Of his history she knew nothing. He was too shy and reserved for one in her position to question; and he seemed to shun the company of his fellow students, and to be wholly wrapt in his studies, —scarcely allowing himself to be absent a moment from his room, except to attend to his recitation and lectures, and his hasty meals.

“Months passed away, and the only change in the pale-faced student was a deeper pallor, and a more reserved demeanor. But such a course of life could not be of long duration, and at last nature gave way. The student fell suddenly and violently ill. The widow hastened to his bedside, and attended him with a mother’s care. For a time his life hung trembling in the balance, reason tottered on her throne; but by day and by night the gentle hand of woman ministered to his wants. She doubtless remembered her own dear boy—her first born—whom she had not seen for five long, long years. He has gone with a mother’s prayers and blessings, to the new world, where, under the advice and patronage of a relative, he hoped soon to be able, by his earnings, to assist his mother in supporting herself and her little ones. He, too, might fall sick among strangers, and in his agony, like the poor boy before her, call in vain for a mother’s kiss. As she thought of this, her heart yearned for her sick charge as if he were her own boy.

“At length the crisis passed, reason returned, and nature began slowly to recover her lost sway. The student daily expressed his gratitude to his kind nurse, for her unwearied watching and care, and hoped that she might never want a friend in time of need. Of his own history, he spoke but little, and seemed to be pained at any question concerning himself. That he was an orphan, struggling with poverty, and had denied himself of even necessary food and exercise, that he might secure an education, was all that could be gathered from his lips. But I must not weary you with these details. After a time the student recovered, completed his studies, and left the university, and city, to seek his fortune elsewhere.

“In the course of years, and after many hard struggles, the fortunes of the kind-hearted nurse had bettered. Her children had relieved her of their support and care; her son had prospered in his new home, and was able to assist her in his turn; and her declining years were passing happily away. Her son’s property continued to increase, and he desired his mother to remove to America, and pass the rest of her life in his own household. But the task of removal seemed too great, and the severing of old friendships too painful to contemplate, and she determined to live and die amid the scenes of her childhood, and the trials of her mature years. Finding her resolution firmly fixed, her son ceased to persuade. But he could not rest satisfied without at least a picture of the mother, who bent over him in his cradle, and whom he had not seen since she kissed and bade him good-bye when he first started for the Western world. Deeply impressed with the thought, he wrote to request that she would sit for her portrait; and remembering how beautiful she seemed to him in days long passed, and of his present prosperity, he particularly directed that it should be painted by the best artist that she could find. If he must content himself with the counterfeit, he desired that it should at least be skillfully executed.

“Anxious to gratify her son’s wishes to the fullest extent, the mother sought for an artist. She learned that the most celebrated artist resided in a neighboring city, and was known as the ‘court’ painter, being honored with the special patronage of the nobility. Thither she went,