

child, had strengthened into the love of a man for a woman, and he hoped to win her as his wife.

Yet he was not altogether sure that he did desire Annie Howson for a wife, or that she would make him the loving and affectionate "helpmeet" that he often pictured to himself; for there would rise before him the picture of his "beau idéal" amongst women, his sister, and he thought how often he had said that he would never marry any woman until he could meet one like his dead sister.

"Dead sister." Ah! there was the pain and the bitterness of it. Four years after his arrival in Canada his mother had died, and he wrote to Mamie to come to him, as he was able then to provide a home for her. Her answer was that she would leave the next week in the barque *Montezuma*, and after that all that he knew of her fate was the following paragraph from an American paper, published some five weeks after the sailing of the *Montezuma* from Barbadoes:

"The ship *Tropic Bird*, from Demerara for Philadelphia, reports that on the 21th May, while off Cape Hatteras, she picked up a boat found bottom upwards, marked, *Montezuma*, New York. It is supposed that the *Montezuma* went down in the gale of 23rd idem, and that all hands are lost. The captain of the *Tropic Bird* reports having encountered a very severe gale, which carried away his foremast, on 22nd May, and supposes the *Montezuma* was caught in the same storm and went down."

He remembered the deep, deep, unutterable grief he experienced on seeing the announcement, and the long patient waiting for news from that other boat in which he hoped Mamie might be. Then came the recollection of letters from a friend in New York giving full particulars of the loss of the vessel, as gathered from the owners, and related to them by the one surviving sailor. Vividly he recalled the nervous anxiety with which he read the shipping news for months and months afterwards, in the blind hoping against hope that his loved one might have been saved and be restored to him; and then came the recollection of the gradual dying out of hope and the unwilling acknowledgement that the onivous waters had snatched his darling sister from him.

Nearly six years had passed since then, yet at times the bitterness of the loss he had sustained would return to him, and he would sit wondering and thinking whether he could ever take up in the same interest in life he had done before the first grand object of his life—the happiness of his sister—had been destroyed by her death.

The midnight hour had passed, and a new day was dawning ere he decided to go to bed. He had not thoroughly made up his mind whether the memory of his dead sister was not dearer to him than the living woman he half thought he loved; but he thought he owed it to the living woman to marry her, if she willed it so, and to strive to make her a loving and faithful husband.

And so while the first streaks of morning were illuminating the sky, and Miss Annie Howson was dreaming of a certain doctor she hoped to win, Mr. Morton fell into a troubled slumber, after having resolved to offer Miss Annie his hand and fortune at the first favorable opportunity.

#### SCENE IV.

##### A PERFECT GENTLEMAN.

August twenty third, eighteen hundred and seventy; time, nine o'clock in the evening; place, Dr. Griffith's consultation room, Beaver Hill Hill, Montreal.

At the close of the prologue Harry Griffith was left struggling in the water. Of course, he did not perish, for the same steamer which had caused the disaster succeeded, in spite of the storm, in launching enough boats to rescue the crew of the *Gaselle*. The steamer was bound for New Orleans, and from thence Griffith made his way to New York, and finally to Toronto when he remained three years with his uncle. Canada quickly proved too slow for his fiery energy and yearning for rapid success; and so, having a small amount of money he went to New York to seek his fortune. For the next four years he had varying success, but on the breaking out of the war he was lucky enough to be engaged in the office of a broker who was well informed of the various army movements, and political events transpiring at that time, and using his information to his own advantage he made a rapid fortune.

Bold, unscrupulous, and almost unprincipled, he was one of the leading spirits in the mercenary risings and fallings of the value of gold during 1863-4, and his profits at times were enormous. The bad feeling instilled into him in boyhood remained, and he looked on all mankind as his natural enemies whom it was his duty to fight, and conquer, if possible. He was known "on the street" as a hard man to deal with, honest, in so far as not to overstep the law, but tricky and always ready to take any advantage he could gain. The man's whole strength of mind and energy seemed to be centered on one object, to gain money, and he sacrificed everything for that.

Yet there was one tender memory left in Harry Griffith's heart, and one humanizing influence clinging to him, his love for Mamie Morton. The old feeling of his boyish love was strong in him, and he fondly pictured the time when he could claim her as his own. But that time seemed distant. Charlie still continued his objection, and as Mamie said she would never

marry without her brother's consent, Harry was almost driven to despair.

Then came Charlie's emigration to Canada, and subsequently his mother's death. Then all the strongest passions of Griffith's nature called on him to make one effort for the possession of the girl he loved, and, unfortunately, circumstances helped him only too well.

He had corresponded with Mamie, and knew of her departure for New York, en route for Canada to join her brother. He saw the announcement of the wreck of the *Montezuma*, and grieved for Mamie's loss as deeply as her brother did. But, Mamie was not lost; three weeks after the reported loss of the *Montezuma*, the two sole survivors, Tom Bowles and Mamie Morton, arrived in New York, and Mamie knowing no one else there called at Harry Griffith's office.

When he found Mamie Morton was alive, his first thought was to make her his wife before Charlie could learn of her rescue; this he knew it would be very difficult to persuade Mamie to; but, prompted by his evil genius, he determined to tell her that Charlie was dead, and either inform her of the falsehood after their marriage, or trust to chance that the brother and sister should not meet.

His scheme was perfectly successful. Mamie never for a moment doubted his story that Charlie had died of typhoid fever, and so she married Griffith a week after her arrival in New York. After his marriage he felt some little shame at the trick he had played on an unsuspecting girl, and so put off the disclosure of the secret until, at last, he determined in his own mind that it was best not to disclose it at all, and so brother and sister lived on for six years, each mourning the other as dead.

The union did not prove a happy one. Harry Griffith had got into the habit of a fast life before his marriage, and he was not a man likely to render the domestic hearth happy. The constant excitement of a speculative life engendered a craving for other excitement, and unfitted him for the calm delights of home; and so almost before the first year of marriage had passed, Mamie found herself a neglected wife, and the evenings which her husband ought to have passed with her, were spent at the club, or amongst his gay companions.

Still she loved him fondly, devotedly, and comforted herself with the idea that he was true to her, and when her little girl was born, a year after their marriage, she was happy again in the smiles of her baby, and hoped to regain the entire love of her husband.

But it was not to be. Harry Griffith grew more and more indifferent to his wife, and although her love for him was unchanged, she could not blind herself to the fact that he had ceased to love her. So passed five years, and then came a crisis in Harry Griffith's business, and his subsequent departure from New York. The speculations which had so prospered formerly, now all went wrong; stocks would go up when they ought to have gone down, and down when they were confidently expected to go up; and so the fortune Griffith had amassed was nearly all lost, and some of his later transactions, in his desperate efforts to recover his losses, were so questionable that he found it safest to leave New York for a while.

He came to Montreal about one year before our story opened, and entered practice as a doctor, he having studied medicine in Toronto, although he had not practised in New York. Mamie did not come with him, and he represented himself as a bachelor.

His acquaintance with Charlie Morton was renewed shortly after his arrival in Montreal, and Charlie introduced him to some of his friends, among others to the Howsons. Griffith soon began to pay rather marked attention to Miss Annie, and he was the "Doctor" whom that young lady fancied herself in love with.

Matters had gone on very pleasantly for him until within the last few weeks, when Mamie had suddenly arrived in Montreal, and declared her intention to remain with him. Unable to induce her to return to New York, he had taken a house at Longueuil for her, and there she was now residing with her daughter.

Dr. Griffith sat in his study thinking over his position, and endeavoring to see a way out of the difficulties by which he was surrounded. What he had intended as a flirtation with Miss Howson, had grown to a passion with him; not only was he fascinated by her beauty, but her fortune was also a consideration to him, and he chafed at the restraint which rendered it impossible for him to marry her.

Was it impossible? It was impossible while he was a married man; but if he should become a widower?

He sat down to think about it. There was a ring at the bell, and soon afterwards the servant ushered in a man who said he wanted to see the doctor.

He was a seedy-looking individual, who staggered slightly as he entered, and there came in with him a strong smell of spirits. He was dressed in rusty black, and his hat was in the last stages of delapidation. He drew out a very dirty pocket-handkerchief, with which he dusted his boots, then wiped his face, and returned it to his pocket, from which he drew a crumpled card, and handed it to Griffith with a slight bow.

"Dr. Griffith, I suppose; allow me to offer you my card."

The doctor took the card, and read the name written on it.

"MR. JAMES HARWAY,  
General Agent,  
Montreal."

"Take a seat, Mr. Harway, what can I have the pleasure of doing for you?"

Mr. Harway carefully deposited the delapidated hat on the floor, cleaned his throat with a preliminary "ahem!" seated himself and said: "I don't suppose, Doctor, you remember ever seeing me before."

"I really do not remember having had the pleasure," replied Griffith, seeing that the other hesitated, and thinking he had rather a queer patient to deal with.

"No; you don't remember? I didn't think you would, because you never did see me before, that I know of. You see I like to put things plain for I always acts as a perfect gentleman."

The doctor bowed as the only answer to this speech. He was getting more and more puzzled about his patient.

"You've lived in New York, haven't you?" resumed Mr. Harway, after another slight polish of his face with the dirty handkerchief.

"Yes; I resided there for several years. May I ask what is your business with me? I am rather busy just at present, as you may perceive," and he pointed to some manuscript which lay on the table.

Mr. Harway hitched himself about half an inch forward on his chair, again had recourse to the handkerchief, and replied:

"Certainly, certainly; never hinder a gentleman's time, and being a gentleman myself I always acts as such."

He paused again, and Griffith, thinking it better to take the initiative, asked, abruptly,

"What is your complaint?"

"That's it; you've hit it. My complaint is a tightness in the chest."

"Ah! the result, probably, of indigestion."

"No. I think it is the result of having nothing to digest, caused principally by an emptiness in the pocket."

"Oh!" The doctor looked at his visitor for a few seconds while a quiet smile played about the corners of his mouth, "You're a wag, I suppose, and have a begging letter, or something of the sort, about you?"

"Please don't insult me, sir; I'm a perfect gentleman, and I always acts as such, begging letters I'm above. Do you think I look like a man with a begging letter?"

The doctor looked at him and was forced to admit to himself that his visitor did not look like a man who would carry around a begging letter with any great probability of success.

Mr. Harway was not nice to look at. He was ugly, he was dirty; soap and water were evidently too great luxuries for him to indulge in, and he had the general appearance of being thoroughly soaked in bad whisky.

"Well, if you don't come to beg, and you do not want to consult me professionally, what do you want?"

"I want to borrow five dollars," replied Mr. Harway promptly, "or to put it plainer, I want you to pay me five dollars on account of what you owe me for keeping something for you."

"Keeping something for me?"

"Yes."

"What have you kept for me?"

"A secret."

Dr. Griffith looked again at the man. Mr. Harway stood his gaze calmly, and met his eye steadily, and the two men regarded each other for a moment as if each was mentally measuring the other's strength.

"You see, doctor," resumed Mr. Harway, "I know all about the gal as was thought to be drowned and wasn't; and I know her brother would give almost anything to know she is alive. I don't understand your game in keeping Mr. Morton in the dark, seeing you're kind of friendly with him, but that ain't my business, and I'm a perfect gentleman, and don't interfere with what don't concern me."

Dr. Griffith regarded his visitor for a few seconds and then said very quietly:

"Look here, my delapidated friend, I do not understand what you mean by my secret; but, it appears you fancy you can extort money from my fears about something you pretend to know. If by 'the gal as was thought to be drowned' you mean Miss Morton, I should be only too glad to know she is alive, but you may as well understand at once that you can make no money out of either Mr. Morton or myself, by your story, whatever it may be. I shall see Charlie to-night and warn him not to be imposed on by you."

Mr. Harway sat stupidly looking at the speaker, and mechanically drew out the dirty handkerchief and wiped his face with it. At last he gave vent to the exclamation,

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"I'm glad to hear it," said Griffith, smiling quietly. "I should never have thought it, judging from your appearance. You do not look as if you were greatly blessed."

"I'm blessed," reiterated Mr. Harway, and then paused.

"You said that before," replied the smiling doctor.

"I'm blessed if you ain't going to swear the gal was drowned, and I saved her life myself, and brought her to New York, and saw you with her."

"You!" exclaimed the doctor, springing up;

"you!"

"Yes, me; I'm a perfect gentleman, and as such bound to tell the truth; my name is Tom Bowles, although it's more convenient for me to call myself Harway just at present. I brought the girl to your office six years ago, and I saw both of you several times afterwards."

Dr. Griffith paused before replying. He did not really care very much whether Charlie Morton knew that his sister was alive or not, except that it might interfere with a half-formed plan in his mind which he scarcely allowed himself to think of yet. He believed that

Harway was really the man Bowles, and that he knew that Mamie was alive, but did he know where she was at present? He would find out, if possible, whether Harway was in possession of sufficient information to give him any present annoyance; in a week or two—he did not finish that thought, but asked, abruptly,

"When did you last see Miss Morton?"

"Six years ago," answered Mr. Harway, thrown off his guard by the suddenness of the question; but he continued with scarcely any alteration in his tone, as he saw he had been caught in a trap, and a careless observer would have noticed no change in the man's tone or manner.

"Six years ago was the first time I saw her; and two weeks ago was the last."

Griffith had watched him closely, and noticing his hesitation, he therefore asked him,

"Where did you last see her?"

"In New York," answered Mr. Harway, boldly. He knew he had to lie, and he told the lie he thought would look most like the truth.

"Very well," replied the doctor, relieved to find that no immediate danger need be expected, as Harway would not be likely to search in Longueuil for a person he supposed was in New York, "I will make you a fair offer, my friend; bring Mamie Morton to me within a month, and I will give you not five, but five hundred dollars. Until you find her you will get nothing."

"Then she is alive; you admit that?"

"Not at all. You say you saw her two weeks ago, I say she has been dead for years; if you are right, and she is alive, and her; no one will be more pleased to see her than I. Tell me where she is and earn your reward."

"Couldn't you let me have that five dollars on account?"

"Not a penny. You are an impudent impostor trying to obtain money under false pretences, and you ought to feel obliged to me for letting you off instead of handing you over to the police. Go!"

Mr. Harway made a desperate clutch at his delapidated hat, and prepared to depart.

"All right, doctor; I'm a perfect gentleman, and can take a hint. You'll keep your word if I find the girl?"

"Yes."

Mr. Harway bowed himself out, and when he had reached the sidewalk he soliloquized thus:

"The gal is alive, and there is some reason why the Doc wants to keep her out of the way; if I can find her my fortune is as good as made. Where is she? Not in New York, that's sure, or he wouldn't have dropped on me so quick. In Montreal? I think not. Maybe he's got her somewhere across the water. Anyhow, I can watch him. Maybe he gets letters from her, and servants can easily be bought. I want that five hundred dollars, for I'm a perfect gentleman, and I like to earn an honest living, provided I don't have to work for it."

He pulled his face with the dirty handkerchief, produced a plug of tobacco, bit off a piece about the size of a walnut, gave it a twist with his tongue, sailor fashion, as he placed it in his cheek, and staggered away.

Meanwhile Dr. Griffith returned to his seat and reflected on the interview.

"Another danger to be guarded against," he thought, "but scarcely likely to give trouble. He won't tell Charlie as long as he thinks he can bleed me. I have only to persuade Mamie to remain in Longueuil until her confinement—she is as safe there as anywhere—and after that—" he paused, even to himself he did not like to confess the thought which was in his mind.

#### AOT I I

##### ACROSS THE RIVER.

#### SCENE I.

##### MR. HARWAY MAKES A DISCOVERY.

Time, August twenty-fourth, eighteen hundred and seventy; place, the village of Longueuil.

Mr. Harway passed what he considered a pleasant evening, after his interview with Dr. Griffith. He got drunk. He always thought he passed a pleasant evening when he got drunk, but discovered his error next morning when he awoke with a racking headache.

He was not habitually an early riser, but this morning he was later than usual, and it was almost one o'clock before he got out of bed. He was enjoying all the miseries of a too free indulgence in bad whisky, and fancying a walk would do him good, he started from his boarding house and strolled down Notre Dame street.

It was a fine bright day, not too warm, and Mr. Harway found his walk invigorated him so much that he extended it down St. Mary Street as far as the Longueuil ferry. He had no definite object in walking in that direction, but after he had reached the ferry he suddenly took a fancy to cross to the other side. He thought the trip on the water would help to restore his shattered nerves, and assist in his recovery from the last night's debauch, so he invested ten cents in a ticket and took a seat on deck, so that he could extract some comfort from a short black pipe.

He had to wait some ten minutes before the boat started, and he occupied his time in calling to mind, as well as possible, all that had passed between Dr. Griffith and himself on the previous evening. He was trying to determine whether it was really worth while to spend his time hunting for a person he had never seen, and who may have been dead for years, as Dr. Griffith said she was.