

will send to New York for them—and, look here!" She took from her pocket a little golden key, and, going to the old secretary, opened its case of small interior drawers, one after the other, all of them full of jewels—rubies, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, pearls, golden trinkets of every kind. Gloria looked on in a kind of rapture, clasping her small hands, and ejaculating, "O! O! O how splendid! How magnificent!"

"I will lend you some of these to wear. There shall not be a girl half so richly dressed as you in all the land. But you must promise me that you will never marry John Preston; never, under any circumstances."

"I am ready to promise that, grandma. I don't care much for him. I had no other company, and John loves me so; it was an amusement."

"Amuse yourself as much as you desire with him. The more you disappoint John Preston the more I will give you. Every time you make him suffer shall be a fresh pleasure to you; I promise it. But, remember, if you ever marry him, I will torture you into the grave; yes, I will: if I am dead, I will come back to do it."

"Grandma, you have my promise. I won't break it."

Then madam took a pearl ring from her own hand and put it upon Gloria's. "I bind you with this ring," she said; "if you break your promise, you will be sure to have sorrow upon sorrow." The girl was much impressed by madam's manner; she looked at the ring with fear, almost with aversion; but she did not dare either to reject the gage, or to remove it.

"Now, let us finish our chocolate. Some day, if you do as I desire you, all the jewels will be your own. They are a great fortune. They will be your fortune if your husband pleases me."

"Did grandpa give you them? Or were you very rich before you married him?"

No one had ever presumed to ask madam personal questions before. For a moment her anger rose, but a single glance at Gloria showed her that the question was one of simple girlish curiosity. An expression of singular softness came over her, and, with eyes and voice full of sadness of retrospection, she answered: "Your grandfather gave me all in the three top drawers, on the left side. My father-in-law, Captain Burke Briffault, gave me all the rest;" and she again looked up at the picture, as if there were some intelligence between them.

"He must have been very rich. How could he buy so many jewels?"

"He bought them with his sword? He was at the capture of Panama, and many other captures"

"Did you not have some when you married?"

"No."

"Was your father rich?"