

childhood utterly ignored when they are not manifested openly.

Edward Elmsdale walked into the library with a sullen, defiant look. Lord Elmsdale simply indicated the revolver which lay on the table. There was a deadly, horrible silence. Lord Elmsdale would have given one half of his estate willingly, cheerfully, much as he loved it, if his son had spoken one word of acknowledgment of his fault—had given even the faintest intimation that he wished to amend.

Edward Elmsdale would have done, or at least promised, all his father could desire, if one kind word had been said to open the sealed fountain of his affection. How foolish people are. Why will they not try the force of kindness when the force of violence so often fails?

There was a deadly, horrible silence. Two guardian angels (they were both baptized, father and son,) stood by, their beautiful faces shrouded with their white, glistening wings. They were praying: could nothing be done? Alas, no! God will not force the human will. He moves it gently at times, but if men refuse to obey His touch! The angels looked up to Heaven, and in the light of God's great throne they saw the future—they saw what would happen if father and son should quarrel.

There was a "roaring lion" in the room; the angels saw him—no one else; the angels, being pure spirits, can see spirits good or evil. We being flesh and blood cannot see them, but they influence us none the less.

The angels were moving away, the devils were coming nearer. The two men had free will and they willed the devils to come nearer to them. The angels could not reach their will, for God had left them free to choose.

The angels had pleaded so fervently with the father: "Oh say one kind word to him! Tell him you will forgive him if he even now will begin a new life. Point out to him quietly, gently, as a father should, the shame—the disgrace of his conduct. Ask him to tell you the truth about last night. It may not be as bad as you think."

The angels knew that the night's work, bad as it was, had not been quite so bad as the father feared. But the angels could not tell him, because if God allowed

us to know everything as the spirits know it, our free will would be unduly influenced, and we would not have the same merit.

The son's angel pleaded with him. If he would only tell his father all; tell exactly what had happened. His father had a right to know the truth; had a right to demand an account of his conduct.

He would not listen.

The angel folded his silver wings; he had done all that God wished him to do. The devils clashed the glittering scales of *their* wings, once so beautiful, now so horrible. They were sure of their prey. They had only to wait and look on.

"Yours?"

Lord Elmsdale pointed to the revolver.

Edward vouchsafed no answer.

"Guilt is silent. I did not think a son of mine——" He paused. Was he going to relent? Was he going to say one kind word? The angels came forward a little—"would degrade the name of Elmsdale as you have done."

"I am the best judge of my own actions, sir."

"And I am the best judge of the disposal of my property. The estate is not entailed, as you are aware, and if——"

Edward was blind, mad with rage—he seized the revolver—leveled it at his father! At this very moment Lady Elmsdale entered.

Barns had kept his watch faithfully, but he thought it would be safe to allow her in. He had his doubts as to the result of the interview.

The mother looked from the father to son, and from the son to the father. Happily she had not the very slightest suspicion of the truth. She feared that there was some grave, terrible breach between them. There was ghastliness of despair in both their faces.

"Edward, what is the matter? Elmsdale, what has happened?"

It is doubtful if Lord Elmsdale had seen the action of his son, or, if he had seen it, had not known what he intended. At least it can never be known now. Perhaps, even if the mother had not entered, the unhappy young man might not have finally carried out his fatal purpose.