

he did use it, she would never forgive him; if she died, he would be her murderer.

But the business of life cannot be delayed for its sorrows. David must wait in his shop, and James must be at the bank; and in two weeks Donald had to leave for Edinburgh, though Christine was lying in a silent, broken-hearted apathy, so close to the very shoal of Time that none dared say, "She will live another day."

How James despised Donald for leaving her at all; he desired nothing beyond the permission to sit by her side, and watch and aid the slow struggle of life back from the shores and shades of death.

It was almost the end of summer before she was able to resume her place in the household, but before that she had asked to see James. The interview took place one Sabbath afternoon while David was at church. Christine had been lifted to a couch, but she was unable to move, and even speech was exhausting and difficult to her. James knelt down by her side, and, weeping bitterly, said,

"O Christine, forgive me!"

She smiled faintly.

"You—have—not—used—yonder—paper—James?"

"Oh, no, no."

"It—would—kill—me. You—would—not—kill—me?"

"I would die to make you strong again."

"Don't—hurt—Donald. Forgive—for—Christ's—sake—James!"

Poor James! It was hard for him to see that still Donald was her first thought, and, looking on the wreck of Christine's youth and beauty, it was still harder not to hate him worse than ever.

Nor did the temptation to do so grow less with time. He had to listen every evening to David's praises of his nephew: how "he had been entered wⁱ Advocate Scott, and was going to be a grand lawyer," or how he had been to some great man's house and won all hearts with his handsome face and witty tongue. Or, perhaps, he would be shown some rich token of his love that had come for Christine; or David would say, "There's the *Edinbro'* News, James; it cam fra Donald this morn; tak it hame wⁱ you. You're welcome." And James feared not to take it, feared to show the slightest dislike to Donald, lest David's anger at it should provoke him to say what was in his heart, and Christine only be the sufferer.

One cold night in early winter, James, as was his wont now, went to spend the evening in talking with David and in watching Christine. That was really all it was; for, though she had resumed her house duties, she took little part in conversation. She had always been inclined to silence, but now a faint smile and a "Yes," or "No" were her usual response, even to her father's remarks. This night he found David out, and he hesitated whether to trouble Christine or not. He stood for a moment in the open door and looked at her. She was sitting by the table