

much; in my own sorrow I forget yours. Will you not believe me? I am innocent as yourself, Zella. Don't send me away with this mountain of misery on my heart," and he looked at her beseechingly. She turned her head slightly.

"Say no more now, sir; leave me for the present."

"Think of me kindly, if you can," and he went.

From this time Zella seemed to think more favorably of Frank, and he was not slow to take advantage of the slightest change. Not a day passed without the gardener at the Bluffs being sent to Mr. Graham's with some rare fruit or flower. Then the child was a bond of interest between them, and Frank began to cherish hope.

One morning when he called at Mr. Graham's, he had a white moss-rose in the button-hole of his coat. Zella noticed it.

"'Tis a fit emblem of our dear Grace; it grew upon her grave," he said.

He introduced the subject purposely, to see if she still thought him guilty. He took out his handkerchief large and white, as a widower's should be to hold the ocean of their tears; and covered his face with it. What he did, whether he laughed or cried, the reader can guess.

After what he considered a proper time, he withdrew the article from his face, adjusted his shirt-collar, which he feared had collapsed in the abundance of his grief, twisted the ends of his mustache, slipped one leg off the other, and looked over at Zella to see the effect.

She was looking out of the window, her thoughts apparently as far from him as heaven.

"This will never do," thought he, "I must interest her in some way."

He went over to her, and putting one hand under her chin, turned her face round, and said—

"My dearest friend, let this coldness cease. I have done nothing worthy of it; why then keep me at such a dreadful distance? For her sake, Zella, for the child's, let the past be forgotten and forgiven."

She raised her eyes, and oh, how sad they were, and said, "Let it be so, Frank."

"You do not think I connived at her death, Zella, anything but that," and out flew his white handkerchief, and in flew his face into it, and remained there so long that it got as red as a turkey's wattles. Instead of growing pale with his intense grief. All Zella's latent resentment was swept away by this deluge of woe. She looked almost sorry that she had dared to think evil thoughts of such a sorrowing, bereaved widower. This was what he wished.

"Zella, you'll take back your cruel words, won't you?"

"Yes, Frank, entirely; forgive me," said she, holding out her hand.

"Forgive you, Zella, oh how freely; you used to call me brother, has your tongue forgotten the term?" taking her hand.

"No, Frank."

"Then why not use it?"

"Give me time—don't hurry me."

There was a pause, at length he asked—

"Where's the baby?"

"She's asleep," she replied, "she's a good child—she never will go to 'seep without matin her tittle pair,' as she calls it, 'for ganpa Gaham, papa Fank, aunty Zella, and I mutten pay for mama Dacy tause se's in hebben"—that's the way she concludes."

Frank sighed wearily.

"What's father doing?"

"He's walking on the back verandah, watching the rain, I think. There's the dinner-bell, you'll stay, Frank?"

And now there came to be long walks by moonlight, and rambles over the hills; there were wild gallops by the river, and very loving words spoken in old John Graham's garden on summer nights, beneath the soft light of the stars; and but for one thing—one fatal remembrance—Frank would have been happy. And Zella—it is enough to say she had never loved before.

The wedding was arranged to take place in September. Masons and carpenters were busy at the Bluffs, tearing down and building up. Frank's orders being to make it as different as possible from what it was before.

It had been remarked by the servants, that, since his wife's death, Frank had been totally unlike himself. They had their own talk about it, and the butler remarked to the cook—

"He's a changed man, is master."

"Deed is he thin, Mr. Thomas, I niver see a man more changed. So handsome as he used to be, and so fond of Missis and the child."

"He was a changed man frum the day Miss Zella come," said the hostler, entering the kitchen, clenching his remark by a significant whistle.

"My poor Missis, may she rest!" said cook, with a groan.

"Aye, may she rest," responded the butler, "but does she rest? There's quare sounds heerd in this o' nights, Mrs. Finnigan. Master has never slept in it a night since her death."

"Where do he sleep at all, do 'e think, Mr. Thomas?"

"The fiend knows," interposed the hostler. "I heerd a noise t'other night, nigh on to one o' the clock. I slipped to head o' stairs; there was master, a flyin' down, and out he went o' the front door, like wan mad. I called an he wint faster an faster, and clean down the road out o' sight. I watched till nigh on to morn, but he niver comed back."

"Strange doin's, thim," said cook. "I declare, Bessie," addressing the housemaid, "I feel quite ill with it all."

"A glass of porter will jist set ye on yer feet again, Mrs. Finnigan," said the Butler, taking the hint, and quickly handing her a glass of the article, foaming over. The portly dame had a