FOR LOVE OF HIM.

[illegible]

[illegible] Paul, with all the [illegible] such a proud nature [illegible] I know very well, in [illegible] to deserve both his and [illegible] love and pride.

[illegible] and believed that her better nature [illegible] strongly, and proved [illegible] Paul's control of the [illegible] circumstances that were [illegible] to [illegible] that event.

It happened one night that there was to be a gathering of young people in the village, which I was expected attending as [illegible] of a slight indisposition.

[illegible] be there.

Very much earlier than was customary for young people to break up, he surprised me by returning.

'Home so early?' I cried, as he entered my room, with 'Was Bertie there?' followed as a matter of course.

'Yes,' he replied. 'Bertie was there, dancing herself, he said, by making her eleven happy or miserable, according to her own royal pleasure.'

'Why, did you come home so early?'

'I had a severe headache.'

'Paul,' I said, 'tell me what has happened. I've no doubt that your head aches, but I am certain your heart aches more. What has Bertie been doing? What have you been doing?'

'Doing?' he answered excitedly, 'precisely what I've been doing for the last six months. Allowing myself to be made the dupe and the plaything of a girl with a face as beautiful as Venus, and a heart as cold as marble! Not satisfied with the bitter lessons which experience should have taught me, I must put a climax to my folly this evening by actually asking her to be my wife. My wife! Oh, what a miserable fool I have been.

His appearance charmed me.

From his boyhood Paul had been subject to occasional fits of wild and uncontrollable excitement, during which it seemed, as though he were capable of almost any desperate deed.

It is not an unusual thing, I have often noticed, among those apparently quiet people who are subject to almost habitual strong self control.

When their feelings do gain the mastery, the victory is complete for the time.

It had been years since I had witnessed one of these outbreaks in Paul, and I had never seen him when he had given himself up so completely to his excitement.

He did not manifest it by any more loud and angry words, but without up and down the room with a stern, hard expression on his white face, which was more dreadful than the most terrible ravings would have been.

For over an hour I tried to calm him by every expedient, of which I could think, but vainly, and he left me at last to go to his own room, where I could hear his restless step pacing back and forth for a long, long while.

I passed an anxious, restless night, and the next morning when Paul did not make his appearance at the usual time, with a vague, miserable foreboding that something terrible had happened to him, I went trembling up to his door and knocked.

There was no answer, and, half-will with terror, I opened the door and went in.

Paul was dead. I had a swift intuition of it even before I caught a glimpse of his white face and the still, rigid outline of his form through the bed-clothes.

My shrieks brought up my uncle, who, while I stood stupefied with terror, approached the bed, where he found Paul with the bottle from which he had drank the deadly poison still tightly clasped in his hand.

I will not attempt to describe the scene that followed.

The physician who attended, but he always to believe Paul took his deadly drug [illegible]

[illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] the living and the dead to reveal it, that we would let the cause of Paul's untimely death a secret between us, and at his burial there was not, among all those who surrounded the grave, a sorrow like that Bertie's.

After it was all over, at her earnest request, and desiring to have her in the solitude of her own miserable thoughts, I accompanied her to her home.

She busied herself with numerous little, every-day details, with calmness that I shall never forget.

It seemed to me as if she were trying to familiarize herself with the cruel fact that henceforth her life was to be only a succession of frivolous details, through all of which she must pass calmly, with that terrible secret sorrow tugging at her heart-strings.

The morning after the funeral, Bertie awakened me at the first glimmer of daylight, and in spite of all my efforts to dissuade her, for I believed that her grief had made the poor girl insane, she insisted on my accompanying her to Paul's grave.

She would give me no reason, save that she felt sure that something had happened there; and the still horror in her voice and eyes at length inspired me with a vague foreboding of evil, and impelled me to yield to her request.

We hastened breathlessly into the churchyard, and to Paul's grave.

There had been a slight fall of snow the evening before, and all around we saw evidences that the grave had been disturbed.

Although it was as yet scarcely daylight, a group was soon collected, spades were brought, and, after the first few shovellfuls of earth had been removed, the broken coffin-lid was found.

A little deeper were other fragments of the coffin, and finally torn shreds of the shroud.

[illegible]

[illegible] Paul [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] the