

“ ‘I rest beneath the Almighty’s shade,  
My griefs expire, my troubles cease ;  
Thou, Lord, on whom my soul is stayed,  
Will keep me still in perfect peace.’ ”

“ My God ! ” she whispered, “ I will speak to Thee for one moment ; no one loses time for prayer. In Thy holy temple Thou wilt surely hear and bless me.”

She slipped from her saddle, fastened the animal, and, drawing her veil closely, entered the building. The singing ceased at that moment, and the preacher rose. He was an old man, with an aspect serious and serene, and he lifted up his hands, and with a solemn gladness, said :

“ Go in peace ; and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all evermore. Amen ! ”

What more did Cassia want ? She felt that she had been blessed. She had no more fear of what Raymund would say. She could leave her darling in the charge of God’s angel. She went on her way unspeakably comforted and strengthened. As she approached the hotel she saw a Negro man, whom she knew, leaning against a lamp post. She spoke to him, and he looked at her in amazement.

“ Miss Cassia, I ’clar to goodness ! It aint you, surely, Miss Cassia ? ”

“ It is, Daniel. My child is very sick, and I want to see Master Ray. He is in the hotel ; go and find him, and say a lady wishes to speak to him.”

“ Name your name, Miss Cassia ? ”

“ Better not, Daniel.”

In about five minutes she saw Ray coming. Before she could speak he knew her, and he asked, sharply :

“ What nonsense is this, Cassia ? Do you think such heroic virtue will frighten me into staying at home ? ”

“ You are mistaken, Ray, dear. Gloria has been home and gone again. She is in great trouble, and madam is afraid she will take her own life. Also, little Paul is very ill, very ill, indeed, I fear.”

“ Then, why did you leave him ? Was that a motherly thing to do ? As for Gloria, she made her own bed, and she can lie on it, though it be at the bottom of the sea.”

He had sent Daniel for his horse, and he spoke no more until it came. It was a hard, wretched ride home. They mistook the crossing of one of the larger bayous, the water was deep and dangerous ; but Ray was not in a mood to turn or to alter his course for anything. Wet to the waist, and faint with exhaustion, Cassia pursued her journey. But her patience finally touched his wilful heart.

“ I have been cross and unkind, Cassia,” he said ; “ but I am so annoyed about this folly of Gloria’s. If Grady comes up