

bent head as he sat writing. His sister, sitting opposite, had just dropped into her lap a sheet of paper closely covered, and was now looking across at her brother, with a real pride as well as tenderness in her eyes.

"You have read it, Primrose?" he asked, glancing up as if he had become conscious of her gaze. "It is a pitiful narrative, is it not?"

"Oliver"—his sister had come up to him, and fallen to her knees, looking up with swimming eyes—"Oliver, I must tell you. I shall hate myself till I also confess. I have had—sometimes—such a terrible, terrible fear, intangible when I tried to dissect it, yet there; making me most miserable. Dear, do you remember that night? Do you remember that I saw you—out in the park, just after his—death? Do you remember"—seizing his hand, and laying it against her lips and cheek—"that you and Miles had quarreled, and yet that you told me to forget it from that night? and that he must take his turn to suffer? Oliver, to tell you this is a bitter punishment for the wrong I did you—"

"My dear," said Oliver, bending to kiss her, "tell me no more. It is not unnatural, for it was most strange that I should have been there just then. I had been with Steve. Let us forget it all, for afterward—when I knew what had been done and yet all was in mystery—I remember with such a fearful pain, how you said—What on earth was I going to tell you?" the young man cried, breaking off suddenly, for the words stung him as he uttered them to her, and suspicion could not take form in her gentle presence.

"Was it," she asked, anxiously, "anything I could have told you about poor Steven? Oh! if he had only not died! But his name will be cleared, won't it, Oliver? That paper will go to some one in authority, won't it? Oh, poor Derry!"

"Primrose, go back, dear, now. I'm writing to her. I must tell her that I know her motive for that change which always puzzled me. For her acceptance of my hand after her rejection of it. I must release her now."

"You will tell her you will wait?"

whispered Primrose, as proud of him as she was distressed for him.

"Yes; I will give her her own time. I will not trouble her—yet. Now, you and I must do something," he added, kindly, (for it would not do to sound the depths of his own disappointment just yet, and in his sister's watchful presence). "Should you like to go abroad together? Long ago you used to say one of your dreams was to travel with me."

"Oh, what happiness!" she sighed.

And that night, for the first time since that January evening when Miles was murdered, she took her violin from its case. Not that she played a note, but she held it in her loving hands, and once again touched it with her loving lips.

CHAPTER II.

IN her own especial corner of the long studio, Derry Hope was plying her chisel diligently, the October sunshine falling upon her, while her father's end of the room was in shadow. Yet, though his windows were shaded, and he was hard at work, he glanced constantly and anxiously across at his daughter, and every now and then had to force back from his lips the questions which rose from his tender heart. What could it be, he wondered in his silence, which had changed her, and yet left her in so many ways unchanged? He had known all about the motive which had taken her to Dewring in the opening of the year, and which had kept her there but that mystery could not vex her now, for did not the Home Secretary hold the confession of the unknown murderer—he himself having died soon after the crime had been laid to one of the Bassets, who, in a fit of intoxication, had acted as if he were guilty? Had not the Bassets expressed themselves satisfied with the unpublished confession, and had not the family name been cleared of all suspicion? No; it could not be any memory of that murder which had left on his daughter's face such deep gravity. He looked across at her again. In her sunny corner she worked engrossedly, pale, but not really sad; thoughtful, but never really abstracted (her father