

and though Ray's heart often softened to the thought of his children, and of their mother praying with them, the thought brought forth no good fruit. On the night of his return from New Orleans he came unexpectedly into just such a scene. Cassia rose from her knees, the tears still wet on her cheeks, to welcome him. He could no more doubt the truth of her piety than he could doubt her delight in his return. He kissed the tears tenderly away, and his heart filled, as he bent over his innocent children.

Then there was a little festival made. Madam, in her distant room, heard the unusual voice and movement, and the faint echoes of Cassia's voice in its happy inflections. After awhile Ray went to see madam. There were changes of which she was, perhaps, unconscious, but which he noted instantly. The room, as usual, was brilliantly lighted, but Josepha had never been able to give it the same air of antique and stately sumptuousness which distinguished it during Souda's oversight. Madam, also, was a little less carefully dressed. She was much thinner, but her black eyes were as bright as ever, and Ray was pained and struck by their expression, it was so anxious and restless. He remembered that he had once before seen just such a look in the eyes of a little child who had lost herself on the wharf at New Orleans. Before madam lay the great ocean of eternity. All around her pressed memories of shame and sin and sorrow. They were crowding her to the very brink of the unknown. Her soul was shivering and fearing, and, with a pathetic entreaty, looking through the only gratings of its fleshly prison-house for some friend strong enough to give help or comfort.

She hoped nothing from Raymund, however. His conduct had disappointed and humiliated her. She noticed, at once, that he had grown coarser in appearance, and was more carelessly dressed.

"I am sorry to see you, Ray," she said; "you are looking much worse. A man may be bad without becoming vulgar. Look at your great-grandfather. Every man of your family dressed like a gentleman. It is the next thing to behaving like one."

"Pardon me, madam. I am just off a long journey."

"And I thought Cassia was going to make you respectable and pious. It is a poor family that has not one saint in it. Cassia has failed, I see."

The conversation was taking an unpleasant turn. Ray excused himself, and left the miserable old woman; but at the door she recalled him.

'Do you go into Galveston soon?'

'To-morrow.'

"Call upon Souda; tell her to come and see me."