

with an ever darkening face to both, then without a word, but with a pointed air of respect and conciliation, offered his arm to madam. She understood it as such, and she took it with a glance of triumph at her accuser.

Perhaps Cassia could have borne this if Raymund had returned to soothe and comfort her. But he went back to the dining-room, and when he found that Cassia did not join him there, he sent her a most humiliating message by Gloria. The words lost nothing by the tone of their delivery. Cassia felt as if she could not obey the order. A cruel scene ensued—a scene in which Raymund forgot all that culture and love had done for him—in which he was simply the son of his fierce and sinful forefathers. Cassia fled from him in terror; Gloria disappeared also; even madam quailed before a temper which had all the brutal force of a past generation, edged with the rapier-like passion of the present one.

When it had spent itself he ordered his horse; then, turning to Cassia, said: “As soon as you have settled your dispute with madam, you can let me know. I shall not return until you send for me.”

“Ray, I am ill, and you ought not to leave me now. Stay at home. I will complain no more.”

“I am going to Galveston.”

“It is where you ought to be, sir,” was madam’s reply; “if devils haunt the places they made hells upon earth, you will certainly meet the Briffaults. I hear there is fever there; if you go, don’t return here full of infection; I have no mind to join the family before my time.”

It was about midnight when he left, and as soon as madam heard the great gates clash she went to seek Gloria. She found her in a large guest-room, that had not been used for many a year. She was crouching among the pillows of the bed, shivering and sobbing with fright.

“Come to my room, child. Souda has made us a cup of chocolate, and I have some things to say to you. What brought you here, I wonder?”

“I heard Souda say nobody ever came here, and I wanted some place to hide in. Whose picture is that? How pretty! How sad! Who is it, grandma?”

The picture of the woman who was your mother and Ray’s mother. Poor little thing! Don’t come to this room any more. I hate the place. I hope you admired your brother to-night. It is the first time I have seen him look natural for several years. If he had taken the whip, which I saw him lift several times, to you, I should not have been the least astonished.”

“If he had, grandma, I should have stabbed him;” and she set her small sharp teeth fiercely together, and looked quite capable of carrying out her threat.