

things with impunity it would be ruin for any one else to attempt. He has undertaken his share in it to befriend her—that seems to be tacitly understood—as he has often befriended others. Reine is doubtless in New York, and does not intend to return. All this you had best tell her sister and let her return if she sees fit. I say nothing of my own feelings, although, loving Reine as I do, you can hardly doubt I feel it deeply. Hoping this will reach you in time, I remain, my dear Mrs. Dexter, yours faithfully.

“HESTER HARRIOTT.”

There is a brief silence of consternation. Mother and son look at each other perplexed and distressed, Marie has fallen back in her chair with one faint, sobbing cry, and does not stir or look up. She is a girl of strong will and resolute character, but she is moved now as few have ever seen her moved. No one knows what to say. Frank looks unutterably miserable—his mother unutterably helpless.

Marie lifts her face at last. She is scarcely whiter than usual. She is not crying, but there is an expression in her eyes that frightens Frank.

“I must start for Baymouth by the next train. Will you kindly see to everything, Mr. Frank? I must not lose a moment. If I had been there this would have never happened.”

They do not understand her, but they ask no questions. She scarcely speaks another word to either. She goes to her room, and has on her hat and travelling dress when Frank comes to tell her they may start. The journey will be but of a few hours. They will reach Baymouth a little after dark.

Frank goes with her. She hardly speaks the whole way, except to give brief answers to his anxious enquiries about her comfort. She sits erect, looking perfectly colourless, but a determined expression setting the lips and hardening the brown, steadfast eyes. He has often noticed that peculiar look of self-will and resolution around Marie Landelle's mouth and chin—it has given character to the whole face—but he has never seen it so strongly marked as now.

They reach Baymouth. The October

night, chill and starry, has fallen, lights gleam from the great range of the Windsor Mills. As Frank is about to give the order to the Stone House, she abruptly checks him.

“No, not there,” she says. “Mr. Dexter, where am I most likely to see your cousin, Mr. Longworth, at this hour? At his office, or at home?”

“It is nearly eight,” Frank returns, looking at his watch. “Not at his home certainly; he rarely spends his evenings there. Either at the office, at Miss Harriott's or at the Stone House.”

“Let us try the office first,” she says, and the young man gives the order and they are driven to the *Phoenix* building. It too is in a state of immiscellaneous illumination. Dexter gets out, goes in and returns almost immediately.

“Longworth is here, Mlle. Marie; I will take you up to his room.”

She pulls the veil she wears over her face, and follows Frank up a long flight of stairs and into the room sacred to O'Sullivan. Frank taps at another door and Longworth's voice calls come in.

“It is I, Larry,” he says, and Longworth turns around from his writing and looks at him. “Miss Landelle is here—has just arrived and wishes to see you. Mademoiselle, I will wait for you in the back.”

She puts back her veil and advances.

Longworth rises, something of surprise, something of sternness, a great deal of coldness in his manner. He is unconscious of it. If he has thought of the elder sister at all, it is to be sorry for her, and yet the deep anger and resentment he feels shows itself in his manner even to her.

“Sit down,” he says and places a chair. “I suppose Miss Harriott's letter reached Mrs. Dexter, and that is why you are here. She told me she had written. It is rather a pity your pleasure trip should be cut short by these untoward events.”

There is a touch of sarcasm in his tone. He is a character reader enough to know that Miss Marie Landelle has a tolerably strong share of selfishness, and will feel any misfortune that touches her own comfort, keenly. But she feels this far more than he is disposed to give her credit for.