

a little child in her house, on the veranda, in the garden, everywhere; the sunny, joyous, blest presence. But how differently had it come! Not Felipe's child, as she proudly had pictured, but the child of Ramona: the friendless, banished Ramona returned now into full honor and peace as the daughter of the house, — Ramona, widow of Alessandro. If the child had been Felipe's own, he could not have felt for it a greater love. From the first, the little thing had clung to him as only second to her mother. She slept hours in his arms, one little hand hid in his dark beard, close to his lips, and kissed again and again when no one saw. Next to Ramona herself in Felipe's heart came Ramona's child; and on the child he could lavish the fondness he felt that he could never dare to show to the mother. Month by month it grew clearer to Felipe that the mainsprings of Ramona's life were no longer of this earth; that she walked as one in constant fellowship with one unseen. Her frequent and calm mention of Alessandro did not deceive him. It did not mean a lessening grief: it meant an unchanged relation.

One thing weighed heavily on Felipe's mind, — the concealed treasure. A sense of humiliation withheld him, day after day, from speaking of it. But he could have no peace until Ramona knew it. Each hour that he delayed the revelation he felt himself almost as guilty as he had held his mother to be. At last he spoke. He had not said many words, before Ramona interrupted him. "Oh, yes!" she said. "I knew