

fully as she whispered, "you are very young, yes, quite too young to undertake it even then. But if you are afraid he will give you the slip before you are up, (he often does that,) just lock the door."

She did so and put the key in her own pocket. The little room assigned me was cleanly; it had an air of comfort about it greatly in contrast with the slovenly chamber I had just left. I had made no allusion to my brother as yet, I could not speak to him, and only ventured to ask the woman as she was leaving me, how long he had been in this condition.

"I might ask you the same question, Miss, for, surely it is not a day nor a month that has brought him to this."

To this! What a world of misery there was in that one simple word! It seemed to carry with it the low wailing of a lost soul.

We were to have paid my brother a visit soon, my mother and I. It was to have been a surprise, and I had gone so far as to arrange the dress I should wear for I was anxious to appear at my best before Arthur's friends, and here I was spending my first night in New York. No kin of mine had bid me welcome. No brother had told me in his loved embrace, and held me out to see how pretty I had grown, proudly kissing me again and again, and telling me how happy my coming had made him.

I arose early, but, early as it was, the woman had apprised Arthur of my arrival. I found him morose and sullen. He demanded my reasons for coming so abruptly upon him. He had not asked after my mother, nor given me one word of kindly greeting; and when in a harsh tone, he asked why I thus intruded myself, my great reserve of womanly strength fled from me, and I cried long and bitterly.

He was naturally kind and gentle. He came to me, wiped the tears from my cheek, and told me he did not intend to be cruel. "Come home with me Arthur dear," I whispered. "You can soon change your life, and be your own self again."

I ventured to tell him that mother had been taken very ill, when, with a look, he begged me to say no more. He could not bear even an allusion to his condition, and I had no wish to harass him. What

a slave he had become to the one ruling passion of his life.

Regardless of my presence, he drank again and again from a bottle near him. Once when I laid my hand upon the glass, he told me that he needed it to steady his nerves, and he would be alright soon. It was in vain that I urged him to accompany me home. He told me he had another situation in view, not anything like the one he had just left, but very good in its way. I could tell my mother this; it might comfort her, 'twas all the hope I had to carry home.

As years went by our sorrows were softened. We had become accustomed to Arthur's manner of life. At times he seemed changing for the better, and again he would go back to his old habits.

It was in early summer time, when everything on our little farm was at its best. I was not yet old, only twenty-two; and on this lovely summer night I was planning our quiet future, when a carriage stopped before the door, and Arthur came in, leading, or rather carrying a delicate young girl, with an infant in her arms.

"Mother," said he, "this is my wife! Grace this is my mother and sister."

"Your wife!" we repeated.

"Oh yes," he replied, "We have been married nearly a year, and I hoped to better my circumstances before I should make the fact known to you."

We saw that the poor child, for such she seemed, was sadly in want of woman's kindly care, so pale, so sorrow-stricken, so young, yet so bowed down disappointed. My new found sister and her wailing infant had our tenderest care. She staid with us our home was hers. Arthur returned to New York. Her history was soon told. She was an orphan, entirely dependent upon the bounty of an aunt who had daughters of her own to be settled in life, She met Arthur. The fascination of his manners and the interest he took in her friendless condition won her heart. The misfortune of his life was well known to her, but she trusted to her love, feeling sure that a life's devotion must redeem him. For her sake, he did try to be firm and strong, and manfully combated his besetting sin; but an hour of weakness came; old associates returned, and old habits with them. In a moment of