

"Be still mother," he said, "be still."

"Be still? Be still when Robbie is lying out in the darkness somewhere dead? Oh, I know he must be dead—my dear, dear, boy!"

A wave of tragic grief spread over her face, and her eyes gazed, wide open, over his head, fixed in wild sorrow.

Then her mood changed strangely. She drew herself up straight in her chair. Her face grew harsh and stony—but her eyes kept that strange wildness which perplexed Howard so. When she spoke again her voice was shrill and querulous.

"How dare Robert stay out of the house at this time of night! It is easy to see that there is no man about now. Oh, what a thing it is for a woman to be left alone to battle for a family of unthinking, selfish, boys! What liberties they take—"

"Hush, mother, please," whispered Howard, "I know where Robert is and I will go and bring him home."

He arose to his feet. His mother clutched his hand.

"Howard, but suppose he is dead! Oh, where *is* he now! Howard, listen—" she spoke in a low deeper, truer voice, her large well lighted eyes gazing into his—"listen; last night I had a dream. I saw your father again as he was the night when he went mad. It seemed to me that I awoke—as I did that night—and heard him talking with some one in his study! and it was late, very late, at night. I was very uneasy, who could be with him? I arose from my bed, and walked out of the room and through the hall to his study. I opened the door softly, and I might have slammed it open for all the difference it