

she cannot be brought to soar with you, but must ever grovel in low aims and pursuits. Oh! Mr. Müller, think of all these things; chain not yourself to such a lot—the living body bound to the dead is not more fearful.’

“All your reasoning,” he answered in his rapid impetuous manner, “is in vain. I have been over it all in my own mind; reason speaks to me as it does to you, but it weighs not a feather in the balance; no power on earth can move me. All I ask, is permission from you and Mrs. Morrison to visit Marah, as her promised husband. I wish you either to keep her with you and to allow me to procure suitable teachers for her, or to place her at Madame Corderos’ school.”

“I cannot consent to any of these things, unless you will write immediately to your father, state to him your feelings, and obtain his sanction to this most unheard of marriage. If he is willing, I will throw no obstruction in the path of what you deem, though erroneously, your happiness.”

“I will write by the next vessel, but will you promise me not to send Marah away, till I have heard from Hamburg?”

“Certainly, Mr. Müller,” I replied, “I shall trust to your honor implicitly; still I wish you would refrain from seeing the poor girl, till you hear from home.”

“That is impossible, Mr. Morrison,” said he; “I do not think I could live; you would laugh at me, and well you might, did you know the intensity of my affection for that girl. I seem to live only in her presence, and in the thought of her, and yet with it all I fully realize what I am doing, and the wreck I shall probably make of my happiness; you may well pity me, but I am hurried on by a feeling I cannot control.”

“I am truly sorry, Hermann, but we will talk no more about it. I will consult Mrs. Morrison, and would advise you also to speak to her.” Thus ended our discussion. Now, what are we to do, Annie?”

“It is a most annoying position for us to be placed in, Harry, and I don’t know what to advise; the man must be demented. What can please him so much, and when did he first see her?”

“He says the first day he called upon you, he saw Marah, and felt irresistibly attracted to her; afterwards he met her in the street, several times; at last he spoke to her, and the fascination was completed; this is the reason he refused both our invitations to dinner; he thought Marah might be in attendance, and he could not endure to see her in that position.”

“It certainly is the most mysterious thing I ever knew; if I did not know you would not carry a joke so far, I could not believe it. Why, Harry,

a fiction like it would be monstrous; we should hoot a writer who should combine such extravagancies; it would be thought at the least a want of tact, and most persons would declare such a tissue of circumstances to be an entire impossibility; I never shall doubt anything again, however wild and improbable. I suppose we must now consider Marah a lady; I cannot have such a belle in waiting upon me, but neither can I send her away; she shall have permission to go to school, or to receive masters here—I could not be in the way of the poor girl’s success in life—and if she is to marry Müller—but I don’t believe she ever will?”

“Why, Annie, you are unjust; I am quite convinced Hermann is perfectly honorable in his intentions; if you had seen him you could not have doubted of his sincere attachment to the girl, strange infatuation as it seems.”

“I don’t doubt he feels it all now, but wait a while, I know the men better than you do. Oh! smile if you will, but in love matters, I understand them better than you; I have measured their height and depth; some, I know, are as constant as the load-star, bore you to death with their love, and absent or present, give themselves up to real devoted affection; but no such nature is Hermann Müller’s; the very violence of his feelings will exhaust themselves. Let him be separated from Marah—and in a month, aye in less time, he would begin to rouse himself, wonder what he saw in her to like, and end by fully deciding he could never be happy with her. You doubt, do you? Now see which is the wisest of the two, which understands human—no, man’s—nature best.”

Mrs. Morrison spoke to Marah of Mr. Müller’s attachment to her, and the girl confessed with an almost intoxicating rapture, her happiness in the idea that Mr. Müller really loved and wished to marry her; she said she did not suppose that she should be so happy as she should be with Francisco, who was nearer her own caste; but the pride and joy of being the chosen bride of a handsome white man absorbed every other feeling.

For a long time Marah lived in a dream of love. Hermann Müller’s friends remonstrated with him on his delusion, but the more that was said to him, the deeper grew his love for the despised girl, and he seemed to atone to her as far as possible for the unpleasant situation in which she was placed. Months rolled on. The summer, so much dreaded in those warm, almost tropical regions, came, and Mrs. Morrison found it absolutely essential, if she wished to preserve her health, to return to her native air; and