

She paused, and again her eyes gleamed with concentrated hatred and passion.

"He went to Mount Sunset, and by some means met Esther Erliston. Being what romantic writers would call one of 'nature's princes,' he easily succeeded in making a fool of her; they eloped, were married secretly, and Squire Erliston woke up one morning to learn that his dainty heiress had abandoned papa for the arms of a beggar, and was, as the wife of a penniless lawyer, residing in the goodly city of Washington.

"Pretty Esther doubtless imagined that she had only to throw herself at papa's feet and bathe them with her tears, to be received with open arms. But the young lady found herself slightly mistaken. Squire Erliston stamped, and raged, and swore, and frightened every one in St. Mark's out of their wits; and then, calming down, 'vowed a vow' never to see or acknowledge his daughter more. Esther was then eighteen. If she lived to reach her majority, Mount Sunset would be hers in spite of him. But the squire had vowed that before she should get it, he would burn Sunset Hall to the ground and plow the land with salt. Now, doctor, I heard that, and set myself to work. Squire Erliston has a younger daughter; and I knew that, if Esther died, that younger daughter would become heiress to all the property, and she would then be just as good a wife for Barry as her sister. Well, I resolved that Esther should no longer stand in my way, that she should never live to reach her majority. Start not, doctor, I see that you do not yet know Madge Oranmore."

She looked like a very fiend, as she sat smiling grimly at him from her seat.

"Fortune favored me," she continued. "Alfred Oranmore, with two or three other young men, going out one day for a sail, was overtaken by a sudden squall—they