

"Certainly, I hope I shall never forget my friends," she replied. As she looked up she encountered his gaze so tender, yet so sad, that the tears started involuntarily.

"My dear Julia," he said, kindly taking her hand, "you are not well surely, how pale you are looking."

"I assure you I am not ill," she replied, withdrawing her hand; "only a slight headache which will soon pass off."

"I hope it is nothing worse," he said, "though you appear strangely unlike yourself to-day—I have been so unfortunate as to offend you?"

"Oh, no, I hardly know myself what ails me, I know I am foolish, but indeed I cannot help it," and the tears started from her eyes which she strove in vain to conceal; she had reckoned too much upon her fortitude, and the affectionate interest Charles manifested was too much for her overcharged heart to bear.

"Julia, I will not seek to pry into your feelings, though it grieves me to see you thus; but let your grief be what it may, rest assured you have my warmest sympathy."

"Oh, it is nothing, I have not felt very well all day, and I hope you will forget my foolishness. I am really quite ashamed of myself; but do not mention it to Mamma, she will think I am really ill."

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"Mamma," said Emma, as they were seated around the centre-table that evening, "you know I have been to see Sarah Woodman to-day, don't you?"

"Certainly my dear, but what of it?"

"Why Sarah has two cousins visiting her, and we had quite a dispute about their names. Sarah thought that Ellen was the prettiest and I thought that Madeline was. Don't you think, Mamma, that Madeline is a much prettier name than Ellen?"

"Well, I think it is, though it depends much upon the person whether we like a name or not."

"Well, I think Madeline is a very pretty name indeed. Don't you Charles?"

"Yes Emma, I like that name, but, as mother says, it may be on account of the person who bears it. I know a young lady of that name in B——; have I never mentioned her to you, mother?"

"You have not; indeed, I do not think you have mentioned a young lady's name since you came home."

"Then it must be because I have found those at home so much more attractive, that I have quite forgotten them, though Madeline Cameron is not one whose friendship is to be lightly regarded."

"Do tell us all about her," said Caroline, "is she pretty?"

"That is altogether a matter of taste, sister, though she is by no means deficient in personal beauty, yet to my taste her chief attraction lies in her well-stored mind and amiable disposition; her father was an officer in the army, and died in his country's services; since his death one misfortune has followed another, and about two years ago Mrs. Cameron lost her eye sight. But all these misfortunes and afflictions Madeline has borne with truly Christian fortitude, and supported herself and mother, solely by the use of her needle. It was by employing her as a sempstress that I became acquainted with her, and never have I heard her utter a complaining word; though young, yet she cheerfully debars herself all amusement, and devotes herself solely to her mother. Indeed Madeline Cameron is one who must be known to be appreciated. I wish you knew her, Julia, I think you would find her a kindred spirit."

The entrance of Mr. Willis prevented her replying. She had never heard him so eloquent in the praise of any lady before, and it served to dissipate any doubts she might have had as to the truth of the report she had heard.

"What is the matter, my dear," said Mrs. Willis to her husband, "your countenance bespeaks a mind ill at ease. Have you heard any bad news?"

He made her no answer, but arose and paced the room in evident agitation, though he strove to conceal it.

"Husband," said Mrs. Willis, rising and laying her hand on his arm, "why will you not allow me to share in your trouble; have you ever found your confidence misplaced?"

"Do not speak so Jane, I would spare your feelings, but it is of no use, you may as well know it now as a few days hence."

He sank on a seat, and leaning his head on his hand, murmured:

"Jane! we are beggars."

"How! husband, how mean you, you are surely labouring under some dreadful mistake."

"Would to God I were! but no, it is a stern indubitable fact, and all by means of that rascally Morgan, whom I fancied the very soul of honesty. But listen and I will tell you. When I took him as a partner I believed him all that his appearance indicated, and placing the most unbounded confidence in him, I entrusted the business mostly to his care, and the result is I find myself indebted for a greater amount than I am able to liquidate. And as if that were not enough, the ungrateful wretch has absconded with most of my ready