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Romance.

BY  
MARIA,

Author of "Cathy and Her Grandmother."

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# FAITHLESS,

- A -

NEWFOUNDLAND ROMANCE,

BY MARIA. (ANASTASIA  
English)

AUTHOR OF

"ONLY A FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER."

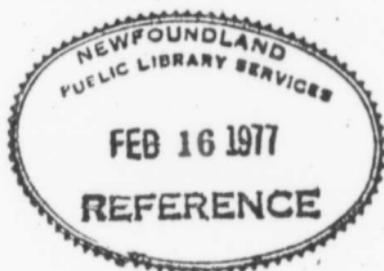
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## INTRODUCTION.

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To the readers of "Faithless," who may be inclined to think that the picture of the heroine, in actual want, is over-drawn, I would say that the writer has known, not only this one, but several other instances, where persons living in affluence previous to the Bank crash of '94, were reduced to most extreme poverty afterwards. It was not the poorer class who suffered most, but those whose pride, or delicacy, forbade them seeking that relief which kind and charitable hearts provided for those who needed it.

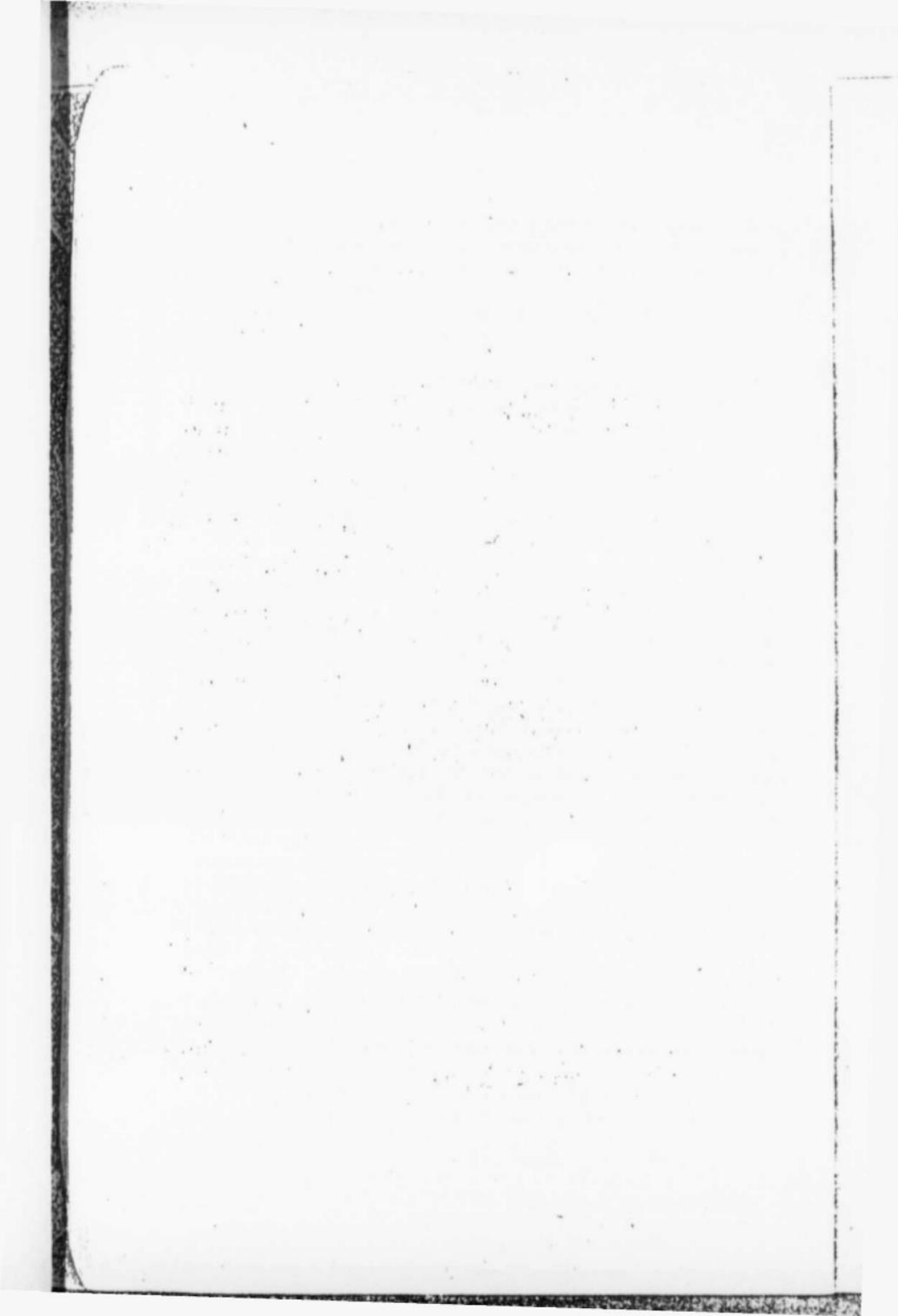
Of the merits of this, my second work, its readers must judge. I have endeavored to make it a book which all may read, young and old, grave or gay, and in its pages I trust nothing shall be found that would wound the feelings of the most sensitive.

As the events which are supposed to have transpired in the story, must have occurred at such a recent date, great care has been taken to place them where they cannot be identified with the originals.

The name, "Faithless," may be thought, by a great many, to be misapplied to the story, but, though being faithful in her love for Alan Horten, Eva Carlen was, in a degree, faithless, when she failed to keep her appointment with him at the end of the two years.

Most sincerely do I thank the many kind friends whose patronage helped me through, in my last work as well as in this one, with the financial difficulty of publication. In my former venture I more than realized my expectations, and should I meet with the same success in this effort, I shall feel amply rewarded for the months of labor which must be given to a work of this kind.

Should this book help to pass pleasantly a few spare hours for its readers, I shall feel that my time has not been given in vain.



# FAITHLESS!

## CHAPTER I.

“Good-bye, sweetheart, good-bye.”

IT was a cold, cheerless, starless night in December, 1894, some days after the memorable 10th, or “Black Monday,” as it was called by a great many in Newfoundland; a name well applied, for what stared hundreds, nay thousands, in the face on that day but black and utter ruin?

Its shadow had fallen, though indirectly as yet, on a happy home, situated on the outskirts of the city. It was a large, handsome house, with a pretty garden in front,—that is pretty when the sweet summer sun shone upon it, and the gentle breezes whispered softly through the lilac trees and stirred the tall poplars, whilst the scent of numerous flowers filled the air. To-night the trees are bare and the wind whistles dismally through their branches, but inside is warmth and brightness, and the dreary aspect outside does not trouble the four occupants of the bright luxurious apartment, though on each face a shadow rests.

In a large arm-chair, near the fire, sat an elderly gentleman, Mr. Edward Carlen; opposite him is his wife, a white-haired, distinguished-looking lady. The other two occupants were in a remote corner of the room. One—a girl of twenty—was seated at a piano singing in a low but intense voice that sweet old ballad, “We’d Better Bide a Wee.” Either the words or the tone of the singer impressed the young man sitting near her unfavourably, for as the last line of the song,

I canna leave the auld folk now,  
We’d better bide a wee,

fell upon his ear, a shade of anxiety covered his handsome face and soon after he arose to go. Mrs. and Mr. Carlen looked anxiously at their daughter as if trying to read her decision in her calm, proud face.

"Well, Alan, my boy," said Mr. Carlen, "is everything irretrievably gone; have you no hope of getting any recompense for your losses?"

"None whatever, Mr. Carlen. My opinion is that a Commercial Bank shareholder will never receive a cent from it."

"It is hard indeed," murmured Edward Carlen. "And have you fully decided to accept Grant's offer and go with him to New York?"

"I have fully decided, Mr. Carlen. The offer is too excellent a one not to be taken advantage of."

Eva Carlen stood leaning against the piano, her face expressing nothing but decision. She was one who, though not wanting in affection and obedience to her parents, had always been accustomed to deciding momentous questions for herself. She was tall and slender, graceful, and the majority of people would say, beautiful. Her hair was of a deep golden hue, the face very fair, with scarcely a tinge of color in the round full cheeks, but this absence was made up for by the vivid red of her lips and the darkness of her brows and long, thick lashes. The eyes were not the color that usually goes with blondes, they were of such a dark blue as sometimes to appear almost black. She was capable of a wonderful amount of self-control; her manner was rather proud and reserved. She was a girl whom few could understand. She had few friends and many acquaintances, the greater number of whom thought her cold, calculating and mercenary, but those who knew and loved her knew also that inside that calm, proud exterior was a loyal, faithful heart, capable of love and constancy that could last till death.

"Well," spoke Mr. Carlen, "I suppose you must be the best judge. I hope you will meet with success, Alan. When do you expect to go?"

"In about two weeks from now," he answered, "and he then bade them good-night."

"Eva, my dear," said Mrs. Carlen, "be sure and put something around your shoulders if you are going to the door."

"Yes, mother," she answered, taking a fur cloak from the hall rack and wrapping it about her.

"You are coming with me, are you not, dearest?" said Alan, as they reached the outer door, and he took both her hands in his.

"Alan," she said, lifting her dark eyes to his face, "I have been thinking all day in what manner I could best give you my answer, and I thought of no gentler way than singing it to you. That song was my answer, Alan dearest,

I canna leave the auld folk now,  
We'd better bide a wee.

The young man dropped her hands and turned away with an impatient gesture:—"I might have known it," he said, "Your love cannot bear the test of misfortune—you fear to trust yourself to me. Your home and your parents are dearer to you than I. Your love is but a poor thing, after all, Eva when compared with mine for you. I would go to the end of the earth for you. I would bear privations, hardships, bid eternal farewell to all else I love for your sake, as I am doing, for it is the sooner to make a home for you that I am leaving father, mother, home and friends, and now you refuse to accompany me."

"Now, Alan, you are unreasonable," answered the girl. "Did I follow the dictates of my heart I would go with you anywhere, oh, so gladly! The possibility of poverty or hardship should not frighten me, but my duty lies here. Had I brothers or sisters it would be quite different; but my parents have no one but me. They have not influenced me, they have not even advised me, they have let me use my own judgment. Ah, Alan, it went to my heart just now to see them looking at me so wistfully, for they do not even know what answer I am giving you."

"But, Eva, surely you owe me some allegiance. You are my promised wife and we were to be married in a few months. Every father and mother must part with their daughter when a husband claims her. If we were married you should come."

"I know, Alan, but the case would be quite different then."

"How?"

"Because if I were your wife my first duty would be to you, my parents could only hold second place; as it is now, my father and mother must come first and you next."

"I cannot agree with you, Eva, it is cruel, it is unjust to me. I would not ask you to leave your luxurious home did I not know I could offer you one as good, though all my fortune has sunk with the bank failure. I have, besides a considerable amount of money invested in different things, more than enough to purchase a nice home in New York, and the situation Mr. Grant offers me is a certainty and the salary a splendid one."

Eva drew back with a proud gesture, as she said, "I have said once, Alan Horten, that I am not afraid of poverty. I do not wish to know what money you have invested nor what your salary will be. When I promised to marry you I trusted you fully in all these things, and I do so now. Were you a millionaire and asked me to go with you I should still refuse under the same conditions, and I expect the same trust and confidence from you in return."

Will you allow me to put our case in the hands of your father and mother, and abide by their decision?"

"No," she answered, decidedly, "because if they told me to yield to your wishes I should disobey them."

"And yet you try to make me believe that you love me," said Alan, with a short, hard laugh. "Why not say at once that you wish our engagement at an end. Who knows what eligible suitors may present themselves before we meet again. Perhaps it would be better to leave you free."

"Perhaps the wish is father to the thought, and you desire your own freedom," answered Eva, throwing back her head proudly. "It would be unfair to keep you pledged to me. You will likely meet many charming and beautiful women in your new home. It may be years before we meet again, and men forget very soon," and she drew their engagement ring from her finger and handed it towards him.

In a moment his arms were around her, "Oh, Eva, Eva, my own darling, forgive me! I deserve all you can say to me but I am so bitterly disappointed. I cannot bear the thought of leaving you; it is like tearing the heart from my body. Unfair to keep me pledged to you; why, Eva, if I looked upon

your dead face I should still be pledged to you. No other woman could ever be to me what you are—my heart is yours till death. Let me place the ring on your finger once more, and I will promise never to offend you again."

She allowed him to replace the ring, and then said with a sad smile:—"There is this much difference between us, Alan, you love me well,—I believe that—but you are a little selfish, all men are, and you do not trust me. I both love and trust you."

"I do trust you, Eva. It is only my impatience makes me appear not to." And so for that night they parted.

Those who have bidden farewell for years to the one they love best on earth can imagine what the remaining days before Alan Horten's departure, were to him and Eva Carlen. What vows of constancy were made, what protestations of love, what promises. As the time of separation approached nearer and nearer, each day became more and more painful, so much so that they almost wished the parting over. But, ah, too soon it came—their last evening together. The steamer was to sail at ten that night, and now it was near nine. Mr. and Mrs. Carlen had bidden farewell to Alan and withdrawn, and the lovers remained with clasped hands, gazing with mute agony in each other's eyes. Eva had determined to be brave for Alan's sake, and not break down till he had departed. She would have plenty of time then to let the barriers of restraint which she had placed upon herself, break, and the storm of tears and bitter sorrow have full sway.

"In two years, dearest," Alan was saying, "I will return, and perhaps if things look brighter I may make my home here again. But, oh! Eva, you will be true to me, will you not? Do not forget how truly my heart belongs to you."

"You still mistrust me, Alan," said Eva, with that forced calmness which she had assumed so as to conceal her real feelings. "I do not ask any promises of you because I trust you fully, and yet I know that when we meet again I shall be able to say, with all truth, that I have been more faithful than you."

"Why, Eva, what do you mean? Do you think for a moment that I could be unfaithful to you?"

"No, Alan, I don't think you would ever be unfaithful to me by allowing another to take my place, or even loving me

less, but a man's heart can be much easier weaned from the object of its affections than a woman's. You have so many things to distract your thoughts, without being really unfaithful, there may be moments when a pretty face would beguile you into forgetfulness of all but the present, and you would find room in your heart for admiration, at least, of others, whilst I shall never, for one moment, find your image absent from mine. No words, no matter how soft or flattering, coming from other lips than yours, shall ever give me the least pleasure. No, Alan, I shall be more faithful than you."

"Time will teach you, Eva, how faithful I can be." Then, silence again, for each heart was too full of sorrow for words.

At last, slowly, sorrowfully, reluctantly, Alan said, as he took Eva's face in both his hands, gazing sadly into her eyes, "And now, my own darling, we must part. The hour has come at last. How calm and cold you seem, Eva, in spite of your words just now. I wonder is your heart as heavy as mine? I hope not, for I would not wish to see you suffer as I am suffering."

"Oh, can I control myself till he has gone!" she thought. But no. With all her resolution, with all her determination and self-possession, she was only a woman, after all, with a woman's loyal, faithful and loving heart, breaking now with its first great grief. She had counted too much on her own strength. With one choking, passionate sob, she clasped her arms round his neck, "Oh! Alan, Alan," she cried, "do not leave me—my heart is breaking. Oh! how can I live through the long, lonely days when I cannot see you, when I cannot touch your hand nor hear the sound of your voice? Oh, people think, and even you too, that I am cold-hearted, that I cannot love enough to suffer. Oh! I wish I were! I wish I were! my heart would not be torn with sorrow as it is now."

The passionate storm of sobs and tears took Alan by surprise. He tried by every gentle, endearing word to soothe and comfort her. But now, that all the pent-up sorrow had mastered her she allowed it to have sway, and when the storm had passed it left her so weak that she could scarcely stand.

"I should not have allowed my feelings to overcome me, Alan," she said. "I am making it harder for you," and she tried to smile through her tears, "but, oh, I feel a presentiment

of coming sorrow deeper than what we are suffering. I feel that we two shall never stand together again as we are now; that something will come between us."

"Everyone feels these gloomy forebodings when they are in such bitter sorrow as we are. Eva darling, try and look on the bright side. I shall come back in two years. It is not so long after all, and we shall be dearer, if possible, to each other than we are now. Farewell, my own dear one, farewell; be faithful till we meet again."

"More faithful than you will be, Alan," were her last words to him, and with one more lingering, tender adieu they parted, and as the last sound of his footsteps died away, Eva felt as if her life had ended. It was her first real sorrow, and but a preparation for what was to come. But the future was mercifully hidden from her as it is from us all.

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## CHAPTER II.

A soft, balmy day early in the month of June, the sweet scent of the budding trees, the delicate perfume of the lilies of the valley and the polyanthuses filled the air. Eva Carlen is leaning against a lilac tree, gazing sadly into vacancy. The sweet breath of approaching summer does not bring any balm to her wounded spirit. She is clad in deepest mourning, for but a few weeks have passed since her father has been laid to rest. When the Commercial Bank had failed, sinking with it the fortunes of many, all laughed at the idea of danger to the Union. It might have been saved had not such a demand been made upon it, but the people grew panic-stricken, and those who had money invested drew it. Gold and silver was dealt out while it lasted, and then the crash came. The shareholders lost not only all their bank shares, but what other money belonged to them. Mr. Carlen was a large shareholder and his losses were heavy. It simply broke his heart to think that after all his life-time of saving and providing for Eva, he should die and leave her almost a beggar. But he murmured not against the order of Providence, and, when he found death approaching he turned his thoughts from this world to that of

a brighter and happier, and in humble resignation died the death of the just. And now Mrs. Carlen's health was rapidly failing, and Eva feared she would soon be left quite alone in the world. She had no near relations, and only a few friends from her many acquaintances, for, as is mostly the case when misfortune comes, the greater number of those whom we call our friends gradually take themselves off and we see them no more. The only gleam of sunshine in her life was Alan's letters—long, loving epistles—full of hope and cheer, and her happiest moments were spent in answering them. She did not tell him of all their misfortunes, and this was her first mistake. She would not distress him by letting him know that the home which she had known from babyhood was hers no longer, for to-day she was looking her last upon it. When her father married he had rented this house for a term of years, and had grown so fond of it that he intended purchasing it for Eva. But the term had just expired when the bank crash came, and so he was unable to carry out his design. The furniture had been settled upon Mrs. Carlen, and when all was sold the proceeds were her own. They kept the piano, as Eva intended teaching music. They had taken three rooms in a modest and respectable part of the city, and this was to be their last night in their old home. What sad, sweet memories filled Eva's mind as she stood and gazed on all the familiar objects. How often she and Alan had sat there neath the shade of the lilac trees and talked of their future that was to be bright and happy. Ah! how vividly a scene from the happy past came back to her, as her eyes fell on her's and Alan's initials, which he had one day, in a fit of idle fancy, carved on the trunk of a tree. "It must be obliterated," she thought, it should not be left there for strangers' eyes to gaze upon, and, taking a sharp penknife from her pocket she carefully erased all traces of the letters, while the hot tears gushed from her eyes. The garden gate opened and Ida Carroll, Eva's best and truest friend entered. She was a bright, lively little creature, with dark brown eyes and rosy cheeks. With that innate tact that belongs by nature to some, she made no remark upon Eva's tear-stained face, nor pretended that she had seen her scrape something from the tree, but silently embracing and kissing her, she sat down beside her and pillowed her head on her shoulder.

"I am really ashamed of myself," said Eva, smiling through her tears. "I have tried to be brave and cheerful through it all, but to-day I have given in completely to my morbid feelings and allowed the memories of the past to unnerve me."

"You've no cause to feel ashamed of yourself, Eva, dear, there are not ten girls in a thousand but would have sunk under the strain you've borne for the past six months."

"Ah, Ida, you do not know what your love and friendship are to me; it is only in a time like this that we realize the value of a true friend and feel how much we love them."

"And yet you would not come to us, and mother and I would have been so glad to have you, if only for a little while, till you got over the first few months of your sorrow, and your mother recovered her health somewhat."

"It is better not, Ida; it would only give me time for thinking. I've got to work, and the sooner I begin the better, but we thank you and your dear mother a thousand times for the kind thoughtfulness that prompted the request. Of course if mother wished it I would go for her sake, but she thinks, like me, that it is better for us to begin our new life together at once."

"Well, I will come and see you to-morrow in your new home," said Ida, when they had talked together for some time. "Let us hope that though the present looks gloomy there may be many bright days in store for you yet."

"Won't you come in and see mother?" asked Eva.

"Not now. You say she is resting, and I won't disturb her. Good-bye for the present."

Eva went with a slow, sorrowful step into the house. Nothing had been touched. Those who had purchased the furniture would not remove anything until Mrs. Carlen and her daughter had left. As she entered the room her mother who had been dozing on the couch, opened her eyes. Eva approached, and kissing her fondly, said, "How do you feel now, mother, dear?"

"Better than I expected, my dear child," she answered. "The sooner we are settled in our new home the better pleased I shall be."

"Ida Carroll was in the garden with me just now, mother. She seems to think badly of us not going with them for a

time as she asked us. You know, mother, if you wish to go with Mrs. Carroll for a while, do not stay from doing it on my account. My only pleasure is to please you."

"I know it Eva. You are a good daughter. I know what leaving your home must have cost you, child; I know what refusing to go with Alan must have cost you, and yet you try to keep bright and cheerful, and never complain."

"When we leave here to-morrow, mother, we will, as far as we can, refrain from speaking of the past. You and I must live for each other. You will get better once this worry is over, and when Alan comes for me, if his home is to be in New York, you shall accompany us, and we will be happy once more.

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### CHAPTER III.

In a brilliantly lighted drawing-room of a magnificent house on Sixth Avenue, New York, there is a gay party assembled. It is the home of Mr. Grant, between whom and Allan Horten's father a strong friendship existed. From childhood to manhood they had been companions, till John Grant had taken it into his head to roam in search of "fresh fields and pastures new." He had succeeded beyond his expectations and was now a wealthy man. He had married an heiress from one of the highest circles in New York. Between him and Richard Horten a regular correspondence was kept up, and some years before this story opens the latter had paid a lengthy visit to his friend in New York, and at the time of the bank crash John Grant had been staying for some months in Newfoundland with Richard Horten, and so offered Alan the situation which brought him to New York. John Grant had two children, a son and a daughter; he had insisted on Alan making his home with him, "the more young people he had around him" he said, "the better he liked it, and Mrs. Grant was of the same opinion."

Nellie Grant, the idolized queen of the house, was a spoiled beauty. She was a decided brunette—black hair and eyes, smooth olive complexion and cheeks like a damask rose. She

had more lovers than she could conveniently manage, but had never really been in love herself. Perhaps it was because she made such easy conquests that their love was valueless to her. Alan Horten was the first of her male acquaintances who looked upon her with seeming indifference. Certainly he could not help admiring her. Besides being beautiful, she was talented and witty, kind and affectionate with her parents and brother, and always bright and merry. Before Alan had been one month in the house he liked her very much: her manner was so gay and free from restraint and formality that they soon fell into the habit of calling each other by their christian names. Nellie Bly was the name Alan often, in playful familiarity, applied to her. But strange to say, before two months had passed she who had been so difficult to please, who had sent one suitor after another away disconsolate, learned to love with her whole heart—unmasked, unsought—Alan Horten. She did not wonder whether he returned her affection, she took it for granted that he did, only, of course, he had a different way of showing it than the others, but then he was different from them. If he had not been she should detest him.

Alan, though being anything but a vain man, had within the last two weeks suspected something of her feelings towards him, and blamed himself for not appearing amongst the household as an engaged man, a mistake which he must soon remedy, and that very night he intended telling Nellie of Eva and their engagement, never for a moment dreaming of the depth of her attachment for him.

To-night the gay party was assembled in honor of Nellie, as it was her twentieth birthday. It had nearly passed, and Alan wondered how he should get a chance of telling her what he intended. At last, by some lucky chance, he saw her sitting alone, the first time for the night, on a lounge big enough for two, and he made his way towards her. She gave him a bright smile of welcome, as she made room for him beside her. Then for the first time it struck Alan of what a difficult and delicate task he had to perform, and he wondered how he should begin, when Nellie herself gave him the cue:—

"I am glad you came over, Alan. I just saw Fred Dale coming in this direction, and if there is anything in the world

I detest it is a gentleman with a light moustache, and his is a very pale straw color."

"Poor Fred; I am sorry for him," said Alan. "Thought you admired blondes."

"Why did you think that?"

"Because a few days ago I heard you speak in very flattering terms of a Mrs. Some-one, and you said that she was a decided blonde."

"Oh, with a lady it is quite different, they are more admired than Brunettes. Which do you admire most, Alan?"

"Is that a fair question for a lady who is decidedly a Brunette to ask a gentleman?"

"We won't discuss the fairness or unfairness of the question," said Nellie, "but just tell me the truth."

"Well, you are a brunette, and I admire you. Won't that do you, Nellie Bly?"

"Yes, I am answered; I've got the truth from you, although you intended to mislead me. You prefer blondes."

For a few moments Allan's thoughts wandered from the gay scene before him to Eva Carlen's home. In imagination he saw her pale, sad face as it was when he had bidden her good-bye, and the storm of passionate grief had swept over it, and he said, more to himself than to the girl beside him, "I prefer one blonde, at least, to all the world beside."

Nellie gave a quick, startled glance at him. "Someone at home," she said, "I suppose it must be your mother, as you have no sister?"

"No, Nellie, it is not my mother, it is my promised wife, Eva Carlen. I have often wished to tell you of her. May I do so now?"

Nellie Grant felt like one petrified. She could neither move nor speak. A sense of unreality took possession of her, and every particle of color left her face. Alan was not looking at her and so did not notice it. "I wish you could know Eva," he went on. "I am sure you would like each other."

Nellie was beginning to recover herself and to realize that Alan Horten was actually speaking to her of his promised wife. She made a desperate effort to rouse herself. "He must not know," was her first thought. She turned to him with such an interested, smiling face, that Alan laughed at himself for ima-

giving for a moment that she had any more than a friendly regard for him, and the thought brought him such a sense of relief that he grew quite animated in his description of Eva. He told of her goodness and beauty, of how she would not leave her parents to become his wife, of the death of her father since they had parted and of his promise to be with her in two years.

Nellie listened intently as if her heart was not ready to break, asked several questions concerning Eva, and made Alan promise to show her Eva's photograph next day.

It was past midnight. At last she was free, and in the seclusion of her own room. To and fro, to and fro, for the past hour she had walked, with pale face and tightly clenched hands. "To think," she thought, "of how indifferent I must have been to him all these months whilst he has been so dear to me. Oh! what shall I do! what shall I do! If I had only known it when he first came. He had no right to keep his engagement a secret. Surely he must have seen that I cared for him, and now I must give up all thought of him, and, what is harder still, to pretend to be his friend and hers, though I hate her. "Oh, it is hard! hard! I who have rejected so many offers, who have won so many hearts, must be denied the one love I crave. Ah, I wonder if it is impossible to win him; is his heart so wholly hers that I have not the power to move it. A year and a half must yet pass before he goes to her. What may not happen in that time? Let me think."

She threw herself on the bed and buried her face in the pillows. For an hour she lay thus without moving. When she arose Nellie Grant was a changed girl. All that was noble, generous, truthful and honorable in her nature was cast aside, and all that was scheming, wily, mean and treacherous arose to the surface. It had been a hard-fought battle between right and wrong, but wrong had triumphed. She appeared at breakfast next morning, bright and smiling. Last night's ball was discussed, also their approaching departure for Coney Island, where they always spent the summer months. Alan, true to his promise, slipped a large envelope into Nellie's hand, as he was leaving for the office. It contained Eva's picture. She waited until she was alone to study it. It was a cabinet-sized photo taken in Eva's happiest days. Nellie gazed long and earnestly at the calm, smiling face,—“And so you are dearer to

him then all the world beside," she said, "with your fair face and golden hair. Oh! I wonder if you love him as I do? No, you do not. You are too calm and proud-looking. I feel sure you are cold and mercenary. You would not break your heart if you lost him. So much the better. I should not like to have the charge that I had broken a girl's heart laid at my door. But I must have patience, patience," she murmured, resting her head in her hands. "It is a tedious task I am undertaking, requiring skill and diplomacy, but I shall succeed. How coolly and deliberately I am going to work to steal a girl's lover. If anyone told me a month ago I should be guilty of such a thing, how indignant I would be. But, after all, I shall not injure either of them. She shall marry someone else and be happy, whilst I shall make him happy." And so, once again, trampling under foot the promptings of her better nature, she replaced the picture in the envelope, and, with the words of a gay song on her lips, went to prepare for her morning walk.

Nellie Grant and Alan Horten had many tastes in common. Both were fond of music, and their voices blended beautifully together. Alan had no mean skill as a violinist, and often for hours together they played and sang duets. Though much care and expense had been lavished on Charlie Grant's musical education, he never went beyond rattling off in a flourishing style, "Yankee Doodle," "The Star Spangled Banner" and a few lively airs from comic operas. "Anything of a sentimental nature," he said, "always gave him the blues, and half tones and minor chords always put his teeth on edge, whatever they did to other people." He was fond of sporting and just a little fast, but not a bad sort of fellow on the whole.

To-night was their last in the city for some weeks, as next day they were to depart for Coney Island. Mr. and Mrs. Grant, Charlie, Nellie and Alan lingered for some time in the drawing-room before retiring, making some arrangements for the coming months. Alan, of course, had to remain in the city as business needed him, and Charlie vowed he should die or go mad at the sea-shore if he spent longer there than two or three days at a time.

"I should say it would be nicer to die of ennui at the seaside than from sunstroke in New York," suggested Nellie.

"Oh, no, Nell," said Charlie, "death from ennui is lin-

gering, you know, very lingering, and everything that's going to happen to me let it be in a hurry. Now with sunstroke it's quite different, one minute you are alive and know everything, the next you feel as if the sun had suddenly landed on your head and you know nothing; the next you see the beautiful gates ajar, and all you've got to do is to walk right in. At least that's my idea of it; I will give you a more accurate account when I get some experience."

So it was arranged that Alan and Charlie should take a run to Coney Island every Saturday and remain till Monday.

The heat was so intense that Charlie said he should take a little stroll and smoke a cigar before going to bed. Alan said he thought he would follow his example. "I think I'll accompany you to the door and get a breath of air too," said Nellie. "You should not, Nell," remonstrated her brother with unusual solicitude. "You should not leave a hot room for the open air on a summer's night. There is always danger of taking cold, la grippe, heart failure and all these things follow from it. Don't allow her, mother."

"Mind your own business, Charlie," answered his sister. "You ought to know before this that 'allow' is a word not known in my vocabulary."

Mr. and Mrs. Grant remonstrated, not strongly, they knew it was no use if Nellie was really going.

"I declare, Nell, a fellow cannot do a thing unknown to you," said Charlie as they reached the outer door. "There is a game on at the club to-night, and I don't want to let father or mother know, they would only be grumbling. I've got an invite for you, too, Alan if you care to come?"

"No, thank you very much, Charlie," said Alan, "I do not care to go."

"And what time do you intend being home, sir?" demanded his sister.

"Oh, the wee sma' hours, I suppose. Don't tell mother, she would only be anxious. I can let myself in with a latch-key. Good night."

As he disappeared from their view Alan turned to his companion and said, "Well, Nellie, what do you think of Eva's picture?"

"I think a great many things about it, Alan. Two things are very apparent, she is good and beautiful."

"Well, these are two very essential things. What else do you think that may not, perhaps, be so apparent?"

"Should you wish me to tell you all I think of her?"

"Yes, Nelle Bly, I should be most happy to hear all you think of her."

"Well, the face expresses much decision of character. I should say she is one who would never flinch from duty no matter how repugnant it might be. She could be faithful just because it is her nature to be so. I should say she is one of those women who will have a happy life, because she will love not too well, but wisely."

"Nonsense," said Alan, a little impatiently. "You could not read a person's character just by merely glancing at a photograph."

"But, Alan, I have not merely glanced at it, I have studied it, and I have studied physiognomy too, and I am telling you what the lines of the face express. I may be astray. The lines of the face have, in some rare instances, been known to entirely belie the character, though not for a moment implying that they belie Miss Carlen's, for, although you do not seem pleased with it, I fancy I have given a very flattering description of her's. I have said that her face, besides being beautiful, expresses goodness, decision, faithfulness, adherence to duty, and what else can man desire in woman?"

"And she would love not too well, but wisely," put in Alan.

"Oh! I see, that is the part you do not like."

"What is the real meaning of that phrase, anyway?"

"What phrase?"

"That loving wisely but not too well?"

A flush of triumph mounted Nelle's cheek. This was the very question she had been trying to call forth. "I have never studied it much," she answered with a little apparent reluctance. "I should say it meant that though a woman may love one man faithfully all her life, that should anything come between them, she could, after a certain length of time, adapt herself to circumstances, and be happy with another, especially if it was any falsity or neglect on the part of the man she first

loved. But let us hope Miss Carlen may never have that to complain of."

"She never shall," said Alan, resolutely, "but," he added, with a smile, "I do not care about that loving wisely business. It sounds rather tame."

"Nonsense, Alan, it's the way the generality of women love, and it is the better way. It is only the few who love too well."

"You would not care to be amongst the few then I suppose?" said Alan, smiling.

"I," she answered, looking quite serious, "I fear when my time comes I shall be amongst the few," and she laid her hand over her heart, "I shall love not wisely but too well."

"May the man deserve his happiness then, Nellie, is my wish."

"You have never spoken to anyone but me of your engagement, have you, Alan?"

"No, Nellie, I have not. The way is, I suppose, a fellow hates to speak of what is dearest to him unless he gets a sympathetic listener like yourself. Women, I believe, are always interested in love affairs."

"I am greatly interested in yours, Alan, and now I am going to ask you not to mention it to anyone else; let it be a little secret—a bond of friendship between us. Count on me always as yours and Miss Carlen's true friend."

"I have made a good beginning," Nellie Grant told herself one hour afterwards, as she stood gazing from her bedroom window at the city in its calm grandeur, lighted and softened by the white light of the midnight moon. "Under the guise of friendship I must win him."

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#### CHAPTER IV.

It is a fine, clear, frosty day in January. Eva Carlen is sitting by the fire of their little parlor, a soft, dreamy smile upon her face. She has just finished reading a letter from Alan, a long, cheerful, loving letter. One year ago to-day they had

said farewell; half the time had passed. One year more and he would be with her, he told her. She could be happy now but for one fact which often brings a shade of anxiety to her face, her mother's health was not improved. Slowly and surely she was fading away. Though often missing the many luxuries to which they had been accustomed, they were still living quite comfortably and did not complain. Her reverie was soon interrupted by the sound of a cheery voice at the door, and Ida Carroll entered, with bright, sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks, swinging in her hand a pair of 'acme' skates, which she held by a strap. "Dreaming all alone by the fire," she said, as she kissed her. "You should have been up with me above the Bridge, the ice is in splendid condition—a delightful run. How is your mother to-day?" This was all said in one breath.

"Pretty well the same, Ida, thank you. I should enjoy a skate very much indeed, but you know I cannot leave her. She is lying down now. I have just had a letter from Alan."

"Ah! that accounts for the rosy cheeks and shining eyes. How is he, Eva? Well, I know, and true to his 'ain love.'"

"Yes, Ida, Alan is truth itself."

"He is a man to be proud of, Eva, not like some one I have the misfortune to know." One who thinks I must have eyes and ears for no other man but himself," and Ida put on as grieved a look as she could assume.

"What is it now, Ida, you and Jack have not quarrelled again, surely?"

"It seems to me we shall never do anything else. We've had it hot and heavy, I can tell you, outside here for the last fifteen minutes, and all because I asked Bob Greene to fix my skate when it came off."

"But why did you ask Bob? Were you skating with him at the time?"

"No, I was skating with Jack," said Ida, trying not to look guilty.

"Oh, you were wrong there, Ida, why not ask Jack to fix it for you when you were skating with him?"

"Well, here is how it happened. We were just at the Bridge when my skate came off, and Bob was there lighting a cigar, but had not got his skates on, and he is an expert at fixing them, while Jack is as clumsy as if his fingers were all

thumbs. Now, if I had put on a vinegar face, and said in a voice as cold as the ice we were standing on:—"Mr. Greene, would you oblige me by fixing my skate, if you please, not letting go Jack's arm all the while, it would be alright, but of course I smiled pleasantly, as any natural girl should, and (you know it is my way, Eva, I cannot help it) dropped his arm and ran over and laid my hand on Bob's, saying, 'Won't you fix my skate, Bob, like a darling,' so, of course, I should stand and talk nice to him. I did not dream for a moment that Jack was gone off in a huff till my skate was on, and I turned round to find he had vanished. So what was left me to do but skate the remainder of the evening with Bob. Now, when it came time to go home, I am sure I was not obliged to follow Jack Roberts all over the ice to take off my skates. I let Bob do the honors, and come home with me also. I told him I was coming in to see you, and we stood just outside your door here to say good-bye, when whom did we see a few yards behind us but the lad—dodged us the whole way down. Well, I saw a thunderstorm approaching and sent Bob off, and then we had it. He said he was at my elbow when Bob was taking off my skates, and that I knew it, and would not turn because I did not want him coming home with me; that I made little of him and encouraged Bob Greene, and, oh! I could not tell you half. Only that it was rather bright and inconvenient to get off my glove without attracting attention, I would have handed him his ring then and there."

"Jack may be a little unreasonable, Ida, but you must acknowledge you give him cause for jealousy very often, and especially with Bob Greene. You know he has always been a rival of his."

"But why need he mind it when he knows it is himself I care for, not Bob."

"When a man cares for a woman as he does for you, Ida, he cannot help minding it. If you heard a girl boast about Jack in the way Bob does about you, that she could take Jack from you any time if she only tried, and he got paying her little attentions now and then, you would soon resent it. But Jack Roberts would not stoop to anything so small, even for an experiment."

Ida looked as if she could not make up her mind as to

whether she would resent such attentions on the part of her too fond and jealous betrothed to some imaginary fair one or not, and finally gave it up by saying, "I don't care, Eva, if he makes love to every girl from Riverhead to Maggoty Cove. I am tired of the whole jolly crowd of them. And now I want to tell you what I came in for. If Sunday afternoon is nice and fine, I am going to send the sleigh for your mother and you to come and spend it with us. My mother is dying to have a good chat with Mrs. Carlen, and we will have a nice, quiet evening to ourselves."

"As if your many admirers will ever give you a quiet evening to yourself, you saucy little flirt," laughed Eva.

"Oh, Jack won't come near me again for two weeks, and I won't be 'at home' to anyone else on Sunday. But mind," raising a warning finger, "don't you tell him. I would not gratify his vanity that much. Of course I know he will be in to lay his grievance before you," and Ida stood up to go, but, as is mostly the case, the greater part of their conversation took place when they were about saying good-bye. Gradually it led up to Mrs. Horten, Alan's mother, between whom and Mrs. Carroll a great intimacy existed, as they were distantly connected.

"Doesn't she ever come to see you, Eva?" asked Ida.

"Only once since poor papa's death. Never since we came to live here. Alan's mother was never particularly fond of me, Ida, and she is less so since we became poor."

"I should not allow that to trouble me, Eva, if I were you. Mrs. Horten is too thoroughly mean and selfish for anything. She does not like me nor I her, and we both know it. I am surprised at how she and mamma get along, their dispositions are so entirely different."

"I do not allow it to trouble me a great deal, Ida; but you know I should like to have Alan's mother on good terms with me for his sake alone."

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During the past few months Eva had opened a day school, which was fairly well attended, and about eight o'clock that same night, as she was correcting some exercises of her little pupils, a light tap came at the door, and Jack Roberts entered.

He was a tall, slight young man, with blue eyes, fair hair and ruddy complexion. His countenance was open and honest, looking like one who would be inclined to unburden his troubles to the ears of a sympathizer, such as he always found in Eva Carlen. After the usual courtesies were exchanged, he said, "Ida paid you a visit to-day."

"Yes," answered Eva. "She came in to tell me that she is going to send the sleigh for mother and me on Sunday, to spend the evening with her. Ah, Jack, I don't know how I should get along without Ida, since our reverses came. She is so sincere and warm-hearted, there are not many like her in the world."

"It seems that Ida is kind to everyone but me," sighed the young man. "I suppose she has told you about our falling out this evening?"

"Yes, she told me all about it. It seems to worry her a great deal."

"Worry her! not at all. Nothing worries her while she has that curled, scented dandy dangling after her heels. When I think of how she actually turned her back upon me to-day when she caught sight of him, it almost makes me vow I will never go near her again."

"Don't you think, Jack, that you often take these things too seriously. I would not attach so much importance to Ida's little capricious flirting if I were you. She has no harm whatever in it, and does not care two straws for anyone but you. Remember I know it."

"She has a strange way of showing it."

"I do not think so, Jack. Of course I am not trying to justify Eva's conduct—I know she flirts a little too much and I told her so. But what better way could she have for showing that she cares for you than by promising to marry you?"

"She would not care a snap of her fingers if our engagement was broken to-morrow," said the disconsolate young man.

"She would care a great deal more than you think or she pretends," answered Eva. And so, after an hour's reasoning with him, and trying to impress on him the fact that Ida worshipped him beyond words, Eva, ere he rose to go, had his full promise that he would call upon Ida the following Sunday afternoon and meet her half-way towards a reconciliation, and he

kept his word. But he had to go a little more than half-way for Ida considered herself the injured one this time, and so their quarrel was mended as had been dozens before.

Mrs. Carlen and Eva spent a happy evening at Mrs. Carroll's and returned home in good spirits.

Robert Greene, Esq., as he delighted to be called, was decidedly a dandy. He was twenty-two and as full of conceit as any youngster in golf stockings. He had loved, in his own fashion, Ida Carroll since he was eighteen, whilst she never thought of him any more than a congenial friend, and often a convenient escort, and until Jack Roberts appeared upon the scene this was all their intimacy amounted to. Though Bob hoped some day to win from her a more tender regard, and though he had to fall in the back-ground to give place to his successful rival, which was very galling, he vowed that he should cause him many a heart-ache, and that he should yet win Ida, even if she and Jack were engaged. He was often heard to boast amongst his friends, as he toyed with the ends of his too freely waxed moustache, that "he would have the laugh on Jack Roberts yet." Of course, they hated each other, and poor Ida was at her wits' end when they met to keep matters sociable between them.

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## CHAPTER V.

It is Easter Saturday afternoon, and the scene was Broadway. The spring was unusually early and the day soft and sunny. Ladies and gentlemen, in gay spring attire, were coming and going in throngs. Alan Horten and Nellie Grant were amongst the number returning from the matinee. The piece was "The Lady of Lyons," and naturally their conversation turned upon the merits of the hero and heroine. Nellie said she should forgive Claude sooner than Pauline did, that her love should overcome the deception which had been practised upon her.

"I quite differ from you there, Nellie, I think Pauline a woman in a thousand to forgive him at all. I should never

forgive anyone who practiced such deceit upon me, no matter what the object was."

"If you loved the person you would, Alan."

"No; no matter how much I loved them, I should never forgive fraud or deceit."

"You would not approve of the saying that 'all is fair in love and war, then?'"

"Certainly not. Nothing is fair in love only what is honest and upright. Love is too pure and sacred a thing to be won by fraud and false pretenses. I don't say the same of war. There each understand the other and intrigue is met with intrigue. They are openly acknowledged enemies and as such are at least honest with each other."

Did the words have any good effect on the unhappy girl who heard them, for unhappy she was. No. Though she spent many hours battling with temptation, though several times she was on the point of yielding at the promptings of the "small still voice" which never fails to admonish us, still the demon conquered, and each time she went forth to the fray girded with fresh armor and more determined than ever to reach the goal at which she aimed.

During the past Christmas she had, presuming on her friendship for Alan, written to his mother, and sent a pretty card which was promptly acknowledged, and a few times since letters had been exchanged between them. One day, after reading one of these letters and laughing with her mother over some droll remark made in it by Mrs. Horten, she was about to leave the room when Mrs. Grant detained her by saying, "Nellie, my dear, I do not think you are doing a wise thing by encouraging the attentions of Alan Horten. People are remarking you and wondering when the engagement is to be announced."

"And what if they are, mother?"

"What if they are! Why you could not for a moment entertain such an idea."

"Entertain what idea?" mother.

The idea of marrying Alan Horten. Of course I know you are not, it is too absurd a probability to speak of."

"I am not so sure of that," said Nellie, with a mischievous smile, glancing sideways at her mother.

Mrs. Grant looked sharply at her daughter, a shade of anxiety clouding her face, "Why, Nellie, you should be mad to dream of such a thing, you, who might aspire to the hand of an English earl, who refused wealthy gentlemen by the score, to throw yourself away on a man who could not give you as much in a year as you spend now in a month."

"Suppose we were content with love in a cottage," went on Nellie, who was in a teasing mood.

"You would grow tired of it in a week," said the now thoroughly frightened lady. "I shall be obliged to ask your father to speak to the young man himself."

Nellie feared she might be going a little too far, so she laughed gaily and said, "Make your mind easy, mother dear, nothing is further from Alan's thoughts than making love to me, and surely you give me credit for better sense than falling in love with a poor man. We are simply good friends, nothing more."

"But it has the appearance of something more, Nellie, and it keeps eligible suitors in the background."

"That is just what I want to do. Alan is convenient to keep off the eligibles until Mr. Right comes along, and then he will take a back seat. You know, mother, we understand each other perfectly, so you need not be the least bit uneasy."

"And how long are you going to wait for Mr. Right," said Mrs. Grant, in a relieved tone. "You seem very hard to please, Nellie?"

"I am waiting till that English earl presents himself, you know, mother, I was always ambitious," she answered, carelessly, as she left the room. Alone with her thoughts she smiled bitterly, "So they are beginning to fear Alan is falling in love with me. Ah, I wish their fears were realized, but I am no nearer his heart than I was a year ago—no nearer. How much more blessed should I think myself in an humble cottage, with Alan Horten's love than here surrounded by wealth and magnificence. If they only dreamt how little I care for what the world would say. If Alan asked me to-morrow I should marry him and let papa disinherit me if he chose. But in a few more months he will go to her, his golden-haired idol, and then how shall I live? No! she said with sudden resolution, "he shall not go; I shall and must succeed. I will

leave no stone unturned to keep them apart. But I must be careful. I cannot forget all he said a few days ago about fraud and deceit. He would despise me if he ever found out that I had resorted to intrigue to win him; but win him I must by fair or foul means."

Next evening Alan and Nellie Grant were sitting by the window in the twilight, talking in low, earnest tones. Alan was telling her of his last letter from Eva, when the door suddenly opened and Charlie entered, saying, "Nell, will you sew a button on this darn glove, it came off just as I was in the act of going out, and I'm in an awful hurry too, the chaps are waiting for me."

"Well, Charlie, you're the greatest plague ever lived—there is always a button coming off of something belonging to you. You'll have to wait till your hurry is over, and the chaps too, for I can tell you I'm not going to rush myself," and she departed for needle, thread and thimble.

"Sorry to disturb you, Alan," as he walked briskly up and down the room too impatient to take a seat, "I know when a fellow is talking to his best girl, he does not like being interrupted."

Alan looked up quickly, surprise and annoyance visible on his face:—"I do not like to hear you speak in that way of your sister, Charlie. I should not, for a moment, presume to appear in the light of suitor for the hand of a young lady who can choose amongst the wealthiest in the land. I would not abuse your father's hospitality to such an extent. Miss Grant honors me by being my friend, that is all."

"Oh! that's it, is it," said Charlie, whose chief trouble now was his glove. "Yes, I guess pop would object, but if you should both happen to get a bit spooney don't let that discourage you. Nell would be a brick in a case like that." Here the last named entered, glove in hand, singing,—

I care na though father and mither go mad,  
Thy Jeanie will venture out wi' thee my lad.

"Ah!" laughed the imprudent Charlie, "didn't I tell you; see how she sings the songs which suit her fancy. Thanks, Nellie, you're a daisy," and he rushed off drawing on his glove.

"What were you and Charlie saying which made him think that that song suited my fancy?" demanded Nellie.

"He was merely saying that you would be a strong advocate for persons pleasing themselves in a case of marriage, that's all."

"What caused him to say that?"

"Oh, nothing in particular," said Alan, uttering the fib a little hesitatingly.

"There must have been something. He would not start on a subject of that kind without some reason."

"Now, Nellie Bly, don't be too curious, it was simply a casual remark that gave rise to it."

"But I must know what it was."

"Well, I won't tell you."

"If you won't I shall bring you and Charlie face to face to-morrow and make him tell me. You know I can make him do anything I like."

Alan knew she would keep her word, and so thought it better to tell her than have it come out in Charlie's blundering, unguarded fashion, so he said, "The only objection I have in telling you, Nellie, is, that I think you would not be pleased to hear it."

"Perhaps not; but I shall be less pleased if I don't hear it."

"Well, if you must have it, he fancied I had presumed to be what he called spooney, and excused himself for interrupting us. Of course I told him that I should not stand a ghost of a chance, and that I was only honored by your friendship."

"And what did he say then?"

"Oh, he just said that if ever we thought of anything more serious to remember that you were 'a brick,' and would please yourself. Then you came in singing that song, and you know the rest."

"I don't know why people cannot be friends without being misunderstood, even by one's own brother," she said, drawing back proudly.

"There, Nellie, I told you you would not be pleased, but you would make me tell you. I don't think I am acting fairly towards you by monopolizing your time and attention—it is selfish of me, I know."

"Not a bit. When the time comes that I should wish my time and attention to be monopolized by another I shall let you know."

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"Perhaps, Nellie, we had better make known my engagement, it would be the best proof that we are such good friends both to your parents and to society."

Oh! how she had failed, miserably failed, to supplant Eva Carlen in Alan Horten's heart. How bitterly his last words brought the truth home to her. She was on the point of yielding, but on second thought, she said "No," she would not surrender till she must; so she turned to Alan a bright, smiling face, saying:—"If you do, Alan, you'll spoil all the fun. There is nothing I enjoy more than keeping curious people in the dark, unless, of course, it is unpleasant to you."

In his heart Alan did not like it. He fancied it unjust to Eva, who was never absent from his thoughts, to let anyone think for a moment that another was dear to him. But, then, would it not be ungallant to refuse? This beautiful, wealthy girl, who could have lovers by the score, who was the centre of attraction wherever she went, who had refused some of the best offers in New York, had, upon hearing of his engagement, taken an unusual amount of interest in Eva and himself, and asked him to let them be friends, and just (as he thought) for a mere whim or caprice, to let his engagement be a secret between them for a while. Thinking all this over he told himself it would seem absurd and churlish not to gratify her. "Unpleasant to me, Nellie," he repeated, "I should, indeed, be the most ungrateful of mortals were that the case. I can assure you I feel quite proud that so fair a lady has deigned to smile on me and honor me by accepting my company on many occasions, until that mysterious knight appears upon the scene, who will, I trust, be worthy of her."

"Nellie laughed gaily. "You just struck it correctly, Alan, when you said knight. You know mamma is very ambitious for me, and does not mind my staying a little in the background until we visit England, where she hopes to secure a titled son-in-law."

"I hope," said Alan, "that her ambition may be gratified. I think 'My Lady' would suit you admirably."

## CHAPTER VI.

It is regatta day in St. John's, a bright, ideal regatta day. Throngs of people are hurrying towards Quidi Vidi, the scene of the day's sport. Children, who have been looking forward for weeks to the "races day," trot along by their mothers' side, their dinners packed in a small basket, a gleeful smile on their little faces. Eva Carlen sits at her window, gazing sadly at the moving mass. At the other end of the room, in an arm-chair, sits her mother, pale and languid. She is fast fading and she and Eva know it, though neither as yet has spoken of it. Eva has had only a short, hurried note from Alan by last mail, and she is wondering what it can mean; it is the first time since they parted that he has not written her a long letter. Certainly his next would explain, and in the meantime she would write and tell him of her disappointment, for did she not trust him fully, and would she not expect him to do the same with her.

"I wonder why Alan wrote such a short letter this time, Eva?" asked Mrs. Carlen.

"I am puzzled over it too, mother, but his next letter, I know, will explain everything."

His next letter! ah, could anyone at that moment have told Eva Carlen under what circumstances she would receive Alan's next letter, she would have begged, when her mother's life had ended, to be laid in the grave beside her. She arose from her seat at the window and crossed to Mrs. Carlen's side, putting her arms around her and pillowing her head on her shoulder, "You feel much brighter to-day, do you not, mother dear?"

"Just a little, Eva; but child, it is useless for us to refrain longer from speaking of what we know is inevitable. I shall not see the end of this year. You know it too, Eva darling; I can see it in your eyes, and you should tell Alan so. It is terrible for me to leave you all alone."

"Oh, mother, mother, don't say it. I know you're far from well and the thought of losing you is breaking my heart, but don't say it will be so soon. How could I live without you?"

"That is why I should wish to have Alan here sooner than he intended, Eva, so that his love and devotion would console

you somewhat for my loss. Promise me, child, that you will tell him when you write again."

"I do not like to tell him this, mother, it might look as if I were hurrying him home whether he likes it or not."

"Eva, my dear, that is a false notion of pride, people who are soon to be wedded should not stand on ceremony with each other, and Alan, I am sure, would wish to be at your side in a time of trouble such as we know is approaching. Promise me that you will write to-morrow and tell him of my condition. Say that I urged you to do so."

"In my last letter to Alan, mother, I told him how hopeful I felt when you recovered from that heavy cold you had in the early part of the summer, and that there was every possibility of your pulling through alright. You know you seemed so much better then."

"Ah, Eva, my dear, you must not deceive yourself nor Alan any longer. Tell him the truth when you write again."

Amid tears and with a heart bursting with grief, Eva gave the desired promise.

About one o'clock Ida and Mrs. Carroll called with the carriage, as they had arranged the day previous, and took them for a drive round the Lake. As they neared the lower part of the Forest Road, the boats had turned the buoy and were skimming over the blue waters in their direction. The mob ran frantically along the margin of the lake waving their caps, and cries of "Well done the *Glauce!*" "Pull out the *Iris!*" filled the air, whilst the gay music of the band floated softly o'er the water. Mrs. Carlen and Eva felt their spirits rise as they gazed on the lively scene. The coachman stopped for a while, as they were just in a spot where they could get a good view of the exciting race. Ida grasped Eva's hand tightly, as if she were laboring under some intense excitement. "I do hope the *Iris* will win, Eva, Jack has bet heavily against the *Glauce* in this race, and all because Bob Greene is rowing in her, and we've quarrelled about him again."

"Again!" repeated Eva. "Oh, Ida, you will some day regret these quarrels, and they are all your fault, too, I am sure."

"There it is. I knew you would take Jack's part, and it's not my fault this time. Now, I'll just tell you the whole circumstance and then you can judge. Last Tuesday was Dick

Farrell's 'day off,' and he asked me to go for a sail with him as far as Fort Amherst. Well, it was a beautiful day, and I went. The wind was a little high, so we landed at King's stage, and who should be there smoking his never-ending cigar but Bob Greene. I do believe he found out by some means that Dick was going to ask me, and went there on purpose. Well, of course, he walked to the Lighthouse with us, and we stayed a long time. Now, unluckily, that morning Jack came in and asked me if I would care to go to the concert? I said yes, I should be charmed, so he went to purchase the tickets, saying he would come for me at a quarter to eight. Well, we walked slowly back from Fort Amherst, and when we were fairly settled in the boat I looked at my watch, thinking it might be near seven, when, to my surprise, I found it half-past. Now, if we had a fair wind, so that we might get a quick sail across, I may have reached home at eight, but every breath of wind had died out, and by means of tacking every ten minutes and using one oar, which was all the boat contained, we reached the Queen's Wharf at quarter past eight, and the house at half-past. Dick Farrell left us at the door, as he had to attend a club meeting, and, of course, Bob went in with me, and there was Jack sitting right before us, with a face as black as night. Mother was awfully anxious about me, as she did not know where I was, and took it for granted, as Jack did, that I was alone with Bob. So as neither asked for an explanation, I offered none. I just went over to Jack and asked, 'Is it too late for the concert?'

"If you have any particular desire to hear 'God Save the Queen' played, you may reach the hall in time for it," he said with a frown, not glancing at me, so I went over and began playing the national anthem on the piano. Then several persons came in, and the conversation turned upon the merits of the boats and crews. One gentleman present, I forget whom, said that the *Glance* would win every race for the day. "That is because she is the superior boat," said Jack, "but she won't win in the amateur race because the crew are not up to the mark, (with an accent on the 'crew') some of them have hands too soft and delicate for handling oars." Now, that's the race Bob was in, and he has hands almost as soft and white as ours, Eva. "That remains to be seen," said Bob, getting crimson, until I thought his collar would choke him—he always wears them

pretty tight. 'I'll bet a hundred dollars to one,' went on Jack, 'that the *Glance* does not come in first in the amateur race.' Of course he was taken up immediately, and now we have to watch the result."

"And you have not seen him since?" said Eva.

"No, I have not seen him since."

Excitement was now running high. The *Iris* and *Glance* were side by side up the Lake. Now the *Iris* shot ahead a few yards. Eva and Ida were breathless with excitement. Hundreds of voices rang out on the summer air. Soon the *Glance* took the lead, but again the *Iris* pulled up alongside, and notwithstanding her great inferiority, kept pace with the *Glance* till they neared the buoy, when the latter, with a few desperate strokes, touched. Off went the sharp report of the gun, up went the oars. The *Glance* had won!

Ida's soft little heart was touched with pity for Jack, not for the hundred dollars, but for Bob Greene's triumph over him. "Poor Roberts," the latter was heard to remark, very sneeringly, as he was entering the Committee's tent, "he loses a hundred dollars, and only made the bet because he is jealous of me."

Meanwhile the Carroll carriage rolled on, and just as it neared 'Pleasantville' the occupants saw Jack Roberts coming towards them. Mrs. Carroll signalled to the coachman to stop.

Jack was about to pass on with a stiff bow till he saw Eva, when he approached and shook hands with her and Mrs. Carlen, and then with Mrs. Carroll, not glancing at Ida, whose eyes filled with tears. Jack, triumphant, would have been quite different, and she could have been just as cold as he was, but Jack defeated, crestfallen, triumphed over by his rival, aroused all the love and sympathy of her womanly heart. She held out her hand and said in a low, sweet voice:—"Won't you shake hands with me, Jack; if you only knew how sorry I am for what has happened, and how miserable I have been for the past week you would, at least, give me a chance to explain and justify myself."

Jack was only like the average young man, not proof against a soft, sweet voice, tearful eyes and a little gloved hand held out to him, the owner of which he was very much in love with, so he told her he should call that evening, and though

Jack Roberts lost his bet, he won what he prized far more, a reconciliation with Ida.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Horten did not suffer any personal inconvenience from their losses in the Bank failure. Mr. Horten's yearly income enabled them to live luxuriously. The house, which was beautifully situated and magnificently furnished, was their own, but all the money which for years had been laid by for Alan, was gone. This, together with the loss of his situation, was the means of his taking the excellent offer which Mr. Grant made him. Mrs. Horten was a worldly woman, who was never particularly fond of anyone from whom she could not, in some degree, derive a benefit. Ambition was her predominant passion. When Alan became engaged to Eva Carlen she was simply resigned. Eva was not a favorite of hers. She never could "make the girl out," she said, but then she had a large fortune. She was of good family, was clever, beautiful and popular, and so she came to the conclusion that he could not do much better in Newfoundland. But when Mr. Carlen lost his fortune, and then died leaving his wife and daughter almost penniless, she considered the engagement the greatest misfortune that could happen to Alan. More than once she said to her husband "What a fool Alan was to go to New York without breaking off with Eva Carlen. It's a wonder the girl herself would not have the sense to see that it is simply a piece of folly their remaining engaged. They should each marry money. It is ridiculous for two young people who are poor to think of marrying."

Mr. Horten generally took his wife's view of everything, and acknowledged that it was a pity, but, of course, it could not be helped now."

To-day this lady's brow is ruffled: She has been in deep thought for the past hour. She holds in her hand a letter from Nellie Grant. For the past few months a hope almost too brilliant to be entertained has filled her heart. She has noticed with keen delight how often, in her letters, Nellie alludes to Alan. To-day she feels certain, from a particular reference she has made to him, that it would not be impossible for her son to marry the wealthy heiress. What a brilliant match it

would be. She felt almost dazed at the thought; her son the husband of one of the leading belles of New York's best society. What a triumph to tell to her dearest friends "but for that girl, Eva Carlen," she thought "it might be. I wonder if he were free would it happen—would she be willing to set him free if she knew?" She then turned to Alan's letter, which she had not yet read. As she finished, the door opened and Robert Greene entered. He was a favorite of Mrs. Horten's. She sympathized greatly with him in his disappointment about Ida Carroll, and often encouraged him to still persevere, hence the cause of the young man's frequent visits to her.

"Good morning, Robert, I am delighted to see you."

"I fear I am interrupting you at your letters, Mrs. Horten."

"No, I have just finished reading them. They are from Miss Grant and Alan."

"He and Miss Grant get on famously together I think."

"Yes, they are great friends, and," she added in a lower voice, "but for one thing, I have reason to think, they would be something more."

"I understand you perfectly. The one thing to which you refer is Alan's unfortunate engagement to Eva Carlen."

"It is, Robert, and well you may say unfortunate, as I firmly believe it is the one barrier to his marriage with the daughter of a millionaire."

"Pardon me, dear Mrs. Horten, if I say that I should think Alan very much wanting in common sense to keep to that engagement with such a glorious chance within his reach."

"He will keep to it, the foolish boy," said the lady with a deep sigh. "He has asked me, in his letter, to call upon her and find out if she received his last two letters; he has got no answer to either, and he is anxious."

"That is strange," said Robert. "It is very seldom that we find letters going astray between this and New York when they are addressed properly, and Miss Carlen is too long writing to the one address to make a mistake."

"I suppose she has not written him," suggested Mrs. Horten.

"She would not leave two letters of his unanswered," said Robert, after a moment's pause.

"How, then, would you account for it, as you say it is not likely both letters could be mislaid?"

"If I were you I should not try to account for it, Mrs. Horten. I should just let it alone. You are supposed to believe she does not write, and what more can you tell him?"

"Ah, but he has commissioned me to find out if she got his letters, and also if she has answered them, and if not, the cause of her silence."

"Oh!" and Robert rose to take his leave, "In that case I suppose there is only the one thing to do. But this much I'll say, if you want to work you've splendid material to begin on; the whole thing is in your own hands, and it will be no one's fault but yours, Mrs. Horten, if Alan does not marry the millionaire's daughter."

Mrs. Horten looked quite puzzled, and said rather coldly: "I do not understand you, Robert. Alan is the soul of honor, and would not dream of breaking his engagement without just cause."

"Oh, it is she who would do the breaking," laughed the young man, as he ran lightly down the steps. "Good-bye."

"I've owed you the grudge a long time, my cold, proud beauty," mused Robert Greene, mentally addressing Eva Carlen. "But for you half the quarrels I arrange between Ida Carroll and Jack Roberts would not be mended. Yes, I know they both go and pour their tales of woe into your sympathizing ears, and how you skilfully make each believe themselves in fault, so that when they meet both are relenting and ready to make it up. But for you they would be separated long ago, and I should triumph over him, as I've sworn to do, the fool. But my revenge is in skilful hands, and you will have no third person to step in and mend your quarrel." He laughed, unpleasantly to himself as he muttered, "and I suppose my stately Mrs. Horten thinks I do not see that she is only pretending to misunderstand me. I gave her the cue, though she did not think of it till I dropped the hint."

Yes, it was true, Mrs. Horten was only affecting to misunderstand him, for as soon as he disappeared her eyes brightened and her cheeks flushed; she was too cautious a woman to show her hand too plainly to a young fellow like Robert Greene. "I have it all," she murmured, as she walked excitedly up and

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down the room, "but it never struck me till he hinted it. Why nothing can be easier, but I must be careful not to question her too closely. I must not write Alan a deliberate lie—if it should ever come out it would be unpleasant," and she went to prepare for her visit to Eva Carlen.

Eva was sitting by her mother's bedside when Mrs. Horten arrived, and she went immediately to receive her. Many women who have gone upon a like errand, have relented when they looked upon a face like Eva Carlen's. Her form had grown much slighter. Teaching one part of the day and watching by a sick bed the other part were doing their work. One lock of golden hair had strayed over her white brow, through which the blue veins were plainly showing. Slight dark rings were visible under the large blue-black eyes, which gazed a little wistfully at Mrs. Horten. A sad, sweet smile parted her red lips, as she reached out her hand. Thoughts of happier days, when not a cloud dimmed the sunshine of her life crowded upon her brain, and she had to use all her self-command to hide her emotion.

When Mrs. Horten had inquired after her mother's health and made a few commonplace remarks, she began to broach the subject which filled her mind. "I have had a letter from Alan and Nellie to-day," she said.

"Who is Nellie?" asked Eva, looking somewhat puzzled.

"Miss Grant. I have grown into the habit of calling her Nellie. She and Alan are very great friends—I suppose." (The last three words were said very slowly, with a marked stress on 'suppose.') "She has written to me very often and she admires Alan a great deal. He writes in glowing terms of her. I was saying to Mr. Horten a few days ago," and she laughed carelessly, "that if he had not been an engaged young man we might never see him again.

An indignant flush mounted to Eva's cheek. She thought the remark unkind and uncalled for. "Alan is free at any time, if he wishes it, Mrs. Horten; I would not for a moment hold him to an engagement against his inclination."

"There is no necessity for taking my words so seriously, Miss Carlen, for though his marriage with a great heiress would be a splendid thing for him, still I rejoice at any tie which I know will bring him home. He writes you often, of course?"

She was watching Eva closely, and noticed a slight hesitation ere she answered, and the proud, defiant look which came in her eyes:—

"He writes often enough," she answered. She did not deem it necessary to tell Mrs. Horten that it was six weeks since she had a letter from Alan.

"You wrote by last mail, I suppose, Miss Carlen, and told Alan of your mother's dangerous condition?"

"No, Mrs. Horten, I did not write by last mail, but I informed Alan some time ago of mother's condition."

"Ah, yes, he said something regarding your mother's illness in his letter to me."

"Then he has received it alright," thought Eva. How was she to know that the words were only used to mislead her, that Alan had only asked if Mrs. Carlen was ill again.

"Well the rest is all plain sailing," murmured Mrs. Horten, with a self-satisfied air, as she wended her way homewards, "I have managed that delicate piece of business quite cleverly. I wonder what happens their letters. He writes to her and she does not get them, she has written to him and he did not get it. Well, it is none of my business. She won't write again till she hears from him. Her pride, which she has plenty of, will prevent her, and I must manage so that she won't hear," and this was a portion of the letter which she sent a few days afterwards to Alan:—

\* \* \* I have called upon Eva since receiving your letter. She is quite well and hears from you so she tells me, but has not written you lately. Her manner seemed rather cold and I did not care to question her further. I don't believe that Mrs. Carlen will ever thoroughly recover her health, but her condition does not by any means prevent Eva from writing you."

Ah, false, cruel words, that destroyed the trust and blighted the happiness of two faithful hearts. When Alan read them all the buoyant hope and trust died out of him. Eva was not faithful, the months of absence had taught her forgetfulness. Perhaps she wished for her freedom; perhaps even another had won her heart from him, then a touch of indignation took possession of him, when he thought of his last letter to her, so full of tender love, and anxiety at her silence, to which she had not written one word of explanation, had not even ex-

plained anything to his mother, though acknowledging she had not written him. What did it all mean? Well, he would not write again until he had a message from her; he would not bore her with his evidently unwelcome letters. But this much he determined on: It was now October. Three months more and the time was come when he promised to be with her, and he would go and prove that he, at least, was faithful.

But, ah, could he have seen Eva on that day when Mrs. Horten left her, when her tender heart, which loved him so well and trusted him so fully was tried to its utmost. She bowed her golden head upon her hands and cried, "Oh! Alan, Alan, if you are false there is no truth upon earth. Oh, what, what does it all mean? Just that one cold note so long ago, and not one word since—not one word in answer to the letter in which I told you of my darling mother's approaching death. Ah, I wonder is the gold of the millionaire's daughter weaning your heart from me; if so, I hope mine will soon break and let me die."

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## CHAPTER VII.

The chill blasts of gray December were whistling dismally round Eva Carlen's humble, desolate home—desolate now indeed—for a few weeks ago her mother had looked her last upon this earth. Long as it was expected the blow, when it came, fell suddenly. She was sitting in an arm-chair and feeling much better than she had for weeks past. Eva was at her side, they had been talking of Alan. Mrs. Carlen did not, for a moment, doubt his constancy, and told Eva to have faith in him, that she believed he intended giving her a surprise by dropping amongst them when they least expected it. Eva only smiled sadly and shook her head. She never complained, and rarely spoke of him. "I feel strangely," said Mrs. Carlen, and Eva looking at her, noticed a change come over her face. She had, once before, seen death and knew this was it. She felt that the shadow of the grim messenger was resting now on the loved face—her only idol—the one tie alone which the world held for her.

In wild terror she caught her in her arms, "Oh! mother, mother," she cried, "speak to me—do not go—do not leave me yet, do not die; oh, I am so desolate, so unhappy! I have no one now but you."

"Eva, darling," she said, and each word was fainter and fainter, "He, whose word never fails has promised a long and happy life to dutiful children. I carry with me, to the Great White Throne, the memory of your love and devotion, your sweet gentleness and patience, and He will reward you. You will be—happy—yet.—You—and—and—Alaa." These were her last words. Kind friends came and removed the heart-broken girl from her dead parent's side. For days she scarcely suffered, her senses were too numbed by the crushing weight of sorrow which had fallen upon her. After the funeral Ida Carroll took her home and would fain have kept her, but Eva was of too independent a nature to allow herself to become a burden upon anyone. Her school must be attended to as she had to live, for what purpose she did not know, but she hoped it would not be long. So after three weeks, in spite of all remonstrance, she returned to her lonely home, where every object reminded her so forcibly of her dear departed one. The woman from whom she had the rooms engaged, and who occupied part of the house, was very kind, and did all in her power to have her rooms warm and bright. Ida remained with her the first night, but Eva felt not a trace of nervousness in the room where death had so lately been. Her sorrow was too deep for that. It was now near six o'clock, and since she dismissed her pupils Eva has been sitting staring blankly into the fire. Her thoughts have gone back to two years ago; then she had father, mother, lover, home and friends, all that could make a girl's life happy—there seemed not a cloud in her sky, but a few days after, the first blow fell, and they had been falling ever since, crushing the life, hope and trust from out her young heart. She wondered now how she had lived through it all, and why she still continued to live. She had no longer a doubt of Alaa's faithlessness. Ida Carroll had taken it upon herself to write him of Mrs. Carlen's death, but still no answer came. Eva only learned this by chance, through Mrs. Carroll speaking of it in her presence, thinking she knew all about it. An item appeared in one of the daily papers which

gave rise to the rumor that Alan Horten was to marry Miss Grant, the millionaire's daughter, and that they were to visit Newfoundland early in the year. Eva heard it with a bitter smile. Pride was now the reed upon which she leaned. She must not wear her heart upon her sleeve for everyone to peck at, and none but Ida Carroll knew that that cold, proud, impassive face hid from the world a heart torn by sorrow but fast hardening from the injustice she had suffered from the hands of the man she had loved and trusted so well, the man who should be at her side in the trying ordeal through which she had passed. When her mother died many friends came forward to offer help, but Eva very unwisely refused all aid, thanking them for their generosity, but telling them she was enabled to meet her expenses, which led many to believe that Mr. Carlen had left his daughter better provided for than people thought, and troubled themselves no more. But for her mother's long illness she would have been able to get through without being in actual want, but nourishment of the best had to be procured the whole time, which was a big demand on their slender means, and upon Eva's return home from Mrs. Carroll's she paid all funeral expenses, doctors' bills, paid her rent and the hired girl who came every day to do what little housework was necessary, bought coal, as she should have fire, and suddenly discovered her money was nearly all gone. She had no more to get for nearly two weeks, and she had simply nothing in the house to eat. She knew she had but to mention it to the landlady and she could have anything she wanted, or she could have got it at the store where she dealt, but not being accustomed to doing it she could not bear the idea of asking for credit, so for a week she was existing on tea, biscuits and butter. If it could have kept to this it would not be so bad, but for the past three days she had had no butter, for the past two, no milk, and to-day, no sugar. The clock striking six aroused her. This was Friday, and Ida always came early on that night and carried her off till Monday morning. She arose and began, in a mechanical sort of way, to prepare her scanty supper. She smiled as she sat down to her cup of black tea and dry biscuits. She felt the need of food badly, but could not eat. The tea half sickened her, so she pushed it from her and leaning back wearily in her chair murmured, as

the hot tears rolled down her pale cheeks, "Oh! mother, why don't you take me with you; why did you and father go and leave me behind?" It was very rarely tears came to her relief. She was becoming hardened, as she often told *Ida*. Soon her hand dropped to her side, her head gradually fell to the back of her chair, and she was asleep. Twenty minutes afterwards the door was gently pushed open and *Ida Carroll* entered. She saw at a glance that *Eva* was sleeping, and stole in on tiptoe so as not to arouse her. As she approached her gaze rested on the table, and surprise, pity and indignation were visible on her face. "No butter!" she murmured; "no milk," and here she took a spoonful of tea from the cup and drank it, "Just as I expected, no sugar." She looked at *Eva*, her long, dark lashes still wet with the tears she had shed, her hair was slightly disordered, and a few locks fell gracefully over her smooth, white forehead, but still she slept on as quietly as a child. "Oh, *Alan Horten*," murmured *Ida*, "what punishment is severe enough for such a wretch as you? You are not worthy one thread of her golden hair, and still—still she loves you. *Eva* stirred in her sleep and smiled. *Ida* could restrain herself no longer, but fell on her knees by the chair, clasping her arms around *Eva's* waist and bursting into tears. The latter awoke and looked wonderingly at her:—"What is the matter *Ida*, dear," she asked, "why are you crying?"

"Oh! *Eva*, *Eva*, am I not worthy the name of friend that you treat me like this?"

"Not worthy the name of friend! Oh, *Ida*, what have I done? Why it is your love and friendship that makes me have any faith at all in mankind, for I know the world cannot be a very hard one when it contains such a being as *Ida Carroll*?"

"And yet you allow this to go on," said *Ida*, pointing to the table.

*Eva* only smiled as she said, "It has not been long as bad as this, and next week I will have some money. I should not have paid all my bills at once, I could easily have waited for another month. I am not a good business woman, you see."

"I find it hard to forgive you, *Eva*, and will only do so on one condition, that you come home with me now and remain till after next week. We can leave word with your landlady, and she will tell the children they can take a week's holiday, as

you are not well," and Eva, generally hard to manage in these kind of things, consented.

The twentieth of December was Ida Carroll's birthday, and Eva had promised to take tea with her. It so happened that Mrs. Horten chanced to call in the afternoon, and at Mrs. Carroll's request remained for tea also, much to Ida's disgust, who had counted on she and Eva having a nice afternoon all to themselves. Both Jack Roberts and Robert Greene sent presents, the latter presenting himself at three o'clock, uninvited, and making himself at home for the evening. At four Jack ran in. He could not remain, as they were busy at his office, and he had to be there. As he was going he drew Ida to the door with him, Robert Greene watching with a jealous eye. When they were outside Jack took from his pocket a small paper bag and took from it a magnificent white, hot-house rose, the last of a tree which his mother prized very highly. "It looked so much like you, Ida," he said, "that I could not help cutting it off for you." He fastened it himself in her dark hair, and left her, saying he should return at seven. As she re-entered the room Robert Greene asked her to try over some new songs which he had bought. They went to the piano, and, after spending half an hour, the songs were cast aside as so much trash, and Ida began diving amongst a pile of music which was on a low stand near the piano. Whilst she was stooping, Robert, unseen and unfelt by her, quickly slipped the rose from her hair and placed it in his buttonhole. It was near six when they left the piano, and Bob said he was sorry he had to leave, as he had a little business to transact at six, but that he should return. It was only now that Ida missed the rose, "Oh! my flower," she exclaimed; "how did you steal it unknown to me?"

"As I will steal your heart some day," he said, in a low tone, trying to look sentimental.

"Don't be silly, Bob," said Ida.

"Can you not let me have it, just till I return, I won't be long?"

"Oh, Ida dare not," said Mrs. Horten, who had overheard them.

"I don't know that I dare not, Mrs. Horten, I am not afraid of anyone."

"A girl with a jealous lover is always afraid. She must be very careful not to rouse his ire," went on Mrs. Horten.

"If you allude to Jack Roberts, I am not at all afraid of him and I rouse his ire whenever I feel like it."

"May I not have it for one hour, Ida," pleaded Bob, humbly. "I shall bring it safely back to you? Jack need never know."

"I am not the least bit afraid of Jack knowing," said Ida, "but I want my flower."

"Let him have it till he returns, Ida," said Mrs. Carroll, who was anxious to avoid words between her daughter and Mrs. Horten.

"It may be unwise for her to do so," put in the latter, knowing these words would only help Bob to gain his point.

"Well, perhaps I will be a little unwise this evening, just for a change," said Ida, with a defiant flash from her dark eyes. "You may keep it till you return, Bob, but don't come back without it."

"At seven precisely Jack Roberts arrived. When he entered the room all noticed the extreme pallor of his face; his eyes had a hard, cold expression as they fell upon Ida. She knew there was something unusually wrong. She went to him and laid her hand on his arm, saying, "What is the matter Jack?"

He shook it off angrily, as he said, "Nothing new. I just want to say a few words to you privately, and then I am going."

Ida was in a very bad humor this evening, she was vexed with herself for letting Bob have the rose, vexed with her mother for urging her to do it, more than vexed with Mrs. Horten for her sneering remarks and vexed with Eva for disappointing her by not coming. True, she had sent word that some business unavoidably detained her, and she would be with her at seven, but this did not help to soothe Ida's irritability, and Jack's words and manner capped the climax. Her patience had reached its limit. Just at that moment Robert Greene entered, the white rose showing very conspicuously. He took it from his coat and handed it to Ida. With a triumphant smile he looked at Jack Roberts, who actually glared at him. The latter left the room accompanied by Ida. When he reached the vestibule door he turned and faced her with the words,

"Ida Carroll, I braved my mother's displeasure this evening by cutting the last rose from her favorite tree to bring to you to wear, not to give it to that mean-spirited, dandified jackanapes to sport around town. I don't know what kept me from knocking him down for his insolence. He came where he knew he would meet me, and in presence of several persons kissed the flower, saying it was given him by the fairest lady in the land, one he hoped to call his own some day, and then had the daring impudence to mention your name. I want to know how long this thing is going to last, how long are you going to encourage the attentions of that cad, for while you allow him to visit you I shall discontinue to do so. Choose now between us?"

It was the very worst way Jack could have gone about getting an explanation from Ida. She was not only out of patience now, but in a violent temper. Though knowing Bob Greene to be all that Jack called him, and seeing through the meanness of the trick he had played her, she would not acknowledge it but said, "If you came here for nothing else but to stand and abuse me, Jack Roberts, you can go again as soon as you like. I am not accountable to you for my actions and I'll receive what visits I choose, and from whom I choose. I am not going to turn anyone out of my house at your bidding. Here, take your rose," and she threw it at his feet.

Jack ground his heel on the poor, little, unoffending flower. "Then you give that scamp the preference. I am quite accustomed to being subjected by you to all sorts of insults at his hands, but surely you have some respect left for yourself."

"Jack Roberts how dare you say I have no respect for myself. You cannot have much for me when you speak to me in such a manner. Bob can visit me whenever he likes, and if you object to it, it is no business of mine."

"I do more than object. I will not have it, not even if it is the means of breaking our engagement."

"Then our engagement had better end at once, for I will not turn Bob out, and I will not be dictated to by you, Jack Roberts."

"Very well, then, let us end it," said Jack, though his heart sank as he uttered the words.

"No sooner said than done," said Ida, drawing the ring in vicious little jerks from her finger, trembling visibly the while.

"It always bound me rather tight in more ways than one," as she tossed it on the hall stand near him."

Jack was trembling too, and his heart felt like a piece of lead in his bosom, but he took the ring and dashed it into the hall stove saying, "It will never bind you too tight again. Good-bye," and he staggered through the door and down the steps.

Robert Greene had stationed himself at the window, peering out into the darkness. He was soon rewarded for his trouble by seeing Jack Roberts pass down the walk and go towards the entrance gate. Ah! as I thought," he muttered. "I wonder is it all ended." He heard the click of the iron gate before Jack reached it, and as he looked he saw a tall, graceful figure enter. "Confound that girl, Eva Carlen," he said under his breath, "she will spoil everything with her infernal meddling. She is always turning up when she's not wanted. She has spoiled every chance I had."

She remained talking to Jack for the space of ten minutes, whilst the watcher at the window grew more impatient every moment.

"Will he ever go," he thought. But why am I waiting? Where is Ida? She has not left the hall yet. What is this I have heard similar to catch the ball on the hop:—catch—catch—ah, catch the heart on the rebound? That's it; so I will," and he made for the door.

One glance told him they had parted. He saw the rose crushed and blackened on the ground. Ida was sitting on a chair, her head bowed on her hands, crying bitterly. On her finger shone no ring. She would have gone to her room but that she knew Eva would soon be here and she wanted to bring her with her.

Bob approached, and going on one knee took her hand, saying, "Ida, my own darling, do not grieve for him, he is not worth it. Do not give him the satisfaction of breaking your heart for him—that is all he wants. Promise now to marry me, I can give you a far better home than Jack Roberts could, and I love you longer and a thousand times better."

Ida sprang to her feet, "How dare you touch me Robert Greene, do you think I do not see through your miserable, cowardly trick of this evening? From henceforth you are no

friend of mine. Whatever liking or respect I ever had for you is gone. You are the means of driving from me the only man I ever loved, or can love. Though we have parted it is no gain to you, for I despise you. I would not marry you if you were the last man in the world. Leave me, I hate the sight of you." Ida stopped for want of breath, and it was only now both became aware that Eva Carlen, and Jack Roberts, were standing in the open doorway, and had heard Ida's spirited speech.

"Jack was soft to go back," I hear you say, but how many a young man has gone back under the same circumstances, and did not lose his dignity either. But only for Eva he would not have returned. She represented to him that he was a little unreasonable, that he should have asked Ida quietly, for an explanation, and then judge; and when she begged him by the friendship they had for each other, and by their love for Ida, he consented to go and ask for an explanation of the whole affair, and we might guess the rest: His wounded pride was fully avenged, when he heard Ida's words to Bob, and her tear-stained face melted all the anger out of his heart. Eva entered the drawing-room. Bob Greene would have taken his departure, but that his cowardly heart prompted him to remain until he paid Eva Carlen back for her interference. So he went in after her, leaving the lovers alone. About twenty minutes afterwards, these also entered, with happy, beaming faces. Mrs. Horten and Mrs. Carroll looked askance at them; both wondered what the prolonged absence meant, together with the coming and going, and watching at the window. At all events, they seemed pleased, though Ida did not wear the rose; "young people are a puzzle sometimes," thought Mrs. Carroll.

Eva and Mrs. Horten exchanged a few cold words upon meeting. There had been silence for a few minutes, until Robert Greene broke it by saying: "When do you expect Alan home, Mrs. Horten?"

"I cannot say exactly, Robert, at times I wonder if he will come at all." This was untrue, as Alan had written her that he would be home in the following month.

"You will only lose him again tho' I suppose, it is not likely that a lady having lived all her life in New York would care to remain in our quiet city afterwards."

"That would depend on the depth of her attachment," answered Mrs. Horten.

Robert Greene glanced at Eva, but whether his words gave pain or not, that cold, proud, calm face did not tell him. "When the heiress to a million, and a beauty at that, marries a man who—well we will say, in comparison to her, is not rich in this world's goods, her attachment cannot be small. We must try and induce them to remain for the winter at all events," and Bob twisted his blonde moustache with a complacent smile.

"Alan has not said anything to me about his marriage," said Mrs. Horten. "I've an idea that he will come home first."

"There is no doubt about the marriage," went on Robert, "a chum of mine, who lives in New York, wrote me about it; he says they are inseparable, and they are to be married early next month."

"It seems to me you have chums all over the world," said Ida in a rather doubtful tone; "whenever you have a piece of news from foreign parts, which you wish to confirm, you always say a 'chum' wrote and told you. I begin to think those 'chums' are all 'fakes.'"

"I'm not accustomed to lying, Miss Carroll."

"I never said you were, but you know some people on some occasions do what they are not accustomed to."

"Suppose we change the subject, and talk about white roses," said Jack with a humorous smile, as he took Ida's hand in his.

"Yes," laughed Ida "and about the propriety of young gentlemen going on one knee to propose."

Bob grew crimson with rage, as he realized how small he must appear in the eyes of the three present, who understood, and was glad when Mrs. Horten rose to go, for, by accompanying her, it would not seem as if he were leaving because he was getting the worst of it.

That night, in the privacy of her own room, Eva Carlen took from her finger Alan's engagement ring, enclosed it in a small box, and addressed it to him. "This," she said, "will let him know that he is free. There is no need for me to write. I know why he hesitates to marry before he returns home;

he has some spark of honor left, and wishes to be 'off with the old love,' etc., but I shall not wait till he comes to me with the story of his love for another, and asks for his freedom. He can marry the heiress whenever he chooses." Next day, she put it in the parcel post. Not a tear fell from her eye, not a sigh escaped her lips, as she severed the last link between them. "Now," she thought as she turned homewards, "for the future I live for ambition. My heart may be broken and bleeding, but the world shall not know it. Oh, no, Alan Horton, you shall not find me a heartbroken girl because another has won you from me. I shall marry, too, some day, but not for love. Love can have nothing more to do with my life. I shall marry money and position. I am capable of winning hearts, I feel the power within me and I shall use it, but mine shall never again be won. Oh! if I could get a chance to leave Newfoundland, I long to go and leave the past behind me."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

It was Christmas Eve. Ida Carroll is as high as she can get on the ladder, putting a few finishing touches to the holly and evergreen decorations. Eva is below holding some sprays in her hand. Ida has brought her home to spend the holidays with her. "And so you and Jack have fully determined never to quarrel again," Eva is saying.

"Never," answered Ida, emphatically. "We are going to have sense. You know, Eva we never realized how much we cared for each other until that night. Oh! I have not shown you my new ring," and she reached her hand down for Eva to examine it. "It's not as tight as the other one. Just fancy him throwing it into the stove. When he went I tried to get it out but it was right into the heart of the fire. We have compromised about Bob, I'm not actually to turn him out, though he deserves it, but I am going to freeze him out. Just think, Eva, how cowardly and unmanly he acted that night. I never saw him in his true character till then, and what both Jack and

I feel most is the unkind remarks he made in your presence. I shall never forgive him for that, never."

"His words did not hurt me any more than if Alan Horton were a black stranger to me. I was really surprised at myself."

"A lady to see Miss Carlen," said a servant at the door.

"To see me," said Eva, wonderingly. Who can it be? Did she give her name?"

"Yes," answered the girl, "Mrs. Brown. She is in the little parlor."

With a strangely beating heart Eva went to meet her. As she entered, a tall, rather fine-looking woman arose and looked at her with a fond smile. A host of sad, sweet memories rushed over Eva. Scenes of her childhood rose before her. She struggled hard to penetrate "memory's dusty mirror," but in vain.

"You do not remember me *my dear*," said Mrs. Brown. "Well, there is no wonder at that. You were but a little thing of ten when I saw you last, but, oh, child, you are the living image of your dear mother. Did you ever hear her speak of Ellen Crane?"

"You are never Ellen Crane," said Eva. "I remember quite well when you lived with us, and I recognized your features but not your name."

"Yes, my dear Miss Carlen, I am Ellen Crane, or Ellen Brown now, as I'm married since. I've been these two days looking for you, and it was only this evening that I found the house where you live. The lady there told me you were spending the Christmas holidays with Miss Carroll, your friend. The first day I landed here I went straight to the old place to see your dear mother, child, and the best friend I ever had in Newfoundland, but strange faces met me and they told me Mr. and Mrs. Carlen were both dead. Oh, Miss Eva, I cannot tell you how sad I felt. For years I have been picturing to myself a meeting with your mother, and I waited too long after all. If I had come two months ago I would have seen her before she died. The Bank crash ruined your father, so they told me. Miss Carlen, you have suffered, my dear, I know," for Eva was weeping.

"Suffered! Oh, Mrs. Brown, I could laugh at the loss of

fortune, that is nothing in comparison to what I've lost. But for my one friend here, Miss Carroll, who has been an angel to me, I should have sunk into the very depths of despair."

"It is hard, indeed, for one so young to meet such heavy trials. Ah, child, I had trouble in my young days too, and but for your dear, dead mother I don't know what would have become of me. When my own mother died I was but sixteen. She was a widow and worked hard to keep me at school. She often did washing and housework for your mother, and when she was dying she requested her to have an eye to me, and well she fulfilled the request. She was but a few months married and she took me to her own home, and when you were born you were my sole charge until you were old enough to go to school and needed a nurse no longer. Your mother never allowed me to do any rough work, she said my mother did not intend me for it. At that time there was a maid wanted at Government House, and at my request she used what influence she possessed and obtained the situation for me. A few months afterwards the Governor was called to England, and Lady ——, who had become attached to me, took me with her. I went to bid you and your mother good-bye before leaving, and, oh, Miss Carlen, she spoke to me so nicely, and advised me so well, that I never forgot it. The memory of her words has often helped to keep me in the straight path."

"Ah, yes," said Eva, "I remember the day quite distinctly. I cried when you said good-bye to me."

"Indeed you did, child, and so did I. Well, I went to England, and four years afterwards Sir —— was ordered off to be Governor of some other place away out in a hot country, and I did not care to go. I don't mind telling you, Miss Carlen, the reason was that my sweetheart, the man I am married to now, was in England, so Lady —— secured me a position as under-housekeeper at the home of a wealthy gentleman—one of the upper ten—and that's no small thing in England. Well, two years afterwards the head housekeeper, who was very old, died, and I fell into the place, and there I've been ever since, till one year ago, when I married Richard Brown. I always thought of your mother with gratitude and affection, though for years I did not write to her. I was never fond of writing. My husband is a well-to-do captain of a fine bark,

and when he was ordered to Newfoundland I never gave him rest or peace till he promised to take me with him, my one desire being to see your mother and you, little dreaming I was going to see such changes in twelve years."

"And you find me but a poor girl working hard for my living," said Eva, with a smile.

"You do not find it easy to get along, Miss Carlen. I know how it is child, plenty of work and little pay."

"Well, Mrs. Brown I earn enough to pay my rent and keep me from starving, with a little over to buy clothes, and I must be thankful."

Mrs. Brown looked steadily at her for a few moments, then said, "Will you pardon me, Miss Carlen, if I make bold enough to ask you a few questions?"

"You are at full liberty to ask any questions you please, Mrs. Brown; are you not a link between the blissful past and the desolate present?"

"Well, my dear child, will you tell me if you are engaged to be married, or if you have a sweetheart?"

The suddenness of the question disarmed Eva's usual self-control. She blushed painfully, then grew very pale, whilst a cold, hard look settled on her face. "An unhappy love affair, poor child," thought Mrs. Brown. "No, Mrs. Brown," she answered, "I am not engaged, nor have I a sweetheart."

"That is a wonder, with your pretty face, but, of course, it's your own fault, my dear. Have you ever thought of leaving Newfoundland?"

"Eva's eyes brightened. "Oh! if I only could! I love my native land and would not wish to bid it farewell forever, but if, for a few years at least, I could put miles of ocean between me and the past, I think I could be happy."

"Then, now is your chance, child," said Mrs. Brown, clasping Eva's hands, "my husband and I leave for England next week. His ship is a fine one, new and clean. Come with us and with your pretty face, ladylike manners and good education, the lady with whom I lived will have no difficulty in getting you a situation befitting a lady like you—some place where you will have light duties and get well paid for them. There are many such in England, and I'll venture to say before you are a year there you will marry well. I've known wealthy gen-

flemen to marry governesses and ladies' companions, not one half as pretty as you child."

Eva fairly held her breath. The suddenness of the proposition deprived her for a moment of the power of speaking. Her heart seemed to stand still, then it bounded rapidly, her pulses quickened and her cheeks flushed. Go to England, the land so rich in history, away from the scene of all her sorrow, but, ah, of all her happiness too. Away from the pain of meeting Alan Horten, her false lover, and perhaps his bride, the millionaire's daughter. At last she found breath to answer:— Oh! Mrs. Brown, thank you, thank you a thousand times; you have lifted a load from my heart, I will accept your kind offer, I will go with you gladly. I believe it will keep my heart from breaking, and make me wish to live once more."

Eva gratified all Ida's curiosity about her visitor, Mrs. Brown, except the proposal she made of taking her to England. She decided not to say anything about it for a few days, as she knew the thought of their separation would grieve her friend, and she did not wish to sadden her Christmas. Alone in her room at midnight she sat at the window and tried to realize that in one week she was going to England. She should be spared the pain and humiliation of meeting Alan. At times she was filled with such hot anger and indignation against him that she felt she hated him. To-night her heart rose in bitter rebellion; how dare he win her youth's best affections and then fling them from him without a word of explanation? In her deepest sorrow no word of sympathy or consolation came from him, nothing but cold, cruel silence that was more torturing than the bitterest truth, but some day, no matter how far distant, she should triumph over him, she should not wear the willow for his sake. Her ambition would be to make a brilliant marriage, and some time she should meet him and his wealthy bride, the millionaire's daughter, and she should queen it over her. Eva was only human, and must be excused if she cherished in her heart this very natural piece of revenge. And now the Christmas bells rang out soft and melodiously on the frosty air. "Peace on earth to men of good will," they said. She raised her window the better to listen to them, as this would be, perhaps, her last Christmas in the land of her birth. Her thoughts went back to other years, when she had listened

to those same bells and those she loved best were at her side. It was always then, standing at the door ere he left her, that Alan placed in her hand his Christmas gift. Ah! how he loved her then, how true he seemed, oh, how, how could he be so false. But it was gold, sordid gold, that won him from her. "Peace—peace on earth," pleaded the bells, but her heart hardened again, there was no peace there. It was in a tumult. Hate, revenge and ambition warred with love, forgiveness and resignation. She retired; but as no peace filled her heart, so none visited her slumbers. She dreamed that she roamed amid trees and flowers, that she was very unhappy. She was looking for Alan and could not find him; it was night, but the moon shone brightly. A terrible fear overpowered her, such as we sometimes experience in dreams. She turned to go home, as she thought, not knowing where home was, but she could not move, and, suddenly gazing a little distance off, she saw Alan lying on the ground. She rushed towards him and threw herself on her knees at his side calling him by every endearing name to speak to her. She placed her hand over his heart, it did not beat, and lifting her hand again she found that it was covered with blood, he was dead. "He has been murdered," she cried, "murdered by the millionaire's daughter," and her cries awoke her.

The wintry dawn was just breaking. It was Christmas day. All through breakfast and dinner hour, and often through the day, Ida noticed a constraint upon Eva. Sometimes her cheeks flushed and then paled quickly, and several times looking up suddenly, she caught her watching her with tears in her eyes, and attributed it to the grief she felt for her mother, who last year was with her, but next day Eva told them all. Both Ida and her mother tried to dissuade her from her purpose, and again offered her a home with them.

"It is a terrible time of year to cross the Atlantic, Eva my dear," said Mrs. Carroll.

"Nothing seems terrible to me, dear Mrs. Carroll. If I meet a watery grave I won't be the first nor the last, and I will be no loss."

Once her mind was made up, Eva was impatient to be gone. She feared every day to hear of Allan's arrival and with feverish haste prepared for her journey. The day before her

departure she went to take a last look at her old home, where her few years of happiness had been spent. She waited until it was quite dark. She intended but to pass it by with one farewell glance, but she could not resist the impulse to open the gate and enter the garden. Ah, how familiar everything looked. She fancied she could see her father's form in the doorway, and wondered if she approached the window and peeped through the blind would she see her mother seated in the arm-chair. Oh, if the past two years could all be a dream from which she could now awaken. She went to the tree on which in the first happy days of their engagement, Alan had carved their names. The spot was still bare where she had removed the traces of the letters. She leaned her head wearily against it, and hot tears rolled down her cheeks. Suddenly she aroused herself. What if anyone should come out and catch her. She made a movement to go, but it was too late, the front door opened and some one stood on the steps—it was a man. She must remain where she was till he went. As he spoke to someone inside she recognized the voice of Robert Greene. "I am sorry that I cannot remain," he was saying, "I promised to go to Mrs. Horten's this evening, she is having a few friends there."

A young girl's voice spoke from inside, "She is expecting her son home soon, is she not?"

"Every day."

"Is it true that he is to marry Mr. Grant's daughter?"

"It is true that they wish to be married, and it is my belief that they will be, but Mrs. Horten thinks it will all depend on Eva Carlen. Alan is an honorable sort of fellow that way, and he does not like the idea of breaking a girl's heart, but I say he is a fool to let a girl's heart stand in the way of fortune." He wished the girl good-bye, the door closed and he stood in the shade of a tree to light a cigar, then passed through the gate, and Eva was free at last. How rejoiced he would have been if he had known how he had stabbed the heart of the unhappy girl so near him.

"Eva Carlen's heart shall never stand between you and fortune," she murmured, as she hastened away. "She shall be far beyond your reach when you come to seek your freedom." The next was the day of sailing, the morning was fine, clear

and calm, and those who were considered judges prophesied the same weather for some time to come. Mrs. Carroll, Ida and Jack Roberts accompanied Eva to Capt. Brown's ship, and saw that she was supplied with every little comfort necessary for her journey. The two girls, their hearts too full for words, retired to a secluded part of the deck for their last farewell.

"And so I am looking my last upon you, Eva, the companion of my girlhood, my confidante in all my little troubles, the only friend I ever loved."

"No, no, Ida, don't say that; we shall meet again. My heart is well nigh broken, and all that is holding it together is first the hope of seeing you again, and, secondly, the thought," and her eyes flashed, "of revenge on Alan Horten. Yes," she went on, seeing Ida's look of surprise, "my one ambition is to make a brilliant marriage. I feel that I can do so. I am not going to take any mean or ignoble revenge, or make trouble between him and his wife, as the girls do in novels, but, Ida, in my heart of hearts I feel that Nellie Grant does not hold the place in his heart that was mine. It is her gold that has won him, and that is why I despise him so; if he honestly loved her I could, at least, respect him. But, at some future day, I shall meet them both, and perhaps he will be sorry. Ah, no, Ida, it is not forever, I shall see you and home again, when I can trust myself to return. If I remained here now and met Alan, he should know that I still loved him, for, oh, Ida," with a little break in her voice, "I do, in spite of all, I do, but he must not know it. I would rather lie fathoms deep in the water than let him know. And you must help me, Ida, you must keep up my dignity in my absence. Give me your solemn promise that, if he goes to you, you will not give him one word of explanation about me. Let him believe that I am as anxious as he is to be free, so anxious that I crossed the seas to avoid him?"

"I promise, Eva."

"All ready, now," shouted the captain.

"Oh, Ida! Ida, we must part at last. Oh! how I shall miss you in my lonely life. You have been such an angel of goodness to me.

Ida could not say one word, the tears rained from her eyes as she clasped her friend in her arms for their last good-

bye. And now the anchor is weighed and the good ship is sailing slowly down the harbor.

Eva is straining her eyes to catch a last glimpse of the friends she leaves behind, perhaps forever.

The last they see of her is Mrs. Brown taking her from the side of the ship to a seat, where she sat beside her and pillowed her head on her kind, motherly bosom.

"She has a good friend in that woman," said Mrs. Carroll, as they turned tearfully away, and Jack Roberts, on pretence of stifling a sneeze with his pocket-handkerchief, stayed behind to wipe away the honest tears of regret, for the friend who had so often raised him from the depths of despair to a heaven of bliss.

As well as she could enjoy anything Eva enjoyed this ocean voyage. For one week she had to keep in her berth as a victim to seasickness, after that she grew better every day and soon recovered her appetite and what spirits she had left. The weather continued very calm though cold. Closely enveloped in wraps by watchful Mrs. Brown, Eva often paced the deck for hours. The fresh sea-air gave a sparkle to her eye and a tinge of color to her cheek. She loved to scan the blue waters when not an object was visible save the frail bark which bore her onward to her new home across the seas. She watched the sun rise out of the water, veiled in its crimson mantle, and sink again in a ball of fire towards the west. Sometimes the sail of a ship would gleam brightly against its back-ground of blue and fade away again, or the dark, curling smoke of an ocean steamer would cloud for a while the distant horizon and then vanish into space. Twenty days had passed when the shores of "Merry England" came into view. Eva felt almost sorry when the journey ended, it had seemed so calm, so free from the bustle and turmoil of the world, which of late years had held for her so much of sorrow and pain. They landed at Bristol, and Capt. Brown, who was to sail again from there in a few days on a short voyage, saw them on board the train bound for London, in the suburbs of which Mrs. Brown lived. It was one of those delightful little country homes with which England so much abounds. It was just dusk when they arrived and the firelight gleamed through the cottage windows, which was always kept in applepie order by the maid of all

work, who gazed admiringly on Eva's tall, graceful form, and sad, beautiful face.

"Now, Jane girl," said Mrs. Brown, "as soon as you have supper ready we're ready too. I am sure Miss Carlen must be nearly famished, after a twenty days' voyage with neither fresh meat nor fowl. The good woman bustled about taking off Eva's wraps and making her as comfortable as she could by the fireside till tea was ready. Eva noticed how scrupulously clean everything looked, from the polished grate to the white-washed ceiling. A snowy cloth was spread and the supper brought in, which consisted of broiled chicken, hot rolls, nice white, home-made bread, home-made preserves and stewed apples, together with a bright silver teapot of steaming tea, the flavor of which helped to sharpen Eva's appetite.

"Now, my dear, let me see you make a good, hearty supper," said her hospitable hostess. "I am a real Newfoundland-der for tea; I never lost my taste for it."

Eva did full justice to the supper and retired early. Her room bore the same air of neatness and order as the rest of the house, and she no sooner laid her tired head on the white, soft pillows than she was fast asleep.

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## CHAPTER IX.

A month had passed since Eva's arrival in London, and as yet the promised lady's situation had not presented itself. She was getting impatient. She had informed Mrs. Brown that in a few days she would answer one of the many advertisements she had seen, for a parlor maid.

"What! your mother's daughter go out as a parlor maid. My dear, I could not think of allowing it. I am only too glad to have you with me."

"I know that, Mrs. Brown, but I cannot bear the thought of living idle upon anyone; I would not do it with my best friends at home. Perhaps I am a little too proud that way, but I cannot help it."

"Well, child, wait for one more week and we will see what it will bring forth."

Mrs. Brown had taken Eva a few times through some parts of the city, and also to see the Honourable Mrs. Macelgin, with whom she had lived as housekeeper for some years.

This lady was deeply impressed by Eva's elegant appearance and sad history, and promised to use what influence she had in her behalf, and also requested that she would visit her often, but Eva had not gone again. Mr. Macelgin was a wealthy Scotch gentleman, and his wife a lady of rank. They moved in the best society. They had two daughters, both of whom had married well. One morning, about the middle of February, Mrs. Brandon, Mrs. Macelgin's eldest daughter, entered her mother's morning-room, a shade of annoyance on her face. "What is it, Lena dear?" asked Mrs. Macelgin. "Something has displeased you, I can see."

She was a tall, finely made woman of about forty, but looked much younger. She had no children, therefore few home cares. She was one who, having ample means to gratify her tastes and pleasures, took the world easy, and escaped all the worries and disagreeable duties she conveniently could.

"Something has worried me and upset my plans, Mother. You know how long Lawrence has been promising to take me on the continent."

"And you are going, are you not, Lena?" interrupted her mother.

"We were to start early next month, and a few days ago an old acquaintance of Lawrence's, whom he had not heard of for years, sent for him. He was a man who had been very poor all his life. His family had died, all but one daughter, a girl of eighteen, when suddenly he was left a large fortune by a relative who had died. Well, he became very ambitious to have his daughter well educated and enter good society, and was on his way to us to seek advice whether it would be better to place her at school, or secure a governess, when he was stricken with the disease which caused his death. So Lawrence promised him on his death-bed that he would take the girl abroad with us for a year and get her a governess, which would be better than three years at school. So James Neyle (that is his name) died blessing him; and yesterday Lawrence came

home accompanied by Agnes Neyle, and here I am with so much to attend to before my departure, pestered with the responsibility of advertising for a governess and perhaps receiving about two hundred useless applications."

"The poor child," murmured Mrs. Macelgin, who had a very tender heart towards those in trouble. "You must be kind to her, Lena. She will feel it very lonely to be thrown amongst strangers. Try and find a young governess who will be a companion for her also."

"That is what the girl herself wants; she is anxious to improve. She feels her father's death keenly, poor girl, and wishes to obey all his instructions. But where am I to find such a person? There are plenty of young girls, frivolous ones, who would undertake the charge, and yet not be fitted for it. Agnes has a pretty fair English education, but she wants to learn how to paint and draw, to play and sing, to learn French and all the little refinements that are required before she goes into society; in short, what she requires is a young lady of good education and perfect manners, who has been accustomed to teaching and is conscientious, and where am I to find her in two weeks time?"

Like a flash Mrs. Macelgin thought of Eva Carlen, and her face brightened. "I'll tell you what you will do, Lena, leave it all to me, and in less than one week I shall send you just the young lady who will suit you."

"Oh! will you, mother? It would take such a load off my mind, because, you know, I would like to get the right sort of person, when the girl was intrusted to us."

"She is the right sort of person. The trouble is if she is free to accept the situation or not. She may have found one since I heard from her. She is from Newfoundland and belongs to one of the most aristocratic families there, who met with severe losses in the Bank crash of last year, and she has been teaching ever since. She is a perfect lady, and a beauty, too, a tall, graceful, blonde beauty, but, oh, so sad looking. Lena, you would love her the moment you looked at her. I am sure she would just suit Miss Neyle."

"Very well, mother dear, I'll leave all to you," and Mrs. Brandon departed quite jubilant over her success.

Next day Eva received a nice note from Mrs. Macelgin

explaining the nature of the situation and requesting her, if she would be kind enough to call on the following day and she would take her to her daughter, Mrs. Brandon. And so, one week later our heroine found herself ensconced in Mrs. Brandon's magnificent town house, and busily preparing for her journey.

Agnes Neyle was a bright girl, she was not pretty, but intelligent looking, and bade fair to become an apt pupil. She liked Eva the moment her eyes rested upon her; the recent bereavement of both girls created a bond of sympathy between them.

Why does it often happen that when persons aim at a certain object from unworthy motives, they find themselves whirled along by the force of circumstances to the attainment of it? Is it a wise Providence who wishes to show us that when the object for which we labored is in our grasp, when victory crowns our efforts, it can be made to recoil with bitter sorrow on our own heads, that leads us on; or, is Satan, with his arts, the instrument which is permitted to lead us into temptation, the more to purify noble souls like gold in the furnace?

Three days before the Brandons were to start for Dover, en route for Paris, a letter came for the master of the house, which bore a great many foreign postmarks. They were seated at breakfast when it arrived. Mr. Brandon, who was a type of the "fine old English gentleman," was fond of correspondence, and gave orders that when his letters came they should be brought to him immediately. "Why, bless my soul, if this is not from Arthur," he exclaimed, putting on his glasses.

"From Arthur!" echoed his wife, "after all these years. What part of the world is he in?"

"Hum," as he hastily scanned the sheet, "he ought to be in this part of the world at present, judging from his letter, he intended it to reach us a week ago. He will be here to-day."

"Not to stay with us, of course."

"Yes, to stay with us."

Mrs. Brandon's face wore a look of alarm, "My goodness, Lawrence, and everything arranged for our journey, the house turned topsy turvy and some of the servants gone."

"Listen," said her husband, and he took up the letter and read, "I have been wandering through Asia for some months,

and I am tired of it. On the first of June I have promised to join a party of gentlemen on a tour to Africa. We are going to explore the wonders of Egypt, and until then I have made up my mind to go home and rest, and let—if you and aunt will allow me—by-gones be by-gones and make your house my home for the intervening three months,' and Lawrence Brandon laid down the letter, removed his glasses and looked the consternation he felt at his wife.

"I know something will happen to stop us before we get off," she said. "What can we do?"

"Ask him to join us," suggested her husband, triumphant-ly, as if struck with a bright idea.

"Lawrence, how dense you are, after you just reading that he is tired of travel and wants a rest before he starts off again."

"True, I had forgotten. Well all we can do is to put our case before him, and if he wishes to accompany us, so much the better, and if not we must submit to the inevitable and postpone our tour for a while."

"It is most unfortunate that we should be going just now, when he offers the olive branch after so many years," said Mrs. Brandon, rising from the table. "I am sure," she continued, with a bright smile at the two girls, "Miss Carlen and Miss Neyle must wonder who Arthur is to be upsetting all our arrangements in so short a time. I'll leave you to explain, Lawrence while I speak to the housekeeper about a room for him."

"Arthur Brandon is my nephew, my dear young ladies, the son of my only brother, who died when his boy was about four years old, so the poor little fellow, at that tender age, was sent to college. When I married he was about leaving, so he made his home with us, till he was twenty-two, and then, as the children say, we got vexed, and he left us, and never lived with us since.

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## CHAPTER X.

THAT afternoon Eva went, as she promised, to bid good-bye to her friend, Mrs. Brown, who looked upon her with pride and pleasure.

"Though I have come to say good-bye," she said, "I cannot positively say we are going. Mr. Brandon's nephew is expected to-day, and they fear it will upset their plans."

Mrs. Brown dropped her knitting and stared at Eva:—"Arthur Brandon! You don't mean to tell me the poor fellow is coming home again."

"Yes," answered Eva, "they expect him to-day."

"I don't see why that need alter their plans; he has not stayed with them for over ten years."

"But he intends to do so now. I heard Mr. Brandon read a portion of the letter to his wife."

"Ah, that is a change, indeed, for Arthur, and for the better, I hope."

"Do you know him well, Mrs. Brown?"

"Ah, indeed I do, my dear, better than those who should have known him, and who should have known better than to meddle with what was no one's business but his own, poor fellow."

"Why do you pity him so much, Mrs. Brown?"

"I pity him because he was wronged, child; because he was dealt unfairly with, because instead of being a happy man, by his own fire-side with the woman he loved, and laughing children around him, he has been made an exile and a wanderer from his native land, leading a careless, reckless life, but not a bad one. He could not be a bad man."

"And who has done it?" asked Eva, wonderingly.

"Three or four had a hand in it. Of course I was supposed to know nothing, but I had my suspicions and believe them to be correct. I always said that those who destroyed his happiness would not prosper; but they have, so far."

"You make me quite curious about him," said Eva, smiling.

"I'll tell you all about him, my dear, as you are so soon to see him. As I told you before, I was under-housekeeper at Mrs. Macelgin's, and there I first saw young Arthur Brandon. He often came with his uncle and aunt to visit there. He was then seventeen, and as fine and handsome a young fellow as you'd wish to see. He was very hasty and passionate, inherited I believe, from his Spanish mother, who died at his birth, but noble, high-principled, the very soul of honor, candid—almost too much so—he could not bear the little white fibs and smal

deceits that are practised in society. He called a spade a spade, and no more about it. Well, when he was twenty-one he came on a visit, with Mr. and Mrs. Brandon, to Mrs. Macegin's country home, and there he met Elsie Maher, the sweetest little creature you ever laid your eyes on, but, as fate would have it, she was only the housekeeper's grand-niece whose mother was a poor widow, but she struggled hard to keep Elsie at school. She was educated better than girls of her class usually are, and had worked so hard at her examination that her health was slightly affected by it, and Mrs. Macegin, always so kind-hearted, and hearing about the girl, insisted on the housekeeper sending for her and making her remain for a month to see if the country air would restore her lost strength. And it did; she soon got the roses back to her cheeks. She was of your style, Miss Carlen, dark-blue eyes and golden hair. She was only seventeen. I'll never forget the surprise I got the first time I saw them together. It was seven in the evening, and I was taking a stroll with Richard, who was paying me attention at the time. We had taken a narrow footpath through the thick woods which lead to a road on the other side, when we saw the pair. They were standing under the shade of a large tree, Arthur holding Elsie's hands and the joyous light in his eyes, together with the shy, sweet, happy expression in hers, told their own tale. They loved each other, and of course this was not their first meeting. They looked up quickly and saw us. Elsie seemed very much frightened, and Arthur annoyed, as I knew, at being caught in a clandestine meeting. My man thought he was only having an idle flirtation with one not of his own class; but it was the thought of placing Elsie in such a false position which brought the flush of annoyance to his face. Richard scowled upon him, as he always did at anything of this kind. Arthur knew exactly what he thought. I'll never forget the haughty look on his proud, handsome face, as he drew her hand within his arm and said, 'strictly speaking, this is our own business and no one else's, and, differently situated, I should not offer any explanation, but under the present circumstances I think it necessary, in justice to Miss Maher and myself, to say that she has just made me happy by consenting to become my wife,' and they walked away. From that hour Arthur Brandon found a corner in my heart that will always be

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his. Richard told me that if I did my duty I should go straight to my mistress and tell her all. Perhaps I should, but I could not do it. The poor young things, I said, let them enjoy their bright love-dream—I will never spoil it. Elsie and I were great friends, and from that day she always came to me when her tender little heart was overflowing with love and admiration for her hero, and she should talk about him to some one. I could not discourage her. What could I say but that he was the noblest and truest of men, that he was good and handsome, that he loved her, and I believed would always love her. Well, it went on smoothly till near the end of August, and Arthur was to go on a twelve months' tour, as all young gentlemen of his class do before they enter into public life. He was going in company with a titled gentleman. Before leaving he went straight to Elsie's aunt and told her all, saying that his little bride-elect was to study during his year of absence and they were to be married upon his return. But she would not listen to him. 'She would never deceive her mistress,' she said, 'in such a manner,' so she acquainted Mrs. Macelgin with the whole affair, who grew indignant, and explained all to Mrs. Brandon. Now it happened that the latter had set her heart upon a marriage between Arthur and a young lady of title, a daughter of the gentleman with whom he was to travel, and who, she felt sure, would not be adverse to handsome Arthur Brandon for a husband. I don't think I have told you that Arthur is almost one of the richest men in England, lacking a title. Well, she flew into a towering rage, which she is well able to do, and got her husband to side with her, and told Arthur he would ruin all his prospects for life by such a marriage, that their doors would be closed against him, called Elsie a presumptuous minx, but she was not then aware of the kind of man she had to deal with. He stopped her in a very few words, and told her she was exciting herself and using very inelegant language quite unnecessarily; that when he returned he should marry Elsie Maher and no one else, and if she, or anyone, closed their doors against him it made no difference, as he should then have a home of his own, and having Elsie it was not at all likely he should need other society. Well, he went, and poor Elsie was so closely watched that they could only bid each other good-bye in writing, which I, by stealth,

brought to them, and at Mrs. Brandon's suggestion the poor child was not allowed to return home, but was kept at Mrs. Macelgin's. She was too weak and yielding, that was her only fault. If she had been more firm of purpose and not allowed them to manage her so easily, all would have been well, but between her aunt and Mrs. Brandon they made the poor girl believe that she was guilty of a great crime by consenting to marry a gentleman of Arthur Brandon's position, moreover when, as they told her, he was almost engaged to the lady with whose father he was now travelling. A whole year passed and not one letter did Elsie receive from Arthur, after he promising to write at every opportunity. She wrote twice to the address he had given her. I posted them, but he never received either and just at the time he was expected home, Mrs. Brandon came and had a private conversation with the housekeeper and next day Elsie was sent home to her mother's. A few days after Arthur returned. He came to me to learn all about Elsie, and was surprised upon hearing that she had not received one of the many letters he had written her, and more surprised still when I said that I had posted two letters to him from her. I gave him her mother's address, and he started off immediately, but only to find that Elsie and her mother had gone somewhere on a visit, no one knew where. On making enquiries of a neighbor he learned that a few days before their departure a lady had visited them, and from the description he judged it to be his uncle's wife. When he returned he had a very stormy interview with his aunt and uncle, and left their house saying he should search for Elsie till he found her, which was not long. Six months afterwards he again visited Mrs. Maher's and learned from her that Elsie was married to a well-to-do farmer. He also learned that the object of his aunt's visit there was to make the woman take her daughter away, telling her that it was her only means of safety from Arthur, as he was returning and would only be renewing the foolish flirtation, as, of course, he would never dream of marrying her. Poor Elsie, easily imposed upon, believed that Arthur had forgotten her, and urged on by her mother, she married, and died one year afterwards, poor lamb. Oh, Miss Carlen, I will never forget to my dying day the scene that followed. He entered Mrs. Macelgin's drawing-room one night, Mr. and Mrs. Brandon were there,

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also the gentleman who had accompanied him abroad, with his daughter Lady Maud, the girl his aunt had wished him to marry, and a lot of other visitors. I was just leaving the room after delivering a message to my mistress, and I stood outside the door. His face was like death as he confronted Mrs. Brandon. I could never tell you what words he used. He cursed her, and said he should never forgive her, nor cease to hate her to his dying day; accused her of influencing Elsie's aunt to appropriate his letters, and also Lady Maud's father of keeping the two Elsie had written him. Neither denied the charge. He said that those who could lie, and cheat, and malign characters as they had done, were a disgrace to the society to which they belonged, and only that he would not sully his name by associating it with theirs, he would bring them before a court of justice to answer for their crimes. His last words were, 'Perhaps it makes you happy to know that I go forth from my home a reckless wanderer over the world. I am not coward enough to take my own life, or that, too, might lie at your door, but I leave you my undying and bitterest hate.' He left them, and when he saw me outside he said, 'Thank you, Ellen Crane, for the many little favors you have done me.' Tears were running down my cheeks, I could not help it. Oh, Mr. Brandon, I said, if Elsie had only waited a little longer, He made an impatient gesture, 'Don't speak of her,' he said. 'for the woman who has not strength of character enough to trust the man she has promised to marry because his enemies call him a scoundrel, I have but the utmost contempt. My faith in women is gone forever, but that does not lessen the pain here,' and he placed his hand over his heart.

"You will come home again, some day, Mr. Brandon?" I said.

"I hope I shall not live long enough for that," he answered. "Good-bye."

"Well, my dear, all that is over ten years ago. News of him often reached England. He was spoken of as leading a very reckless life, courting death but never finding it. He has fought duels, and, though his aim is sure, he has never more than wounded his man. People say he does not shoot to kill. However, nothing disgraceful has ever been heard of him. Six years after he came home; I saw him once. He cut the

Brandons direct. He was changed, very much bronzed and bearded. He went away again in a few months, and returned in two more years. This time he called upon his uncle and aunt, and was coldly polite, but much as they begged him to, he would not make his home with them, but now you tell me he intends to. Well, I hope the poor fellow will stay home and settle down and be happy."

"Oh, what a pity," said Eva, "what a pity they destroyed his life's happiness. I would not blame him if he never forgave them."

"Nor I, my dear. I wish he would marry. He is a most peculiar man, he scarcely ever looks at a young lady. I heard a person say that when he is being introduced to one he generally looks over her head, and, do you know, that only makes him more attractive to them. There is not a girl in England who would refuse him. The large fortune which was left him by his father, his uncle invested in shares which all turned out successful, and he has a beautiful country residence named 'Brandonville,' which is sadly neglected these many years."

"It would be a great pity if Mr. Brandon did not remain at home," said Eva, as she rose to go, "now, that his nephew is inclined to forget the past."

"It will be a crying shame if he does not," said Mrs. Brown.

Upon arriving home Eva went straight to her room to dress, as it was near dinner hour. She was met on the stairway by Agnes Neyle, who said:—"Oh! Miss Carlen, Arthur Brandon has arrived. I hope he won't spoil our journey abroad."

"I am inclined to think he will, Miss Neyle," said Eva, with a smile. "It would seem most unkind of Mr. and Mrs. Brandon to go and leave him, just when he has returned after a long absence, travel-tired and wanting a rest."

"Would you not be sorry, Miss Carlen, to give up our tour?"

"Not as sorry as I should have been yesterday, because the knowledge that we are giving up our pleasure to make the wanderer more welcome, gives a touch of heroism to the sacrifice. Let us look upon ourselves as two much-wronged maidens, who, though ousted from our rights, yet bear our tribula-

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tions with fortitude sublime," and with a gay little laugh, the first since her mother's death, she passed on to her room.

As Eva descended, she met Agnes Neyle, who always felt shy entering a room alone, waiting for her at the bottom of the stairs. They entered the drawing-room, and Eva found herself gazing with interest, curiosity, and a kind of feeling not unmingled with fear, at the opposite side of the room, where stood a powerfully built man, looking older than his years. His hair, which was very dark, was streaked with gray. His features were clearly cut and intensely pale. A dark beard and moustache hid all the softened lines of the face, leaving only the hard, dissipated ones visible.

"My ward, Miss Neyle," said Mr. Brandon, "and Miss Carlen, my ward's companion."

Agnes Neyle bowed, and Eva, half hesitatingly, held out her hand. Arthur Brandon did not look over her head as their hands met, Eva remarked. He glanced at her steadily, in fact he had been looking at her since she entered the room, with an expression in his very dark-brown eyes which she could not define—half critical, half reassuring, half mocking—which made her relapse into her habitual state of cold, haughty reserve. She looked like a tall, fair lily in her dress of black crepe, without a single ornament, her deep golden hair and fair face contrasting so vividly with it. Her large, dark-blue eyes were quickly withdrawn from his face, and veiled with their long, dark lashes. When they were seated at dinner the conversation turned upon different subjects. Arthur gave some glowing descriptions of his many experiences whilst roaming o'er the world. He spoke fluently and had a deep, musical voice.

"When do you start for the continent, aunt?" he said abruptly, with such a fleeting glance at Eva that she wondered if it were at her or not.

Mrs. Brandon looked up quickly, saying, "who told you we were going on the continent, Arthur?"

"No one."

"No one! and how did you know?"

"I heard it."

"You heard it, yet no one told you," said his uncle. "That is strange."

"I heard it, yet no one told me," he repeated, with another glance at Eva.

"If any of the servants here have spoken of what is not their business I shall be displeased with them," said Mrs. Brandon.

"None of the servants have spoken of such a thing to me," said Arthur, with a smile, "nor has anyone. I have learned it, it does not matter how. All I want to know is, what time did you intend leaving?"

"We were intending to start in a few days," said Mr. Brandon, "but we are so glad to have you with us again that we have postponed it for another year."

"Oh, no, you shall do no such thing. I could not think of allowing such a sacrifice in my behalf." And Eva fancied there was just the faintest stress laid on the word "sacrifice."

"But, Arthur, put in Mrs. Brandon, "I assure you we do not mind it in the least."

"That does not make any difference to me," answered Arthur in a decided tone. "You shall not give up your pleasure on my account, you must start on the day you intended, and I can take up my quarters in some other place, and if you refuse to do it, I shall leave you just the same."

"It is very unfortunate your learning this at all, Arthur. We intended not to tell you one word about it."

"I appreciate your kindness very much, uncle, but I should consider myself terribly in the way if you gave up your journey. You must go. I may accompany you as far as Paris. I suppose that is the route you will take, and then I may have a run to see how Brandonville looks. I daresay it requires some renovating and looking after."

So the preparations went on. The evening before their departure they were all assembled in the drawing-room, with a few visitors. When Arthur was asked for a song, he "would be most happy," he said, "if some one played his accompaniment," and Eva, being requested, went to the piano. In a rich musical tone he sang, with deep pathos, the sweet old song, "Her Bright Smile Haunts me Still." He could throw a great amount of expression into his singing, and Eva found herself wondering if the bright smile of Elsie Maher still haunted him. A settled gloom rested on his countenance as he finished sing-

ing. He turned over the leaves of the book in an abstracted manner. After a little while he said, "I called to see your friend, Mrs. Brown, to-day."

"How did you know she was my friend?" asked Eva.

"Mrs. Brown, herself, told me; she also told me that you had gone to bid her good-bye on the day of my arrival," and he watched her narrowly.

"And I suppose you told her that you were somewhere in the hallway, where you could not be seen, and heard my conversation with Miss Neyle on that same day, from which you first learned of Mr. and Mrs. Grant's intended journey," said Eva.

Arthur Brandon only smiled as he said, "May be I did, and may be I did not, but allow me, Miss Carlen, to compliment you on being such an expert at putting two and two together."

"I suppose I should feel flattered at any compliment from a gentleman who thinks it a condescension on his part to bestow even the smallest attention on a lady."

"Who said I thought that?"

"No one."

"And what makes you think I do?"

"Putting two and two together."

He smiled sadly and his manner changed. "If you knew my life, Miss Carlen, you would not wonder at my desire to hold aloof from the society of ladies. You are the first whose company has afforded me any pleasure for years. Why? Because I heard you from my dark corner in the hallway that evening say, that you would not hesitate to make a sacrifice, and be happy in doing so, to make the wanderer more welcome, and I know the words came from your heart; and also (please pardon my curiosity) I asked Mrs. Brown about you, and she gave me a little of your history. But your sorrows have only ennobled you, they were not the kind that destroy the faith, love and trust of a young heart. This is what the wrongs that were practised upon me have done,—suspect all, love none, trust none, believe in nothing, rush through life in a reckless, dissipated manner"—he broke off abruptly. "Shall we try this duet?" he said, and soon their voices filled the

room blending beautifully in the sad, sweet strains of, "Go Thou and Dream o'er that Joy in thy Slumber."

## CHAPTER XI.

WE must bring our reader back again to New York and Alan Horten. It is January, a few days after Eva Carlen sailed in Captain Brown's ship for England. Alan and Nellie Grant are saying farewell, for early next morning he leaves for Newfoundland. The two years have almost expired, and in spite of the long silence, the unanswered letters, the return of their engagement ring, he does not fail in his promise. He goes hopeful that when they meet all will be explained.

How miserably Nellie Grant has failed in her efforts to win Alan Horten from his golden-haired darling. She realizes it now as she stands before him trying to smother her emotion, trying to be calm, and to hide her broken despairing heart. But what is it that has gone from her face since last we saw her, what causes that quick look of fear in the eyes at every step, at every ring of the door-bell? What has taken the bloom from cheek and lip, what is that which is stamped upon her countenance? Ill-health every one believes. Ill-health it is, brought upon herself. The knowledge of guilt, the constant pricking of conscience, the fear of discovery have undermined many a less frail constitution than hers. In her last desperate effort to gain her object, she has stooped to crime. Remorse has set in and is gnawing at her heart-strings. She would now give years of her life to undo what she has done. To-night she intended to tell him all, but as he stood before her, so noble-looking, so unsuspecting, with such faith in her unselfish friendship for him, her courage failed her, and once more the tempter whispered, 'both are proud, they may never make it up, there may never be an explanation and you need not fear discovery.'

"Thank you, Nellie, a thousand times for your friendship," Alan was saying. "You do not know what it has been to me. If all this doubt and mystery between Eva and me is cleared,

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and we are happy once more, I shall write and tell you. I am sure you would be glad to know."

"More than I can tell. But Alan," she said, in a soft, pained voice, "if you are not happy again, won't you write at all."

"Certainly, Nellie, I shall write in any case; I shall be most anxious about your health. I do not think you are at all careful of yourself."

"I am careful enough," she answered, in a weary voice. "All the doctor says is not to excite myself. You know the trouble is here," and she placed her hand over her heart. "I cannot be cured, so he tells me, but father and mother do not know that. Good-bye now, I shall expect a letter from you soon."

Alan noticed the purplish tint coming in her cheeks and feared another fainting spell such as she had been subject to of late, but it passed off and left her pale as death.

"Good-bye, Nellie. If all goes well I shall bring Eva on a visit to New York, and you shall be friends, and perhaps you may come with us and have a look at your father's birthplace."

Alan Horten's heart bounded with joy and tears of emotion filled his eyes as he stood on deck and watched the familiar objects of his native land, as they appeared in sight—the snow-clad hills, with the fishing stages and small dwellings on their base, the Fort Amherst Lighthouse, the large, square flag which heralded their approach flying from the tall mast at Signal Hill. Oh, when should he see Eva? he wondered. Perhaps, that very day. It was not yet noon. He received a warm welcome from father, mother and friends. As soon as he got a chance of a few words privately with his mother, he asked her if she had seen Eva and Mrs. Carlen lately, and if they were well?

Mrs. Horten looked the surprise she felt. "Mrs. Carlen," she repeated, "why, Alan, is it possible you never heard of Mrs. Carlen's death? She died in October last."

"Eva's mother dead," said Alan, "and I not to know it. Why did you not write me of it, mother?"

"Did I not mention it? I must have forgotten to I suppose, but surely Eva wrote you of it."

"I have not received a letter from Eva since August.

There is a misunderstanding somewhere, but I shall know all this very night. I cannot believe that Eva is untrue till I hear it from her own lips."

"Then she has not thought it worth while even to inform you that she was leaving Newfoundland. She does not merit the trust you have placed in her, Alan. She has gone to England over two weeks ago. I thought that surely she would wait until the two years were up, but she was evidently in a hurry to get off before you came."

A look of keen, bitter disappointment swept over Alan's face. "Eva gone to England," he repeated. "With whom or to whom has she gone?"

Mrs. Horten told him all she had heard of Eva's departure from Mrs. Carroll.

"What is the meaning of it?" said Alan, as he paced the floor. "Why did you not see her mother, before she went?"

"It was hardly my place to call upon her when she did not trouble herself to send me word of her intention."

"All this seemed reasonable enough, and Alan could not find fault with it.

"Take my advice, Alan," said his mother, "and do not trouble any more about her. It looks as if she wishes to be free. She is likely to marry well, and I think," half laughingly, "that you could have a wealthy wife for the asking. Don't you think the same?"

Alan looked up quickly and felt somewhat annoyed. Several times, in her letters, had his mother hinted at something like this. "No, mother," he answered, "I know of no wealthy wife that I could have for the asking, nor none that I would ask even if I could have. I never have, nor ever shall care for any woman but Eva Carlen."

For her own reasons Mrs. Horten kept silent regarding the reports which were circulated around town about Alan and Miss Grant.

Next day Alan called upon !a Carroll, who received him with cold politeness, never mentioning Eva's name till he first spoke of her. He asked Ida to tell him all the particulars of Eva's departure, and why she did not wait till he returned? But Ida remembered she was to uphold Eva's dignity, "She was much grieved at her mother's death," she told him, "and

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felt a desire to leave the scene of her sorrow for a while, together with a longing to see the world, as all young people have, and when the chance offered she was not going to refuse. I see nothing remarkable in it, Mr. Horten."

The coldness of her manner piqued him a little, and he rose to go.

"I suppose she wishes to be free," he said, "but she need not have been afraid to meet me."

"It is not at all likely that Eva was afraid to meet you," said Ida, "but she may have thought it was the easiest way out of the difficulty."

"There would have been no difficulty at all," said Alan, proudly; and Ida felt sure that by these words he meant that he, too, wished to be free, and felt rejoiced at having misled him.

A few weeks later a report was current amongst a large circle that Alan Horten had proposed to Miss Grant and was rejected. "Serves him right," said many a saucy young 'damsel, "nothing less than a New Yorker and a millionaire's daughter would satisfy him." Ida, too, heard it with satisfaction. She had received one letter from Eva, to which she replied immediately, telling her of Alan's visit and what passed, and also of the late report concerning him. The firm in which Alan was employed at the time of the Bank crash, had somewhat revived, and he again found a position there, so he intended remaining home at least for the remainder of the winter. He wrote to Nellie Grant telling her all he knew about Eva.

One day as Ida Carroll and Jack Roberts were taking an evening walk along the King's Bridge road, they met Alan Horten. All three bowed and passed on.

"Ida," said Jack, "I believe you are all making the biggest mistake in the world about Alan Horten and Miss Grant. I believe the poor fellow is breaking his heart about Eva Carlen, and I've several times been on the point of telling him that she is doing the same about him."

Ida turned upon him fiercely, "You will do no such thing, Jack Roberts. Breaking his heart, indeed, when he left her for months without a letter, and the poor darling in such trouble over her mother's death. I even wrote him myself at the

time and he never acknowledged it. No, I could never forgive him for the way he has treated Eva. I hope he will break his heart; he does not deserve her. I hope she will get a better man. Never mind meddling with what is none of your business, Jack."

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## CHAPTER XII.

WHEN the Brandons arrived in Paris, Arthur surprised them by saying that he would go on travelling with them till June, when he should return to England to join the friends who were to accompany him to Egypt.

They visited Switzerland, Italy, Florence, and a great many of the leading capitals of Europe. Mrs. Brandon keenly enjoyed the excitement of attending operas, theatres and select balls. Eva and Agnes Neyle felt no desire to mix in gay company, their late sorrow prevented it, and Arthur had long ago wearied of these things. So it happened that at all the places of note which they visited he was the girls' escort. He explained to them everything connected with the great painters, both ancient and modern. They went through all the famous art-galleries. Change of place and surroundings had done much to restore Eva's lost spirits, and she felt that life still held something after all, and the world was a beautiful place to live in. The memory of her past sorrows and privations seemed to fade away as this new and beautiful life opened before her. Of late she had begun to feel a kind of restraint when in Arthur Brandon's company. She had a feeling that he was continually watching her. Often, looking up quickly she would catch his eyes fixed upon her face, and a flush of annoyance would mount her cheek, though his manner was not by any means rude. She had received many introductions, as Mr. and Mrs. Brandon had a large number of friends and acquaintances whom they were continually meeting. They mixed in the most select circles, and Eva, though living, in a manner, apart from them, had many admirers, who needed but a slight show of favor to lay their hearts and fortunes at her feet. But

when she put on her armor of cold reserve there was no penetrating it, and many a would-be suitor was heard to remark, as he shrugged his shoulders, "Miss Carlen is so late from the frozen region that her heart has not yet thawed," whilst Arthur Brandon looked on and smiled. "The wound has not yet sufficiently healed," thought Eva, as she smiled bitterly, "to allow me to stand calmly by and listen to words I once heard from him. Ah, why does not my heart harden towards him? How long will it take to crush out all the love I felt for him?"

It was early in May, and they were about leaving for Spain when Agnes Neyle grew seriously ill. The doctor was summoned and pronounced it a severe case of pneumonia, caused by rapid changes of climate on lungs not very strong, and as soon as it could possibly be done she was ordered to the south of France. "After a few months there she may get strong enough to return to England," the physician said, "but it was doubtful," and so, in a short time the found themselves settled at Montpellier, in an elegant, quiet country hotel, not overcrowded with visitors. Here, after one week, Agnes grew better. They now arranged that as soon as she was well enough, they would all return to England. In a few weeks Arthur would be leaving them to meet his friends for the promised exploring expedition, and then, he told his uncle, he intended to return home and settle down to a useful life on his country estate.

One beautiful evening, as the sun was sinking in the west, Arthur asked Eva to join him at the piano as he felt in singing humor. Agnes was lying on a couch, Mr. Brandon and his wife were sitting in a far corner near the window, trying to read by the last lingering light of the dying day. "Will you sing that old Scotch song for me, 'We'd Better Bide a Wee,' Miss Carlen?" asked Arthur. "I love those old ballads."

Oh, how her thoughts rushed back to the past. She saw the dear familiar drawing-room of her old home, her father and mother, and Alan standing by her side as Arthur Brandon stood now, when, her heart full of love and trust, she had sung him her answer. The thoughts crowded themselves so quickly upon her brain that they made her feel dizzy, the color left her face and she leaned her head upon her hand.

"Are you ill, Miss Carlen?" asked Arthur

After a moment she was herself again. "No," she answered, "but when last I sang that song, it was under such sad circumstances that I have not sung it since, and I don't think I could control my voice to sing it now."

"Oh, forgive me," he said, "I am so sorry to have brought any such sad recollections to you. Play over this other old one, 'Sweethearts,' and I will sing it to you."

How well the words suited her. She joined in the last two lines of the refrain:—

Oh! love for a year, a week, a day,  
But alas for the love that lives away.

"That is the best kind," Arthur remarked, when they had finished.

"Or the worst," said Eva.

"Would you care to take a stroll on the lawn?" he asked. She answered by rising from the piano.

As they left the room Mrs. Brandon glanced after them, and then at her husband, saying, "Have you noticed anything lately, Lawrence?"

"I have," he replied, following her glance, "and mind, Lena, there is to be no interference this time."

"I would not interfere again if he wanted to marry the scullery maid," said Mrs. Brandon, with a shudder. "Once was enough for me."

"Miss Carlen is a perfect lady and would grace any man's home. I only hope she won't refuse him," went on her husband.

"Yes," she answered, "she is a lady, and beautiful, "but Lady Maud is still single, and I had hopes of having a title in our family."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

"Why do you think the love that lives forever the worst kind, Miss Carlen," asked Arthur Brandon as soon as they were outside.

"I think it the worst kind only for those who wish to forget," answered Eva.

"Miss Carlen," he said, stopping abruptly before her "will you marry me?"

She gazed at him spellbound for a moment. "No, Mr. Brandon," she said, slowly and sadly. "Thanking you for the honor, but I could not marry you."

"Why," in a disappointed tone.

She smiled as she said, "I won't say as the girls do in novels, 'because I do not love you,' for the reason that when I do marry it shall not be for love. I am ambitious; I want to make a brilliant marriage, but I could not think of it as yet, not for a long time."

"Suppose a marriage with me to be a brilliant one, and I am content to wait a long time, what then?"

"Would you be content to wed one who married you only for fortune or position?"

"Not everyone, but I would be content to marry you."

"Why do you wish to marry me?"

"Because I love you; not in the wild, romantic fashion of youth, but with the stronger, surer love of mature years, and I do not despair of winning your affection in a little time. Do you believe me?"

She looked at him doubtfully and then answered. "No, I do not believe you care for me in this way, and even if you did I should prefer the wild, romantic love of youth, as you call it, to that of mature years, and you would never win my affections; no man living will ever do it again." In an unguarded moment she used the last word which betrayed the secret she would have kept from him.

"Again," he repeated. "That means that some one has won it in the past. Well, Miss Carlen, I do not wish to know anything of your past, only what you will please to tell me. But I will tell you mine if you will be kind enough to listen." He began from his earliest recollections, and told her all which she had before heard from Mrs. Brown. "I had no proof that our letters were stolen," he said, "nevertheless I believe they were, and when I accused those whom I suspected, they did not deny it. I used words that night which I should not have, but I was mad with anger against them and against Elsie

Maher for being so weak as to allow herself to be managed so easily. I thought then that I should never forgive them. For years I led a reckless life constantly meeting those whose greatest pleasure is leading on in the path of ruin youths of the age I was then. I have been guilty of some wild, daring deeds. My association with bad and fast companions has done me, I fear, irreparable injury. But, Miss Carlen, I have committed no crime, nor have I done anything which my wife, if I had one, should blush for. Well, of late years my anger began to melt away, and the wild love-dream of my youth to fade from my memory, so I returned once more to my uncle's home with the determination that when the next few months of wandering are over, I would settle down in my own country home, and if I could find a woman noble, good and strong, I despise weak women, who would be content to share my life and try to make a good man of me, I would marry. I have found the woman noble, good and strong, also beautiful, and what I thought beyond my power, I love her, but she is not content. He said the last few words with such intense sorrow in his voice that Eva pitied him. "I am a wealthy man, Miss Carlen," he went on. "My country home is a beautiful one. If I marry I shall also purchase a residence in London. I mean to go in for a political life. I have energy, and I think I should succeed. My family is an old and honored one. You could have all you want of travelling and sight-seeing. We could visit America, if you desired it, and we would go and visit your home and friends in Newfoundland. Unless that you aspire to a title, to which your grace and beauty give you the right, a marriage with me, I think, would be as brilliant as you could desire. I did not dream, at first, of coming on this tour with my aunt and uncle, but during the time that intervened, after I had given my promise to accompany them to Paris, till we arrived there, I grew so interested in you that I could not bear to leave you. You do not believe it, Miss Carlen, you say, but only give me the chance to let my actions prove my words."

Eva's brain suddenly fired with triumph, her heart beat fast. Was not this what she wanted? She would visit America, the home of her rival and her false lover; she should meet them, and Alan should find that she wore no willow for

him. And if their home was in Newfoundland she should go and meet them there. She should meet Mrs. Horten, the woman who despised her in her poverty. With the swiftness of electricity these thoughts flashed through her mind, her face flushed with excitement. If she put this chance from her now would she ever deserve another?

"Mr. Brandon," she said, "think well of what you are saying. Is it fair to tempt a woman who does not love you, by the glamor of the worldly advantages which you can offer her, into marrying you?"

The directness of the question for a moment kept him silent, but increased the more his admiration for her. "Were the woman a weak, vain one, it would be unfair," he said, "but you are neither. You will do your duty in whatever sphere of life you're placed in, and I hope to win your love."

"You over-estimate me," she said. "Listen while I disenchant you. I have loved, and do still, with all the strength of my nature, a man whom I was engaged to marry. We parted for a time, and things came to my knowledge which convinced me that he was acting falsely. I ended our engagement by returning his ring. You have heard from Mrs. Brown of all my other sorrows. She knew nothing of this. My heart was nearly broken, and I wished to live for one reason alone, an ambition—an unworthy one I admit—to marry wealth, so that I could one day meet and queen it over my rival, the millionaire's daughter, whose gold had tempted my lover from his allegiance to me. If I marry you this will be my sole motive for doing so, and if you lost your wealth I should give you up—even the day before the wedding. Is your courage equal to that?"

"I think I can muster enough," he answered, smiling. "You are most candid, Miss Carlen."

"And," went on Eva, "if, after marriage you lost your fortune—such things often happen—I should be tempted to do something desperate, perhaps run away from you. Will your admirable courage face such a possibility as this?"

"Yes," he answered dryly. "In a case of this kind I call upon my reserve force."

Eva smiled in spite of herself. "You are jesting over what is a very serious matter," she said.

"You would do nothing desperate," he replied. "You would do as all good and true women do, make the best of a bad bargain. But nothing like this shall happen. I shall not lose my wealth, and if I am willing to take all risks of the terrible things you anticipate happening, may I hope that you will consent to become my wife, and I promise that I shall, in time, make you happy."

Her lips uttered the words at which her heart revolted; "I consent," she said, and hated herself the next moment for saying it.

Another week had passed, but love and marriage, ambition and revenge were, for a time, forgotten, for the stern, grim messenger of death was hovering in their midst. Agnes Neyle was dying. The sunny, health-giving clime had failed to restore her lost strength, and quite suddenly and unexpectedly the end had come. A slight cold contracted had brought on a return of the disease, and it proved fatal. Eva was most untiring in her solicitude and tender sympathy for the dying girl and tried to gratify her slightest wish. As it so often happens in the young and innocent, she died with resignation and, even, happiness. In the event of her death her large fortune was willed to a relative, a poor man with a large family, who, a few days afterwards was made glad by the news that he was, for the remainder of his life, above want. So they made her a grave in a sunny spot, where flowers, nourished by the luxuriant air, which had refused its life-sustaining properties to her, grew in rich abundance, and once more Eva was thrown upon the world. Mr. and Mrs. Brandon now made up their minds to continue their tour, which they expected to last till the end of the year. They intended remaining two weeks longer in Montpellier, till Mrs. Brandon recovered somewhat from the shock she had sustained at Agnes Neyle's unexpected death. Of course they asked Eva to accompany them, but she refused for she knew that they did not in reality need her, and she—always extremely sensitive in these matters—said she should prefer returning to England and remaining with Mrs. Brown till she found another situation, and they did not press her further. They were aware of her engagement to Arthur, also that he and Eva were to be married when he returned in the autumn.

It was just three days before Arthur was to leave for England to join his friends there, and he and Eva were taking a walk. "I wonder," said Arthur, "whose companionship you will miss most during the remainder of your travelling, poor Agnes's or myself?"

"Agnes's," she answered, promptly.

"At least you are honest," he said quite bitterly, as he realized how far he yet was from winning any show of affection from her.

"But you know," she added hastily, "I shall not be travelling. I return to England very soon to seek another situation. I shall live with Mrs. Brown till I find one."

Arthur looked surprised and displeased, "Why," he said, my uncle told me they intended taking you with them."

"They wanted me to go, but I would not dream of being an unnecessary expense on anyone. You know they do not need me."

"But my aunt would be only delighted to have your company."

"So she told me, but like yourself, Arthur, I have learned to mistrust everyone, and she may have said it only for politeness sake."

"How proud you are, Eva. I am sure you would have enjoyed the travelling. It must be a great disappointment to you," and he watched her intently.

"More than I can tell," she replied.

"Eva," he said, suddenly, "will you consent to the proposal I am going to make. I was on the point of making it several times before, but feared to do so."

"I cannot tell you that till I hear what it is," she answered, smiling.

"Marry me on the morning of the day I leave here. As my wife you will be an expense to no one, and you can finish out the tour with my aunt and uncle. They expect to arrive in England in December, about the same time as myself, and then you and I together can visit your home in Newfoundland and New York also, if you wish, and 'Brandonville' will be in readiness for us when we return, or, if you prefer it, we would purchase a town residence?"

It was not so bad while the marriage was some months

distant, and he was going away, but to marry him now, in a couple of days, she shuddered at the thought, whilst, at the same time, his kind consideration for her touched her deeply. "Oh, Arthur, do not ask that," she said. "I feel grateful for your desire to give me pleasure, but it would be an unheard of thing to get married within a few hours before you go away on a five or six months' journey."

"Well," he answered, "suppose we get married and I don't go away. I could write to my friends and excuse myself?"

Now a new fear took possession of her. What if he refused to go and leave her to earn her own living for six months? She felt that his will was stronger than hers. "No," she said quickly, "you must not spoil your pleasure for me. I shall manage all right till you return."

"Spoil my pleasure," he repeated. "When will you believe, Eva, that my greatest pleasure in life is being near you. I would have given up this tiresome journey long ago, did I not cherish a hope that absence may do what association has failed to, that by perhaps, missing me a little you might learn to care something for me. But Eva, my dear child, I cannot go and leave you unprotected on the world. Mrs. Brown is a very good woman, but not much of a companion for you. Where would be the difference in having the ceremony performed now, when I leave you, say, two hours after, and having it performed when I return. During our separation you would get accustomed to thinking of me as your husband, and perhaps it would help you to care a little for me."

"Could a marriage be legally contracted at so short a notice in a foreign land. Must there not be some one to prove that each party is single?" asked Eva.

"All that could be done in a few hours by cablegram," he answered.

"Would you be sure to go if we were married?" she asked, hesitatingly.

"I see," he replied, and his features hardened a little. "Your chief consideration is to be rid of me. Yes, Eva, I am always faithful to my word, I would leave the moment the ceremony is performed if you desired it. Nothing would induce me to stay unless you yourself asked it."

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"Give me a little time to think it over," I will give you my answer to-morrow.

Alone in her room Eva reviewed the last two years of her life. After all had she not condemned Alan on very frail evidence? She had no positive proof that he was false to her, except the fact that he had not written. "But then," she thought, "something must have given rise to these rumors of his marriage with Miss Grant. Why did he use her name so familiarly in his letters to Mrs. Horten, and why had she become so intimate with his mother, whom she had never seen, as to keep up a correspondence with her; and, why, after she had returned his ring, had he not written even to acknowledge the receipt of it; and, ah, yes, crowning proof of all, why did he not write even a line of sympathy in the greatest sorrow of her life, her mother's death? True, he had been faithful to his word in returning at the expiration of two years, but if he were still true to her, why did he not get her address from Ida Carroll and write for an explanation?" She had forgotten that she had exacted a promise from the latter to lead Alan to believe that she wished their engagement at an end, "Because he was glad to be free," she concluded, and her cheeks burned with indignation. Then her heart beat with triumph, "Yes, she would wed one of the wealthiest men in England, to-morrow, any time. What did it matter? Why should she resign all the pleasure of travel in foreign lands in which her soul revelled, and return to Mrs. Brown's humble cottage, there to seek another situation, which she, perhaps, would not find? "No, she would 'take the goods the gods provided, and be as happy as she could.'" But the small, still voice of conscience would not be silent. During Agnes Neyle's illness and death she had discovered something which appalled her at first with its hideousness, Arthur Brandon had no belief in a hereafter—he was simply an atheist—and this was the man with whom she was to mate. Her better self shrank from such a union. She knew it was wrong, but her desire to be even with, and triumph over Alan Horten urged her on. She tried to stifle the voice of conscience with the thought that she would win her husband back to his lost faith. To-night she stood upon the brink of a precipice, in a few days she would have taken the fatal leap. Next morning she placed her hand in Arthur

Brandon's and told him she would marry him on the day he was to leave for England.

"You have made me happier than I have been for years," he told her. He led her immediately to his uncle and aunt, told them of their plan, and left all the arrangements for the wedding in Mrs. Brandon's hands, who was glad of something to distract her thoughts from the late dismal scenes through which she had passed. The wedding was to be very quiet. They were to drive to the church with no one but Mr. and Mrs. Brandon for witnesses. The latter took Eva that afternoon to the leading dressmaking establishment of Montpellier and selected an elegant, but not expensive, wedding costume of some soft, clinging material, with veil and orange blossoms, so Eva had no time to think ere her wedding day dawned. At six in the evening they were to be married, return to the hotel for supper, and at eight Arthur Brandon was to bid his bride farewell for six months.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

THERE was no small amount of surmise and conjecture amongst Alan Horten's friends as to which was the cause of his dull, pre-occupied manner, the refusal of Miss Grant or the disappearance of Eva Carlen. One evening in May he was taking a stroll along LeMarchant road when he was accosted by Jack Roberts, "A penny for your thoughts, Alan," said Jack. "I do believe I could have passed by without your seeing me."

"So you might, Jack, I was in deep thought. But do you know one of the things I was thinking was wishing to see you. I want to ask you something which I would not ask everyone. How long has the rumor that I was to marry Miss Grant, of New York, been going round town?"

"In September, I think, I first heard it, Alan."

"Did you believe it?"

"I did not at first. Not until your letters to Eva Carlen ceased, then I thought there was something in it."

"My letters to Eva did not cease until I had reason to believe they were unwelcome. To three successive letters I received no answer. Then I thought—although it was an unusual thing—that they may have miscarried, and wrote to my mother, asking her to find out from Eva if she received them, and she replied telling me yes, and that Eva had confessed to not writing me for some time."

"Alan," said Jack, catching his arm, "there is some mistake in all this. You know what great friends she and Ida always were. Well, through her I know that Eva got no reply to the last letter she wrote you, and what she felt most, when Ida wrote and told you of Mrs. Carlen's death, you never replied."

"Ida wrote me of Mrs. Carlen's death," repeated Alan. "Why I never heard of it till my mother told me the day I arrived home."

"Then you did not receive Ida's letter either. It seems to me there has been foul work somewhere," said Jack.

"Did Eva hear those remarks about Miss Grant and myself?" asked Alan.

Jack eyed him sharply for a moment, then said, "Alan, will you tell me was there any truth in that report, were you true to Eva Carlen?"

"Never the faintest shadow of truth in it," said Alan, firmly, "nor have I ever, in thought, word or deed, for one moment been untrue to Eva; it is she who has been faithless. Why, I cannot tell, for she seemed truth itself. But if we never meet again, Jack, no other woman will ever take her place in my heart."

"As I thought," exclaimed Jack. "How blind women can be sometimes. Alan, why did you not say this to Ida when you visited her after your return?"

"To tell you the truth, Jack, Ida was so cold, strange and unfriendly that I could not ask her any of the things which I intended; and besides, she all the same as told me that Eva went away purposely to avoid me. But at that time I had heard nothing of those foolish rumors that were afloat; it is only within the last few weeks they came to my ears."

"Eva did hear them, Alan," said Jack, laying his hand on his friend's arm. "Why there was a notice in one of the daily

papers regarding your prospective marriage, not giving any names, but put in a manner which no one could mistake. That, together with getting no letter from you, led her to believe them, and she left her home, a broken-hearted girl, so that she should be spared the pain of a meeting with you."

"Oh, Jack, Jack, why did you not tell me this long ago?"

"Because I was not at liberty to do so, Alan, and it is only the knowledge that you were true all the time which justifies me in telling you now."

"It will go hard with the meddlesome reporter who inserted that notice if I ever lay hands on him," said Alan, with a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"It was no reporter that did it," said Jack. "I believe I could lay my hand on the mean, low-spirited cad who is the originator of the whole thing."

"Who is he?" asked Alan.

"Robert Greene. Of course I have no proof, but I believe it just the same."

"Where would be his motive?"

Jack told him all which the reader already knows, not forgetting their last almost fatal quarrel about the white rose, and of how Robert afterwards told, in presence of Eva, of the news he pretended he had heard from a friend in New York. "He disliked her, Alan," concluded Jack, "because she was the means of mending many of our little quarrels, and especially the last and bitterest one, and of, as he thinks, doing him out of Ida Carroll."

"The scoundrel," muttered Alan. "I shall trace that notice home to him and then punish him."

"You cannot sue him for libel, as no names appeared."

"I will make him sorry he did it," said Alan fiercely. "My poor darling," he thought, "what little faith you had in me."

"Alan," said Jack, "come with me now to Ida's and tell her what you've told me, and she will let you know all. She has the softest little heart in the world. It was only believing you false to Eva which made her so cool towards you."

Shortly afterwards Jack burst unceremoniously into Ida's sitting-room, with the words, "Alan Horten is in the drawing-room, Ida, he wants to see you. I pity the poor fellow from

my heart. It has all been a mistake, that affair from New York, just as I said all along."

With a misgiving at her heart as to whether she had been Eva's friend or enemy, Ida descended to the drawing-room, and there Alan learned all Eva's life during his two years absence, her losses, sorrows and privations, together with her loyalty to him through it all, and the fact that though she believed him false she loved him still, but that her pride made her feign inconstancy equal to his. She also told him of what passed when Mrs. Horten called upon Eva to enquire if she had received his letters, and Alan, knowing Eva so well, could understand why she would not explain anything to her. "She is now in the south of France," went on Ida. "Three weeks ago I received her last letter. She will be there some months longer, as the young girl to whom she is companion and governess is very delicate."

Alan rose to go, his heart ready to burst as he thought of all his dear one had suffered. "I would have flown to her were it possible," he said, "if I had heard that her mother was dying. Oh, Eva, Eva, what evil fate ever drove me from you? But there shall be no more misunderstanding. I shall trust no longer to letters. I can easily obtain some weeks' absence. Give me her address, Miss Carroll, and I shall start in a few days for the south of France."

Ida's face beamed with joy. "Oh, I am so glad," she exclaimed, "you shall both be happy again, and I shall have her with me once more."

Faithful to his promise, Alan wrote to Nellie Grant telling her that he was leaving in a few days to go to Eva, when he hoped to clear up all mis-understanding. Mr. and Mrs. Horten tried to remonstrate with him on the uselessness of such a journey, Mrs. Horten saying, why could he not write and it would do just as well. But he answered her quite coldly and firmly, for he believed that his mother had purposely misled him with regard to Eva, that he had had enough of trusting his life's happiness to letters, and that nothing should prevent his going.

A few hours after Alan Horten had sailed for Liverpool en route to France, a foreign despatch arrived for him. Mrs. Horten received it, and thinking it might be something impor-

tant which required an immediate answer, she opened it and read:—

FROM NEW YORK,

May —, 1896.

To Alan Horten, St. John's, Newfoundland:

Take this direction on way to Europe. Can explain all concerning lost letters.

NELLIE BLY.

“What a strange signature,” thought Mrs. Horten. “It must mean Nellie Grant surely.” Now she was puzzled what to do. If she sent it on to meet Alan in Liverpool, would he go back to New York before proceeding further? Hardly. But should he fail to find Eva, or to make his peace with her, he may visit there on his return, and who could tell what good may result from it. So when he arrived in Liverpool the message was handed to him together with a few words of explanation from his mother. He immediately sent an answer to Nellie Grant telling her he should go to see her on his way home, and with his heart filled with love and hope, he continued on as fast as rail and steam could carry him to the place that held the one love of his life.

The nearer he approached his destination the more feverish grew his haste, and a vague fear that all would not be well took possession of him. It was near seven in the evening when he reached the town of Montpellier. He proceeded immediately to the rural hotel, his heart beating wildly at the thought of once again beholding Eva. A wide drive led up to the front entrance, and Alan, seeing a group of ladies and gentlemen standing on the steps, and not wishing to attract much attention, dismissed the vehicle and walked leisurely up. They eyed him curiously but not long. Their attention seemed to be directed to the entrance gate, and the sound of carriage wheels was heard. A little flutter of excitement was visible amongst the group, and Alan heard one of them say, “They must be coming.” He stood a little distance apart, in the shadow of a tree, and a little boy of about ten years approached him saying, “you are a strange gentleman; I did not see you here before?”

He looked down and smiled at the little fellow and asked him what the people on the steps were watching for?

"The wedding," answered the child, promptly. "The English lady is gone to the church to be married. Oh! here they are now," he cried, joyfully clapping his hands as he saw two carriages coming up the drive. They stopped in front of the hotel. The footman opened the door of the first one, and Alan saw a tall, handsome, powerfully built man descend. The groom, of course, and he was assisting his bride to alight. Ah, what made Alan Horten's heart stand still, and then beat till it nearly suffocated him. Surely that tall, graceful figure was familiar to him. She placed her hand on her husband's arm and ascended the steps. He rushed madly forward to catch a better glimpse ere she entered the hotel, and there beneath the soft, flowing bridal veil and wreath of orange blossoms, not whiter than the brow on which they rested, was the calm, proud, fair face of Eva Carlen. But not like a happy bride did she seem as she acknowledged the congratulations of her friends; a deep sorrow had settled upon her countenance. He got a full view of the beautiful dark blue eyes, but they never once rested on him. She had not seen him. She had passed in surrounded by the group, the carriages had rolled away, and he was alone in the summer evening, with a wonder as to whether he were dreaming or awake. Had he really seen Eva—his Eva—in a bridal robe, on the arm of her husband? With a crushing weight of sorrow pressing upon him he raised his hand and drew it across his forehead and eyes, he staggered to one of the garden seats near him, he felt a hand upon his knee, and looking up beheld the little boy who had spoken to him a short while before. "Are you sick, sir?" he said; your face is very white. Ain't you coming in to see the bride?"

"Not now, my little man," he answered. "What is the bride's name?"

"Miss Carlen," the child answered, "and the gentleman's is Mr. Brandon."

## CHAPTER XV.

It is nine o'clock, and Eva Brandon is sitting in the welcome seclusion of her own room. She is still in her bridal robes. Her husband has bidden her farewell over an hour ago. She is trying to realize that she is married. How she hates herself for what she has done. Ever since her eyes had opened on this, her wedding morn she has hated herself, and yet she would not draw back. A light tap on the door, and a neat-looking, smiling little French maid entered. She spoke in her native tongue, which language Eva was thoroughly acquainted with.

"Monsieur, the English gentleman, asked me to give you this mamselle, or, pardon me, madam," as she placed a small square envelope in her hand and withdrew.

Wondering what Arthur could have to write her about after having said good-bye, she glanced at the address, and for the first time read her new name. But what sent the blood from her face, what caused those strange emotions at her heart? Surely that writing was familiar to her. She tore open the envelope and read,—

"When next we meet I shall be able to say that I have been more faithful than you. Can you recall the words, Eva Brandon, or is the past entirely blotted from your memory? Three times I wrote and received no reply, only our engagement ring returned without a word of explanation, yet in the face of all this I kept my appointment, and on the same day two years after we parted I returned to find you gone, as your friend, Ida Carroll told me, with a desire to sever all connection between us. When she was convinced of my constancy to you, I succeeded in obtaining your address, and, oh, Eva, if I had only come in time to see you in your shroud it would not have pierced my heart as did the sight which I beheld. I arrived just in time to see you step from your carriage clad in bridal robes. I do not know why I write you this. I intended to go away and never let you know I had seen you, but some infatuation draws me to where you are. I leave here to-night, so you shall not be troubled by sight of me. May you be happy. Your heart is too false and fickle for any memory of the past to cause it a pang.

"Farewell, ALAN HORTEN."

With a wild, despairing cry, Eva tore from her head the veil and wreath, and threw them from her. She rushed to the door and called the girl who had given her Alan's note. "Where is the gentleman who gave you this?" she demanded.

"I saw him go straight towards the entrance gate, madam."

Eva flew along the corridor, down the stairs and rushed out following in Alan's footsteps, looking like a spectre, with her wild, despairing face and white dress gleaming like marble in the bright moonlight. She would follow, she cared not where, till she reached him. She had not far to go. When he reached the gate and knew that he would soon leave behind forever the four walls which enclosed her, Alan stood gazing sadly at the house in mute farewell. Soon he saw a white figure rushing towards him; another few seconds, and, panting, breathless, Eva stood before him.

"Eva!"

"Alan!"

Only these two words, then dead silence. Her bosom heaved convulsively, her face looked tragic in its wild despair, as she raised it to his. She clasped her hands tightly together. "Oh! Alan, Alan, is it thus we meet? Oh! I am justly punished, I am justly punished—I was mad to doubt you. I realize it now, but too late, too late."

"Vain, useless words," raising his hand as if to keep them off, "if they are meant to deceive me, and I think Mrs. Brandon has done a very unwise thing in leaving her room at this hour of night unaccompanied by her husband."

"Hush, hush, Alan," she cried, "I've borne enough. Your reproaches cannot hurt me half as much as my own do."

The calm of her nature seemed broken, and on her face were visible grief, despair, a hopeless sorrow which he could not mistake. "Do not goad me to madness" she went on, "I am not prepared to say what I may do before this night ends. I am selfish too, for I am not giving you a thought. I am only thinking of my own lost happiness. What evil fate kept you one hour too late to save me from that hateful marriage, or what blind, mad folly led me on to it. When the chance of happiness was so near I threw it from me."

"Eva," said Alan, becoming alarmed as he saw her wild, reckless manner, her cheeks flushed, her eyes blazing with ex-

citement, "try and calm yourself; you will be seen from the hotel, come here and tell me all," and he led her to a narrow grove which branched off from the walk and was shaded by tall trees. She leaned against one of them, for she was trembling from head to foot. When she had calmed herself a little she told him everything, of her motive for wishing to make a brilliant marriage, of the circumstances which had hurried her into it, of her last words to Ida Carroll to make him believe she had ceased to care for him.

"What a small thing to condemn me on, Eva, just because you did not get my letters."

"And the last one I did receive from you, Alan, was but a short, cold note."

"Ah, yes, I remember; there was something of importance transpired at the office on that day, and I was sent for in a great hurry. I was in the act of beginning your letter, and so was obliged to hurry through it, but in my next I explained it satisfactorily."

"I never received your next, Alan, but it was not that alone which made me condemn you. When that report began to be circulated, and I saw people looking at me with sympathetic eyes, my pride arose, and my heart rebelled at the injustice which I believed you had done me."

"What a poor opinion you had of me, Eva, to think I could be guilty of such unpardonable meanness."

"I did not believe you would be married without first coming to see me, and this was what I wished to avoid, so I returned your ring to let you know you were free, and when the chance offered of leaving home I embraced it. Oh, Alan, are you sure that you did not care for Miss Grant?"

Both forgot for the time that she was the wife of another. He took her hands in his while he said, "Never for one moment, Eva, but in the light of a dear friend; never have I, by thought or act, been, in the smallest degree, untrue to you. My heart is as much yours now as on the day we parted over two years ago."

"Ah, no," she answered, "it should be reserved for me to be faithless; but not in heart, Alan, not in heart, but in deed, in mad, wicked deed, for which I am bitterly punished. But, oh, Alan, if you knew the torture, the slow, lingering torture which

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I endured when your letters did not reach me. How every day I hoped, and hoped in vain, to hear from you. When the postman came to the door my heart would beat with expectation. And then came the cruel, bitter disappointment, when I thought I could not live through it, when I prayed to die. Who could have taken our letters? What enemy had we?"

Alan showed her the message which was handed to him in Liverpool. "I had a hope, Eva," he said "that perhaps you and I should go there together, but what matters it now what happened to them, it cannot give us back to each other." He told her of Nellie Grant's noble, disinterested friendship for them both, and of how she must have been working since he left to discover the lost letters. But Eva could not look upon her in the light of a noble friend. She had a prejudice against her which she could not overcome. "And now, Eva, dear, lost one, we must part. When your husband returns to you, you must try to be happy and forget me."

A wild, bitter sob burst from her lips. "I would that he never returned," she cried, with sudden passion.

"Consoling words for the husband of a few hours to hear from the lips of his bride."

Both started, looking in the direction from which the voice came, and saw Arthur Brandon a little distance from them, a look of deadly hatred, jealousy and anger plainly visible on his face, even in the moonlight. "I thought," he went on, "that it was only in the pages of romance we hear of the bride of a few hours going to keep tryst with her lover in her husband's absence."

The scorn and sarcasm which he threw into his voice, revealed to Eva a new side of his character. She looked neither guilty nor defiant. She had gone past all that she was simply indifferent to what he thought. "And," she added, "the husband, after bidding his wife farewell for six months, breaks his word by appearing stealthily upon the scene."

"I have not broken my word," he replied. "I have been wandering for the past hour through the grove just because I would not break it. The train which was to have borne my unwelcome presence from you is delayed for some hours owing to an accident on the line, and I—poor deluded fool that I am—thought I might, at least, come where I could catch a

glimpse of the light from your window without violating my pledged word."

"Mr. Brandon," said Alan, "you know just as well as your wife and I do, that this is no lover's tryst. It is a last sad farewell between us, who one time hoped to link our lives together. This meeting is not even by appointment. A misunderstanding caused each to believe the other false. When I discovered the truth I hastened to set things right between us, and arrived in time to see you lead your bride from the carriage. I should have gone away then, I admit, and suffered in silence, but the frailty of human nature rose above the nobler promptings of the soul, (here a cynical smile passed over Arthur Brandon's face), and I wrote bitterly reproaching her for what she had done. She hurried out to catch me ere I had time to be gone, and as you seem to have heard our conversation you know the rest. If there has been any imprudence, I alone am to blame."

"Nicely put," said Arthur Brandon, "but I don't believe you, Mr.—whatever your name is."

"Alan Horten," he answered, drawing his figure to its full height.

"Then Alan Horten," and Arthur Brandon trembled with wrath, "there is but one way to settle a thing of this kind. Name your time and place."

With a cry that startled both men, Eva flew towards Alan, grasping his arms tightly. She shook so that she could scarcely stand. "Oh! Alan, Alan, do not fight him for my sake—promise that you will not, he will kill you; he is a sure shot. Oh, go—go away now." She spoke rapidly, beseechingly, her nerves were strung to their utmost tension, and she had lost all control of them. The sight of her clinging to Alan seemed to madden her jealous husband. "I hate you," he said. "I hate you for coming between us just when she might have learned to care for me. She had long ago despised and was learning to forget you. I would rejoice to see you dead at my feet this moment. I must assert the authority of a husband, Mrs. Brandon, and command you to return to your rooms." But he might have been talking to a statue so far as any attention she paid to him was concerned. She was wildly beseeching Alan to go away and not fight her husband. He held her hand

tightly in his to try to calm her. "Listen, Eva," he said, as if he were trying to coax a child, "listen, dear. Have you ever known me to break a promise made to you?"

She laid her head for a moment on his hands, and tried to steady herself. "No," she answered, more composedly, "I never have."

"Well, now believe me when I tell you that nothing shall induce me to fight with your husband—nothing. Now, child, return to the house; you will make yourself ill, try and be calm. Shall I accompany you?"

"I think that is my privilege," said Arthur Brandon, stepping hastily forward and offering his arm.

"According to our agreement you have no privileges for six months," and Eva drew back proudly. "I require no assistance. You will keep your word, Alan?"

"I will keep it, Eva," and she walked wearily away.

Arthur Brandon was leaning with his back against a tree, his arms folded across his chest, a bitter smile upon his lips. "Do you intend to keep that promise?"

"I should not make it did I not intend to keep it."

"Coward," hissed Arthur Brandon between his teeth. "You are afraid."

"No, Arthur Brandon, I am no coward. Did we fight you would find a foeman worthy of your steel, for I feel I should be the victor. My aim is sure. I do not fear the opinion of the world, the tiniest atom in the elements is more to me than this. But I do not base my refusal to fight you on that ground. The God whom you impiously deny, commands that we must not so expose to danger the life that is not our own, but were it lawful by the laws of God and man, I should still refuse. Why?" and he raised his hat, pointing in the direction which Eva had taken, "because I have given my word to her, and did ten thousand worlds brand me with the name of coward, it should not tempt me to break it."

Arthur Brandon was dumb. He recognized in the man before him a truer heroism, a higher nobility of character than his own, and he was forced to inwardly acknowledge his inferiority. He felt that this man was no coward. Both were silent. Not a stir broke the calm of the summer night save the rustle of the leaves on the trees, and just now the hoot of

an owl. Then suddenly there rang out loud and sharp on the night air, the report of a rifle, and Alan Horton first staggered and then fell to the ground. The inmates of the hotel heard it, the landlord heard it, and all ran to the door to see what it meant. Eva, in her own room, heard it and ran like one frantic, her golden hair flying disorderly about her shoulders.

"He has murdered him! he has murdered him!" she cried as she rushed to the spot where she had left her husband with Alan Horton. They all thought she had suddenly lost her reason. They followed her, Mr. and Mrs. Brandon being amongst them. As Eva entered the grove she saw her husband stooping over Alan trying to raise him. With a push she threw him from the prostrate figure. "Murderer," she cried, "do not touch him," as she fell on her knees by the side of the man for whom she would now gladly yield her life could it give back his. "My dream! my dream!" she wailed. Murdered, not by the millionaire's daughter, but by my husband. "There," she cried, pointing to Arthur Brandon, who stood a little distance off, his arms folded, a look upon his face which did not seem like guilt, "there stands his murderer. Do not let him escape." She had pillowed Alan's head upon her knees, and her bridal dress, face and hands were stained with his life-blood. Mr. Brandon approached and laid a hand upon her shoulder. "Eva, what wild thing is this you are saying?" he asked. "Have you gone mad? What is this stranger to you or your husband that he should murder him? Get up, you are attracting the attention of everyone and causing much trouble to Arthur."

"He murdered him, I tell you," she repeated. "He challenged him, Alan Horton, to fight a duel with him, and he did not fight because he promised me he would not. With my own ears I heard Arthur Brandon say that he would rejoice to see this man dead at his feet, and here we come and find him dead, dead. Oh, my darling, will you never speak to me again! Oh, he has murdered you in cold blood, you, one hair of whose head is a thousand times dearer to me than he could ever be."

"This is a serious charge for your own wife to bring against you, Mr. Brandon," said the landlord. "I must have

this thing seen to. I am sorry, sir, but the reputation of my hotel is at stake."

"I understand you," said Arthur. "Send for the authorities, I will not attempt to escape. The thing looks black against me, and my wife's evidence will condemn me, but I am innocent. In a court of justice a wife is not allowed to give evidence against her husband, but mine has given it here in presence of those who will have to appear against me."

"Your wife," cried Eva, rising excitedly to her feet. "I am no wife of yours. I would not own a murderer for a husband." She tore the wedding ring from her finger and flung it as far as she could from her. "As I cast this emblem of our ill-fated union from me," she said, "so do I cast every tie that binds us."

In a very short time two gens d'armes and a surgeon appeared upon the scene, the landlord having acquainted them with what had transpired. "We must take you in charge, sir," one officer said to Arthur, who only bowed to him, and turned to the doctor, saying, "if yonder man is not dead, and some effort made to make him speak, he alone can clear me."

The surgeon went to Alan, laid his hand upon his heart, felt his pulse, and then said, "The man is not even near death, he has simply fainted from loss of blood. Had anything been done quickly he would not have fainted at all. He is reviving now," he said, as he quickly put a flask to his lips.

Soon he began to breathe. Eva knelt by his side, holding his hand. A sweet hope filled her heart—Alan was still alive and might not die. A few moments more and he spoke her name. All drew near to listen.

"Eva," he said, in a weak voice, "that was a great mistake of yours. I heard you accuse your husband of murdering me. I tried to contradict it but could not speak; something seemed to get in my throat, I think it was blood, and then I knew no more. Your husband did not fire the shot, Eva, he was standing with his arms folded when it struck me somewhere in the throat. I think it must have come from some distance up the grove. No, Eva, your husband is no coward, he did not shoot me."

Very carefully Alan Horten was borne to a room in the hotel where his wound was attended to, which proved to be

serious, but not fatal, and after the bullet was extracted, he was pronounced to be out of danger, but feverish. When Eva learned that Alan would live she went to her room and wept tears of joy. She felt so weak and exhausted from what she had gone through during the past hour, that she threw herself upon the bed without undressing, and as she grew calmer she began to realize her position. Mr. Brandon and his wife would never speak to her again. She read it in their cold, averted faces. And her husband, what of him? Surely he must hate her. What had she said whilst that wild frenzy of grief was upon her? She could not remember half. She had overheard Mrs. Brandon saying to her husband that she should leave Montpellier next day and would feel thankful to escape with her life, and hoped she should never again set eyes on it. Of course they did not ask her to go with them, neither would she go if they had. Would her husband ever forgive her she wondered. Slowly it began to dawn upon her the terrible crime from which she had been saved. If Alan had been killed would she not be a double-dyed murderess; his, because she was the means of bringing him to his death, and her husband's, because believing so firmly in his guilt she would have sworn away his life. The more she thought of it the higher her heart rose in gratitude to Him, the ruler of all destinies, Who, in His mercy had saved her from so terrible a fate, till at last she arose and fell on her knees by the bedside, resolving that as far as it lay in her power she would nobly atone to her husband for the great wrong she had done him. She knew he had not yet left Montpellier, for she had heard Mr. Brandon say he would see Arthur next day. She also would see him, ask his forgiveness, and tell him that if he were willing she would go to England with him, and live in the seclusion of his country home till he returned to her. But a nobler, higher, greater sacrifice than this kept forcing itself upon her mind. She put it from her at first as something beyond her strength. But it came again and again, each time leaving a deeper impression, till by degrees all bitterness melted from her heart and a firm and noble resolve took its place. After all, was it not her duty. She owed him this reparation. It was the only way in which she could atone to him for her unjust accusations and the humiliations which she had heaped

upon him. Next morning, though feeling weak and ill, she arose early and went to inquire after Alan. She was told that he had a fairly good night and was on the road to recovery. Her dark-blue eyes kindled with the light of heroism as she descended to the breakfast room. Mrs. Brandon and her husband bowed in silence. Eva looked around, half wishing, yet half dreading to see Arthur, but he was not there. She enquired for him and Mr. Brandon answered that he had not stayed at their hotel last night, but had gone into town and taken the noon train to Paris, and that he himself intended seeing him immediately after breakfast."

"Then he does not intend returning here again?" she asked.

"Can you wonder at that?" he replied.

"No, Mr. Brandon, I do not wonder at it. I should not wonder if you and Mrs. Brandon never spoke to me again. I do not deserve either of your forgiveness. My only excuse I can offer is that I was mad with grief. Alan Horton and I were engaged to be married. A false report caused me to believe him untrue, and I left home, as you know, and went to England in Captain Brown's ship. Alan was not in Newfoundland at the time, and when he arrived there and found I was gone he thought I wished to be free. It was some months ere he learned the truth, and he then immediately followed me here and arrived about one hour after my marriage. I was not aware of his presence in Montpellier till after I had gone to my room last night, when I was handed a note. Here it is," and she took it from her pocket where she had put it, intending to show it to her husband. Both read it. "Then," she went on, "I asked Jeannette where he had gone and she told me towards the entrance gate. I rushed after him. At least, I said, he should not go believing me the false creature he thought me. I should explain all to him. When I reached the gate he was there. We were not more than fifteen minutes talking when Arthur came along. I should have told you before that I did not deceive him. He understood that I not only cared nothing for him, but that I loved another, and he said he was willing to take the risk of marrying me. But that does not excuse me, I did wrong to marry him."

"You did, my dear, no doubt you did," said Mr. Brandon, whose heart was beginning to soften towards her.

"And then, as you know," Eva went on, "poor Agnes Neyle's death was the circumstance which hurried on the marriage. Arthur would not leave me depending for a living upon the obtaining of another situation. But I should have been more firm and not have allowed him to persuade me into it. Well, he heard some of our conversation, enough to tell him that it was the man who was at one time to have been my husband, and he grew furious and challenged him to fight; but I made Alan promise he would refuse, and I know he kept his word. So when I heard that shot, and saw Alan lying on the ground, as I thought, dead, and Arthur bending over him, can you blame me very much for believing him guilty?"

"The circumstances looked very black against him," both acknowledged; "but then," said Mrs. Brandon, "why did you make such a scene?"

"I forgot everything," Eva replied, "in the maddening thought that I, being the means of bringing him here, was the cause of his death. But now, as far as it lays in my power, I will make atonement for all the wrong things I have said and done. Mr. Brandon, will you take me to my husband?"

"With the greatest pleasure in life," he answered, "and I hope you will make the poor boy happy in spite of all that has happened."

"A noble woman, Lena, no matter what she has said and done," he told his wife when Eva had left the room to prepare for her journey.

"I do hope they will come to terms," said Mrs. Brandon, "and let us complete our tour in peace."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

Eva is sitting in a little waiting-room of a hotel in the town of Montpellier, whilst Mr. Brandon has gone to inform her husband that she is there and wishes to see him. What

did he think of her, and what would he say? she wondered. Presently the door slowly opened and he entered, closed it behind him, and he stood before her. His face looked cold and hard as marble, there was no softened light in his dark eyes as they rested upon her, not even when he noted the extreme pallor of her face and the unsteadiness of her nerves.

"Why do you wish to see me?" he asked.

"Arthur, did you intend going without seeing me again?"

"If I desired to please you could I do anything better? And did I once again enter the hotel in which you stayed, I should break our contract, of which you took care to remind me last night. I intended asking my uncle what you wished to do, and was about despatching a messenger to him when he arrived. Do you mean to go on with them to Spain?"

"No," she answered, "the feverish longing which I had for travelling has all left me, and besides, how could I expect my companionship to be pleasant to your aunt and uncle after what I've done. They can never forgive me. I could not ask them. My path of duty lies straight before me and I will not turn from it. I must endeavor, in some degree to make atonement for my folly and rashness. I have been wrong—all wrong. I entered into marriage with you from unholy motives, and if that shot had proved fatal last night, I should have been guilty of his death and yours; his, because I detained him; yours, because my wild words would have convicted you. When I knew he was out of danger, and realized all that might have resulted had it been otherwise, I felt such relief, such gratitude in my heart that I wept for joy, and I resolved to go to my husband, ask his forgiveness, and do my best to make the remainder of his life happy, if he will let me."

But no glad light shone in his eyes. "I forgive you," he said, "inasmuch as I bear you no malice, but, forget that you tried to brand me with the sin of Cain, that, in presence of a gaping crowd you tore my ring from your finger while you confessed your love for another man, I never can. I take a long time to forget a wrong. For twelve years I resented one which had been done me in my early youth, and this one cuts deeper than that because it has been dealt me by the one I loved best on earth. I speak in the past tense because I am not sure that my love will outlive the cruel stab it received last

night. My life seems to be made up of broken chords. The restless fever for roving is again upon me, and the only thing which can ever make me forget is time and absence. If any wish of mine has the smallest weight with you, I would ask that you go to Brandonville, make what alterations and regulations you chose there, invite whom you please, and if, when the autumn comes, I do not return, if it should please you to do so, take a house in London and be as happy as you can."

"A vain, empty life indeed you would map out for me, Arthur, but I aspire to something higher; I will go to your country home, not to lead a life of gaiety, but to live apart from the world which holds no attraction for me, and thank God every day that I am not a murderess. Arthur," and she drew a little nearer and laid her hand on his arm, "a few days ago you said that nothing would make you give up your journey to Egypt unless I asked it. Well, I ask it now. Come with me to Brandonville, forget that last night ever existed, and there, after a time, we may both find happiness, there you may regain your lost faith. I went to the grove this morning and tried to find my ring, but failed to do so. But see!" and she drew her glove from her left hand, "I have put in its stead my darling mother's wedding ring, I kissed it as I placed it there, with a prayer to her that she would obtain for her daughter strength to be as true to her marriage vows as she had been to hers. And if I am, Arthur, and my heart tells me that my prayer was heard, you shall have no fault to find with me."

The light of admiration shone in his eyes. He looked upon her, but they saddened and hardened again. "If you had asked me that yesterday, Eva, I would have thought that earth held for me no greater happiness, but to-day everything is changed."

"To-day, Arthur, I am a better woman than I was yesterday. Then my heart was filled with a mean ambition, a desire for revenge in some form, and a determination to live for my own pleasure. All these have passed; remorse, a wish to atone for all the wrong I have done to you and Alan Horten, and a desire to make an effort to save your soul from destruction have taken their place."

"I cannot—I cannot," he said, with a despairing gesture,

as if he would fain yield, but it was beyond his power. "I am a desperate man, Eva. Do what I will I cannot forget that if Alan Horten had never spoken again, the gallows would have been my fate, and my blood would have cried out for vengeance against you as the blood of Abel did against his brother Cain."

"To whom, Arthur, should your blood cry for vengeance?"

This simple question from the lips of his wife for a moment staggered the man of the world, the man who boasted that his intellectual powers were of too high an order, his brain too clear to admit the simple faith which she possessed. He did not answer.

"Tell me then," went on Eva, "to whom did Abel's blood cry for vengeance?"

"To God" he answered slowly and reluctantly; and as the words escaped his lips there seemed to sweep over his soul a great and mighty change, an awe of some power more than human, a forced, inward acknowledgment of his own nothingness, of the unfitness and inability of the human intellect to solve those mysteries which are destined to be, till the end of time beyond its reach, and, though he did not then realize it, his stubborn will was submitted to Him who gave it.

"Oh, Arthur," said his wife, while tears filled her eyes, for she noticed his emotion, "you are no atheist; I always doubted it. I believe you tried to think yourself one, and association with those whose craven minds will not allow them to acknowledge their belief in a hereafter, has done you much harm, but I have always believed that in your heart of hearts you could not doubt the existence of a world beyond this, and of a God."

"Why have you believed this?" he asked.

"Because," she answered, "you are neither a dolt nor insane, and he, who is really an atheist, must be one of these."

The man who possessed such capabilities for good or evil, leaned his troubled brow upon his hands for some minutes, then he replied, "I will take you to our English home myself, Eva, but I must then leave you for a while. I wish to forget, and absence will help me better than anything else. I will remember your words, and the noble sacrifice which you tried to make to fulfil your duty will not be lost upon me. I fully

trusted you, Eva, remember that. The fact that I would have left you with the man you love so near you, proves how much I believed nothing wrong of you last night when I saw you in the grove talking to Alan Horten, though I pretended to. My jealousy and fierce passion urged me to it. I believe now, as I did the first moment my eyes rested upon you, that were you tried, like gold in the furnace you would come forth purer than when you entered."

"Thank you, Arthur, for your faith in me. Since you will not let me try to make you happy now, I will do as you desire. Take me to your home—our home—and there I will wait and pray for your return."

It has often been said that only very proud natures can at times be truly humble. Eva might have retorted that she had not wished to marry him, that she had told him the truth as to her feelings towards him and her motives for marrying him. She might have reminded him that, against her inclination, he had persuaded her into hastening it on, and so spoiled her life-long happiness, but Alan's life was spared, and her heart felt so overflowing with gratitude that she counted no sacrifice too great, no humiliation too bitter to offer in thanksgiving. Her self-abnegation was generous and entire. That same evening she bade an eternal farewell to Alan Horten and left with her husband for England. The bitterness of that parting, she felt, would remain with her till the day she died. She told him of all her good resolutions, of her request to her husband to remain home with her and of his refusal for some months yet.

"I hope, Eva," said Alan, that when he does return he will have learned to appreciate you for the angel you are."

He was resting on a lounge in the room, looking pale and sad. The wound, he told her, would be sufficiently healed in a week to allow his departure for home. The doctor was loathe to permit the interview, and it was only considering that they were English friends, and the lady going away that it was granted, with strict instructions not to excite the patient, and that the visit should be brief. The hired French nurse had discreetly withdrawn while they said good-bye.

"Oh, Alan," she said, her composure nearly breaking, "all the sorrows of the past years put together cannot equal the bitterness of this hour. When last we parted I thought my

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heart would break, though I knew it was only for two years, and now it is forever—a long, long life time. Oh, why did we ever part; it was an unlucky day. I wonder will you be happy after a little while, Alan, when you will have forgotten me; when some other girl, sweet and true, will be your wife?"

"Hush, Eva child, do not make our parting harder, do not make me say words which I should not utter."

He was only human and not exempt from temptation, but he remembered he was a man, "God's noblest work," the being destined to guard, and not tempt, the weaker sex. "You are Arthur Brandon's wife," he went on, "devote your life to the holy task of winning him back to his lost faith, and this will bring you peace and happiness. Do not fear for me, I shall not be unhappy. I, too have duties to live for, but—" and for one instant he held her hands tightly, "the only wife I shall ever know is the memory of Eva Carlen." He dropped her hands, and said in a cold, stern voice, "Go!" The next moment the door closed upon her, and he was alone.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

A scorching hot day towards the end of June, and Alan Horton is walking leisurely along Sixth Avenue in the direction of Nellie Grant's home. His handsome face is thin and pale, with a heavy sadness shadowing his dark-brown eyes. He went slowly up the familiar steps, and in response to his ring the well-known face of the porter appeared at the door. He was rejoiced to see Alan, and, with a glad face, went to inform his mistress that he was there. Mrs. Grant entered the drawing-room looking much troubled. She shook hands cordially with Alan, and when he enquired for Miss Grant the tears filled her eyes.

"I do not know what to think of her, Alan. She has those attacks of the heart very often now. When she was a child she had rheumatic fever and was near death. The doctor told us at the time that her heart was seriously affected, but being young, and with great care, she might outgrow it, at

least he led us to believe so, and now he says the symptoms remained all the time, but that they would not have caused any trouble were they not aggravated by some great worry, trouble or anxiety of some kind, which has brought on these attacks. Now, we know that she has never had any worry, trouble or anxiety, and the strangest part of it is that she believes she is going to die and has no desire to live. I must tell her of your presence, Alan, before she sees you. The doctor says to be particularly careful not to surprise or excite her. At the end of a quarter of an hour Mrs. Grant reappeared and asked Alan to follow her. She led the way to a cool, pretty morning-room. Nellie was resting on a couch drawn near the window; but, oh, how changed. In place of the bright bloom which less than a year ago, flushed her cheek, was a dark, purplish tint, purple rings rested under her dark eyes, which lighted with pleasure as she glanced at Alan. A bright blush, for a moment, lent the once familiar bloom to her cheeks. In silence, more eloquent than words, Alan took her wasted hand in his. Mrs. Grant withdrew and left them together.

"Do you find me much changed, Alan?" she asked.

"You are not looking well, Nellie," he answered, "but you will get better by-and-by, when you go to the seashore."

She shook her head, slowly, "Ah, no," she said, "that is what they all say, but I know better. I shall never go to the sea-shore again. I made the doctor tell me the truth. I may die at any minute. I may die before I tell you that for which I brought you here, and I must make haste. When I received your letter telling me that you intended leaving for Europe, I sent a message in the hope that you would receive it before you left Newfoundland, but it was too late."

"Yes," answered Alan. "My mother sent it on to me in Liverpool."

"And you found Eva and made it all right with her, did you not, Alan?" she asked, looking anxiously at him.

"I found her, Nellie," he replied, "let me tell you how." and to the girl whose heart sank at every word, whose remorse increased tenfold as she listened, he told the whole story.

"Oh, I am so sorry, so very sorry," she murmured.

He took her hand and looked at her gratefully. Her sympathy was sweet to him.

"Ah, take my hand, Alan, it is the last time I shall feel that strong clasp of friendship, the last time you will look kindly upon me. When you hear what I've got to tell you, you will despise me, and I shall deserve it. I might spare myself the recital, as it cannot reunite you, but as I hope for pardon from One above, Whom I expect soon to meet, I must make a full confession of my crime, and repair, as far as I am able, the injury done. Yes, crime," she repeated, as she saw Alan start. "I must speak plainly," and she clasped her hands tightly together, as if nerving herself for what she was about to say. "I loved you, Alan Horten," she said, "loved you, not with a friend's love, as you believed, but with a love greater than I had for any other being living, and though I had seen but her pictured face, I hated the girl who had won your heart and whose praises you were continually sounding in my ears. I deceived you, but let me add, that if I had known, when you first came amongst us, that you were not a free man, I don't think I would have learned the lesson which has been so fatal; I would rather have died, Alan, than have made this humiliating confession some time ago, but when we are on the brink of eternity, all these things seem small in comparison. I tried by every means in my power to win you from your golden-haired darling, but you were too loyal and true. As the time approached nearer and nearer when you would go to her, I grew desperate. I kept up a correspondence with your mother, and learned from her letters that Eva Carlen was not a favorite of hers, and I led her to believe, without writing it in so many words, that there might be a possibility of her having me one day for a daughter, with the hope that she may drop a word at some time which might reach the ears of my rival and cause her to mistrust you. But I watched and waited, and saw that you wrote and received letters promptly. You both loved and trusted too well. The month of August came and we were at Coney Island. One Saturday morning I had to come to the city on some business. You know I always took upon myself the duty of placing each one's letter near his or her plate. I liked it, and James always gave them to me. But he had directions after we went to Coney Island, to bring yours to the office. So this day he had just arrived with the mail as I entered the house, and told me he wanted yours taken

out to bring them to you. Leave them to me, James, I said, it is no difference to-day, because Mr. Horten is coming out in the afternoon and I can give them to him. There were only two, your mother's and Miss Carlen's. I knew both writings well. Ah, that was my last happy day. I had manœuvred, given false impressions, but I had not stooped to crime before. The temptation came when I was placing the letters on the table to keep back Miss Carlen's. I did not give way to it easily. I put her letter, with Mrs. Horten's, near your plate and took it up again several times. At last, hearing someone coming, I hastily put it in my pocket, intending to keep it there for a day or so. I saw the disappointed look on your face as you took up your mother's letter and looked in vain for another. You told me of it afterwards, and I (hypocrite that I was) expressed wonder at it. The longer I kept your letter the more difficult it seemed to give it up, and at last I determined never to do so. But all the time I was fearful and anxious. What if you should question James, and he told you he had given me two letters for you. Well, I chanced it. Then came my next temptation. One crime always brings many. If I wanted to derive any advantage from the holding back of Miss Carlen's letter to you, I must arrange that no letter from you reached her. This was not easy, as we were at the seashore and you were in the city, so the day that I expected you would be writing, I arrived here early in the morning. I entered the library with two letters in my hand which I had written merely to serve my purpose. One was to your mother. You were there just addressing a letter to Miss Carlen. I had sent James on a message so as to delay him. If you remember business was very pressing for some weeks at the office during that summer and nearly all your time was spent there. I put my two letters in the bag, which was lying on the table, saying that James would be here directly to take them to the post office. You put in your letter and made the remark that you feared Eva's mother must be ill again and it may have kept her from writing you, then left the house. I remained, saying I had a message to receive from James. As soon as you were out of hearing I opened the bag, took out your letter to Miss Carlen, and put it in my pocket. After that I became so accustomed to deceit that it came as naturally to me as any other every-

day duty. But haunting me day and night, sleeping or waking, was the fear of discovery. I think I would have committed any crime to prevent your finding out how false and bad I was. I would have given my life rather than have you look upon me, as you must do now, with horror and aversion. I started at every ring of the door-bell, at every unusual sound. Every letter that came I felt the color leave my face till I was assured it was nothing that would lead to my detection. Then I began to watch for Miss Carlen's next letter. How should I get possession of it without letting anyone see it? I pleaded illness, saying that the seaside was not agreeing with me and persuaded father and mother to return to the city. Do you remember, Alan, we left Coney Island somewhat earlier than usual that summer?" It was the first time she had ventured to look at him since she began her confession. His head was leaning on his hand, his face partly turned from her. "I remember," was all he said, in a hoarse voice. "Well," she went on, "I was spared the sin of stealing another of Miss Carlen's letters. She was prouder, even than I thought; she never wrote again. But you did, and this time I had to follow James some distance and get the bag from him on pretence of putting in a letter, and so slipped Miss Carlen's out unnoticed by him. About this time I began to lose my health. When the doctor was called in after the first heart attack, he told me that it must have been occasioned by some pressing anxiety, or worry, which had aggravated the symptoms of heart disease that remained with me since the rheumatic fever, which I had when a child. As my fear and anxiety increased every day, so did my illness. One day, in looking over some Newfoundland papers, I read of Mrs. Carlen's death. I knew you would read them, and before you had time to do so, I destroyed the paper, fearing that the knowledge of her mother's death would soften your heart towards Eva and cause you to write again. Then I began to be on the watch for more letters. I thought it likely Miss Carlen would write to inform you of her mother's death. One day, some time after this, the letters came, and as I was arranging them I noticed one, with a black edge, addressed to you, in a strange handwriting. Fearing it might be something relating to Mrs. Carlen's death, I kept it. That was my last theft."

"It was from my poor, wronged darling's one friend, Miss Carroll, informing me of Mrs. Carlen's death," said Alan. His voice was choked with emotion. "If you had even left me that letter all would have been well."

"Oh, if I only had," she moaned, with a ring of intense agony in her voice. "I often wondered why your mother never informed you of Mrs. Carlen's death. I wish she had, it might have saved all this trouble. When the small package came to you in Miss Carlen's writing, I felt sure, before you told me, that it was the ring, and rejoiced, hoping soon to hear from you the words which would have made me happy. What a fool I was, and, oh, what a bitter price I have paid for my wickedness. It has cost me my life. When you bade me good-bye to go to her I realized, all too late, that my plotting had been in vain. I had such confidence in the power of my poor beauty, which has all left me now, that I thought I could not fail to win you. But even at that late hour, if I had confessed all, you might have been happy, for you could have gone to her before this ill-fated marriage took place, but the thought of your scorn for me when you saw me in my true colors, kept me silent. Repentance had come to me then, but I could not bear the humiliation of letting you know that I loved unasked. A few months ago I insisted on the doctor telling me the exact truth. I told him it would have no bad effect on me to know the worst, for I had no desire to live, and gently as he could he told me that though I may live for years I should never again have perfect health, and also that any sudden shock, any slight excitement, over exertion, or fatigue, might prove fatal, so that any minute may be my last. When I received your letter telling me of your intention of going to Miss Carlen, I felt glad and hoped you would be reunited. I was filled with a desire to make some atonement for the wrong I had done you both, so, knowing a letter would not reach Newfoundland ere you left it, I sent that cable message hoping it might catch you there. Oh, Alan, I was a very proud girl, and you can imagine what a humiliation this confession has been to me, but I have made it with the hope that in the world beyond, where soon I hope to be, it may help to weigh in the balance against the evil I have done. Oh, Alan, look at me once more. Do not turn your face from me. Can I, dare

I, plead your forgiveness for the irreparable injury I have done you? Remember that my soul is hovering on the brink of eternity. Forget all I have told you; think of me once again as Nellie Bly, your friend, to whom you confided all your anxieties, all your joys. Say you forgive me, I was but human?"

When he spoke his voice startled her. Never before had she heard it so cold and stern. All softness and emotion had died out of it.

"And so am I but human," he said. "'To err is human, to forgive divine.' May God pardon you, Nellie Grant, I never can,—never on this side of the grave. Were my own wrongs ten times as great, I could forgive you, but what you've made her suffer, my wronged, innocent darling, I cannot pardon. You had all that the world could give, wealth, beauty, home, friends, love, if you chose to take it; she had lost home, fortune, parents; the one gleam of sunshine in her clouded sky, was the knowledge of my love and devotion, her faith in my constancy. You robbed her of that. It is desecration to call such a feeling as yours by the name of love, it was a vain, selfish passion to possess that which belonged to another. Love, that is worthy of the name, forgets itself, its impulses, its promptings are noble and self-sacrificing; its groundwork, truth and loyalty. In my heart there is not one touch of pity for you. You've brought you're suffering on yourself, and well you have earned it," and he moved towards the door.

It was only when a sudden, gasping cry caused him to turn once more towards her, and he noticed the death-like pallor of her face, that he remembered the doctor's words which she had told him, that any excitement, any over-exertion, which the recital of the confession she had made him must have caused her, may prove fatal. She had fallen back on the cushions and could not speak. She motioned him to hand her a glass containing a mixture, which stood on the table near. He brought it and raised her head, so that she could drink a little. After a few moments she grew better and he felt thankful that he had not caused her death.

"I am sorry," he said gently, "if my words have caused this. I forgot that I should not have said anything to excite you." A little pity was stirring in his heart as he gazed upon the wreck she had made of herself.

"I am better now," she murmured faintly. "Oh, Alan, I deserve all you can say to me, and though I am fully aware I do not deserve your forgiveness, still I ask it. If you knew it would make me die happily would you not grant it?"

"I cannot," he said, "I cannot; not now. Perhaps to-morrow I may find in my heart some forgiveness for you, but I cannot do it now."

"Oh, Alan, God has forgiven me, will you be less merciful?"

"I am, because, as I have said before, I am only human."

"If Eva Carlen were here she would forgive me; she would not refuse my dying request. Forgive me for her sake?"

"She is an angel of goodness," he said reverently.

She reached out her small, white hand to him with a supplicating gesture, "Oh, Alan! Alan!" she cried, "I did not think you could be so hard, so relentless. Take my hand just for one instant, and say, Nellie, I forgive you."

"I cannot do it, Nellie," he answered, in a kinder tone. "I am trying to but cannot. I could take your hand and, with my lips say that I forgive you, but my heart would not echo the words and I would be but uttering a falsehood. I will come to-morrow and then I may be able to do it."

She let her hand fall wearily to her side. "To-morrow," she said, "I may be beyond the reach of all earthly pardon. You know the extent of my sin, Alan, but you will never, in this world, realize the bitterness of my punishment. With your refusal to pardon me, I have drained the cup to its bitter dregs." She opened a small work-box near her and took from it a large sealed packet. "In this," she said, "you will find yours and Miss Carlen's stolen property. You will see that I have not dared to break the seal of one of them. Farewell."

She turned her face from him and closed her eyes. He went nearer and took her hand for one moment. "Good-bye for a while," he said. "I trust you will soon get a little stronger and live many years yet. I will come and see you to-morrow ere I leave for home." He hesitated for one moment and then stooped and kissed her hand. Her eyes opened and glanced at him, whilst a glad smile parted her lips. She thought he would speak the words she longed to hear; but no—he

dropped her hand and hastily departed. All that night he battled with himself, should he go and tell her he forgave her? she, who had caused his darling so much suffering, who had wronged her so deeply, whose falseness, crime and deceit had almost caused the loss of two lives? She did not deserve it. Then came the remembrance of the words, "Forgive as you would be forgiven," "Be merciful and you shall find mercy." In imagination he could hear the gentle voice of Eva pleading with him to offer to the dying girl the words of consolation which she craved. He began to think that after all there was much of nobility in her character, deeply as she had wronged them. Might she not have kept it still a secret, especially now when it made no difference. Might she not have written a confession to be given him after her death, and so retain what she valued so much, his good opinion of her whilst she lived. But no, she took upon herself the humiliation of it all, to make atonement for her sin. She did not spare herself anything, and she was but a weak woman. She would have sacrificed friends, home and fortune for his sake, and he was a strong man with health and vigor to battle with the world. Yes, he had been ungenerous and unmanly. The fierce anger which he felt against her, when he thought of Eva's sufferings, began to melt away, and he felt at last that he could go to Nellie Grant and say "I forgive you," while his heart responded to the words. He would not read the letters which she had given him till he had left New York, fearing that by so doing he would break his resolution.

At eleven next morning he wended his way to Sixth Avenue. "Well," he thought, "everything has an ending. This, I trust, is my last visit here. How I wish I had never laid eyes on it. How truly Eva spoke when she said on that night when first we parted, that we should never again stand together as we stood then. He was so deep in thought that he did not notice Charlie Grant coming towards him till he touched him on the shoulder. It struck him that his manner was rather subdued, and he asked, "How are you all, Charlie?"

"As well as can be expected," he answered. "Go right in. You will find father in the library, mother is too ill to be down-stairs." The front door was open, and he entered. All seemed silent and dark. With a strange sort of feeling creep-

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ing over him he went to the library. The first object which met his view as he entered, was Mr. Grant, his head bowed in deep sorrow, then he noticed the closed blinds, the lighted tapers, and near them, in a magnificent casket, robed in purest white, lay the remains of what was once Nellie Grant, sleeping the last long sleep of death. "To-morrow I may be beyond the reach of earthly pardon." Ah, hard, relentless heart of man, feel now the gnawing pangs of remorse. Thou hast not dealt as "gently with the erring one as God has dealt with thee." She to whom you yesterday refused one word of forgiveness, does not need it to-day. She has gone to receive her sentence from a more just and more merciful judge. Tears he could not stay rolled down his cheeks, and sobs he could not stifle shook his strong frame, as he knelt beside the silent form. Beautiful in death she looked, with the long, dark lashes resting on the marble cheeks, the small, white, beautifully moulded hands folded on the quiet breast. What would Alan Horten not give to see those eyes open and the light of intelligence to shine in them for one moment whilst he told her he forgave her? As he bent to kiss her brow he murmured, "Nellie, if it is possible that my words can reach you in the spirit land, hear me:—Freely and fully from my heart I forgive you. You have nobly atoned for your sin; and ask of Him whose pardon you have received, that when my hour comes He may show more mercy to me than I have shown to you."

"Alan, my dear boy," said Mr. Grant, laying his hand on his shoulder, "your sympathy does my heart good. It is a heavy trial to think of our poor darling being snatched from us in the spring-time of life."

"I had no idea," said Alan, "when I left her yesterday, that she was so near death. At what hour did she die, Mr. Grant?"

"About one hour after you left the change came. She scarcely spoke at all, and went off as if she were going to sleep. I think about six this morning she breathed her last."

Alan waited for the funeral, and followed the remains to Greenwood cemetery, and then once more started for home, as sad a young man as, perhaps, this world held, to take up the burden of his lonely life.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE news of Eva Carlen's marriage to one of the wealthiest men in England, soon leaked out, and it was published in the papers. Ida Carroll had, of course, learned all particulars from Alan. He told her everything but Nellie Grant's confession; that was safely locked in his own breast. Ida tearfully reproached herself for not telling Alan the truth months before she did, it would have altered everything and she would have had Eva with her again. Once only did Alan speak of his disappointment to his mother. He told her in a few words of Eva's marriage, and ended by saying:—"If I had written to Ida Carroll instead of to my mother, and asked her to find out if Eva received my letters, we would be happy now," to which Mrs. Horten could find no reply.

"Did Miss Grant tell you, before she died, what became of the letters, Alan?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, "she found them and gave them to me. It is no difference now what happened them. They, with the aid of a few more things, did their work. We are separated for ever."

The summer months passed and autumn came. St. John's was much excited over the coming election. Alan Horten was asked to stand for one of the leading outport districts. There should be two members for the district, but as yet his colleague had not been selected. Nomination day drew near, but the party did not fear defeat, for they felt sure that if Alan Horten were elected he would carry his man with him.

Robert Greene's highest ambition was to secure a seat in parliament, and so he went and offered himself for the vacancy as Alan Horten's colleague, feeling certain that this district, of all others, would elect their party. One day Alan received a note requesting him to attend a meeting at the party rooms that evening, as the man who was to stand with him had been selected. When he entered the room and Robert Greene was brought forward, he drew back with a haughty gesture, saying, "No, gentlemen, I would not enter the election field accompanied by such a cowardly end as you've selected. I want a man of honor and principle, not one who underhandedly inserts libelous articles in the papers with the malicious intent of in-

juror one whose absence at the time prevented him from justifying himself. I would not touch him with a long pole."

It was a bold hit; Alan had not been able to trace the paragraph home to Robert Greene up to this, but now one look at his guilty face convinced him that Jack Roberts had been correct in his suspicions. Everyone looked surprised, and all eyes turned upon Greene's flushed face as he stammered something unintelligible about Alan Horten's meanness in drawing back at the last moment when there was so little time to fill his place. But the ambitious little gentleman was soon made to understand that they had not the least notion of allowing Alan to withdraw, but that he himself must retire for the present. The remembrance of his maiden speech which he had long ago prepared in anticipation, and which he had labored over for hours, and thought so eloquent, forced him to make one more frantic appeal to the leaders of the party to induce Alan Horten to accept him as his colleague, but it was fruitless. They were too far-seeing to run the risk of losing a man of Alan Horten's standing merely to gratify the ambition of a "dude" like Robert Greene, and he was forced to take a back seat. He vowed he would come out independent and defeat Alan, but he very wisely changed his mind before nomination day. He did all in his power to injure Alan in the election campaign, especially when he learned that the man elected to fill his place was no less a personage than his old time rival, Jack Roberts, but to no avail, for he, together with Jack, was elected by a big majority.

For a time Ida Carroll and Eva corresponded occasionally, but by degrees, as often happens, the letters began to drop off. Winter passed, spring and summer passed, autumn came again, and now it was over a year since Ida had heard from her friend. She had written last, she told herself, and Eva was the one to blame for the long silence. She would have written again but that she hoped soon to give her a surprise. This was September, and about the end of the month she and Jack were to be married, and depart on their wedding tour, and certainly during their travel they would visit Eva. It was their intention to go to England and return by way of America.

So the days flew by on the golden wings of love till the one dawned that was to see Ida Carroll and Jack Roberts

bound for life in the closest union that earth holds, the tie that nothing but death can sever. The wedding day was sunny and warm. The bride was attired in the regulation costume of white, with veil and orange blossoms. Alan was best man, and the bride's maid, a young girl of eighteen, wondered why his eyes rested on the bride with such a look of deep sadness. How could she know that his thoughts were far away. In imagination he saw the French hotel, saw the carriage, and the groom assisting his bride from it. Since then he had not looked upon a bridal robe till now, and the crushing weight of pain which he felt on that day rushed back upon him. "Was she living or dead?" he wondered.

After the ceremony the wedding party repaired to Mrs. Carroll's where the young couple were to remain during the few days previous to their departure for England.

It is the last night in September. On the morrow Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roberts start on their wedding tour. It is nine o'clock and Alan Horten is about leaving Mrs. Carroll's, where he has been to say farewell and bid bon voyage to his two friends. He has been longing to send some little message to Eva, but words fail him. What could he say?

"Tell her, if you see her," he said to Ida, "that I am as happy as I will ever be." He was having a little business discussion with Jack, near the door about some purchases he was to make for him during his stay in England, when a servant entered with a letter. It was addressed to Miss Ida Carroll, and had come, so the girl said, about four that afternoon, but in the rush and hurry of preparation for a journey she had forgotten to deliver it before. As Ida's eyes fell on the familiar handwriting she uttered a joyous exclamation:—"Oh! from Eva, from Eva at last," she cried, as she tore open the envelope. Alan scanned her face eagerly as she read the letter. It was not long, and when finished, Ida quietly laid it down and looked at Alan with a peculiar expression, while tears shone on her long, dark lashes.

"What is it, Ida?" he asked nervously, "she is well I hope?"

Ida crossed over to his side, and laying her hand on his arm, said, "Alan, Eva is a widow; has been a widow for over twelvemonths."

A few moments later Alan said, as he was bidding Jack Roberts good-night, "I'll not trouble you about those purchases after all, Jack."

"Why, Alan?"

"Because the ship that takes you to England shall also take me."

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### CHAPTER XIX.

As they entered the gates at "Brandonville" Arthur turned to his wife and said, "I cannot say may you be perfectly happy here, Eva, for I know that is impossible. I have blighted your life as well as my own, but I feel certain that the knowledge of doing your duty, which you have so nobly tried to do, will keep you from being unhappy."

A beautiful home, indeed, it was on which the summer sun shone. All nature looked at its gayest, the scent of trees, the perfume of cowslips and lilies of the valley filled the air. The birds sang joyously. A feeling of rest and contentment seemed to fill Eva's heart, as the carriage rolled slowly along the drive, and she thought how happy she might be in such a home if that mutual love and trust, which is so necessary to happiness, existed between her and her husband. He helped her from the carriage and led her to the door, which was opened by a female servant.

"Tell the housekeeper to come here," he said.

In a few moments a middle-aged, kindly-faced woman entered, whom Arthur introduced to his wife as Mrs. Bryant, telling her to do all in her power for the comfort of her mistress, Mrs. Arthur Brandon, during his absence, which unavoidable business made necessary for some months, and then he left her.

Lonely and desolate, indeed, was the life to which Eva had to look forward. She was simply a deserted wife, deserted because in a frenzy of grief and remorse she had accused her husband of the foul crime of murder. He had left her and she could not tell if he ever should return. The one chance

which Arthur Brandon had of winning his wife's heart, he threw from him. If he had nobly stayed by her side and forgotten all, lavishing upon her a husband's love and protection, she might, in time, have learned the lesson he had at one time hoped to teach her. Though the man's nature was not ignoble or ungenerous, still there was in it an undercurrent of selfishness. During his life he had never taught himself to battle against the bitter feelings of resentment which he always felt against those who injured him. How small a thing the love of such a man was compared with Alan Horton's. Eva smiled as she contrasted the two. How differently he would have acted. The days wore slowly on. Eva had nobly and patiently borne too many sorrows to sink under this one. She found many duties to fill her life. She made some improvements, many of which had long been necessary on her husband's estate. But she determined she would form no acquaintances until the return of her husband. She went to see Mrs. Brown once, who rejoiced when she heard of her marriage to Arthur, but thought, as did a great many others, his absence rather strange. Mrs. Macelgin visited her occasionally and Eva returned the visits. This lady was much attached to her and wondered what motive Arthur Brandon could have for neglecting so long such a wife as he possessed. Her friendship helped, in some degree to break the monotony of Eva's life. One night, early in September, a young man arrived at "Brandonville," and asked to see its mistress. He was shown into a reception room, where Eva soon joined him. When she entered she noticed that he appeared somewhat embarrassed and seemed as if he had a disagreeable duty to perform.

"I am truly sorry, Mrs. Brandon," he said, "to be the bearer of unpleasant news. You are expecting your husband home very soon, are you not?"

"I am expecting him every day," she answered, while a nervous sensation began to creep over her.

"Well, madam, I am the bearer of a message from him. He was on his way home when he was stricken with small-pox and had to be taken to the hospital in London, where he is now very ill. He would not have alarmed you by letting you know of his condition only he feared you might hear it from

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some other source, and it would seem strange for you not to be aware of his being so near home."

"Small-pox," echoed Eva. "Is he very bad? Oh, tell me is—is he dying?" as she noticed a look of compassion stealing over his face.

"I fear the worst, Mrs. Brandon," he answered slowly. "Still while there is life there is hope."

"Oh, you must take me to him immediately," said Eva, her face white as death. "Who are you?"

"I am one of the attending physicians at the hospital. But, my dear madam, I pray you not to think of such a thing. You would run a great risk of taking the foul disease, and besides, I am sure your husband would not wish it."

"No matter what he wishes, or what anyone wishes," said Eva, in a decided tone, "I am going. I am his wife, and he is in danger of death, and my place is by his side. Are you going back now to the hospital?"

"Yes, Mrs. Brandon."

"Then wait for me, I shall be but a few moments."

A few more hours and this strangely wedded pair had met again for the last time on earth, and a feeling more akin to love than she would have felt for him were he in perfect health, filled her breast as she gazed upon this wreck of magnificent manhood. The fever-parched lips, the disfigured face, the dull, heavy eyes, which brightened with the light of recognition as they rested upon her, touched her heart with infinite pity. Tears rolled down her cheeks as she stooped over him, saying in a soft, sweet voice, "Are you very ill, Arthur? Why did you not send for me as soon as you felt you were unable to reach home?"

"I did not send for you now, Eva," he answered, in a weak voice, "and if I had any idea that you would come, I would have given strict orders that you were not to be admitted. I have done enough to spoil your happiness, but I do not wish to spoil your beauty. You must go away immediately. Have you thought of the terrible risk you run in coming; if you catch the disease you will be marked for life."

"Have you no better opinion of me, Arthur, than to think that such a small thing as my personal appearance would prevent me being at your side while you are in danger? No,

Arthur, I will not go away; I will stay till you are well enough to come with me to our home. I am not easily susceptible to disease, and I do not fear this. I am strong and healthy, but of course I am only human, and if I am afflicted, and it is the will of Him who has endowed me with what you are pleased to call beauty, to take it from me, I am resigned."

"Eva," he said, after a moment's pause, "it is only now that I realize how unworthy I was of you. You have reached the highest pinnacle of womanly heroism, and happiness will come to you for you deserve it. I am dying, Eva. I shall not see another sun set, but your example, your noble words, your sweet humility and self-ennoblement have not been lost upon me. They have sunk deep into my heart, helping to enlighten my awakening faith, which I know was not entirely lost, but only sleeping. I have been the destroyer of my own happiness. My life has been a failure, as far as any good I have done for others is concerned. A misdirection of science, together with a vanity I felt in what I thought my own cleverness, helped on by evil advisers, made me believe myself an atheist, until that day when I spoke to you about my blood-roying out for vengeance, and you asked me to whom it should be paid? I did not answer, and you asked me to whom did Abel's blood cry? I tried not to answer then, but the words seemed to be forced from me by some power stronger than my own, and I answered, to God! In that moment my will bowed in humble submission to Him who owns it, and the light of faith once more flooded my soul."

"The words were spoken slowly and in a very weak voice, and more than once he had to pause for breath. "And now, Eva, my dear wife," he went on, "I have made what preparation I could for death, and I am calmly waiting for the end. As I said some time ago, my life is made up of broken chords and I feel no regret at parting with it."

All night Eva remained at his bedside, and when the morning sun was flooding the earth with the light of another day, her husband's soul had taken its departure from the world, where, by his own mistakes, he had been so unhappy.

## CHAPTER XX.

MORE than a year has gone by since Eva returned a widow to "Brandonville." Very busy and useful has been that year. She was not known in fashionable circles except in name, but the poor and afflicted, and many who had been won back from the pathway of ruin on which their tender feet had just begun to tread, knew her and blessed her. Mr. and Mrs. Brandon fully realized what a mistake Arthur made when he exiled himself from the noble woman who was his wife.

She is sitting in the grey October twilight, a dreamy smile upon her face. Her thoughts have gone back to other days. She is picturing herself as she was when she first met Alan Horten, a happy, careless, light-hearted girl, on whose golden head sorrow had never rested. All she had experienced since then, what tempests of grief, temptation and remorse had swept over her soul. But now she had found peace and calm, yes, and happiness too, that is the happiness which cannot fail to come to those whose consciences do not upbraid them, but not that supreme bliss she had once dreamed of, that was too beautiful, too blissful, to be hers—she did not deserve it. True, she was free, and likely by this time Alan knew it; but how could she expect to be the same to him now as she was then. He knew she was the wife of another, and would it not be only natural for him to marry, though he had said her memory was the only wife he would ever know. But that was over a year ago.

"A gentleman wishes to see you, Mrs. Brandon," said a servant at the door, presenting a card. As she read the name a bright wave of color lighted her fair face. The past years, with all their misery, seemed to fall away from her, and she forgot everything but that Alan Horten, the fond, faithful lover of her girlhood's happy days, whom she feared to allow herself to hope ever to see again, was here. Her heart beat with love, hope and joyous happiness.

"Show the gentleman in here," she answered.

With a quick, sudden impulse, for which she could never account, she snatched the widow's cap from her head, and as Alan entered she stood before him in all her youthful beauty, with her bright, golden hair clustering in a little graceful dis-

order over her smooth, white brow, her large, dark-blue eyes radiant with a tender light, her lips parted in a glad, expectant smile.

"Eva! Eva! my own at last," and these two loyal hearts whose faith had been so cruelly tested, felt that the blissful joy of this moment more than repaid them for all their past sorrows.

One hour later another card was presented to Eva. "Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roberts," she read, wonderingly.

"Oh, yes," laughed Alan, "I had no time yet to tell you, (which was strange, considering he had been there an hour), that Ida and Jack are married. This is their wedding tour. We came together, but they, very considerably, allowed me to come an hour in advance," and soon the fond friends were clasped in each other's arms, whilst tears of joy moistened the eyes of each.

"What a happy re-union for us all," said Ida gaily, "and do you know, Eva, you've got ever so much prettier."

Ida made as much as she could of her first, and, perhaps, as she said herself, her last visit to England, and saw all that was worth seeing. Ere they left, Eva consented, at Alan's earnest pleading, that they should be married there, and so, early on the morning of departure, with Jack and Ida for witnesses, Eva once more pronounced her marriage vows, and Alan Horten thought to himself that had they not tasted so much of sorrow they would not have as fully appreciated the intense happiness which was now their portion.

Eva left "Brandonville," which had been willed to her by her late husband, in the charge of his uncle to find a tenant for it. Her last visit in England was paid to kind-hearted Mrs. Brown, who rejoiced as she saw, for the first time in Eva's face, the light of perfect happiness. During their voyage across to New York Alan explained to his wife all the particulars of Nellie Grant's death, of the stolen letters, and how he had refused to pardon her.

"Oh, Alan," she murmured, tearfully, "I think you were very hard, very merciless."

"I know, Eva. I regretted it ever since, and more so now that we are re-united. Eva, several times I was about to ask why was it you waited for a whole year to let me know that you were free?"

"I can scarcely tell," she answered. "I did not wish it to seem as if I were in a hurry to let you know."

"I know," he answered, with an adoring smile. "I can understand the extreme delicacy which prevented your writing till a year had elapsed, and I am glad, darling, for if I had known it sooner I am sure I could not have waited for a year."

"Alan," said his wife, quite suddenly, "did you ever find out where the shot came from that struck you that night?"

"Oh, yes," he answered, "two young boys who had several times before noticed a large cat-owl which visited that grove each night, conceived the idea of capturing and having it dressed for a small museum of theirs. So that night they sighted the owl, but it kept further off than before, frightened I suppose by our presence. I remember hearing the hoot of an owl just before I was struck. The wind was in a direction which took the sound of our voices off, and the boys, having no idea of anyone being near but themselves, one of them fired, but his aim must have been sadly at fault when the shot struck me instead of the bird."

Eva gave a sigh of relief as she leaned her head upon her husband's shoulder and thought of what she would have been if that shot had proved fatal. While in New York Allan took her to visit Nellie Grant's grave, and there, on bended knees, both mentally promised that the secret of her ill-fated love, of her stealth and deception should be faithfully locked in their hearts.

The two happy couples started on their homeward journey. Ida was a victim to sea-sickness, and so they took in all the land travelling they possibly could. They reached Sydney by rail and took the steamer *Bruce* to Port-aux-Basques. This journey was completed in six hours, which were made as enjoyable as the genial and hospitable captain so well knows how.

"Eva," asked Alan, playfully, after they had boarded the train at Port-aux-Basques, "have you never thought me presumptuous in aspiring for the hand of such a rich widow as yourself?"

She only smiled as she answered, "If you only knew how I hate it, Alan. A thousand times I have wished that my

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husband's will had been arranged to deprive me of every cent if I married again."

It is twilight, of an evening early in December, and Alan and Eva Horton are seated near the fire in the drawing-room of her old home, where four years ago had come the first cloud in their sky. Alan had purchased the house and it was his wedding gift to his bride, for which she thanked him with tears of gratitude. It was her one desire to get possession of it, and she intended, if it were possible, to buy it herself, but he had forestalled her, and now they are settled down, as Eva says, "in quiet Darby and Joan style," in the home where her youth had been passed, and where she hopes to spend her happy life. Alan's mother is now quite attached to her son's wife, who is only too glad to forget all unpleasantness. The gas is not yet lighted, and the bright firelight gives a glow of warmth to the luxurious-looking room. Ida and Jack Roberts have just left after having paid their friends a lengthy visit. Eva is sitting on a low stool at her husband's feet, her arms resting on his knees. With one hand he is toying with some stray locks of her hair. They had been silent for some time when Eva said, "How positive I was, Alan, that I would be more constant than you. What did you think of me when you came home at the end of two years and found me gone?"

"Very hard and bitter things, Eva, until I discovered that you did not receive my letters, then, knowing how proud you always were, I understood exactly how you must have felt. But, Eva, dearest, even taking all which we have gone through into consideration, now, that it is past, we have no cause for regret. Much good has resulted from it, for our love and faith would not have been so fully tested, nor perhaps the soul of Arthur Brandon saved from eternal ruin, if, when I returned at the end of two years, I had not found you 'Faithless.'"

THE END.