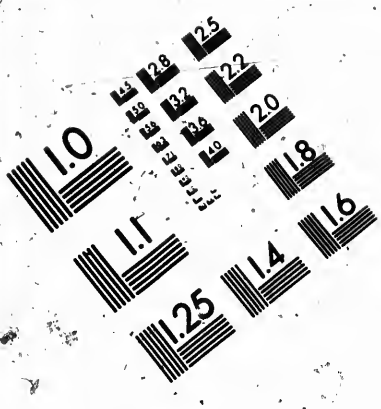

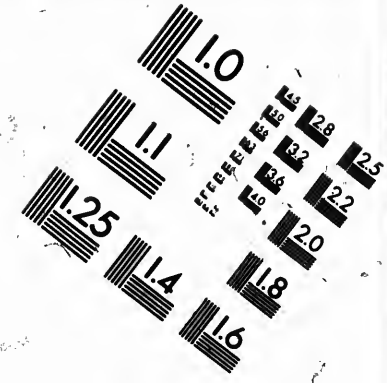

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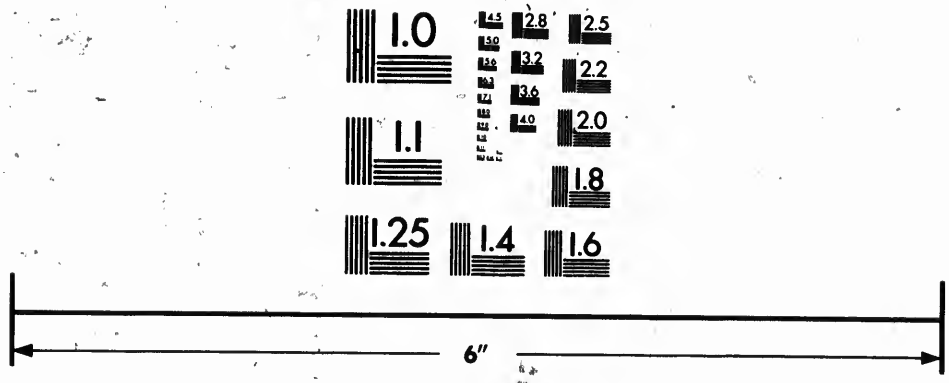

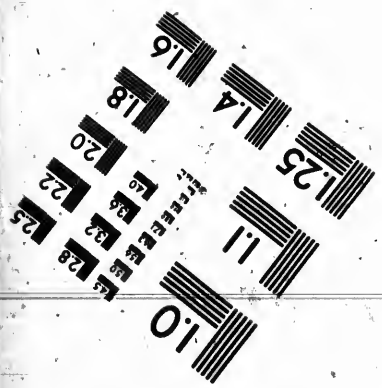

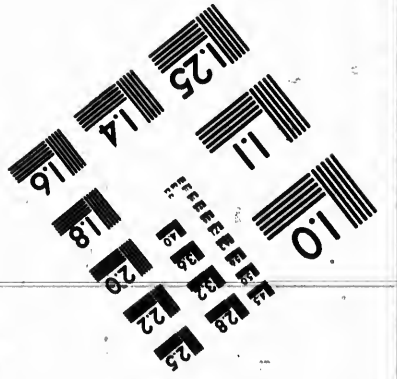

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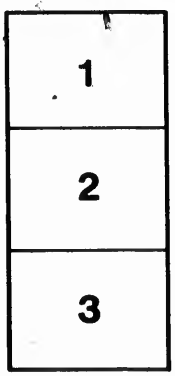

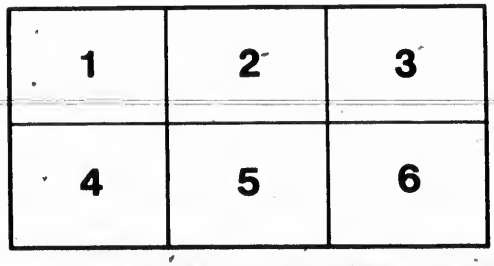

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"GUY

"A M

THE VIRGINIA HEIRESS.

BY

MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF

"GUY EARLSCOURT'S WIFE," "LOST FOR A WOMAN,"
"A MAD MARRIAGE," "A WONDERFUL WOMAN," ETC.

NEW YORK:
STREET & SMITH, Publishers,
31 Rose Street.

THE VIRGINIA HEIRESS.

CHAPTER I.

A SPOILED CHILD.

Long lines of red and orange were paling slowly in the western sky, showing where the August sun had dropped behind the blue Virginian hills, as Sybilla Tresylian stepped through the open French window into the grassy lawn. Singing as she went, holding a book in one hand, and swinging her hat in the other by its rosy ribbons, followed by two or three wooly poodles of preternatural ugliness, and a yelping little tan terrier, the young lady floated across the lawn—yes, floated, I say it advisedly; it was not walking that airy, graceful, swimming motion, that scarcely seemed to bend the clipped grass on which she trod. She floated over the velvet sward, her white muslin dress fluttering in the faint breeze and pink ribbons blowing about her, to where, under some giant beeches skirting the lawn, there was a large fish-pond with swans swimming about, and an arbor of green vines and wild sweet roses. And here, still singing "*La ci darem*," Sybilla Tresylian flirted her

airy skirts over a rustic arm-chair, and settled herself to read—that is to say, to look at the rosy sunset, to play with her dogs, to throw crumbs to her swans, to sing little bits of operatic airs, and to read between whiles. Her book was "Lalla Rookh," and it was just the hour and just the scene for a pretty, sentimental girl to dream and read poetry.

For Miss Tresylian, granddaughter and sole heiress to the richest man in Virginia, was sentimental, and willful, and wayward, and a little silly sometimes. She raved about George Gordon, Lord Byron, and his dear, delightful, wicked "Corsair," and "Giaour," and "Childe Harold," and she doted on Shelley, and Owen Meredith, and Tennyson, and had read more novels in her seventeen years of life than would stock a circulating library. She was petted and spoiled, as it is in the nature of heiresses to be, and she was capricious and exacting, and held firmly to the opinion that among all the F. F. V.'s there never was anything like the "bitter, bad Tresylians." She was proud of her old name, of her aristocratic English descent, of her native State, of her stately grandpapa, of her beautiful old home; and she would not have been anybody but Sybilla Tresylian, of Tresylian, Va., for all the world.

Look at her as she sits there under the beeches, with the tremulous shadows of the rose leaves fluttering about her, and the gleaming orange light in the low sky making an aureole around her. She is very pretty, is she not, with those small, delicate features, those large, shining gray eyes, that exquisite rosy mouth, and all that fall of rippling chestnut hair? She is

petite, but proportioned as daintily as a fairy, and the little head can poise itself with queenly grace on that arching, slender throat. She is very pretty, and very charming, and very rich, and yet poorer than other girls, for she has neither father nor mother. She knows she is a bewitching little fairy, for has she not been told it since she was a wee, toddling thing; and she is coquettish, and fickle, and vain, and silly. She is all this, but remember, she never had a mother. If, by and by, you come to despise her, and think very badly of her for sins and misdoings, remember this. She never had a mother; she has been an orphan since babyhood. If she does wrong, it is because she has never been taught to do right; she has been almost taught to believe that she cannot sin; that she is a beautiful and perfect being; that life is one long summer holiday, and that she is to dance along her shining life pathway, gathering in roses without thorns. Suffering and sorrow, and sin and shame there may be in this big world, but they are to be only meaningless words to Miss Tresylian, of Tresylian Hall. A doting grandfather, an idolizing nurse, admiring servants, and toadying teachers have only praised, and flattered, and caressed; no whims are to be contradicted, no fancy thwarted.

"Let her crown herself with roses before they fade," is to be the motto of all who approach her.

So Sybilla Tresylian sits in the green gloom of the arbor on her seventeenth birthday, and watches the August sun go down behind a canopy of pearl and amber clouds, and chatters pretty nonsense to her dogs, and whistles to the stately swans, and

reads little bits of melody from "Lalla Rookh." By and by she forgets the sunset, the dogs, the swans, and everything in the witchery of that charming Eastern story, and settles back in her chair to read in earnest.

The low, yellow light grows paler and paler in the western sky, and the big, white August moon sails serenely up behind the misty hills. The evening breeze, all scented with roses and mignonette and heliotrope, lifts the bright curls at its capricious will, a songbird in the pine woods trills sweetly its vesper chant, but Sybilla neither hears nor sees. A horseman comes slowly through the great iron entrance-gates, and rides up the long, winding avenue between two rows of giant trees, but his horse's hoofs fall on turfy sward, and she hears him not. She is thousands of miles away—"in that delightful region of the sun," with the "vailed prophet" and his worshipers, and forgets that it is her birthday, and that there is to be a party, and that she has to dress, and that somebody, in whom she ought to be more interested than even in *Mokanna*, is to arrive this evening. She forgets everything but Tom Moore's enchanting masterpiece, and reads while the yellow light drops lower and lower, and the silvery moon sails up to the zenith.

Suddenly two hands are clasped over her eyes, and some one stoops down and kisses her cheek.

"Eleanor?" Sybilla said at a venture.

"No, not Eleanor. Guess again."

Sybilla started up with a cry, for the voice was strange, and the voice of a man. As she confronted him breathlessly, she

uttered another exclamation, and held out both hands with a radiant face.

"Eustace! Oh, dear me! how glad I am to see you! You scared me nearly to death. When did you come?"

The young man laughed good-naturedly at the torrent of words. He was a tall young man, of five or six-and-twenty, sallow, and plain, and intelligent, and gentlemanly of air and bearing, with a profusion of light whiskers and mustache, and close-cropped light hair.

"When did I come? About fifteen minutes ago. I shook hands with the governor and Mrs. Waldron; learned from Miss Eleanor Waldron that I should probably find you here, and so I—I came, I saw, I conquered. As fond of reading and poodle dogs as ever, Sybilla?"

Sybilla nodded and laughed, and looked at him as though taking his measure for a suit of clothes. The young man took off his tall hat and stood bareheaded before her for inspection. They were distant cousins, Sybilla and Eustace Tresylian. They had grown up together, and they had not met for five years.

"Well, Sybilla, will I do?"

"Not for my husband," said Sybilla Tresylian, with a frank, innocent laugh. "Grandpapa told me the other day that he destined you for that honor; but it won't do, Eustace."

"Why not, Sybilla?"

He took out his cigar case as he spoke and held it up coolly.

"May I?"

"Oh, to be sure! I'm used to it—grandpapa has his meer schaum in his mouth all day long. Smoke away."

"Thousand thanks! And while I smoke, my fair cousin, just tell me why I won't do for your husband."

"It's clear enough," said the young lady, coquettishly. "You're not handsome, Eustace—you don't mind me telling you so, do you?"

"By no means," said Mr. Eustace Tresylian, taking a seat. "I am quite aware of the fact. But, then, Sybilla, you have no idea what a capital fellow I am, and what a splendid husband I shall make; and beauty, you know, is only skin deep."

"Very well—that's quite deep enough. If you had black eyes and raven locks, you know, and a Grecian nose, and a murder on your mind, like Eugene Aram, you might stand some chance; but as it is——"

Miss Tresylian shook her auburn ringlets and laughed—such a merry, girlish, thoughtless laugh!

"Well, I'll remedy all that. I'll send for a bottle of patent hair dye, and I'll murder anybody you'll please to mention, from Aunt Chloe, the cook, to Mrs. Waldron, our stately housekeeper. Hey!"

"But, then, your nose is a snub, Eustace, you know it is, and your eyes are no color at all, and you've nothing in the way of eyebrows and eyelashes worth speaking of. No, sir, it won't do. I shall tell grandpapa this very night I can't be Mrs. Eustace Tresylian—such a romantic name, too! I should like to oblige grandpapa in this matter, but you perceive I can't."

"Alas! that my cruel destiny should send me into the world with a snub nose; but don't do anything rash, Miss Tresylian. I improve vastly on acquaintance—upon my word I do!"

"Sybilla! Sybilla!" called a voice. "Where is the child? Come into the house and dress."

Sybilla started up.

"There, don't you hear Miss Waldron calling? Come, Eustace."

The pretty coquette pushed her hand through his arm and started with him toward the house. The young man shot a piercing, sidelong look at the lady, as if he would read what lay under that sparkling, silly surface. But she was off at a new tangent, telling him all about the slowness of life, and the stupidity of things in general at Tresylian Hall. She was an inveterate chatter-box, and had been ever since the days when she gossiped to her dolls by the hour.

"Well, Sybilla," Eustace said, when she paused, breathless, "all this shall be remedied. When we get married I——"

"But we *won't* get married," cried Sybilla, shrilly. "I never could bear fair men, with wishy-washy complexions and fair eyes."

"Sybilla, don't be inexorable? I shall break my heart!"

"Of course, you will! I should be shocked and disappointed if you did not! But don't you and grandpapa go talking together to inveigle me into an engagement, because it will not be of the least use. I let grandpapa go on before you came—

and, goodness gracious! how he used to go on about you, because I didn't know but that time had touched you up and improved you, and darkened your eyes, and straightened your nose, and so on. But it hasn't, and that puts an end to the matter at once, I suppose grandpapa will be disappointed, and I hate to disappoint him, poor dear; but it can't be helped. Do you know what he wants me to marry you for, Cousin Eustace?" suddenly inquired the heiress, clasping her hands round his arm, and looking up with big, bright, shining eyes in his face.

"Because he thinks I am the only fellow in the universe worthy of such a charming little wife."

"Nothing of the sort. Because your name happens to be Tresylian; and he wants his money and his name to keep together—that's why."

"A very laudable wish," said the gentleman; "how can you be heartless enough to frustrate it? Don't be so dreadfully resolute, my dear Sybilla—just take time and draw me out, and discover my various perfections, and you'll forget all about my nose and other drawbacks, and we will be the happiest pair from Maine to Florida."

They were ascending the steps of the house by this time, a large, old-fashioned, red brick mansion, a hundred years old and more. A wide piazza ran all around the building, with sweetbrier and climbing roses trailing over it.

"Think better of it, Sybilla," Eustace Tresylian said, flinging away his cigar; "think of my blighted hopes, my broken

heart, and all that sort of thing, and *don't* be so frightfully inflexible."

"It's of no use," Miss Tresylian replied, seriously. "Thinking of your blighted hopes, your broken heart, and all that sort of thing," mimicking his tone, "won't improve those features of yours, nor make you one bit like Edgar Ravenswood, or Zanoni, or the Corsair. I should like to have married the Corsair, I think, or Count Dara, or Claude Duval—anything but a lawyer with cropped hair and yellow whiskers."

She ran into the hall as she spoke and flew up stairs. Mr. Tresylian, lingering on the piazza, heard her singing clearly and sweetly as she went:

"Tell me not of your soft sighing lover,
Such things may be had by the score,
I'd rather be bride to a rover,
And polish the rifle he bore."

CHAPTER II.

MR. EUSTACE TRESYLIAN.

Left alone on the piazza, Mr. Eustace Tresylian lit a second cigar, and, leaning against a vine-clad pillar, looked thoughtfully at the crystal moon. He was thinking of that marriage of which he and his cousin had just been talking. Lightly as he had spoken, coolly as he had heard her determination, this marriage was really a matter of vital importance to him. The husband of Miss Tresylian, the heiress, would be quite a different order of being from the struggling young lawyer, drudging in New York for the daily bread and butter of life.

George Pierrepont Tresylian, the present lord of the manor, had been left, nearly forty years before, with an only son—his earthly idol. That son, in course of time, took to himself a wife of the daughters of the land—a pretty Virginia heiress—whose fortune swelled the already full coffers of the Tresylian family. Two years after her marriage the young wife died, and three years later her husband followed her, leaving his little four-year-old daughter to his father's care. From that hour the child became the day-star of George Pierrepont Tresylian's life. *Love* is a weak word to express his almost idolatrous worship of

that little flaxen-haired child. He could hardly let her out of his sight. She sat with him in snowy pinafores in a high seat at table, and sailed her shoes in the soup, and washed her hands in hock and Moselle unhindered. She was his companion in all his walks, and rides, and drives; her will was law, and the little toddling damsel, in short frocks and pantalettes, ruled the household as with a rod of iron.

Years went by. Miss Tresylian was growing tall, and masters and governesses began flocking to the hall. The masters, it was a noticeable fact, were all old and ugly, and married men; and the governesses, the hardest and grimmest of old maids. Still, the young lady's education was very spasmodic and imperfect, for she was perpetually quarreling with these preceptors, and getting them dismissed, and commencing over again under new ones. She could leap a five-barred gate on an Arab steed much better than she could play triplets and arpeggios and cinque-paced passages on the grand piano, and she was much more interested in the adventures of Jack Shepherd and Claude Duval than in those of Telemachus and Mentor. She rode, and walked, and played billiards with grandpapa, and practiced her music, and played with her pet dogs, and birds, and rabbits, and read novels week in and week out, and grew up—and was seventeen years of age. Mr. Tresylian did not approve of all those highly-spiced romances, too strong for his little girl's mind, but the golden-haired tyrant set her foot down decisively in the matter, and would not be interfered with. Of course, with all these novels, and the poems of Messrs. Shelley,

Byron, Tennyson, and Owen Meredith, the young lady was highly familiar with everything relating to the grand subjects of courtship and marriage, and had her future husband pictured out with most poetical precision. Sometimes a tender and dreamy creature, blue-eyed and fair-haired, like Ernest Maltravers, sometimes dark, gloomy, remorseful, and irresistible, like Eugene Aram, sometimes dashing, daring, splendid, like Paul Clifford. Oh! he was anything, everything, but snub-nosed, matter-of-fact Cousin Eustace, the New York lawyer.

And yet to snub-nosed Cousin Eustace grandpapa had made up his mind she should be married. He was *cousin* more by courtesy than any tie of kindred, so that was quite proper. His father had been a very remote kinsman of Mr. Tresylian's, and, dying and leaving his boy at thirteen years of age penniless and alone, the generous master of Tresylian had adopted and educated him, with the ultimate view, if he turned out well, of bestowing upon him his greatest earthly treasure. For this the old man had many reasons. First, his name was Tresylian, and it was of vital moment to perpetuate that name, and keep up their ancient race; secondly, married to Eustace, his darling need never leave him. She might marry some foreign grandee, it is true, but then she would be lost to him forever—borne off to forget him in some distant land. And, thirdly, although the tie of blood that bound them was slight, yet it *was* blood, and blood is thicker than water.

So Eustace, nine years Sybilla's senior, was sent to Columbia, and graduated there with high honors. He had more than ful-

filled all his benefactor's expectations; he had been a model of exemplary conduct all his life; he was clever, and tolerably well-looking. What more could any girl desire? On more than one occasion Mr. Tresylian had dropped a hint to Sybilla that she was to look upon Eustace as her future husband, and Mistress Sybilla had pursed up her rosy lips, and set her head on one side like a defiant canary, and made up her mind to do as she liked about it.

Eustace Tresylian, working away at his profession in New York, understood all this perfectly, and appreciated it fully; but he waited for Mr. Tresylian to take the initiative. Two weeks previous to his arrival at the hall, he had received the following communication:

TRESYLIAN, Aug. 5, 18——.

MY DEAR BOY—You must be nearly worked to death in that stifling city, and badly in want of a little fresh air. Come and see us, if your clients will permit you. The twenty-seventh is my granddaughter's seventeenth birthday (how time flies!), and we shall be delighted to have you with us on that happy anniversary.

Faithfully yours,

G. P. TRESYLIAN.

There was very little in this note to the general reader, but it bore a marked significance to Eustace. The time had come at last; the little heiress was dawning into womanhood, and it was time for the siege to begin. Others would be there to contest the prize—*he* was to be first in the field. He had not seen Miss T. for upwards of five years, but he remembered very well the last time he had looked upon her. He and Mr. Tresylian were

on the piazza, and she was seated on the grassy lawn below, a pantaletted angel in white and azure.

"Be as exemplary a man as you have been a boy, Eustace," his benefactor had said, with his hand on his shoulder, "and *that*, in a very few years, will be your reward."

He pointed to the little girl with the flaxen curls playing with half a dozen wax dolls and poodle dogs on the grass, and Eustace repressed a strong desire to whistle. It never for a moment entered the old man's head that his *protege* could be anything but transported at the idea. Certainly Eustace had no objection—if she had been red-haired and pock-marked, the heiress of all the Tresylians would still have been unspeakably acceptable; but she gave promise of being very pretty, and he had grasped the old man's arm, and poured out his gratitude most eloquently.

And now, five years after, here he was to claim his bride. He had found her but little changed—only a taller child than when he went away, and prettier, if anything. He cared very little for all her girlish nonsense about his lack of good looks, and her determination not to marry him. Eustace Tresylian was one of those wonderful men who *believe in themselves*, and consequently rarely fail in anything they undertake. Let her foolish little tongue run on as it might, when he left Tresylian it would be as her affianced husband.

Leaning against the vine-wreathed pillar of the piazza, while the twinkling stars came out, the young man smoked his cigar and thought all this. He looked around upon the swelling

meadows, the rich fields, the dark woods, the stately old house, and thought how much better all this was, even with the incumbrance of a silly little wife, than plodding on forever in that dingy law-office, among troublesome clients and more troublesome creditors.

At that moment a hand dropped on his shoulder, and, looking round, Eustace saw Mr. Tresylian—a tall, spare, white-haired old man, who looked like a French marquis of the old *regime*—frosty, but kindly.

"I want to have a talk with you, Eustace," Mr. Tresylian said, "before our guests arrive. We may as well come to an understanding at once."

Eustace threw away his cigar, linked his arm in the old man's, and the two paced slowly up and down the piazza. There was a brief silence. Mr. Tresylian looked slightly at a loss, Eustace as impenetrable as if his face were a waxen mask.

"What do you think of Sybilla?" Mr. Tresylian asked at length, very abruptly. "Do you find her greatly changed?"

"On the contrary," replied the young man, "I was struck by the slightness of the alterations the last five years have made in her. She is taller, and even prettier, I think; but, beyond that, she is the same artless Sybilla of five years ago."

"You think her pretty, then?"

"Undoubtedly, as every one must."

"You used to be fond of her as a boy," said Mr. Tresylian, carelessly; "how is it now? Have the dashing damsels of New York driven your little cousin's image from your mind?"

An almost imperceptible smile dawned and faded on the face of Eustace.

"By no means, sir. The dashing damsels of New York are nothing to me, nor I to them, and I am as fond of my pretty little cousin as ever I was."

"Fond enough to marry her?"

Mr. Eustace Tresylian looked at his benefactor with an expression of surprise that was very well got up indeed.

"My dear sir! Marry Sybilla! Do I understand you aright?"

"To be sure you do!" testily. "Is there anything so very preposterous in the idea, that you stand there the picture of astonishment?"

"No," said Eustace, slowly and thoughtfully. "No, Mr. Tresylian; it is only the suddenness and unexpectedness of——"

"Unexpectedness! What the duse is the fellow talking about? Didn't I tell you five years ago to be as exemplary a man as you were a boy, and *she* should be your reward? Stuff and nonsense! Don't pretend you have forgotten! I won't believe it."

"I have not forgotten," said Eustace, quietly; "but I supposed you had. Believe me, Mr. Tresylian, I am fully sensible of *all* your great kindness—this last and greatest particularly. At the same time——"

"You beg to decline. Is that it?" interrupted Mr. Tresylian, haughtily, stopping short. "Out with it."

"Yes, sir!" said Eustace, firmly, "unless my Cousin Sybilla

herself is perfectly willing. Understand me, my best friend, Sybilla is, as she has always been, very dear to me, and nothing would make me so happy as to call her wife—my whole life would be devoted to her. But without her free and full consent, I cannot, I will not, marry her!"

Mr. Tresylian grasped the young man's hand cordially.

"My dear boy, you speak nobly, your sentiments are worthy of you. I know Sybilla will be happy with you. I know you will devote your whole life to making her happy. If I thought otherwise, I would see her in her grave sooner than wedded to you! She shall consent."

"But without coercion, sir?"

"Of course. I love my darling too well to force her to anything, even for her own good."

There was a brief silence. Then—

"You are certain her affections are disengaged?"

"Quite certain. How could it be otherwise? She has been reared up here in Eastern seclusion, going no where scarcely, and receiving no visitors. Except the heroes of her pet novels, Miss Tresylian is in love with no one."

Eustace smiled, but grew grave again almost instantly.

"I hardly know how to thank you. My obligations to you are so many and so heavy, that any thanks I could offer would be totally inadequate. I know how many far more worthy would be only too glad to bear off the heiress of Tresylian Hall."

"Precisely," said Mr. Tresylian, dryly; "the *heiress of Tre-*

sylian Hall will have no lack of suitors; but I don't choose to have her fall a prey to some designing fortune-hunter with a Grecian nose and empty pocket. It is because she is heiress of Tresylian Hall that I want you to be first in the field—it is for that I sent for you this time. She is very young yet—only seventeen—but quite old enough to form an engagement that will keep others at bay. As soon as you please, after the completion of her eighteenth birthday, she shall be your wife."

Eustace Tresylian grasped the old man's hand, really agitated.

"You overpower me. I *cannot* thank you. As Heaven hears me, I shall never give you occasion to repent your confidence."

"I believe you, my boy. And now our friends are beginning to arrive, and I must leave you. The rest is in your own hands. Sybilla's heart is free, and you are a clever fellow, and have a lawyer's tongue. And you know what Shakespeare says—

> "The man that hath a tongue, I say is no man,
> If with that tongue he cannot win a woman."

Two carriages rolled up the tree-shaded avenue in the misty moonlight, and dropping the young man's arm, with a significant smile, the lord of Tresylian Hall walked courteously forward to wecome his guests.

CHAPTER III.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

The long drawing-room at Tresylian, usually so quiet, was lliant that evening with wax lights, flowers, and pretty girls. ere were about a score of young ladies present, all more or s pretty, but not one prettier than the little heiress whose *fete* y had come to celebrate. Dressed in pale pink, filmy and ating like a rosy cloud, with ribbons fluttering and jewels rkling about her, and all her bright, pretty curls dropping in ber glory to her waist, Miss Tresylian was charming as some y sprite. Here, there, and everywhere that slender pink figure, d those long, light ringlets flashed, the rosy face radiant with iles, and flushed with excitement—

"Queen-rose of the rosebud-garden of girls."

Mr. Eustace Tresylian leaned against a marble column, and tched her tripping hither and thither like some bright-winged tterfly, and thought, after all, it would not be much of a draw-ck to take the estate with this incumbrance. He was not a ntimental, nor even a susceptible, young man by any means, d was very likely to pass through life with but a hazy notion the "grande passion." He was not the least bit dazzled, nor

the slightest degree in love with his bewitching little cousin ; h
he was very well satisfied to marry her, and be a good and fai
ful, and even affectionate, husband, as husbands go. He wou
train her up to his own standard of what a woman and a w
should be, which was not very high; for Eustace Tresylian h
no idea of female intellect, and shrugged his shoulders at lit
ary ladies as unnatural and monstrous creatures, to be avoid
and put down by lordly man. She was silly and sentimenta
but he would smooth all that out of her presently with th
moral flat-iron called common sense; and she would give
Dickens and Tennyson for shirt-button sewing and attending
the wants of her lord and master.

Eustace Tresylian had the honor of the first dance with th
heiress, to the disappointment of half a dozen competitors.
was the only quadrille she danced with him, but she favore
him with a waltz. She was a charming waltzer, and passion
ately fond of it, and when it was over and she was fanning he
self, with Eustace playing the devoted, Mr. Tresylian approache
them.

"Eustace," he said, "I wish you would ask Eleanor to danc
—she is rather neglected. She is over there in the recess of tha
window."

Eustace departed, and Sybilla looked up at her grandfathe
with sparkling eyes.

"Oh, grandpapa, how nice this is! How I do love pleas
ure! I wish my birthday came every night!"

"Foolish child! by and by you will wish it only came once

three years; it is always the way with ladies. But, Sybilla——"

"Yes, grandpapa."

"I want you to do me a favor. Don't waltz or polka with any of these young men, except, perhaps, Eustace. I don't approve of it—it isn't modest."

"It's modest with Eustace, I suppose!" said Sybilla, pouting.

"With Eustace it is quite another thing; waltz with him, if you choose, but with no other."

"Very well, then," said Miss Tresylian, spiritedly, "I sha'n't waltz at all."

The young lady kept her word. She not only did not waltz at all, but she declined dancing with Eustace for the remainder of the evening. She was engaged for every dance, she told him, with a willful little pout; she could not allow herself to be monopolized by him; she, the belle of the ball, and so many other gentlemen, a thousand times handsomer than he, dying to dance with her. She wished he would let her alone and devote himself to some one else—Miss Eleanor Waldron, for instance.

Cousin Eustance obeyed very quietly, and *did* devote himself to Miss Waldron with considerable *empressement*, which Miss W. estimated at its proper worth. She was a tall, stately-looking girl, three years older than Sybilla, with a fixedly-pale face, bright, coldly-bright, blue eyes, and braided dark-brown hair. She was the daughter of Mr. Tresylian's housekeeper. Her father had been the Episcopal minister of Taunton, the nearest

village, and intimate friend of the 'squire. At his death his widow gladly accepted the post of housekeeper at Tresylian, and ever since, some eight years, with her daughter Eleanor, had resided at the hall, treated more as an honored guest than as a dependent.

Eleanor Waldron and Sybilla Tresylian were not very good friends. Sybilla could not pour into the ear of a marble statue her gushing raptures over the compositions of Shelley and Owen Meredith. Miss Waldron never wasted her time reading novels or poetry; she improved her mind. Sybilla's masters and governesses were also hers, and the words of wisdom that went in one of the little ears of the foolish heiress and came out of the other, were carefully treasured up by the little housekeeper's daughter. She practiced her music for hours daily, until she became a brilliant pianist; she spoke French as fluently as English, while Sybilla just knew enough of that language to read romances she had better left unread. She was perfect in botany, and astronomy, and geology, and rhetoric, and had the history of every nation under heaven at her finger ends, since the days of the flood. Miss Tresylian knew a trifle of history. She could tell you about Sir William Wallace, and Robert Bruce, and Joan of Arc, and Charlotte Corday, and Napoleon the Great, and Marie Antoinette, and Anne Boleyn, and Nell Gywnne, and that dear, delightful, wicked "merry monarch." Miss Waldron despised Miss Tresylian as a chattering little dunce, and bitterly envied and hated her for being what she was, an heiress. Miss Tresylian, on the other hand, held Miss Waldron in profound

ontempt for her prosaic soul, that never soared to the enchant-
d regions of poetry and romance, and returned her hatred cor-
ially for her frigid, impenetrable selfishness and cold ingrati-
ude. They had quarreled as children, and Miss Tresylian, on
ore than one occasion, I am sorry to say, had partially scalped
er opponent by tearing out several fistfuls of hair; but latterly
is mode of warfare had ceased, and a sort of armed neutrality
xisted. They were elaborately civil to each other, these two
oung ladies, and went on heartily detesting each other the
ame. Miss Waldron's ambition in this life was to capture a
ich husband—old or young, handsome or ugly, it was all the
ame, so that he had the dimes. Like Eustace Tresylian, love
lid not enter into her calculation at all—she wanted to marry
fortune, that was all. She was like him in a good
many other ways, and she was frightfully sensible and se-
retive, and, in short, a model of young womanhood every way
ou viewed her. The nearest approach to the tender passion
he had ever felt had been for Eustace, for his cleverness and
ound sense; but no word, or look, or action had ever betrayed
his to living mortal.

To this young lady Eustace Tresylian paid marked attention
ll the remainder of the evening. If she and Sybilla could have
changed places, it would have been the greatest possible satis-
faction to the young lawyer, for stately, and learned, and sensi-
ble, she was much more to his taste than that poor little pink-
robed sentimental child. But it couldn't be. Yet he danced
with her, and talked to her, an led her into supper, and list-

ened while she played Mendelssohn's masterpieces, and won dered, if matches *were* made in Heaven, why this tall girl wa not an heiress and his future wife.

The rosy dawn of another morning was glimmering in the east before the carriage of the first departing guest rolled away from the gates of Tresylian Hall. It had been a brilliant success, this birth night *fete*—every one had enjoyed himself or herself to the ut most—but, like all other pleasures of this life, it was short lived, and "the lights were fled, the garlands dead, and the banquet-hall deserted." Sybilla's *fete* was over, and Sybilla was sleeping on her little white bed, her flushed cheek pillowed on her arm, and a smile lingering on her lips still.

After this brilliant night, of course the dullness of Tresylian Hall became doubly dull from contrast. Sybilla might have gone melancholy mad had it not been for Cousin Eustace, who turned out to be the most delightful of cousins and entertaining of companions. Grandpapa resigned in his favor at once. He escorted Miss Tresylian in all her woodland rambles; he was cavalier when she mounted her Arab pony for a breezy canter over the "sacred soil;" he lay on the grass at her feet while she did little bits of fancy work, and read her favorite poets and novelists by the hour. He improved her billiard playing, taught her euchre, trained her dogs to perform all manner of little dog gish tricks; sang comic songs for her, and was altogether too charming to describe. He visited Richmond once a week for the express purpose of buying her new books and pounds of unwholesome French candies, and drove her about in a light

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on to the four points of the compass. He was never a bore, , although he talked perpetually, he was always entertain- . He told her of New York life, of its theaters, its operas, balls, its matinees, its Broadway promenade, until Sybilla's eeks glowed with longing, eager desire to see those wonders l enjoy those fabulous delights.

"Very well, Sybilla," Mr. Tresylian used to say, "so you ll, my dear, when you are my wife."

So August and September passed, and Paul and Virginia never re half so inseparable as Eustace and Sybilla. But the end of ptember brought a letter from New York, requiring the young n's immediate return to that city, and the last day of the onth he started for the Empire City, and Sybilla was alone.

Yes, *alone*—oh! dreary word. There was grandpapa, whom e loved very dearly, but grandpapa, as a companion, was no- here after brilliant Eustace. There was Mrs. Waldron, whose ind ran in a circle that only comprised cookery and her daugh- r. There was Eleanor, about as cordial as a statue of ice, and sympathetic. There were her dogs, her flowers, her novels, er piano, her fancy work—very good and pleasant things in heir way, but vanity and vexation of spirit, now that Cousin Eustace was gone. The heiress of all the Tresylians wandered disconsolately about the big rambling old mansion, while the slow hours dragged themselves away, and wondered how she had ever endured this sort of life before Eustace came.

"I must be in love with him," thought Miss Tresylian, try- ing to blush at the idea, and failing. "This is the way all the

heroines of my novels felt when their lovers left them. I d
see why I shouldn't marry Eustace, after all. He isn't ha
some, poor fellow; but then there was Mr. Rochester, and
how fond Jane Eyre was of him! He is delightful to talk
and he will take me traveling all over the world—to Paris,
Italy, and Germany, and all those charming, romantic pla
I have been reading of so long. Then, when we come back
live in New York, I shall go into society, and go to balls
the opera, in ruby velvet and diamonds, and oh, goodness, g
cious me! perhaps I shall get acquainted with poets, and
thors, and artists, and sculptors—and won't *that* be delightfu

Sybilla Tresylian pondered over this matter a good deal d
ing her cousin's absence, and quite made up her mind "that
way duty lay." Grandpapa saw it all, and chuckled inwar
at the success of his plans, and wrote to Eustace, *sub rosa*, to
turn at once.

"She's yours, my boy," wrote the old gentleman; "so str
while the iron's hot. Come back at once and claim yo
bride."

A week after the receipt of this letter, Eustace Tresylian w
back at the old hall, laden with presents for Sybilla—all mann
of new and enchanting things. Brown October was glowing
self out in the woods, and the morning after his arrival he a
Sybilla set off for a ramble among its leafy arcades.

How pretty she looked that sunny October morning, her bl
dress and golden curls fluttering in the fresh, sweet breeze, t
rose-flush on her cheek, and that sparkling, happy, hopef

ht in her eyes. Poor little Sybilla! it came back to him so
en afterward with a pang of nameless pain. He had grown
y fond of her, in a tender, brotherly sort of way, and he
ant to be very good to her when she was his wife; but for
t love—deep, undying, and self-sacrificing—that makes mar-
ge thrice holy, neither he nor she knew anything of it.

Strolling about in those green woodland aisles, with the birds
ging in the branches, the squirrels hopping around them,
solemn hush of country peace everywhere, Eustace Tresyl-
asked her to marry him. Not lightly and jocosely this time,
on her birthday, but earnestly, and pleading quite as roman-
lly as Ernest Maltravers could have done. He did not feel
he expressed, to be sure, but how was Sybilla to know that,
she listened complacently, feeling she was to be a heroine at
? And, when he had finished, she fluttered out "yes," pos-
herself like Juliet in the garden, and went home through
October sunshine pledged to become his wife.

Grandpapa was ecstatic. All his visions were realized; he
s the happiest of men and grandparents. Before he let Sy-
la go that night, he had coaxed from her a promise that she
uld become Mrs. Eustace Tresylian on her eighteenth birth-
y.

Sybilla was a heroine, and enjoyed the situation unspeakably.
rs. Waldron kissed and congratulated her, and Eleanor
ched her cheek with her icy lips, and hoped frigidly she
uld be very happy. As she swept from the room she favored
bridegroom-elect with a lightning glance of scorn from her

turquois blue eyes. *She* understood him and his motives, he actually quailed before the passionately-contemptuous gla of the housekeeper's daughter.

Mr. Tresylian was determined the betrothal should be no cret—it must be celebrated by a ball that would eclipse birthday *fete* altogether. Invitations went out far and wi the large, unused banqueting-hall was to be fitted up for da cing, and the military band from Richmond engaged. The f Wednesday in November was to be the auspicious night, a half the State was to be present.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. WAYLAND.

usy days were those at Tresylian Hall. Upholsterers were refitting and refurnishing, carpenters hammered all day , and up stairs two dressmakers sewed away as if life depend- n it. Mr. Tresylian was occupied in superintending, Eus- was busy riding to and from Richmond on all sorts of er- s for him and Sybilla, Mrs. Waldron was busy, and the and her satellites trebly busy, and Miss Tresylian, in her doir with the dressmakers, was hurried to death. The only who moved serene in the disturbed household was Miss El- or Waldron, and *she* pursued the even tenor of her way re- less of the "confusion worse confounded" on every side. practiced her five hours every day on the grand piano in the drawing-room, undistracted by all the hammering and clat- ng about her; she pursued her German, and Italian, and nish studies as quietly as ever; for she was a wonderful lin- st, and she sallied forth every afternoon, armed with pencils portfolio, to sketch from nature in the grand old pine wood. she failed in the grand object of her life—a wealthy marriage he might find it necessary, one of these days, to go out as

governess, and all these manifold accomplishments would b
invaluable stock in trade.

So November—ominous month—dark, cold, and melanch
came and brought round the eventful night. The long row
pines and beeches around the old mansion twinkled with p
colored lamps, until all out-doors was like fairy-land.
night was auspicious, clear and frosty, with numberless
cleaving keen and bright through the blue arch, and a cres
moon rising pale and luminous over the misty hill-tops.
riage after carriage rolled up the long avenue, and the illu
nated rooms were filling fast. Mr. and Miss Tresylian stood
ceiving their guests, he more like a marquis of the old *reg*
than ever, and she—oh! how lovely she was in that rich w
silk, with pearls and emeralds gleaming about her, and the be
tiful ringlets dropping in a sunny shower to her taper wa
There was a rose-flush on her delicate cheek, a streaming fir
her large eyes, and a smile for all who came near her that m
her irresistible. There were far more stately beauties am
these fair daughters of Virginia, but not one half so fascinati

Of course Eustace was by her side, and of course everyb
understood exactly how matters were, and shook hands with a
congratulated him to his heart's content. How he was env
by at least a score of young men, none but these young m
knew, as they followed, with admiring eyes, the fairy figure
the bewitching little heiress.

Among the latest arrivals there was a certain Judge Har
and his family, and in their train came a gentleman who co

ded the attention of the room. He was a stranger to all—
ll, distinguished-looking man of thirty or more, with a
d, massive face and head that could not fail to attract at-
on. Sybilla, leaning on her cousin's arm, gazed at him
hlessly.

What a splendid face that man has, Eustace," she cried;
looks grand enough for a king. Who can he be?"

ustace raised his glass.

Where, *petite*?"

he next instant he dropped it with an expression of the ut-
astonishment.

Now what the duse brings *him* to Virginia?—the very last
on. Sybilla, my dear, excuse me a moment, won't you?"

e was gone as he spoke—an instant later he was shaking
s, with the greatest *empressement*, with the stranger.

Wayland, my dear old fellow! how delighted I am to see
Where in the world did you drop from? I should
oon have expected to see the man in the moon here to-
t."

r. Wayland smiled. His noble face lit up with rare bright-
as he did so.

Nevertheless, there is nothing very extraordinary in it. I
e to Richmond on a little matter of business, two days ago,
in with Judge Harper, and accepted his invitation to spend
eek or two at his place. He insisted on my coming with
to-night, and, when I found out I was to meet you, I agreed

at once. What a lucky fellow you are, Tresylian; I congra
late you with all my heart. Where is she?"

"Who?" said Eustace, laughing, "Sybilla?"

"Ah! Sybilla!—a charming name. I want to have a l
at her."

"There she is, then—talking to Mary Harper."

Mr. Wayland took a prolonged survey. Presently he tur
to Eustace, and let his hand fall on his shoulder, looking
smilingly in the face, without speaking.

"Well," Eustace said, "what do you think of her?"

"What a lucky fellow you *are*, Tresylian," repeated Mr. W
land. "She is a perfect rosebud! Present me."

He passed his arm through that of Eustace, and the two
proached the young ladies.

Miss Tresylian made a graceful courtesy, and wished
Wayland would ask her to dance; but, as Mr. Wayland ne
danced, she was destined to be disappointed. He stood by
side talking, however, until Eustace led her away for a wa
and how he *could* talk. Somehow very commonplace thi
sounded like blank verse from his lips. He had a deep, me
dious voice that matched his face, and in ten minutes he
read Sybilla's sentimental little heart to the very bottom.

"Well, Sybilla, and how do you like my friend Wayland
Eustace asked as, when the waltz concluded, they saunte
out of the warm ball-room.

"He's a perfect love, Eustace; with such a magnificent fa
you know, he ought to be an emperor or something."

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concluded, they saunte

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or or something."

"He'll never get his deserts, then, I'm afraid; but he's a re-
rkably clever fellow. Do you remember that book I read
, The Story of Pauline, and which you liked so much?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, Wayland wrote that. You remember I told you at
time I knew the author."

ybilla's eyes opened to their widest extent.

"Oh, Eustace! you don't mean to say he is an author?"

"Yes, I do; he contributes to half a dozen journals and mag-
es—stories, poetry, biographical sketches, etc. But this is
tly *entre nous*. He writes over all sorts of signatures, and
few know of his literary proclivities; so, in talking to him,
't allude to it."

"But, good gracious me, Eustace! only to think—*an au-*
/ Oh, do tell me all about him!"

ustace laughed at her enthusiasm.

"There is very little to tell, my dear, and that little the re-
e of romantic. Wayland is the only son of a wealthy Boston
chant, is a lawyer by profession, and, as I said before, a re-
kably clever fellow. There's his whole history for you in an
shell, and don't you ask any more questions about him,
emoiselle, or I shall be jealous. Come and dance the
wa with me."

iss Tresylian found no opportunity to improve her ac-
ntance with Mr. Wayland during the hours that followed.
was engaged for almost every dance—there never was such
ntiring dancer—and Mr. Wayland was not even in the ball-

room half the time. Once she caught sight of him standi
talking to Eustace, and looking at her with a half amused, h
admiring smile. Eustace was retailing, no doubt, all the fo
ish things she had said of him, and how silly he must think h
Her partner led her off, however, to take her place in the qu
rille, and in the excitement of the dance she forgot all about
She only spoke to him again when, in the cold gray dawn
the November morning, he approached to take his leave.

"I shall have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow, M
Tresylian," he said, with that rare smile of his. "I have so
thing to tell you that, perhaps, will interest you."

Sybilla's eyes flew open; but, before she could speak, he
gone. Others were flocking around to say good-by to th
pretty little hostess, and when it was all over, and she was up
her room, she was too tired even to think.

Rosa, her bright quadroon maid, disrobed her and brush
out her pretty blonde curls, and then she was buried among
downy pillows of her little bed, far away in the lovely land
dreams.

About the middle of the following afternoon, Mr. Wayl
and Mr. Frederick Harper, a dashing young Virginian, w
had been mightily impressed the night before with the f
heiress, arrived. Miss Tresylian, beautifully dressed, and w
white rosebuds in her hair, sat at the piano, looking like a p
ture. The slanting sun rays, sinking westward, seemed c
centrated round her sunny head, like the yellow aureole arou
the head of a pictured saint. Miss Waldron was her only c

on, and Miss Waldron sat in the shadow, stately and cold, g her crochet, and scarcely deigning the visitors a glance. should she? They had not come to see her, but that silly of seventeen, with the big gray eyes and gold-colored

. Fred Harper monopolized Sybilla at once, and Mr. Way- took a seat beside Miss Waldron, and flattered that young in her only weak point, by talking to her as sensibly as if had been a man. But ever and anon his eyes wandered to the piano, where Miss Tresylian and Mr. Harper were ing and talking animatedly, while she played lively little ng tunes. He was a sensible man, and he was talking to sible young lady, but, for all that, it was very evident the of the little enchantress had fallen upon him too. Pres- Mr. Tresylian and Eustace entered, and Mr. Wayland ed himself of that opportunity to secure a seat beside Sy- His greeting was a brilliant smile—for her interest in was far more profound than in young Fred Harper. He quite patriarchal in her eyes, this grave man of thirty, and heart fluttered a little as she realized she was *tete-a-tete* at last a live author.

I trust you are not fatigued after last night," Mr. Wayland "You danced a great deal."

Tired?" exclaimed Sybilla, with a gay little laugh; "I don't w the meaning of the word. I am ready for a ball to-night, a party to-morrow night, and another the night after. Oh," Miss Tresylian, rapturously, "I could dance forever!"

"That's very like sweet seventeen—eh, Mr. Wayland?" said grandpapa, coming up and chucking her dimpled chin; "when she's ten years older she'll begin to have sense, and look on these things in a very different light."

"I shall never have sense," said Sybilla, pouting; "I don't want to have it. There's Eleanor Waldron, *she's* sensible, and I wouldn't be like her for a kingdom."

"You are only a spoiled baby, Miss Tresylian. I wish you *were* like Eleanor. But I suppose it's of no use wishing."

"Not a bit, grandpapa. Nobody expects anything from a little thing like me but to look pretty and be silly." She laughed merrily as she said it. "And now, Mr. Wayland, do tell me what you meant last night."

"Only this, that I know a friend of yours at the North who would be very glad to see you."

"Who can it be? I should like to go North; but I don't know who you can mean."

"I mean a lady who was your governess two years ago."

Sybilla clasped her hands. "Oh, Mr. Wayland! not Miss Venning?"

"Yes, Miss Venning," smiling.

"Oh! how much I should like to see her. She was the only governess I ever had that I liked; and just because I liked her, and wanted her to stay, she went and left. Dear, dear Miss Venning! I would give anything to see her."

"Go North, then. But her name is not Miss Venning now; she is married."

"Married! I never knew it. That's the way every one goes and gets married. What *is* her name?"

"Mrs. Wayland."

"What?"

"How astounded you look!" said he, laughing. "She is not my wife—she is only my mother."

"Your mother!—why she's ever so much——"

"Younger than I am. Very true; nevertheless, she is my father's wife."

"How odd," said Sybilla, languidly. "Is your father a very old man?"

"About fifty-three."

"Oh, that's dreadful old! How could she——"

Sybilla stopped confused.

"Don't mind me," said Mr. Wayland, smiling good-naturedly. "You must ask her when you go North. Come and spend New Year's with us; she will be delighted."

Sybilla's eyes sparkled.

"I should like that, if grandpapa will let me. I should love to go North. Where is it?"

"The city of Boston. I shall speak to your grandfather to come and fetch you with him; and you shall see what winter in a Northern city is. Eustace will come, too. You must coax Mr. Tresylian, if he hesitates; he will not be able to resist *you*."

"Here he is," cried Sybilla. "Grandpapa, come here.

Mr. Wayland has a great favor to ask of you, and I want you to say yes beforehand."

Mr. Tresylian looked into the eager, sparkling face with an amused smile.

"Say yes beforehand! Highly characteristic of Miss Sybilla Tresylian. What is it? Anything in reason I shall be happy to oblige you and Mr. Wayland by granting."

"Well, this is extremely reasonable," said Mr. Wayland. "I am urging Miss Tresylian to use her influence over you to bring her North this winter. Her late governess, Miss Venning, is my father's wife, and will be more than delighted to see her old pupil. Come, Mr. Tresylian, make us all happy by saying yes. Here is Eustace to second my request."

"Of course," said Eustace, sauntering up. "What is it?"

Mr. Wayland informed him.

"A capital idea. My dear sir, say yes by all means. Look at Sybilla's imploring face. It may be some time before an opportunity occurs again."

"Well, be it as you will. Mr. Wayland, my granddaughter and I will avail ourselves of your kind invitation. There, Sybilla, my dear, don't choke me."

"You dear old darling!" cried Miss Tresylian, in a paroxysm of kissing. "I knew you would. He never refused me anything yet, Mr. Wayland, and he's just the best old grandfather that ever lived."

And so the consent was given to that journey, whose results were to color the whole future life of Sybilla Tresylian. Could

that devoted grandfather have been, but for a moment, the threatening future, surely nothing earthly could have wrung from him that consent.

Three days after Mr. Wayland and Eustace departed for New York. It was settled before they left that Mr. Tresylian and his granddaughter should arrive in Boston the second week of December, where the two young men would meet them.

The week following their departure brought a letter from Mrs. Wayland to Sybilla—a long, affectionate letter, full of delightful anticipations of their coming meeting.

"Let nothing prevent your arrival the second week of December," wrote Mrs. Wayland. "Your room is already prepared, and I am counting the days until I shall see my dear little Sybilla again. I congratulate you with all my heart on your approaching marriage. I know of no one to whom I should be so glad to see you united as to your Cousin Eustace. We will try and give you a glimpse of what life is in our Northern cities in winter. I am certain you will be delighted."

Of course she would be delighted. Sybilla knew that beforehand. The theater, the opera, balls, parties, shopping, sleighing, skating—oh! it would be a foretaste of paradise. Half a dozen seamstresses were at work as hard as they could sew—piles and piles of dresses were being made, and Sybilla flew about the house, in a sort of gleeful rapture, all day long.

Miss Waldron looked with lofty disdain out of her turquois blue eyes at these childish proceedings, and held herself aloof from the dress-making din. She was glad the house was to be

rid of Sybilla for a couple of months at least, and she was more than glad to know she was so soon going away for good, even though she was going as the wife of Eustace Tresylian.

So the short, dark, melancholy days of November wore away. The dead leaves lay in yellow drifts on the avenues, and fluttered mournfully about in the sighing wind. Change and gloom were everywhere without; but the wailing wind and dying flowers had no voices to speak of the deeper change and gloom that were threatening those within. No ominous foreboding of that approaching journey troubled parent or child as the preparations progressed, and cold, snow-clad December came in.

CHAPTER V.

GOING NORTH.

"The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley." The second week of December came, but Mr. and Miss Tresylian did not start for Boston, for Mr. Tresylian was down with a severe attack of gout.

To say that Sybilla was disappointed, would be doing no sort of justice to her feelings on that occasion. She flung herself upon her bed, and went off into a hysterical passion of childish weeping worthy a better cause. Oh! why need grandpapa have the gout at all? Or, having it, why could he not postpone the attack for one little week more? It was too bad—*too* bad. With three big trunks full of loves of dresses—dinner-dresses, ball-dresses, street-dresses, morning-dresses, and all elaborately trimmed and flounced, and each more of a love than the other. And now grandpapa was down for six weeks, or two months at the shortest, and the winter would be gone, and she must mope herself to death in the dreary solitude of Tresylian Hall, and these exquisite dresses waste their sweetness on the desert air.

It was a harrowing case. Sybilla wept, and would not be comforted. She was very selfish and very silly, I know, but the

poor little heiress was such a spoiled baby that you could hardly expect anything better. She cried until her pretty eyes were as red as a ferret's, and she told Mrs. Waldron, passionately, to go away and leave her alone, when that good lady came in to comfort her.

Mr. Tresylian was distressed. He half forgot the agonies of gout in his trouble at Sybilla's disappointment. She could not go North without him, for who was to take her? Not Eustace, certainly—not Mrs. Waldron, *she* was not to be spared.

There was no help for it—fate seemed to have sent forth her stern mandate, so Miss Tresylian sent a letter, blistered with salt tears, to Mrs. Wayland, to say the visit must be postponed until February at least.

"And oh! dear Mrs. Wayland," wrote Miss Tresylian, in a breathless sort of way, and without any punctuation marks, "I am so sorry and so dreadfully disappointed and I haven't done anything but cry ever since and grandpapa feels so bad too but just as soon as ever he is able to go about will go and that won't be before the middle of February I know."

But there was balm in Gilead, after all. On the third day after Mr. Tresylian's seizure, Judge Harper rode over to see him. Sybilla was with her grandfather, and the old judge noticed at once the young lady's pale cheeks and heavy eyes.

"What's the trouble with Madge Wildfire?" inquired Judge Harper, chucking her under the chin; "have we been crying our pretty little eyes out about grandpapa's gout—eh?"

Mr. Tresylian explained.

"Oh! that's all, is it?" said the judge; "that's easily remedied. I am going North myself in a day or two, so cheer up, pussy—care killed a cat—and come with me."

Sybilla's face flushed with delight. "Oh, grandpapa!" she cried.

"But are you going to Boston?" inquired grandpapa, doubtfully.

"My business is in New York; but I can take a step farther, of course, and deposit mademoiselle in Boston. There now, my dear, you needn't thank me; don't you suppose I shall like to have a pretty little girl for company?"

Of course, Mr. Tresylian could find no objection to Judge Harper, fastidious as he was. Sybilla's face shone like a sunset sky with new hope, and the sick man had not the heart to cloud it. His illness was by no means serious or unusual, so that need not detain her, and Judge Harper departed with the understanding that Miss Tresylian was to start for the North with him in two days.

Nothing occurred this time; the two days passed in packing and unpacking, and the morning of departure came. A dull, dark December day, with a raw wind and a threatening sky. But the heart makes its own sunshine, and Sybilla's eyes were dancing in her head as she flew up stairs to kiss grandpapa good-by.

"You'll come for me just as soon as ever you can; won't you, grandpapa? And oh! make them attend to Frollo, and Juno, and Sylphide" (her dogs), "and, above all, Starlight" (her

horse). "And, grandpapa, if you're not able to answer my letters, make Eleanor Waldron write for you. And you mustn't be lonesome without me, grandpapa, or get worse, you know, because if you do, I shall never forgive myself for going away."

The young lady stopped for want of breath, and filled up the hiatus with kisses.

"Good-by, my darling," Mr. Tresylian said, with a sigh. "Enjoy yourself as much as you can, and never mind me. You'll write every week until I join you; won't you, Sybilla?"

"Why of course, grandpapa, and oftener, too, I dare say. Good-by, dear, dear grandpapa, and don't you worry about me, but make haste and get well and come North, for I sha'n't half enjoy myself while you are here."

And so they parted, never to meet again, like that. All the world would be changed to Sybilla before she kissed that devoted grandparent again.

The journey was delightful; Sybilla went into raptures over everything, and thought railroad-riding a foretaste of paradise. People—steady-going old travelers—looked at the bright, enthusiastic young face with a half amused, half admiring smile, as her very audible ecstasies reached their ears. By the time they arrived at New York, however, Miss Tresylian's enthusiasm had a trifle abated, although she still thought it all charming. Her unflagging vitality was something wonderful—she was never fatigued—her roses were as bright at the close of a long day's travel as at the beginning.

Judge Harper lingered two or three days in New York, to at-

tend to the business which had brought him, and to show Miss Tresylian the wonders of the Empire City. Everything excited her wonder and delight—the crowded streets, the brilliantly-lighted shops, the rows of palace-like dwelling-houses, the Park, the horse-cars, in which she delighted to ride; the theaters, and everything, in fact. On the last night of their stay, the judge took her to the Academy of Music to see "Lucrezia Borgia," and words are powerless to express Sybilla's raptures on that occasion. Oh! to live in New York! Better, a thousand times better, be street-sweeper in that city of enchantment than an heiress anywhere else.

Before she went to bed that night, Sybilla wrote a long letter to grandpapa, full of glowing but slightly ungrammatical accounts of all her happiness, and next morning they took the train for Boston.

It was a sunshiny December day, and the young Virginia heiress spent it watching the ever-shifting panorama fly by. The morning passed, the afternoon wore on, the yellow wintry sun was low in the western sky, and they were close upon the last stopping-place between them and Boston. Half the people in the cars were asleep, Judge Harper among them, when suddenly there was a commotion—a horrible, loud-grating sound—a shock!—screams, uproar, and a deafening noise. Sybilla just remembered this, and no more—all was darkness and oblivion.

When she opened her eyes again she was out in the open air, the darkening evening sky overhead, the cold wind blowing in her face, and some one holding her head. She lifted her dull

eyes and saw a strange face—a man's face—but an awful sense of pain benumbed every faculty. She saw dimly the pale face of Judge Harper bending over her as he talked to another man.

"Her left arm is broken in two places, and the shoulder dislocated," said this other man, briskly. "She had better be removed to the nearest house at once."

"She can come to *our* house," said the subdued voice of the person who supported her head. "My mother is an excellent nurse."

"So she is, Dick," said the first speaker; "a capital idea, my boy. Here, you lads, go for a door or shutter, and get a mattress from Mrs. Nagle. Tell her we've got a patient for her."

All this Sybilla heard faintly and far off, like one in a dream. Then they were lifting her, very, very gently, but with a low, moaning cry of agony she fainted at the first touch.

It was a merciful unconsciousness that wrapped her, until they laid her little bruised form in the snowiest and plumpest of beds, in the prettiest of cottage-parlors, for the bed was one of the parlor ornaments, and the pride of Mrs. Nagle's heart.

Mrs. Nagle herself, a pale, gentle little woman, in widow's weeds, bent above the cold figure of the Virginia heiress, with tears falling from her motherly eyes.

"Poor dear! poor dear! so young and so pretty. There's no—— She isn't very badly hurt, is she, doctor?"

"Not at all—not at all, ma'am," the doctor replied, with professional briskness. "We'll have her all right again in a week

or two. Bessie, my dear, just you gét us some warm water and strong linen bandages—will you?"

Bessie Nagle, a tall, buxom, red-cheeked, dark-haired damsel, hurried out of the room, followed by her brother and the others who had helped to convey the wounded girl to the cottage. Only the doctor, Mrs. Nagle, and Judge Harper remained.

The merciful unconsciousness that held her lasted while they set the dislocated shoulder and broken arm. Then restoratives were applied by the doctor himself.

"We must take great care of her, Mrs. Nagle," the doctor said, chafing the cold hands, "and not let fever supervene, if we can help it. That might be dangerous, you know. You'll just follow my directions precisely, and with the help of Providence, and Bessie there, and this pretty little lady's youth, we'll send her home sounder than ever, before the moon wanes. May we ask what is her name, sir?" This last to Judge Harper, looking on pale and anxious. "She is not your daughter, you say?"

"No; she is Miss Sybilla Tresylian, of Tresylian Hall, Virginia, on a visit North, and any trouble or expense she may put you to will be liberally rewarded. Do everything you can for her, and, when your bill is presented to Mr. Tresylian, I assure you it will not be disputed."

The judge made this little speech with a certain air of pomposity that might have impressed any man but a New England doctor. That gentleman listened with a shrewdly-attentive look.

"Just so," he said, chafing away. "Magnificent fellows, I hear, these Virginia grandees. Well, we'll do what we can for this pretty young lady—eh, Mrs. Nagle? Ah! she opens her eyes at last."

Sybilla's large gray eyes opened and looked vacantly from face to face.

Judge Harper bent over her.

"My dear," he said, "how do you feel?"

She recognized him, and then her eyes wandered around the unfamiliar room and unfamiliar faces.

"Where am I?" she faintly asked.

"Among friends, my dear, who'll be very kind to you. You must lie still and go to sleep. No, don't talk; you have been hurt, and the doctor won't allow it."

"By no means," said the doctor, handing him a glass full of dark liquid; "just give her this, and don't talk any more to her at present."

Sybilla was too faint to talk. She drank the draught submissively—it was an opiate—and, in five minutes, she dropped asleep.

Judge Harper and the doctor left the room, the latter lingering a moment to give some parting directions to Mrs. Nagle.

"Is there a hotel in this place," the judge asked, "to which I can go? I must remain here until Miss Tresylian is out of all danger."

He asked the question of the widow's son. Richard Nagle stood leaning against the porch, looking up at the cold, crystal-

ear December moon, and smoking a clay pipe. The young an took out his pipe, and answered, respectfully:

"Yes, sir; the hotel is not a quarter of a mile from this. I ll walk there with you, if you like."

"Thank you, my lad—come on. Very unhappy accident is."

They were walking briskly over the road, hard as iron with ack frost, and their footsteps echoed sharply in the night si- nce.

"Yes, sir," the young man said; "it is a great pity; but, ter all, it might have been worse. The young lady is in no anger?"

"I believe not, unless fever sets in. I must remain here a w days to see."

"Her friends will be very anxious, of course."

"We won't tell her friends, my lad. Where's the use? If he gets well shortly, as the doctor says, it will be only worry for othing. If she doesn't, why trouble's soon enough when it omes. Poor little Sybilla!"

The Virginia judge and the New England farmer said very ttle after this, until their destination was reached. The hotel as a big, white, wooden building, with green shutters, and a arden in front.

Young Nagle did not go in. At the door he bade Judge Har- er good-night, and returned home. Entering the kitchen, he ound Bessie, with her sleeves rolled up, bustling about getting upper. The kitchen stove glowed red-hot, and a savory odor

of hot tea and newly-baked cake fill d the apartment. The yellow painted floor shone with cleanliness, and the rows of tins along the wall made you wink again. The table was set with the snowiest of cloths and a tempting array of warm biscuit, steaming ginger bread, golden pumpkin pies, and "apple sass."

"Your'e about starved, Dick; ain't you?" demanded Bessie. "It's eight o'clock, and the cake's baked as black as your boots, and the tea's been boiling for the last hour. Don't you smell it?"

"Where's mother?" asked Dick, seating himself in mother's cushioned rocking-chair.

"Why, with the young lady, of course—poor thing! How pretty she is, Dick, with all that golden-colored hair; and her dress—oh! Dick, she must be awfully rich to wear such clothes as them!"

"Of course, she is. Hurry up, Bessie, and let's have some supper. What's this the gentleman called her?"

"Miss Sybilla Tresylian, of Tresylian Hall! Doesn't that sound grand, Dick? How nice it must be to be her—so pretty and so rich, and able to afford such splendid ear-rings and finger-rings as that?"

"Very nice, I dare say," responded Mr. Nagle, with a touch of philosophy, sitting over to his supper; "but don't you go breaking the commandments, and coveting your neighbor's goods, Bessie, because you know it's no use. I don't know that I could feel much better satisfied if I was ever so rich, than I do now. Is Frank Shield coming here to-night?"

"I don't know whether he is or not," said Bessie, blushing brightly, "and I don't care. Are you going to see Fanny?"

Dick Nagle laughed as he rose up from the table.

"Are you going to sit up to-night with the young lady, Bess?"

"Of course."

"Then I'll step over and fetch Fanny to keep you company. There's Frank's step at the door now."

The roses on Bessie Nagle's cheeks turned to scarlet redness as a tall, good-looking, farmer-like young man entered. Dick took his hat, and turned to go.

"One good turn deserves another," he said. "You keep my sister company, Frank, and I'll just step over and look after yours."

CHAPTER VI.

A SLOW RECOVERY.

Miss Tresylian's accident did not seem likely, after all, to turn out seriously. Before the end of a week all danger of a fever was over, and she was slowly but surely progressing toward health. It was partly owing to her own strong young vitality, and partly to the unceasing care that had been taken of her. Mrs. Nagle and her daughter were the most untiring of nurses. All day and all night one or other was by her bedside, anticipating, with motherly and sisterly care, her every wish. [illegible]la, lying pale and weak among her pillows, liked to look in Widow Nagle's kind, serene face, and listen to her low, soothing voice. She was from the South, and when she had married, twenty-eight years before, she and her husband had gone to Frankfort, Ky., to reside. There her son Richard and her daughter Bessie had been born and reared, and there three younger children slept their last, long sleep. But at the death of her husband, seven years ago, poverty had overtaken them, and Dick had come North to try in busy New England to better their condition.

"He was only sixteen years old then," his mother said, "and no one knows how my poor boy toiled and labored for the poor

mother and sister dependent on him. God prospered him, as he always does dutiful children, and in four years he was able to rent this farm, and send for us to come North. I was sorry to leave Kentucky and my kind friends there, for the South is far dearer to me than New England can ever be. Still, I have passed three peaceful, happy years here, and here, if it be the will of Heaven, I am ready to die."

[illegible] listened dreamily to this simple little narrative, and Mrs. Nagle's son became magnified into a hero all at once. Perhaps his good looks had something to do with it, and he was *very* good-looking. If he had been the amiable owner of sandy hair and a freckled complexion, Miss Tresylian would not have considered his filial conduct worthy of a second thought. But the "Corsair" never possessed blacker eyes or hair, darker complexion, whiter teeth, or more Grecian nose than Widow Nagle's only son.

The Virginia heiress had only seen him once or twice, but, ailing as she was, that was quite often enough to photograph his handsome face on her romantic mind. Seeing that a Grecian nose and raven locks are sufficient in themselves, without any additional virtues, it is not surprising that Mr. Nagle mounted a pinnacle in Miss Tresylian's estimation that young man never dreamed of.

Judge Harper was a daily visitor at the cottage, as solicitous almost about her as her grandfather could have been. Now, however, that all danger was over, he began to think of the business which had brought him North.

"You are getting better so fast, my dear," said he, "that my presence here is no longer requisite, and my business really must be seen to without delay. Will you mind much if I leave you here with these good people, and take a run up to New York?"

"Of course not," said Sybilla. "Mrs. Judge takes as good care of me as anybody could take, and the doctor says I will be able to sit up next week. Don't delay your business on my account."

"Thank you, my dear. And now about grandpapa—shall I write and tell him, or shall I wait until you get better, and let you tell him yourself?"

"It will distress grandpapa dreadfully if he knows it now," said Sybilla, anxiously, "because you know, Judge Harper, he cannot come to see me. You had better wait. I will write to him myself next week. It's so lucky it is my left and not my right arm that was broken. Oh, to think of what *might* have happened!"

"Don't think about it—there's a good girl. Well, I'll start to-morrow for New York, and, when my affairs are settled, I will come back and see you before going South. By the way, will you write to your friends in Boston?"

"No," said Sybilla, with a willful little pout. "I don't want to see any of them until my arm is better. They are not expecting me, and will not be anxious, and Eustace never writes to grandpapa only at long intervals. I am very comfortable here, and here I mean to stay until I am quite well."

Of course it must be as Miss Tresylian pleased, so Judge Harper arose and bade her good-by.

"You are sure you will not feel lonely?" he said, holding her hand. "If you do, you know you can send for Eustace any time."

Sybilla drew away her hand with an impatient gesture.

"There is not the slightest danger of my being lonely for Eustace, nor of my sending for him. Good-by, Judge Harper. Be sure to come and see me before you go South."

Judge Harper promised, and departed. His business detained him over a week in New York, and, as soon as it was arranged, he returned to Massachusetts.

It was a cold, bright night, almost the last of December. The snow lay white and glittering, and frozen hard in the moonlight—the stars were numberless—the wind keen and invigorating. A bright light shone from the cottage-window—brightest of all, it seemed to him from the window of Sybilla's room. He rapped at the door, and was admitted by bright-faced Bessie.

"Good-evening, Miss Nagle. I have returned, you see. How is Miss Tresylian?"

"Nicely, sir. Walk in."

She opened the door of the little parlor, which had been Sybilla's chamber from the first, and Judge Harper paused on the threshold to contemplate the picture—a picture very bright, very pretty, and very suggestive, and one to be remembered long afterward in the troubled days that were to follow.

A roaring fire of hemlock logs blazed on the hearth, red as Bessie Nagle's own cheeks. Its golden blaze rendered quite superfluous the lamp burning on the table. It flashed on the old-fashioned mirror, it shone on the snowy bed, on the home-made carpet, and splint-seated chairs, and, brightest of all, on the heiress of the Tresylians, pretty Sybilla.

She lay on the crimson morocco lounge, dressed in pale blue, an exquisite *negligee*, with fluttering ribbons. A little paler, a little thinner, but very lovely, with her fair curls flowing, and her large eyes soft and dreamy with hidden light.

Seated at the table in his mother's comfortable cushioned rocking-chair, sat Mr. Dick Nagle, reading aloud. Handsomer even than Sybilla, and arrayed in his Sunday best, the widow's son looked rather a dangerous companion for the sentimental, beauty-worshiping young lady. He was reading, as if to make matters worse, the Lady of Lyons, and Judge Harper, glancing from one to the other, compressed his lips with anything but a satisfied expression.

Dick Nagle looked up from his book, Sybilla glanced over her shoulder at the opening of the door. The young man arose, in nowise disturbed by the sudden apparition, but the young lady uttered a faint feminine exclamation, and her face, pale a moment before, flushed all over carnation.

"I need not ask if Miss Tresylian is better," said the judge, taking a seat. "I see she is."

Something in his tone deepened the rosy light in Miss Tresylian's face, and her glance fell confusedly.

"Yes," she said, faintly. "I am much better, thank you. I hope you had a pleasant journey."

The widow's son had arisen and left them together, and his absence seemed to relieve Sybilla of her embarrassment. She looked up with a more assured air.

"When are you going South?" she asked.

"To-morrow. When are you going to Boston?"

"Next week, I believe. The doctor thinks I will be able to travel by that time. You don't know how I dread it."

"Ah! Are you so fascinated with this place, then?"

Sybilla looked up, her gray eyes filling with rather an angry light.

"You know what I mean. I dread the thoughts of the railway."

"Then why not be driven to your destination? The distance is only twenty miles. If you write to Eustace, you need not travel by rail. Have you written yet?"

"Not yet. I wanted to surprise them."

"Will you send a letter with me to your grandfather?"

"Of course. If you call to-morrow before you leave, I will have it ready. If that is too much trouble, I can send it."

"By no means—I will call. Am I to say nothing of your accident?"

"I think you had better not. I will send him a detailed account from Boston. He would worry so, you know."

"Yes," (a pause), "and how do you like these good people here?"

"Very much."

"They are very kind to you?"

"Very."

A certain air of restraint with which she spoke warned the judge that the subject was not agreeable. That only confirmed his suspicion, and he hazarded another question.

"Very thoughtful of that young man to read to you; is he in the habit of doing it?"

Sybilla looked suddenly up, the angry blood of the Tresylians flashing in her eyes, and glowing in her cheeks.

"He reads to me when I ask him to do so. I shall probably keep on asking him while I remain here!"

Of course that ended the matter.

The judge arose.

"You will have your letter ready when I call in the morning?"

"Yes. Grandpapa's questions will be rather embarrassing; but you are a lawyer, Judge Harper, and will be able to evade him."

She held out her hand with a brilliant smile, her fascinating little self again.

The old judge sighed as he took it.

"I will try to, my child. Take care of yourself when I am gone."

Bessie let him out, and came into the parlor.

"Dick wants to know if you wish him to read any more tonight?"

"No. Wheel up that table, Bessie, and give me pen, ink, d paper. I must write a letter."

Bessie obeyed, and quitted the room. Sybilla mused a long ne before she began to write; but the note was very brief, er all:

DEAR GRANDPAPA—You must not be angry with your Sybilla not writing before, and you must not be offended now at a ort letter. I am well and happy. Is not that enough? Ev- one is good to me, and the time goes by like magic. I pe you are better again, and will soon be able to come North. will write, in a week or so, a long, long letter full of news. ntil ther, dearest grandpapa, I remain

Your devoted

SYBILLA.

"I am afraid grandpapa will think this very unsatisfactory," ought Miss Tresylian, pondering over her own composition; but it's impossible to help it. I know he would be for com- straight here, well or ill, if he knew of my accident, and I n't want that."

No, Miss Tresylian did not want that. She did not want to e grandpapa, or Eustace, or Mrs. Wayland, or any one just t. She did not want to leave the cottage—why, she knew st.

Perhaps Judge Harper knew, too, for he was thinking rather riously of his young charge just before he fell asleep.

"I'm afraid this accident may turn out rather worse than I pected," he thought. "I might have foreseen—and she so lly and sentimental, too. Confound the whole tribe of ro- ancers and poetasters! They turn the brain of every woman

in the nation. I hope I won't get into a scrape; and I wi
with all my heart, Eustace Tresylian were here to look after
promised wife."

Judge Harper called at the cottage very early next morni
between seven and eight, and received Miss Tresylian's lett
He held her hand a moment at parting, and looked earnes
into her eyes.

"And you will be sure to write to your friends in Bost
next week, Sybilla?"

"Of course," Sybilla answered, rather pettishly. "I sh
not remain here after I am able to leave."

Perhaps the young lady made the promise in good faith; b
if so, she certainly did not keep it. That week passed, and t
next, and the third came, and still the Virginia heiress linger
in the New England cottage.

It was the middle of January, and the snow lay piled wh
and high everywhere. The wild winds of mid-winter shriek
around the house, tore through the gaunt, black trees, rattl
the windows, and whirled the red sparks in fiery showers up t
wide chimney.

Miss Tresylian was quite well again—even her sling was d
pensed with. Why, then, was she still here? Ah! ask h
that, as she sits on the hearth-rug before the parlor-fire, loo
ing dreamily into the glowing coals, and listening, as on t
night when Judge Harper returned, to Dick Nagle readi
aloud a highly-spiced romance. Sybilla is blind, and deaf, a
in a dream. She does not hear a word—she only listens to t

ce that is deep and musical enough, and sees the pictures in
crimson coals.

Presently the young man lays down his book.

"I don't believe you hear a word, Miss Tresylian," he says,
h a laugh.

Sybilla looked up with a start.

"Have you finished? Were you speaking?"

"I knew it. I said you did not hear a word. Here I have
n reading this Buccaneer of the Bosphorus for the last hour,
I'm certain you haven't heard two words!"

"No—I have been thinking."

"Thinking of what? Our sleigh-ride to-night?"

For be it known Miss Tresylian's health demanded moon-
ht sleigh-rides, with Mr. Richard Nagle for charioteer.

"No—thinking I must go away to-morrow."

"To-morrow! Oh, not so soon, surely!"

"Yes, I must, Dick. I have staid too long already. But
emain in Boston for four or five weeks, and every week I shall
me out here to visit—your mother."

"Ah! you think so now. You will forget all about us poor
ks when you leave."

Sybilla's gray eyes met his with a sudden luminous flush.

"You know better than that. Will you drive me to the city
morrow, Dick?"

"*Will I?* Are you not going in the train?"

"No; I hate the cars. But come," starting up, "it is time

for our drive, and the night is lovely. Hurry and fetch ro the sleigh; we can talk all about this on the way."

The young man hastened off, and in ten minutes had light sleigh and active horse at the door. Sybilla, all muf up in shawls and furs, got in beside him, and, with the m jingle of bells, they dashed off in the silvery moonlight.

"Handsome couple, ain't they, Frank?" Bessie Nagle ask watching them out of sight, with her beau in the porch.

"She's rich," responded Frank, sagaciously. "She is a above Dick. They'll never make a couple, Bessie."

"Above Dick!" exclaimed Miss Nagle, her black eyes fla ing. "There's not a lady in Massachusetts too good for Di I've been in Boston, and I've seen gentlemen—lots of 'em— I never saw any handsomer than our Dick."

"I guess Miss Tresylian thinks so, too," Frank said, lau ing. "There's your mother calling you, Bess."

It was late when the sleighing party returned—past o'clock. Bessie stood alone in the moonlit porch, wrapped a shawl, Frank had gone home, and Mrs. Nagle had gone bed. Just as she was getting impatient, the sleigh flew up.

"How late you are," Bessie cried. "Have you had a go time, Dick?"

"Ask Miss Tresylian," said her brother, laughing.

But Miss Tresylian, with "cheeks like the roses red," w gone.

CHAPTER VII.

IN SOCIETY.

In the wintry twilight of a January day—nearly the last of January—Sybilla Tresylian tripped up the steps of an imposing brick structure in Beacon street, and rung the bell. While she waited, she watched the people hurrying homeward along Tremont street, and down the Common, now white with snow. The keen evening wind had blown the pink bloom of her cheeks into big, round roses, and fluttered the tusseled ringlets under her dainty little hat. She looked a bright little frost-fairy, in her sable furs, and rose-lined mantle, and rose-hued ribbons, and men and women passing rapidly along the street paused to glance again at the bright, pretty, girlish face and trim little figure on the pillared door-step.

Her ring was answered by a woman-servant, who looked surprised to see a strange young lady call at this late hour.

"Is Mrs. Wayland at home?" Sybilla asked.

"Yes, Mrs. Wayland is at home. Please step in this way. What name?"

"Say a friend," Sybilla answered, seating herself in the elegant reception-room, and thinking her governess might have done worse than marry an old man, after all.

Five minutes, ten, fifteen passes. Bells rang, servants cursed and recursed the bell, doors opened and shut, and footsteps ran up and down stairs.

Twenty minutes!

Sybilla was getting impatient, when there was a rustling of silk, and a tall, youthful-looking lady, pale and stately, swept in.

"I fear I have detained you," she said, in a peculiarly gentle voice, "but I was engaged. Why, *Sybilla!*"

Sybilla laughed, and then there was a pause, in which nothing was done but kissing.

"You darling child! how glad I am to see you! And how you have grown! Stand up, and let me look at you. Why, you are a young lady."

"Of course," said Sybilla. "What would you have of a person in her eighteenth year?"

"Are you that? You don't look sixteen. But where is your grandpapa?"

"In Virginia. I came here alone."

"Alone!" repeated Mrs. Wayland, looking unutterably shocked.

"Yes; but it's such a long story, Miss Venning—— Oh! I beg pardon—Mrs. Wayland—but the other sounds so natural."

Mrs. Wayland laughed good-naturedly.

"You were surprised, I suppose, when George told you I was married?"

"George? Oh! Mr. Wayland. Yes, I was, rather. By the way, I suppose he and Cousin Eustace are here now?"

There was in her manner a slight hesitancy, which her friend noticed.

Mrs. Wayland looked down in the fair young face with a smile, half tender, half sad.

"My little Sybilla—a child the other day, and engaged to be married! I ought to congratulate you, I suppose, but I don't feel like it."

"Why not?" Sybilla asked, laughing a very conscious laugh, and coloring vividly.

"Because you are too young. They ought to let you reach twenty before making you a wife. You will have no girlhood at all. I don't like it. It is none of my business, I suppose; but, if you were mine, you should wait three years yet."

"Don't you like Eustace?"

"Yes; it is not that. I like Eustace extremely, and I have no doubt he will make you an excellent husband. It is only your youth I complain of. George is of my opinion, too."

"It is grandpapa's wish, you know, Mrs. Wayland?"

"I know. Sybilla, do you love your cousin?"

Sybilla bent over her glove, trying desperately to unfasten it, her cheeks aflame.

"Such a very embarrassing question, Mrs. Wayland," trying to laugh. "How can you?"

Mrs. Wayland took the busy little hands, and held them fast.

"Answer your old governess, Sybilla."

For answer Sybilla dropped her head suddenly on Mrs. Wayland's shoulder, and burst into a hysterical passion of weeping. Very much shocked, Mrs. Wayland sat and looked on.

"My dear Sybilla! my dear child! I beg your pardon—I had no idea—Sybilla, *what* is the matter?"

"Oh, don't ask me!—don't mind me! I am only a silly girl, you know, and I have been sick. Please let me alone for a little while, and I will be better again."

Mrs. Wayland led her up stairs to a pretty chamber, kissing and soothing her as though she were, indeed, a child. It seemed only yesterday since she had kissed and soothed her just like this, when the heiress of many Tresylians cried her pretty little eyes half out over the death of a pet kitten.

"Where are your trunks?" Mrs. Wayland asked. "The dinner bell will ring presently."

"They won't be here until to-morrow. Oh! I forgot—you don't know."

So Sybilla sat down and told Mrs. Wayland, in brief, the story of her mishap.

"You poor child! how dismal it must have been, moped up in that old farm-house. You should have sent for us."

"I was very comfortable there," Sybilla said, softly; "they were the nicest people! I promised to go see them every week while I stay."

The dinner bell rang as she spoke, and Mrs. Wayland led her down.

Mr. Wayland was already there—a hale old gentleman, frosty but kindly," seen through a long vista of silver, and cut ass, and flaming gas-light.

"How *could* Miss Venning," thought Miss Tresylian, "so ung and so pretty? He is a very nice old gentleman, I dare ; but how could she marry him?"

It was rather dull at dinner, where Mr. Wayland did most of talking, and kept asking her questions about the South, and r grandpapa, and the accident, and the people she stopped th, until her head ached. It was dull, too, in the long draw-room after dinner, with Mr. Wayland in the library writing ters, and Mrs. Wayland playing the piano for her.

"Won't you play?" Mrs. Wayland asked. "I want to hear w you have improved since I left Virginia."

"I can't play; my arm is not strong enough yet. And I ve improved *backwards* since you left. I never practice. eanor Waldron does enough of that for both of us."

"She was always studious. I have no doubt she plays well."

"Splendidly. She knows lots of things—botany, and as-nomy, and chemistry, and mathematics, and half a dozen guages. She's dreadfully learned, and I hate her!"

"Oh, Sybilla!"

"Well, I do—so where's the use of playing hypocrite? Of the selfish, unfeeling, disagreeable——"

Mrs. Wayland put her hand over the little detractor's mouth. billa laughed.

"You didn't like her yourself, you know."

"Then I must have been unjust, for she certainly was a mo
pupil—not a bit like you, flighty little thing!"

"Still, you liked me best."

"How do you know I did?"

"Oh, I know! It is easy to tell when we are liked. D
Mrs. Wayland, sing that song you used to sing for me long a
—Soft and Low I Breathe my Passion."

"And you will think of Eustace, I suppose, while I si
You sentimental little Sybilla! Do you read as many novels
ever?"

"About the same."

"And Byron, and Shelley, and Tennyson, and the rest
them?"

"Yes."

"And isn't your head turned?"

"Only a little. Do sing."

Mrs. Wayland sang the song in a low, sweet voice. Sybi
sitting on a stool, with her head in the lady's lap, listened w
her eyes full of misty dreaminess, and thoughts full of
Eustace Tresylian.

"That is *so* pretty," she said, with a fluttering sigh. "D
stop—sing more."

So Mrs. Wayland sang half the evening. Then Mr. Wayl
came, and the music ceased, and it was dull again, and a t
look came over Sybilla's face. She leened her head against
azure velvet back of her chair, pale and still.

"We shall have no more such stupid evenings as this," M

ayland said, just before they parted for the night. "I shall te to George to-morrow, and he and your cousin will return. n't look homesick so soon, my dear; you will like Boston ."

Next morning a long letter—a *lady's* letter—crossed and re-ssed, and containing a detailed history of Miss Tresylian's adventure, went off to New York. Another was posted for esylian Hall, containing a similar account, and concluding:

o you see, grandpapa dearest, as I have only just arrived e, you must let me stay the longer. I have seen nothing of ston yet, and Mrs. Wayland says I must positively remain un-the end of March. You will let me, won't you, grandpapa? d, oh! please come on here just as soon as ever your health permit.

Mrs. Wayland, in the absence of anything masculine, under-k to do the honors of the "modern Athens" herself. All first day was spent in driving through the city and suburbs. course, Mount Auburn was the first place visited, and very utiful that "city of the dead" looked, although the winter w lay piled white and high, the roses dead, and the trees pped.

Then Sybilla climbed to the top of Bunker Hill Monument, tried to feel patriotic on that dizzy elevation, but was too ch out of breath. She performed a like feat at the State use, and returned home at dusk in such a state of fatigue she was not able to stir all next day.

A week passed. No letter came from New York, rather to surprise of Mrs. Wayland. Sybilla did not care; she went

about the house all day, singing like a skylark. She had bee to a theater for the first time in her life—to the Boston—to se Edwin Booth play Hamlet. She had been to a dinner-party with Mr. and Mrs. Wayland, looking lovely in white silk an pearls—a very Princess Fustina. And she had been very muc admired, of course, this pretty little Virginia girl, heiress of fa ulous thousands, and with the best blood of the Old Dominio in her veins. She had shopped, and made calls, and gone to matinee, and, in short, had crowded as much enjoyment in five days as it was possible for five days to contain. When Su day came she went to a fashionable church with Mrs. Waylan *en grand tenue*, and listened to a fashionable preacher, wi whiskers and a snowy surplice, reading an elegant sermon, a it was all novel, and at seventeen novelty is delight.

But, through all this dissipation, it seemed Miss Tresyli could remember gratitude, for on Monday morning she a nounced her intention of going to see her friends in the cou try.

Mrs. Wayland expostulated a little, but Miss Tresylian w firm.

"I'll come back to-morro," she said. "I must go. promised; and you know, *ma chère*, the Tresylians never bre a promise."

So Sybilla went, with one of the servants to see her safe in t cars. On Tuesday evening she came back, and in the hall w suddenly caught in a young man's arms.

"You runaway!" he cried, "where you have kept me sin

st night in a state of unendurable suspense. I was just going search of you. You little witch! how well you are looking.

Sybilla had come in rosy with the frosty air, but now, as she xtricated herself from Eustace, her cheeks had grown white.

"When did you come?" she asked, faintly.

"Last night. I started the moment I heard you were here."

"Has Mr. Wayland come, too?"

"Yes; he is up stairs in the drawing-room. Come."

Of course, life was gayer than ever, now that the young gentemen had returned. Not that the young lady of seventeen hought Mr. George Wayland young. Thirty was a venerable ge to her, and then there was something about him that awed nd impressed her. She liked him, but she was a little afraid f him, and all the pretty coquetries and airy sauciness of manner, practiced with impunity on others, faded out of sight when e came near, and Sybilla, as she expressed herself to Mrs. Wayand, "tried to be goody, and talk sense."

A few days after their arrival there was a ball at the Wayland ansion. Sybilla's first ball! What an event that was! It ook her from four o'clock to eight to dress; but, when she *did* ome down, the result fully justified the expenditure of time. er plighted husband looked at her as if he had seen her for he first time, and began to realize he was going to marry a eauty. What did she wear? How can I tell? She was all loat in a sea of tulle and filmy lace, until she looked like a laid of the Mist, or a Naiad Queen, or an Undine, or Venus

fresh from the white sea foam. There were blush roses and white roses looping up this gossamer robe, and a diamond necklace and cross around the white throat, and a tiara of gems clasping back all the pretty chestnut curls. Yes, she was lovely, with her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkling, and she turned about twenty Boston heads before morning. She danced, she sang, she flirted, she did everything charming little coquettes do, and she leaned on the arm of Mr. Wayland, Jr., and talked to that gentleman with all the gravity she could muster. When she flitted away by and by to waltz, he heaved a little sigh, and stood looking after her as your "potent, grave, and reverend seigneurs" *will* sometimes sigh and look after these silly little butterflies. There were dozens of sensible young ladies present, literary ladies who had made their mark in the romance-writing world, and one might have thought Mr. George Wayland would heave the sighs for them. But no; people will never do as reasonable mortals would expect in these matters, and your great men are just as absurd, if not worse, than the common herd.

Miss Tresylian had left him to waltz—she waltzed with everybody to-night. Eustace expostulated, but the willful beauty shook him off.

"Grandpapa's not here, and I will do as I please! I'm not married *yet*, Mr. Tresylian! You go and waltz with every lady in the room, if you please—I'm sure *I* sha'n't interfere."

Miss Tresylian seemed bent on "doing as she pleased," in more ways than waltzing. When, a little over a week after their return, she informed them she was going back to the country to

pend a couple of days, Eustace again attempted to interfere. Sybilla's eyes flashed, and her color rose.

"Eustace Tresylian, be so good as to let me alone. I tell you I *will* go."

"But, Sybilla——"

"I will go to-morrow!" said Sybilla, sweeping out of the room.

And go she did, and remained two days. Eustace, finding she *would* go, had volunteered to escort her.

"I don't want you!" returned the youug lady; "I prefer going alone!"

Eustace was at the Worcester depot when the train came in, the second evening. Sybilla came out among the rest, with a tall, dark, and remarkably handsome young man. He was well dressed, but there was a certain countryfied air both about his clothes and manners. Eustace approached, but neither saw him.

"You will be sure to come?" he heard the young man say, earnestly.

"Of course," Sybilla answered; "have I ever failed yet?"

Some one touched her on the arm. She turned hastily round to see her cousin.

"You here, Eustace!" she exclaimed, coolly. "Were you waiting for me?"

"Yes," rather coldly. "Take my arm—the carriage is waiting. I will relieve *you*, sir, of your task."

The young man made a somewhat confused bow, and retre
ed. Eustace led her straight to the carriage without speakin

"Who is that fellow?" he asked, when they were shut in.

"What fellow?" angrily.

"That fellow who was with you just now."

"I am not in the habit of going with *fellows*. That gen
man was a friend of mine."

"That *gentleman*, with country clod written all over him, i
singular friend for Miss Tresylian to pick up. Who is he?"

"I shall not tell you!"

"Sybilla!"

"I will not!" cried Sybilla, passionately; "and I tell y
Eustace Tresylian, if you don't let me alone I'll break off w
you to-morrow! I *won't* be ordered—I *won't* be dictated t
Mind your own business, and let me alone!"

This was a settler. Eustace relapsed into sulky silence, a
Miss Tresylian sat with eyes that flashed and cheeks that burne
until they rattled down Beacon street, and were at home.

There was a letter from Virginia awaiting her—a long let
from grandpapa. He was deeply shocked at her accident, u
speakably thankful that it was no worse, and rejoiced to he
she was enjoying life so much. As for himself, he was but l
tle better; the probabilities were that it would be March befo
he was fit to travel. Meantime, she was to go on enjoying he
self, and writing long letters, and the weeks would soon go b
She was to give his love to Eustace and Mrs. Wayland. M

Waldron, Eleanor, and the servants sent their best regards to her; and he was her

Loving grandfather,

GEORGE P. TRESYLIAN.

There was a bank-check for a large amount in this, which Sybilla put hastily away, and read and re-read the letter.

"Dear, dear grandpapa!" she thought, with tears in her eyes, "how good he is good to me, and I—oh! what a wicked, ungrateful wretch I am! I wish I could be good—I wish I could please him—I wish I could be fond of Eustace; but I am only a willful, selfish creature, and I *can't!*"

The ringing of the dinner-bell aroused Sybilla, lying with her head on the table crying softly. She must go down, so she bathed her red eyes, and shook out her crumpled robes, and descended, and was on her good behavior all the evening. She went and sat down beside Eustace, and talked to him, and tried her best, poor child, to be sensible, and womanly, and agreeable, and she played and sang all his favorite songs. It rather perplexed Mr. Eustace Tresylian, this docile goodness. He never was subject to spasmodic fits of repentance and remorse himself, and didn't quite understand them in other people.

February drew to an end, and March came in "like a lion," roaring like Bottom the weaver, "so that it would do any man's heart good to hear him." The snow fluttered wildly in white drifts past the windows, and the sleighing was sublime. Sybilla was taking grandpapa's advice, and enjoying herself. It was balls, and parties, and the theater, and dressing, and driving,

and skating all the time. She was quite a belle among the belles of Boston; but young men who fell in love discovered she was engaged to her cousin, and fell out again. She rather snubbed Eustace than otherwise—her fit of penitence, like your and mine, and other people's, evaporated in next day's sunshine—and she was bad, and self-willed, and imperious, and obstinate, and anything else that is disagreeable and wicked, to her promised husband. She had her own way in everything—waltzed as much as she pleased, and with whom she pleased. She went to see her country friends as often as she chose, and sometimes staid there days at a time. She flirted desperately, and, in the most decided way, declined being monopolized by her cousin. She was wild with the excitement of her gay life, and bent on crowding all the dissipation possible into these few weeks.

The middle of March came. The letters to and from Virginia were regular as clock-work. Grandpapa was getting better, and would be in Boston by the first of April to take her home. Eustace had written an account of Missy's goings on, and grandpapa was getting alarmed. He would remain but a week, he wrote, so she was to be all ready when he arrived.

Miss Tresylian was very silent and thoughtful the evening after the receipt of this letter, and, it was a noticeable fact, left next day for the country. She remained until the following evening, and returned even more silent and thoughtful than when she left.

But this wore away, and she was her gay self once more. Day

y day the last fortnight passed, April came, and the fourth of
at month brought grandpapa.

Sybilla flew into his arms in a sort of rapture. A little pale
nd thin from his recent illness, but stately and handsome in
is upright old age still, and indescribably glad to hold his little
irl in his arms once more.

"You have lost your roses since you left home, my darling,"
e old man said, fondly, "and you have grown thin. What
it?"

Sybilla hid her face in his bosom, feeling a hysterical choking
her throat.

"Nothing, grandpapa, only I have been so dissipated, I sup-
ose. Oh, grandpapa! did you miss me very much?"

"Very, very much, my darling. *So* much that I think I will
ever let you out of my sight again. What! crying, Sybilla?
oolish child," with tears in his own eyes; "come, lift that
lly little head, and tell me how is Eustace."

Mrs. Wayland and her husband did their utmost to prevail
pon Mr. Tresylian to remain over the week, but in vain. He
as resolute to go, and Sybilla made no effort to change his de-
rmination. The day before that appointed for leaving, she
old him she must go to the country to see and bid her friends
ood-by.

She was standing by the window, gazing out as she spoke, and
ever turned her face.

"Of course, of course," Mr. Tresylian said, cordially; "nev-
r forget your friends, my dear. Who is to go with you?"

"No one, grandpapa; I always go there alone. They ar
poor people, you know, and don't care for visitors. I will b
back this evening."

Miss Tresylian went. In the mild twilight of the April da
she returned, and, months afterward, all remembered ho
white and ghost-like she had glided in among them, so unlik
herself that even then they wondered. All that evening, pal
and silent, she sat at grandpapa's feet on a little stool, with
shadow on her face never seen there before. There was a din
ner-party at the house, and late in the evening, when Mrs. Way
land played, there was dancing. Eustace came up to take Sy
billa out for a waltz, but she shrank from his extended hand.

"No, no!" she said; "I can't dance to-night. I am tired,
and my head aches."

There was sympathy and a fuss directly, but Miss Tresylian
only wanted rest and quiet, she said. So she went up to
chamber, not flying up stairs singing like a skylark, as was her
wont, but slowly and wearily, as if worn out.

Late that night, before retiring herself, Mrs. Wayland stole
into her room to see if she slept. The gas burned low, but
brightly enough for her to see. Yes, she slept, her head pil
lowed on her arm, her fair hair all disordered, her pillow and
eyelashes wet with tears.

"Poor child!" Mrs. Wayland thought, kissing her softly,
"she is is so sensitive, and she feels this parting so much, she
has cried herself to sleep."

CHAPTER VIII.

AT HOME.

The "sacred soil" was green with tender new grass, and the e spring flowers were all in bloom around Tresylian Hall. lay calm in the warm April sunlight, with its stately old trees ound it, as Mr. and Miss Tresylian drove up the long, shady enue.

"Dear old home!" Sybilla said, her eyes sparkling, "and ar old Virginia! It is very fine up there at the North, but ere is no place like home."

Mrs. Waldron, in rustling black silk, stood in the hall to re- ve them. Miss Waldron did not take the trouble. She was ing over an embroidery frame when they ntered, and arose h calm politeness to welcome the master and mistress of the use. Mr. Eustace she acknowledged by a cold bow, and n retreated to her seat in the window-recess, and went on nting her stitches as placidly as ever.

Sybilla was out among the servants, shaking hands, and kiss- one or two, and telling them of the hosts of presents she brought them from Boston. Then she had to visit her e, and her pet dogs, and her rabbits, and pigeons, for she

had pets of all sorts, and then, tired and breathless, she was in her room getting dressed.

Eustace Tresylian remained only a week at the hall. He going to New York, there to remain until the close of Ju when he would return, to stay by his bride until the weddi day in August, and then part no more forever.

Miss Waldron, silent and still, and quietly observant— your silent and still people are—noticed that he and Miss T sylian were remarkably unlover-like for two so soon to be unit To Miss Waldron there was an undefinable change in the v tile little heiress since her return from the North, and one of this change was her persistent avoidance of her affianced h band. It was quite diplomatic the way she dodged him wi out seeming to do it. The walks, the rides, the drives, wh he was wont to play cavalier, were no more; grandpapa, or (Miss Waldron), made invariably a third party. Sybilla h contracted a sudden friendship, it seemed, for the housekeep daughter, and insisted on her accompanying them when gra papa was absent or engaged. It puzzled and perplexed E tace, who could not quite comprehend whether it was the wo of chance or design. Sybilla seemed to have slipped like shadow or a dream from his hands, how or wherefore he cou not tell. It might be the girl's natural coquettishness, it mig be maiden coyness, it might be woman's spirit of contrarie but Eleanor did not think so. To her mind some deeper m tive lay at the bottom, which none of them saw.

The evening before his departure Eustace sought out h

in, and found her in the library alone. She started up in dusk at sight of him.

Is it you, Eustace? Have you seen Eleanor? I want her icularly."

he was gliding past him, but he caught her fast.

You always want her, or somebody else, when *I* want you. se dispense with Miss Waldron for the next ten minutes, dear—I have something to say to you."

e was fairly cornered. With an impatient jerk she freed lf, and sat down again in her chair.

stace leaned against the chimney-piece, and looked down r. The glimmering twilight showed him her fair hair and t silk dress, and the snowy gleaming of her bare arms and but not the expression of her face, averted from the win-

Shall we have lights? It is getting dark."

No," said Sybilla, sharply and shortly.

re you aware, Sybilla, I go to-morrow?"

Yes."

Will you have the goodness to tell me, before I leave, what meaning of your changed conduct?"

don't understand you," pettishly.

Oh, yes, you do, my dear! You have not been over and cordial since our meeting in Boston, but you have been an cordial since we came here. What have I done?"

Don't be absurd! Nothing."

Then why are you so changed?"

"I am *not* changed! I don't fancy billing and cooing, th is all. I don't feel like playing the role of turtle-dove, and *won't!* Don't make yourself ridiculous, Eustace!"

Eustace Tresylian's face flushed angry red, but he paused a moment to control himself.

"I was not aware I was making myself ridiculous. In A gust you are to be my wife, and I think it is only natural should know the meaning of this steady avoidance."

Sybilla started to her feet, and he could see the passiona flashing of her angry eyes even in the twilight.

"Cousin Eustace," she cried, vehemently, "*will* you let m alone? Ever since that wretched engagement took place, y have been dictating to me, and interfering with me, and ma ing yourself hateful until I can't bear the sight of you! I t you I won't have it!" stamping her foot; "and I warn you, the last time, to let me alone. You have no authority o me, and, what is more, you *never will!*"

She was gone like a flash.

An hour after, Eustace Tresylian came out of the libra very pale and stern, and sought the drawing-room. Only M Waldron was there—Sybilla was in her room, her grandfath was absent, and Mrs. Waldron was busy looking over her hou keeping accounts.

Eustace left at daybreak next morning, before any of the fa ily were stirring, and ate his breakfast with a moody brow dismal solitude.

It was Sybilla's turn now. The spoiled heiress could do as she liked; but wait until she was fairly his wife—*wait!*

Eustace gone, life at Tresylian Hall flowed back into its old monotonous channel. One would have thought that Sybilla, wont to complain of the dullness of existence before she knew any other, would have found it doubly dull now, after her Northern experience. But events never *do* turn out in this world of contrarieties as reasonable mortals like you and I might expect. Sybilla made no complaints of the monotony, and accepted her life without a murmur. The change Eleanor Waldron had noticed in her was more marked than ever. She was no longer the disturbing element of the house, flying breezily up and down stairs, banging doors, and singing like a skylark from morning till night.

No, Miss Waldron herself was not more staid and quiet than the little heiress now. Her horse and her dogs were no longer the delight of her heart—even her books failed in their attraction. She had fallen into a habit of day-dreaming, and would lie for hours among the pillows of a lounge, with her hands clasped over her head, her eyes fixed on the opposite wall, listening to Eleanor play.

Miss Waldron, sitting quietly at the piano, would have given a good deal to know the tenor of these dreams; but Sybilla, open as the day before, could keep her own secret in this matter, it seemed, for Eleanor could learn nothing.

Others noticed the alteration in her, too. Grandpapa congratulated himself that his little girl was becoming a woman at

last, and yet—it was very inconsistent—he missed the little whirlwind that used to stir up their stagnant life. He missed the chattering tongue, the restless feet, the shrill scraps of songs, the busy interest in horses, dogs, and darkey babies, although he tried to persuade himself he was better pleased with the silent dreamer he had in her place.

One thing was unchanged—the old willfulness. Miss Tresylian would not write to her cousin. In vain notes by the dozen came from Eustace, in vain grandpapa expostulated. The young lady was inexorable.

"What's the use, grandpapa?" she would cry out, impatiently; "I have nothing to say to him, and I hate letter writing! You can tell him, when *you* write, that I am well, and that is enough!"

Miss Tresylian might hate letter writing, but she certainly wrote to some one, and very long letters, at that. Miss Waldron it was who discovered this fact. Late into the night Sybilla's lamp burned, and Eleanor, passing her door softly had distinctly heard the scratching of a pen. I don't know whether it was eavesdropping or not, but it was something like it. Once she had been nearly caught, when Sybilla, opening her door hastily, ran down stairs for something she had forgotten. Miss Waldron just saved herself by retreating behind a cabinet. It was late at night, all had retired, but lamps burned the night through in the corridors of the old mansion. Miss Waldron slipped into the chamber with the rapidity of lightning, and made an appalling discovery

The loose sheets of a long, long letter lay scattered over the table. Her eye lighted on the first—

DEAREST, DEAREST RICHARD:

I received your letter yesterday, and you cannot possibly long to see me more than I long to see *you*. But I dare not——

That was all she had time to read.

Quick, light footsteps were pattering over the marble of the lower hall, and she flitted out and hid behind the cabinet as Sybilla ran up again and disappeared in her own room.

Miss Waldron did not sleep a wink that night. What was this mystery? Who was "dearest, dearest Richard?" It was not very hard to fathom. Miss Tresylian was false to her plighted vows—she had formed an underhand attachment at the North, and here was the secret of all her changed conduct. "Richard" was some brainless dandy, some scented fop, whose brains lay in his heels, and who had danced himself into her affections.

"Some dainty, elegant creature," thought Miss Waldron, with a curling lip; "some perfumed dry-goods clerk, very likely. After all, she may not marry Eustace Tresylian."

The blood rushed into her cold, still face at the thought. As much as it was in her selfish, secretive, passionate nature to care for any one, she cared for this man.

"He likes me a thousand times better than he does her," she thought, "and who knows what may come of it? Mr. Tresylian will certainly remember him handsomely in his will, and, although he is only a poor lawyer, it will be much better than

the drudgery of teaching. If anything happens, I may write my name Tresylian, yet."

She sat down by the window and looked out at the starlit sky, still musing. How had Sybilla received a letter yesterday? None had come to the house for her. All of a sudden she remembered that Miss Tresylian had walked over to Taunton yesterday afternoon. Could it be that her letters from Richard were directed to the post-office? She was in the habit of walking to Taunton pretty frequently since her return from the North. Now here was the motive.

"I will watch her to-morrow," mused Miss Waldron; "she will be posting this precious document. Oh, my pretty, fascinating little Sybilla, *my* time may come at last!"

The housekeeper's daughter kept a furtive but ceaseless watch upon Miss Tresylian all day. That young lady spent the morning dawdling from room to room in a lost, languid sort of way, and lay on the lounge and asked Eleanor to play for her. It was a rainy, windy day, the close of April, with mud, and dreariness, and discomfort everywhere out of doors.

"She will send Lucy, her maid," thought Eleanor; "she will never walk to Taunton such weather as this."

Miss Waldron was mistaken. Young ladies in love are capable of all sorts of acts of self-abnegation. Immediately after luncheon, when Mr. Tresylian was writing in his study, and Mrs. Waldron asleep in her easy-chair, Sybilla flitted down the front steps, in her plainest dress and bonnet, with a thick brown veil, a shawl of her maid's, and an umbrella.

Eleanor started up, dressed rapidly, seized another umbrella, and set off in pursuit. The umbrellas were capital shields. Sybilla never saw her. Keeping at a safe distance, Eleanor watched Miss Tresylian, wet, weary, and muddy, enter the post-office.

That was all she wanted, or dared venture. She turned to the right about, and was home fifteen minutes before Sybilla.

Miss Waldron said nothing of her discovery. She was wise in her generation, this young lady, and had no wish to hasten an explanation. Besides, her secretive nature rejoiced in something to keep. She said nothing, but set herself quietly and ceaselessly to watch the unsuspecting little culprit.

Poor, wrong-doing Sybilla! Never was an imprudent mouse more incessantly watched by a sleek mouser than she, by the housekeeper's stately daughter.

Patience is its own reward. Miss Waldron, for her pains, found out that Miss Tresylian received letters weekly at the post-office, and sent lengthy epistles in return. She could not, with all her watching, see to whom these letters were directed—"Richard" was a myth still. *His* epistles were neither so well written nor so well spelled as they might be. She discovered that by catching sight of the envelope, and it confirmed her suspicions that he was of the *canaille*. To Miss Waldron the hour of Miss Sybilla Tresylian's downfall was near at hand, and she waited in silent exultation for the hour to arrive.

So April and May passed. June, rose-crowned and radiant, came in, and the waving trees around Tresylian Hall cast invit-

ing shadows on the velvet sward. Still Miss Waldron, in her new character of amateur detective, got no further into the heart of the mystery, and still Mr. Tresylian and Mrs. Waldron were conveniently obtuse.

The visits to Taunton continued with clock-work regularity, and more than once Sybilla was dogged. The post-office was always the place visited, but the letters received there were never seen by mortal eyes, save the bright gray eyes for which they were written.

Mr. Tresylian and Eustace kept up a brisk correspondence, and, as June drew to a close, the last letter of that gentleman arrived. He would follow it himself in a week, all his arrangements were made, he would quit Virginia no more until after the wedding.

Mr. Tresylian read this letter aloud to the family at breakfast, and looked across the table at his granddaughter. Miss Waldron looked, too; but, except that the heiress was very pale, and kept her eyes immovably fixed on her plate, there was no change. She did not even speak, but sat crumpling her muffin in stony stillness.

"You hear, Sybilla," Mr. Tresylian said, rather gravely; "in a week Eustace will be home; in six weeks your wedding-day will have arrived. Will you be reasonable at last, and begin to prepare?"

Mr. Tresylian was as very nearly vexed with his granddaughter as it was possible for him to be with that idolized darling. In June, by all the rules of propriety, the preparations for the

wedding should have commenced, but the self-willed bride-elect would not hear of it.

"Who wants the house overrun with dressmakers and milliners," she said, petulantly, "and all the fuss of fitting, and refitting, and trying on, and giving directions so soon? *I don't*, and, what's more, I *won't!* July will be time enough; I sh'a'nt have all the dry-goods in New York made up, and I don't want the bother to begin while it can be put off."

Of course this decision, like all Miss Tresylian's decisions, were as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. But the time had come when the "putting off" process must end. Here it was the close of June, the bridegroom coming, and the wedding-day drawing rapidly near.

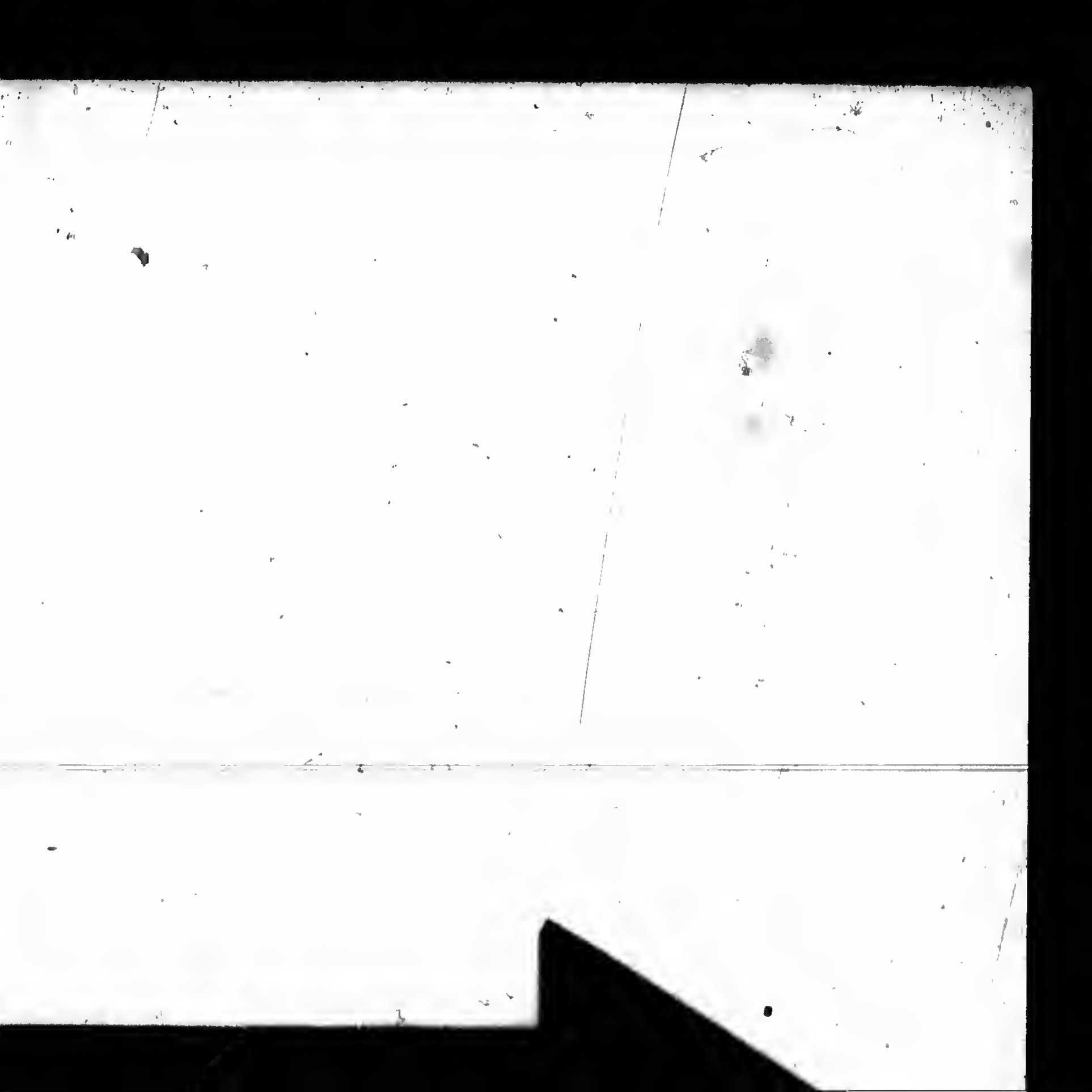
"Very well, grandpapa," Sybilla said, glancing up, "just as you please."

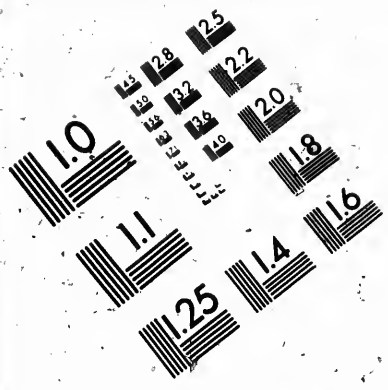
Grandpapa looked as nearly exasperated as possible, Mrs. Waldron astonished.

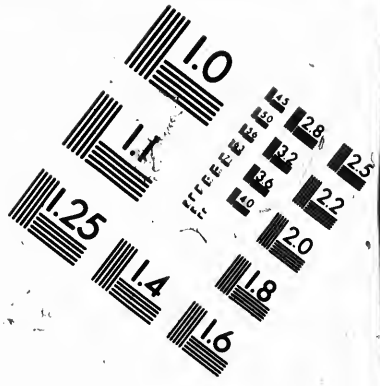
"What *is* the matter with you, Sybilla?" he cried. "What is the meaning of all this indifference? I fancied you would not be able to sleep for two months beforehand for thinking of your wedding-dresses, and here you don't even care whether you have any or not. What is the matter?"

Sybilla's pale face flushed faint carnation all over, and then grew white even to the lips. She rose abruptly from the table, and ran out of the room.

Mr. Tresylian looked at Mrs. Waldron in a state of blank stupefaction.







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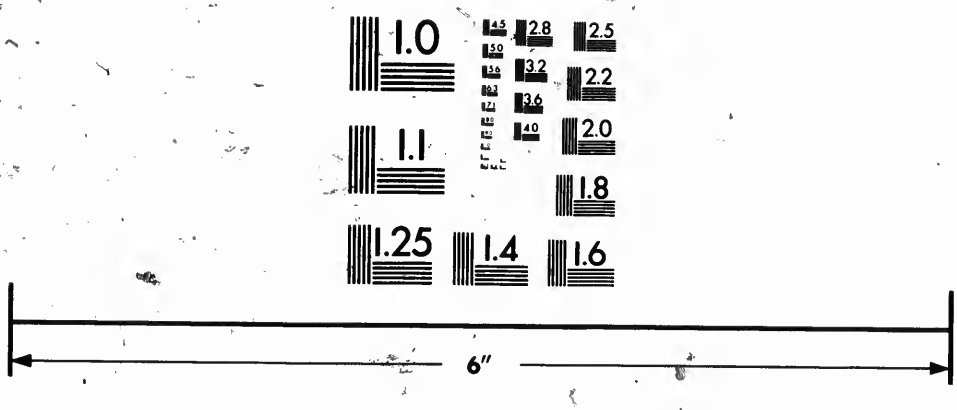

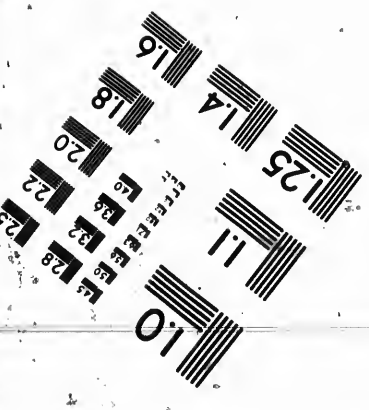

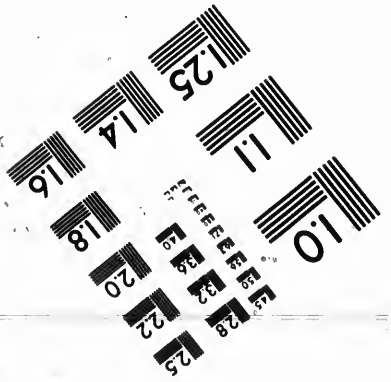

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"*What* is it?" he asked, bewildered.

Mrs. Waldron shrugged her broad shoulders.

"I'm sure *I* don't know, sir; there is no accounting for a girl's whims. The matter in my mind is that Sybilla reads too many novels."

This was rather meager, but no better solution offering, grandpapa was forced to accept it.

"She hasn't been like herself since she came from the North," he said, discontentedly. "If it wasn't that I knew to the contrary, I should think this marriage was distasteful to her."

Sybilla did not make her appearance for the next two hours. Miss Waldron, going softly by her room, heard the scratch, scratch, scratch of that busy pen.

"Writing again," thought the housekeeper's daughter, "another letter to *dearest Richard*. She will be going to Taunton. I'll watch and see."

She took her station, with a book at the dining-room window, and in half an hour saw what she waited for. Miss Tresylian, dressed for a walk, and wearing her vail down, hurried through the avenue, and out of the gate.

"Matters are drawing to a climax," mused Eleanor. "August is very near; but there is many a slip! I don't believe we will have a wedding at Tresylian Hall quite so soon as we think."

CHAPTER IX.

EXTREMELY MYSTERIOUS.

Late in the afternoon of the first day of July, Mr. Eustace Tresylian arrived at the hall. He had been detained by business longer than he had anticipated, but everything was arranged now, and he would leave Virginia no more, until he left it in August with his bride to start on his wedding-tour.

It had been an intensely warm day, this day of his arrival. The sun had glared with a yellow, brassy hue since early morning, and had sunk at last with an ominous, lurid glow. All the windows and doors were thrown wide open in the old mansion, but no breath of air fluttered in. The trees stood lifeless, the flowers drooped, the grass was scorched, the dogs on the veranda lolled their great tongues between their wide jaws, and panted in the fiery heat. The servants were out on the grass, the family seated in the wide entrance hall. Thus Eustace, all dusty and travel-stained, found them on this evening of his return.

With one exception—Sybilla was not there. Hot as it was, she had started, more than two hours before, for a walk, and had not yet returned.

It had been almost too warm before to think about anything, but now, looking up at the changing sky, Mr. Tresylian felt the first symptoms of uneasiness.

It was darkening rapidly, black clouds hurried wildly to and fro, and the West was all a blood-red glow. A storm was rising—a storm of rain and lightning, and she was afraid of lightning. Oh! where was Sybilla?

Mr. Tresylian started to his feet in a tremor.

"Where can that child be? There is a storm at hand, and she may be caught in it. Do you know where my granddaughter went, Mrs. Waldron?"

Mrs. Waldron did not.

Mr. Tresylian grew more agitated. He was easily alarmed when that darling granddaughter of his was [illegible]rned, and the first great drop of rain had plashed on the ve[illegible]da. Miss Waldron looked up from the book she was reading—a treatise on geology, by the way.

"I think it is probable Miss Tresylian went to Taunton. She is in the habit of going there of late."

"To Taunton!" repeated Eustace. "What takes Sybilla there?"

"I am not in Miss Tresylian's confidence," Miss Waldron answered, coldly. "I only know that she goes."

It was growing dark with alarming rapidity. The lurid red hue faded entirely out, and the sky was inky black. Fast and faster fell the plashing rain-drops, and a vivid flash of lightning

leaped out like a two-edged sword. Mr. Tresylian was like a man frantic.

"For God's sake! Eustace, get your coat and hat and come with me. Mrs. Waldron, arouse the servants, and send them in every direction with umbrellas. The child will get her death!"

Everything was confusion directly—running, and ordering, and preparing for the search.

Miss Waldron folded her hands on her placid lap—it was too dark to read—and never moved. The rain fell now in torrents, the lightning blazed ceaselessly, and the thunder broke in deafening peals. Eleanor Waldron sat alone in the hall, and watched the storm through the open door—sat thinking of Sybilla with a smile on her face.

"I know where she has gone," she thought; "my lady is nicely caught for once."

Miss Waldron was mistaken. She did *not* know where Sybilla had gone. If she had, she would probably have thought it the greatest mare's nest she had ever found.

The searching party trooped out into the hall, with Mr. Tresylian and Eustace at their head. Just at the same moment a little figure emerged from among the trees and flew up the avenue. All paused aghast. Another instant and Sybilla, drenched through and through, pale and scared, stood before them.

"My darling!" the old man cried, "where have you been? You have terrified us nearly to death."

Sybilla stood, her wet garments clinging around her, her fair hair blown wildly about, her eyes wandering from face to face, resting at last on Eustace.

"*You* here!" she said, in no very rapturous tone. "When did you arrive?"

"An hour ago. Won't you shake hands?"

She held out her hand, but it lay cold and lifeless in his.

"Where have you been, Sybilla?" her grandfather repeated.

"Out for a walk," Sybilla answered, rather impatiently, "and got caught in the storm. I can't stand here talking in my wet clothes, and, when I take them off, I am going to bed"

The young lady's hearers knew her too well to attempt expostulation, and she had swept off with the wet clothes trailing about her while the words were yet on her lips. There was only one person who doubted the truth of what she had said—that person was Miss Waldron.

"I don't believe she was out for a walk," thought Eleanor. "She is not so fond of walking as to start out this burning afternoon for that alone. She has been to Taunton to post or receive another letter."

It was rather a dull evening. This little episode threw a damp over the bridegroom's return. Mrs. Waldron bent over interminable plain sewing. Miss Waldron, at Mr. Tresylian's request, sat down at the piano. Eustace lay on a sofa and listened, but the masterpieces of Beethoven, Mozart, and Mendelssohn were entirely thrown away upon him. He lay listening to the rush of the pouring rain, and thinking of Sybilla with a gloomy

brow. Was everything going wrong, after all, just as he thought it going right? Was he to lose a magnificent fortune for a girl's whim, just as it was within his grasp? Was the power of his strong man's mind to be as chaff in the wind before the coquetries of this little Lady Caprice? Was she going to jilt him at the very last moment? Eustace spent as restless a night as if he had been the most adoring and despairing lover in christendom. He lay tossing on his bed, and listening to the still falling rain, and wondering what new display of self-will to-morrow would bring forth.

"If Eleanor Waldron had half her fortune," he thought, "Sybilla Tresylian might go to Joppa for me. All the gold in her grandfather's coffers will hardly compensate for such an incumbrance. Let her wait until she is once my wife, though, and if I don't take the nonsense out of her, the blood of the 'bitter-bad' Tresylians does not flow in my veins."

Sybilla did not make her appearance next morning until the family were seated at breakfast. Then she entered, looking very charming in a white muslin robe, her cheeks flushed, and her curls flowing. Never was the wind half so changeful as these girls! The pretty little flirt was all smiles, and held out her hand to Eustace with something of the frank brightness of other days.

"I was too cross and too wet to say 'how do you do' last night, Eustace. A saint couldn't keep her temper in a downpour of rain, and I am not a saint."

"No," thought Eustace, "very far from it."

Miss Tresylian's tongue never ceased all breakfast time, and her stream of girlish tittle-tattle made grandpapa's face radiant. It was sweeter than the music of the spheres to him, all this pretty feminine small-talk, and his darling's smiling face fairer than the Venus de Medicis.

As they rose from the table, Sybilla pushed her arm through that of Eleanor.

"Come, Nell," she said, "I want you to teach me the *primo* of that duet. It is of such a fly-away character that I never can learn it alone. All the more like myself for that, eh?"

Nobody in the world would ever have thought of calling Miss Waldron *Nell*, save Sybilla Tresylian, and she only in one of her most fitful moods. Eustace looked round with an imploring expression.

"I thought you would take a walk with me this morning, Sybilla."

"Couldn't possibly—must improve my mind. 'How doth the little busy bee,' you know, and I'm awfully backward in triplets and things, and Eleanor knows more about music than the man that composed it, and she's going to teach me. You can come and listen to us, if you like, only you mustn't read the paper, for nobody can play runs and shakes with a fidgety young man turning over a crackling paper. Come, Nell."

Miss Waldron allowed herself to be led out of the room. Eustace followed, still looking appealingly.

"After the duet, then—you can't spend the whole morning over *that*."

"Can't we? You don't know what we can do when we're driven to it. After the duet I have a novel to finish—the loveliest story, with an old, hard-hearted hypocon—what-you-may-call-it, uncle?—and a niece dreadfully in love with a poor young man! It will take me until after luncheon to finish *that.*"

Eustace turned away abruptly. It was quite evident, under all this talk, lay a steady purpose to avoid him. He mounted his horse and rode off, and, the moment he was out of sight, Sybilla sprang up from the piano.

"I'm sick of that duet, at least for the present. Perhaps I'll have another practice this afternoon."

"Penelope's web," thought Eleanor, "a shield to ward off suitors. When Eustace returns it will be resumed."

Luncheon passed—afternoon came.

Sybilla was lying idly on a lounge, her eyes closed, and her hands clasped above her head, when Eustace sauntered into her boudoir.

"The afternoon is lovely, Sybilla—come out for a walk."

Sybilla kept her eyes closed, and made no sign.

"Sybilla!"

"Go away!" said Miss Tresylian, opening her eyes and shutting them again; "don't you see I'm asleep?"

"I see you are determined to be provoking," replied Eustace, trying to keep his temper. "I want you to open your eyes and talk to me."

"I prefer talking to you with my eyes shut; but I think you might go away when you know you're not wanted."

"I am never wanted, it seems," bitterly. "Will you come out for a walk?"

"Too warm!" said Sybilla, taking a lazier position on the lounge.

A fresh, cool breeze after the rain was sweeping through the apartment at the same moment. Eustace echoed her, in surprise:

"Too warm!" and she was out in the fiery heat of yesterday. "Say you don't feel inclined, at once."

"I don't feel inclined, then."

The tone in which this was said left Eustace but one dignified alternative. He arose, and walked silently out of the room.

That was but the beginning—Miss Tresylian's conduct did not improve.

The cleverest statesman could not have shown more diplomacy in gaining his point than did she. Eustace had to stand off at arm's length, and submit to being most unmercifully snubbed.

Grandpapa saw it, and expostulated; but grandpapa's mouth was closed with kisses.

"Eustace is such a tease, grandpapa—don't you mind him. I told him before I didn't like billing and cooing, and I don't. And he's very well off, only he doesn't know it."

But all this time the preparations for the wedding were going

on in real earnest. There were two seamstresses in the house, whose needles flew from early morning till dewy eve, and silks, and laces, and moires lay heaped on tables in rich confusion. But the bride-elect took surprisingly little interest. She let them buy for her what they pleased, and she submitted to be fitted and "tried on" with lamb-like docility, but she seemed to care very little, after all.

She had no orders to give—make them any way they liked—one way was much the same as the other, after all. Of the changes in her, no change was more surprising than this—she, the most particular of mortals about the cut of a sleeve, or the trimming of a skirt, so shockingly indifferent concerning her wedding-clothes.

"She is indifferent because she never means to wear them," thought sharp-sighted Eleanor Waldron. "When the bridal day comes there will be no bride."

The visits to Taunton continued, since the arrival of Eustace, with even more frequency than before. Miss Tresylian, little despot in petticoats that she was, went and came, unquestioned and alone. Almost every day, sometimes on foot, sometimes mounted on Starlight, always unattended, she was gone for hours, returning often when the stars were in the sky. No one presumed to question her, not even grandpapa, lest she should take a sudden tantrum, and renounce the marriage altogether. They held her by a hair only, that might snap at any moment, and leave them utterly discomfited.

So July wore on—its third week had come.

The wedding-dresses hung in splendid array in the wardrobe up stairs; the arrangements preparatory to starting for Europe were being made.

Mrs. Waldron and her daughter were to keep the house while they were gone, and superintend its refurnishing and rejuvenation before they came back.

Matters were coming to a focus. In three weeks the wedding would take place, and still the bride kept the bridegroom aloof, still she maintained her listless apathy on the subject of dress and ornaments, and still the daily absences grew longer and longer.

CHAPTER X.

HIGHLY SENSATIONAL.

Eleanor Waldron sat at her chamber window, her chin resting on her hand, her thoughtful eyes looking out at the tossing trees. It was the afternoon of the first of August—a dark, overcast afternoon, with the promise of coming rain in the leaden sky. A moaning, complaining wind worried the trees, and a solemn sound echoed from the pine woods, always the forerunner of coming storm.

The house was very still. Sybilla was absent, so was Eustace, so was Mr. Tresylian, who had gone that morning to Richmond. Mrs. Waldron was taking her before-dinner nap; the servants were away out of hearing, and only a murmur of talking and laughing, from a room across the hall, broke the hush of the hot afternoon. It was the room where the two seamstresses and Sybilla's maid were busy at work, making up for lost time.

Five struck somewhere down stairs, and Eleanor woke out of a deep reverie, surprised to find it so late. She had been sitting there for two hours, lost in meditation with Miss Tresylian's misdoings for her subject. The wedding-day was very near, now, and no sign as yet of the *denouement*. This waiting was getting

a little tiresome—she wished the mysteries would open, and the *coup de theater* come.

As the clock struck she arose. She had to go to the village to execute some commission for her mother, and should have started an hour ago. It would be dark, now, before she could come back, and with the night would fall the rain also. In five minutes her bonnet and shawl were on, and she was walking rapidly down the avenue and toward the village.

It was some two miles off, and nearly an hour before Eleanor got there, then another passed in fulfilling her errands, and seven was striking by the village church ere she turned to retrace her steps.

The storm threatening all the afternoon had not fallen yet, but was drawing near. It was darker than it should have been at eight, and a thin drizzle filled the air. She would be overtaken by the storm and the darkness to a dead certainty, and the road was a lonely one.

"I might take the short cut through the fields and the pine woods," she thought, "but it is so dreary; and they say there are runaway negroes in the woods. I had better risk the storm and go round."

"Miss Waldron," said a voice at her elbow.

She turned round and saw Eustace.

"Your hurry must be pressing, Miss Waldron, when you can't take time to speak to your friends."

"I did not see you," said Eleanor, very much relieved at the sight of him. "Are you going home?"

"Yes, if I may have the pleasure of escorting you there. Take my arm. We will have to step out, or stand a ducking."

"I am inclined to think we are in for the ducking in any case," said Eleanor. "Had we not better take the short cut through the woods?"

"Of course; we may outstrip the rain yet."

He drew her arm within his, and they hurried on. It was no use denying it, he liked to be with Eleanor, and much preferred having her on his arm to his bride-elect.

They were walking too rapidly to talk much. They left the village behind presently, and struck into a number of forlorn-looking fields.

"Was Sybilla at home before you left?" Eustace asked once.

"No," replied Eleanor. "I fancy she may have got belated as well as myself."

Eustace made no answer, but hurried her over the dismal fields.

The pine woods loomed up black and grim before them, but Eleanor, with Eustace by her side, felt no fear. It shortened the distance by half a mile, this woodland path—very pleasant on a sunny summer noon, but ghastly and weird now.

The rain was beginning to fall as they entered, but the sheltering trees kept them safe. No living thing was visible, and no sound was to be heard but the solemn surging of the great pines.

They had hurried along for nearly a quarter of a mile, when a sudden angle in the forest-path brought them in sight of two

figures flitting along ahead—the figures of a man and a woman. Eleanor Waldron uttered a faint exclamation.

"It looks like Sybilla," she said.

"It *is* Sybilla!" said Eustace, in a surpressed voice. "I know that hat and feather."

"Who can the man be?" exclaimed Eleanor, her heart beginning to throb fast.

Eustace made no reply, but kept his eyes fixed on the pair before them.

Sybilla—ah! there could be no mistaking that graceful little figure, or that coquettish hat and plume. She hung on the stranger's arm as she had never hung on that of her cousin. They followed them, their footsteps making no echo on the turfy path—never speaking, and too far off to hear even the voices of those they pursued. Suddenly Eleanor stopped and drew Eustace back.

"Hush!" she whispered. "Don't go on. They are stopping.

Eustace drew back with her into the black shadows of the trees.

The pair, in fact, stopped. They were on the outskirts of the wood, and it was only a short distance across two or three fields to Tresylian Hall.

It was too dark there in that gloomy woodland aisle, by this time, to see more than the mere outline of their figures. Eleanor Waldron, standing by Eustace's side, never forgot that picture. The black wood shutting them in, the deep, solemn

surging of the trees, the mysterious gloom, the two spectral figures ahead, and the sound of the falling rain. She never forgot it. It was always dark, with the plash of the rain, and Sybilla Tresylian looking shadowy and ghost-like.

They parted at last. The man stooped and kissed her. Eustace Tresylian took a step forward, with a deep oath on his lips, but Eleanor still restrained him.

"Wait!" she whispered, "wait! he will pass this way coming back, and we will see him."

He obeyed her.

The man was advancing toward them with long strides, whistling a tune. Even that old Scotch air, Comin' Thro' the Rye, remained in Eleanor's memory years after, as part of that night's strange scene. He came close; he passed them, never seeing them. He was tall, and that was about all they could define, for his great-coat was so pulled up, and his hat so slouched down, that in the darkness nothing of his features was visible. Again Eustace was starting forward, and again Eleanor's cold, firm hand held him back.

"No," she cried; "let him go; don't make a scene here, for pity's sake. You can settle this matter another way."

They came out of their shelter as she said it, and walked on. Even in the darkness, Eleanor could see the deathly whiteness of the young man's face.

"Do you know him?" he asked, in a deep, intense voice.

"I never saw him before, I am certain. Whoever he is, I do not believe he belongs here."

"No!" looking at her in surprise; "where then?"

"To the North—to Boston. I am confident of it. I know that Sybilla has been corresponding clandestinely with some one ever since her return. She posted the letters and received the answers at the post-office in Taunton. I say *received*, for I feel sure the correspondence is at an end. I know the man is here, and that is he."

All the venom in her nature came out with the words. She almost hissed them. She had kept her secret so long that it was a double delight to tell it now. Eustace listened in dead silence.

"Can you think of no one?" she asked.

"No one. Why have you kept this a secret so long?" he asked, coldly.

"It was no business of mine, and Miss Tresylian is not one to be interfered with."

"No," he said, between his closed teeth; "no; but we will interfere with her to some purpose now! *Here* is the secret of those long absences from home ever since my return. I think this night will put a stop to my lady's capers for a while."

Eleanor Waldron smiled a cold, exultant smile. It was not so easy putting a stop to anything Sybilla Tresylian took into her head, as she well knew.

No more was said.

They were out of the woods, crossing the fields in a downpour of rain. Ten minutes brought them to the house. On the threshold of the front door Eustace held her a moment.

"Say nothing of what you have seen to-night, Eleanor, and neither will I. I must think over what is best to do. If I seek out Sybilla and accuse her, she will fall into one of her vehement passions and defy me. Her grandfather is so infatuated where she is concerned, that she can wind him round her little finger. Wait until to-morrow."

He opened the door without waiting for a reply, and they entered.

Eleanor went up stairs at once to her room, and, on the upper landing, encountered Sybilla's maid.

"Is Miss Tresylian at home?" she asked.

"Yes, miss, jest come, and soakin' through with wet."

Eleanor asked no more, but hurried into her room. She was wet herself, and had to remove her dripping garments, and dress for dinner. She was ready when the bell rang, and went down stairs. All were there, except Sybilla, who was never punctual. They were fairly seated at table before that young lady came in.

"Always late," cried grandpapa, chucking her under the chin, "always late."

"I am here now," said Sybilla; "that is all that is necessary, I suppose."

"Have you been out?" Eustace inquired, in a tone so naturally careless as to surprise Eleanor.

"Yes," answered Sybilla, without looking up.

"You took a disagreeable afternoon for it, did you not? Was your business so pressing?"

"Very! Would you like to know what it was?" replied Sybilla, audaciously.

"Not particularly," said Eustace, coldly; "it is impolite to pry into other people's affairs; besides, I may be better informed than you imagine."

Sybilla looked at him suddenly, her face flushing. Mrs. Waldron seemed bewildered—Miss Waldron stonily quiet. Grandpapa saw fit to interpose.

"Are you two quarreling? I won't have it! Eustace, what did Harcourt say about that mortgage?"

Eustace began an account of the errand that had taken him to Taunton that afternoon.

The rest sat quiet. Sybilla had grown rather pale, and ate nothing, and, when they arose from the table, she went away to her room, and was seen no more.

Next morning, after breakfast, Eustace set himself to watch Sybilla. He had made up his mind what course to pursue. Eleanor saw that in his set face, though he said nothing to her. She asked no questions—she was satisfied to wait for the course of events.

The day was intensely hot. Sybilla, in a white muslin wrapper, lay on a sofa all morning, with a volume of poems in her hand. She declined luncheon when luncheon hour came—it was too warm to eat. All the afternoon she spent in her chamber.

Eustace, smoking among the trees, could see the white figure at the window.

As the evening drew on, however, and a cool breeze arose, she came down the front steps, her white dress changed for one of blue barege, a black-silk scarf thrown over her shoulders, and her hat on her head.

Eustace saw her trip away, and composedly followed her, keeping out of sight.

She took the high-road, walking rapidly with a light, elastic step. Eustace never lost sight of her, and never let her see him. He felt sure her destination was the pine woods, and he was not mistaken.

She entered the solitary path, and was lost among the trees—only for a few moments—then he came in sight of her again. She was no longer alone. The tall young man of the preceding night was with her. They were walking on, arm in arm. His back was toward Eustace, and his face in the shadow of a broad Panama hat. He made no attempt to see him. "All in good time," thought Eustace.

They sauntered slowly on, he still following, keeping among the trees, and of course out of hearing, as well as out of sight. When they reached the end of the path near the hall, they separated, after a very affectionate embrace, Sybilla, the perfidious, hurrying across the fields homeward, and the conquering hero retracing his steps back through the woods.

Eustace followed him. He could not see his face yet, for the trees and that wide-leafed hat. He followed him out of the woods, over the fields, and into the high-road.

The August sun was setting in a glory of crimson and gold,

as they entered the village, and people were hurrying home to supper.

The young man in the Panama hat paused about half way up the village, opened a garden gate, and entered a pretty little cottage with the air of one who is at home. As he turned to close the gate before entering, Eustace had caught a fleeting glimpse of a pair of dark eyes, a handsome nose, and a black mustache. Only a glimpse, but enough to show that his successful rival was eminently handsome. But Eustace had taken *that* for granted all along, knowing Sybilla as well as he did.

He had found out all he wanted, and turned back. An old man was approaching, leaning on a stick. Eustace knew him, and stopped.

"Good-evening, Barton. Do you see that house there?" pointing out the cottage.

"Ay, ay, Mr. Eustace," the old man answered, touching his hat, "I see it."

"Who lives there?"

"One Peter Lantham, a blacksmith. He's from the North somewhere, they tell me. Old Daddy Kenly lived there afore him. Peter Lantham's only been in it three year."

"Has he a family?"

"Two little girls, sir, and his wife."

"No more? Is there no young man living there?"

"Oh! now you name it—yes, there is," said the old man; "a young fellow from the North, down on a visit. He came

about the same time you did yourself, Mr. Eustace. An uncommon smart young fellow, too, and his name—what's this his name is?"

"Yes," said Eustace, "try and think of his name."

"I have it, sir—Nagle's the name. Dick Nagle they call him, and he's from Boston. Do you know him, Mr. Eustace?"

Yes, Eustace knew him. Like lightning it flashed on him. This was the young man he had seen with Sybilla at the Worcester depot, and Nagle was the name of the family who had taken care of her after her accident.

It was all as clear as the golden sunset illumining the western sky.

"Thank you, Barton—good-evening," he said, abruptly, turning on his heel. "That is all I want to know."

He strode away, leaving the old man gazing after him. He went straight home, never looking to the right or left, lost in thought.

When dinner was over, Eustace entered the dining-room. Sybilla lay on a sofa, languid and sleepy, as she had lain all morning, and Eleanor at the piano was playing softly and sweetly in the summer twilight.

No one else was there, and both looked again at his pale, fixed face.

Eleanor understood, Sybilla suspected—dreaded, perhaps—for she turned away her own. He scarcely looked at her,

did not speak, only remained a moment, and then went out on the lawn to smoke. He lingered there, walking up and down, and smoking cigar after cigar, until the stars swung in the blue-black concave, and a pale round moon smiled up to the zenith.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GRAND CLIMAX

Nothing further happened that night. It was very quiet all evening in the drawing-room—the ominous hush that precedes the storm.

Eustace, when he came in at last, played chess with his uncle. Eleanor never quitted the piano. Mr. Tresylian liked to hear her play of an evening. Mrs. Waldron bent over her everlasting sewing, and Sybilla lay on her sofa, with her face to the wall. Was she asleep?

"No," she answered, when grandpapa called her, "only tired and hot."

It was very quiet, but the storm-clouds were gathering—the thunderbolt was terribly near.

Perhaps Miss Waldron never admired Eustace Tresylian so much in her life as she did that night. He sat so calmly self-possessed, playing that intricate game, never making a false move, and all the interests of his life at stake.

"If I were a man," thought Eleanor Waldron, very much as Desdemona once thought, "I should like to be such a man as

Immediately after breakfast, next morning, Eustace made t
first move in a very different game. He took his hat and l
the house, turning in the direction of Taunton. Sybilla watch
him from the window, her lips set, her face pale, her eyes gl
tering. Eleanor watched *her*, and read that look. It said:

"You have found me out, but I dare and defy you yet."

Eustace walked rapidly to the village, and approached t
cottage where Sybilla's lover had entered the preceding evenin
He had not to go in, the young man in the Panama hat w
leaning over the garden gate, smoking with the morning su
light full in his face, and the morning breeze lifting his da
hair.

Eustace, seeing him plainly now, saw how *very* handsome
was, and his lip curled scornfully.

"For that country clod's black mustache and straight no
Sybilla Tresylian throws me over, and disgraces herself. Wh
does it matter if the head is an idiot's, so that those well-shap
features are outside of it? Good-morning."

He stopped short before the young man with this abru
salutation.

Dick Nagle took his cigar out of h[illegible]d eyed h
coolly.

"Good-morning, sir."

"Your name is Nagle?" imperiously.

"It is."

"And you are from the North—from Massachusetts?"

"I am."

"And your object in coming here is to make love to Miss Sybilla Tresylian!"

"Sir!" said the young man, coloring violently.

"Hark you, Mr. Dick Nagle, of Massachusetts!" said Eustace, white with suppressed passion, "I know you and your object in coming to this place. You have been playing a desperate game, sir; but that game is about played out! Do you know who I am?"

"Not at present," said Mr. Dick Nagle; "but I should like to."

For a country clod certainly he took things remarkably coolly. If all the blood of all the Tresylians flowed in his veins, he could not have been more perfectly or unaffectedly *nonchalant*.

"I am Eustace Tresylian, of Tresylian Hall,' said that gentleman, more enraged by this clod's effrontery than even by his crime; "and Miss Tresylian is my cousin and affianced wife!"

Mr. Nagle was by no means so overpowered by this magnificent announcement as he had a right to be, and returned Mr. Tresylian's gaze unflinchingly.

"I thought you were," he said, coolly; "but, as to the other affair, I reckon you're mistaken. I didn't come here to make love to Miss Tresylian, and, for the matter of that, haven't seen any such person since she left Boston."

Eustace was so perfectly confounded at this glaring falsehood that he stood for a moment speechless.

"You lying scoundrel!" he almost gasped, in his passion, "how dare you tell me such an infamous falsehood?"

"Look here, Mr. Tresylian," said Dick Nagle, "don't you call such hard names, or I may lose my temper. I am not afraid of you, or of any other man, and I'm not easily made mad; but, by gracious, if you come it a little *too* rough, what's a fellow to do? That about not seeing Miss Tresylian 's a true bill, and no mistake."

Eustace paused for a moment, and strove to recover his temper. It was seldom he lost it, and he felt he was gaining nothing by it now.

"If you repeat that barefaced lie again," he said, steadily, "I will knock you down! I saw you with her twice myself!"

A smile flickered for a moment over the aggravating rustic's handsome face.

"There must bo a hitch somewhere, 'squire; I haven't walked with Miss Tresylian *this* time, I vow! As to knocking me down, well that wouldn't be healthy pastime for you, nohow."

Eustace felt it instinctively.

There was a look of power about this tall, well-made young farmer that spoke volumes of his prowess. Besides, Eustace, be it known, never had a taste for that sort of thing.

"I came here to warn you," he said, starting to go; "you shall never see Miss Tresylian again!"

"Don't expect to, boss!" said Mr. Nagle, provokingly.

"And, if you attempt it, I will have you tarred and feathered by the negroes on her grandfather's estate!"

"Go it!" said Mr. Nagle, sententiously. "Got anything more to say? Let it all out, or you'll be apt to bust!"

"Remember!" Eustace said, with a malignant scowl, "you low-bred ruffian, you shall be watched; and, if you attempt any intercourse with Miss Tresylian, I'll keep my word, as sure as my name's Tresylian!"

He walked away.

"Good-day, 'squire," celled the exasperating Dick after him. "Where's your manners?"

To tell the truth, Dick had been rather putting it on, adding an extra touch of the raw New Englander for Mr. Eustace Tresylian's benefit.

He laughed when he was out of sight, and re-lit his cigar, which had gone out.

"Won't there be a row at home?" mused Mr. Nagle. "He didn't quite get the hang of what I meant about not seeing *Miss Tresylian* since she left Boston, but he will shortly. It was hard to stand all that abuse; but I didn't want to kick up a row, on *her* account."

Eustace went directly home. His next move was to see Mr. Tresylian. Here he was baffled. Mr. Tresylian had left home, and would not be back until evening. His third was to see Miss Tresylian. Here he was baffled again. Miss Tresylian was in her room, and did not wish to see any one. There was

nothing for it but to wait until evening, and watch, in the meantime, that Sybilla did not leave the house.

She made no attempt to leave it; she staid in her chamber all day.

Before Eustace's return in the morning, she had dispatched a note, with her maid Lucy, to the cottage in Taunton. The girl was a bright, intelligent mulatto, ready to do anything for her mistress.

"Go and come through the woods, Lucy," her mistress said, "and don't let any one in this house see you. Bring me back an answer, and you may have that pink silk of mine you admired so much."

Lucy went off delighted.

She just escaped meeting Eustace on his return by dodging behind a tree. Sybilla waited in a fever of impatience for the girl's return. It was near noon when she came in, breathless and panting, and bearing an answer. Sybilla fairly snatched it from her.

"Who gave you this?" she demanded, tearing it open.

"A young gentleman, miss, and *so* good looking. I got out and in without nobody seeing."

"Very well, Lucy, that will do. Go, now; and, if you say nothing of this, you shall have that blue spotted muslin, too."

Miss Tresylian never left her room all day. Lucy brought up luncheon, and Sybilla remained shut in, with her door locked.

The house was still as a tomb, as if the shadow of coming evil hung over it.

Half an hour before dinner Mr. Tresylian returned. Eustace made use of the first moment, followed him into his study and broached the momentous topic.

An hour passed, Eustace came out, and the study-bell rang It chanced to be Lucy who answered it.

"Is Miss Sybilla in?" Mr. Tresylian demanded.

"Yes, sir—up in her room."

"Tell her to come down, then, I wish to see her particularly."

Lucy departed, but returned again alone in a few minutes. Miss Sybilla had a bad headache—would grandpapa kindly excuse her?

"No," said Mr. Tresylian, with a sternness very unusual; "tell her to come at once. I *must* see her."

Against this there could be no appeal.

Sybilla, very pale, and with glittering eyes, presented herself. She knew that the worst had come, and she must meet it; but she came of a daring race, this little Sybilla.

Mr. Tresylian was pacing up and down the study, white and stern.

"Shut the door, Sybilla, and come in," he said, with an abrupt sternness absolutely without precedent in his intercourse with her. "What is this I hear? What is this Eustace has been telling me? What have you been doing?"

She stood silent, grasping the back of her arm-chair, her eyes fixed on the carpet.

"Sybilla!" the old man cried out, in a tone of sharp anguish, "for God's sake, speak, and tell me you are not guilty! Don't stand there like a stone!"

Sybilla looked up proudly.

"Guilty of what?—of what does Eustace accuse me?"

"I don't know—of folly—of madness. Who is this man whom you meet clandestinely, at improper times and places? Who is he?"

The red blood flushed all over Sybilla's face, but she did not speak.

Her grandfather stood looking at her, his face working.

"She does not speak—she does not deny it! It is true, then. She has deceived us all, and disgraced herself! She is guilty!"

He staggered against the wall, and stood looking at her in a sort of horror.

Sybilla fell down on her knees before him, and held up her clasped hands.

"Oh! grandpapa! don't look at me so—don't speak to me like that, or you'll break my heart! Oh, dear, dear grandpapa! I am very foolish and wicked, I know, but I am not so bad as you think!"

She broke down in a storm of wild, hysterical weeping. At sight of her tears, the old man forgot everything but that she was dearer to him than life. He raised the little quivering form in his arms, and hid the tear-stained face against his breast.

"My darling! my darling!" he said, soothingly, stroking

the silken hair, "don't cry so! You know I would not make you unhappy for the world! Sybilla! Sybilla! my pet!"

But still she sobbed passionately, unrestrainedly, until she could sob no more. The hysterics did her good; she lay weak and panting in his arms, quiet at last; only now and then the slight figure shook with a shivering sob.

"My darling girl!" the old man said, with infinite tenderness in his voice and face, "my darling girl knows I love her dearer than life. She knows I would not willfully give her one moment's pain for all the wealth of the world. But, Sybilla, *this* is something serious—we *must* speak of this. Much as I love my child, I could better bear to see her dead than disgraced!"

The hysterics began again.

"Oh! not that dreadful word, grandpapa—I am not so very, *very* bad as that. I know I am wicked, and selfish, and disobedient; but, oh! not, *not* so awful as that!"

"My dear, dear child!—my foolish, mistaken little girl! Tell your grandpapa all about it, then. Who is this young man?—what is he to you?"

"Oh, not to-night! Oh, grandpapa, not to-night! I am tired and sick, and my head aches. Wait until to-morrow, grandpapa—dearest, best grandpapa that ever was in this world—and you shall know all!"

"As you please, my own darling; I would not distress you for the world. To-morrow will do as well. But first, Sybilla, before you go, *is* it all true?"

He spoke eagerly, as if with some lingering hope she would deny yet, and he had always known her to be truthful. But she did not—her only answer was a sob. He put her from him with a heavy sigh, and arose.

"To-morrow, then, Sybilla, to-morrow you will tell me all. Good-night, my dearest child, and God bless you!"

She broke down again, crying wildly, and clinging about his neck, and calling herself a wretch—a wicked, wicked girl, until he grew alarmed.

"You *must* stop, Sybilla—you must not cry so, or you will make yourself ill. Go to your room, now, and say your prayers like a good girl, and go to bed."

"And you will forgive me, grandpapa—you will forgive your Sybilla to-morrow, even if she *has* been bad?"

"My darling, what is there I would not forgive you? There—there—go to your room, and try and compose yourself."

And so they parted—to meet no more for a weary time.

Mrs. Waldron, Miss Waldron, and Eustace dined together. Mr. Tresylian sent an excuse. Miss Tresylian sent none. Eustace lingered all evening in the hall, anxiously waiting Mr. Tresylian's appearance from the study. It was late when he came out, looking pale and haggard.

"I can tell you nothing to-night, Eustace," he said; "wait until to-morrow, and let us hope all will be well yet."

He hardly hoped it himself, as he went slowly up stairs to pass a sleepless night; but there was nothing in his heart but

ty, and forgiveness, and love for that cherished granddaughter. e might overthrow the hopes and plans of a life-time, but he uld never say to her one harsh word. I think if she had mmitted a murder, he would have pardoned her, and taken r to his heart five minutes after.

To-morrow came—a dull, overcast day. The family met at eakfast, but tardy Sybilla did not appear. Mr. Tresylian rang her maid.

"Go up stairs and tell your young lady we are waiting, acy."

Lucy obeyed, and was back presently.

"Please, massa, Miss Sybilla got her door locked, and won't me in."

"Well, well—we can wait. Pour out the coffee, Mrs. Walon."

Breakfast was over—ten o'clock, eleven, twelve came, and ll Sybilla appeared not.

Mr. Tresylian got alarmed, and went up to her room himf. He rapped; there was no answer. He tried the door; was fast.

"Sybilla!" he called. There was no reply. "Sybilla!" he eated, knocking louder. Eustace was by his side now. Force the door!" Mr. Tresylian said, hoarsely, his face white ashes.

It was done. In five minutes they were in the room. It was pty. The bed had never been slept in. Dresses, shawls, d articles of all sorts, lay scattered in confusion about. The

window stood wide open—it opened on the veranda—and a letter lay conspicuously on the dressing-table, directed to Mr. Tresylian.

"She has fled!" cried Eustace, with colorless lips. "The letter is for you, sir."

But Mr. Tresylian did not take it. He reeled backward and would have fallen if Eustace had not caught him in his arms.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. RICHARD NAGLE.

The gray afternoon of that sunless day streamed into Mr. Tresylian's chamber. He lay on his bed, a broken old man, with Eustace beside him.

He was calm at last—as calm as it was possible for him to be under such a blow. Eustace held the letter in his hand, still unopened.

"Are you better, sir?" he asked. "Are you able to read it now?"

"I can't read," Mr. Tresylian replied, his voice trembling; "read it for me, Eustace."

Eustace, himself very pale, but quite collected, broke the seal. It was blotted, and tear-stained, and smeared, and incoherent, and shockingly written, but the lawyer managed to make out:

"DEAR, DEAR, DARLING GRANDPAPA:

Oh, don't be angry with me because I go away! I cannot help it—I have been too bad for that! Oh, please do forgive me! Oh, please do, or I shall die! I am MARRIED! Oh, darling, darling grandpapa! what will you think of me now? I was married, the day before I left Boston, to Richard Nagle, because I couldn't marry Eustace, and because I loved Richard

so much. And now I dare not stay here any longer, and I am going away with him to-night. Oh, dearest, dearest grandpapa! don't, *don't* be angry with me, for I love you best of all in the world, except my husband. Oh, pray do forgive me, as you have forgiven me so often before! I will write to you again from my new home in Massachusetts, and I shall be miserable until you write, and say you pardon me. Good-by, darling grandpapa; you will soon hear again from

Your own SYBILLA.

Eustace read this hysterical epistle very slowly, and without emotion of any sort, but Mr. Tresylian wept like a woman.

"My poor child! My poor little foolish Sybilla! Eustace what shall we do? I can't live without her. Shall we pursue and fetch them back?"

"No," said Eustace, emphatically; "what will you do with that low-bred clown of a Nagle? No; let them go."

"But, Eustace, I can't live without Sybilla!"

"She can live without *you*, it seems!" said Eustace, bitterly "you had better try and exist without her for awhile; it will not be for long I fancy."

"Why?" looking bewildered.

"Because she will come back of her own accord—come back alone."

"How? She is married—I don't understand."

"It is very easy, I fancy, for one who knows your granddaughter to understand. She is as capricious, as fickle, as inconstant as the wind. She married this fellow on the impulse of the moment. She will be heartily sick of her bargain in three months."

"You think so?" cried Mr. Tresylian, his eyes sparkling.

"I *know* so. How can it be otherwise? She leaves luxury nd opulence for poverty and privations—privations, at least, to er. The novelty of this fellow's beauty, for which she has rown herself away, will wear off, and she will see him as he is -vulgar, under-bred, boorish, uneducated. There is nothing ke matrimony, believe me, sir, for opening the eyes of these inded, love-sick damsels. She will find love in a cottage ettier in her books than in reality. When she descends from ks to linsey-woolseys, and darns Mr. Nagle's stockings, and oks his dinner a few weeks, the love will be about at an end. ave her to herself, and you will have her back by Christmas, addier and wiser woman. Oppose her, and she will be as firm a rock."

"There is something in that," Mr. Tresylian said, thoughtly.

"You can't have the fellow here," pursued Eustace, "to dis- ce and mortify you. Let her alone for awhile, and she will rn without him. Then you can procure a divorce on the und of incompatibility of temper, and all may be well yet."

"What a head you have!" exclaimed the old man, looking im admiringly.

The lawyer smiled.

"I know my cousin, sir—that is all. Keep up your spirits, she will soon be with you once more. When she writes n, don't answer immediately; give her time to awaken a from her delusion; then write to her firmly but kindly;

tell her you forgive her, but can never see her again while she remains with that man. If she grows tired of him, and wishes to give him up forever, then let her come back—she will be received with open arms. Send her no money; let her feel what it is to want it. 'When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.'"

"I will do whatever you say, Eustace; I am sure the course you propose is best."

"You will find it so, sir. A few weeks after you write, I will call and see her. She will be sick to death of it all by that time—her husband included. His lack of education, his vulgarity will be all the more striking and disgusting by contrast. I will talk to her. I will persuade her to return. I will tell her of your grief and loneliness—of all she has given up for a fellow not fit to be her servant—and, believe me, the arrangement that would be worse than useless now, will succeed then. Sybilla will be back, and that before long."

Eustace carried everything before him. And *that's* how they took it at Tresylian Hall.

* * * * * * *

Meantime Mr. and Mrs. Richard Nagle were far on their journey North.

It was quite true Sybilla had been married before she left Boston, but how? By a magistrate!

But Sybilla was not satisfied with this. She was *married* by the law of the land, and could run away with Dick Nagle in time, without causing public scandal, but this was not enough

to satisfy her conscience, or his either—for, strange to say, he *had* a conscience—so it was arranged that they should stop in New York and be married over again, by a clergyman, before presenting themselves to deeply-shocked Mamma Nagle.

And, while the "resonant steam-eagle" whirls the happy pair to the Empire City, let us just take a backward glance, and see how this marriage came about.

In the first place, if you have been blaming Richard Nagle for his presumption and meanness in inveigling an heiress into an ill-assorted union, stop it. Richard Nagle was not to blame. He was a modest young man, high principled, and would as soon have thought of lifting his eyes to some "bright particular star" in hopes to win it, as to the Virginia heiress thrown by accident into their family.

But when that little Virginia heiress, by signs and tokens all so palpable, gave Mr. Nagle to understand that she admired him, and preferred decidedly *not* being treated with such distant respect, *then* Mr. Nagle began to open his eyes to the dazzling vision of what might be. Not that he discovered it first—men are as blind as bats about these things—it was ambitious Sister Sissy, who, with womanly quickness, saw how the land lay. Who can blame him if he improved his opportunities? She was so pretty, so fascinating, and so lady-like. It half turned the young man's head, and he went and fell deeply, intimately, and absurdly in love with her. He didn't care for her wealth; he loved her with his whole heart, and yielded himself up to the will of the enchantress without a struggle. That is how it was.

To be sure he proposed the secret marriage—he was afraid o
losing her—but she consented almost without a demur. She i
very wicked, very bold, and unmaidenly, this unfortunate her
ine of mine, is she not? But how am I to help it? I hav
searched for perfection, and failed to find it—even you and
as near it, I am sure, as it is possible to be, make side-sli
sometimes. And, besides, if she *had* been perfect, instead o
the faulty creature you find her, I could never have written th
story, you know.

Bessy Nagle and Frank Shield were the two witnesses of t
marriage.

Mrs. Nagle knew nothing about it; she had not even se
what was as clear as noonday, the love-passages, and when,
ter Dick's trip to the South, the secret was told, the good lad
only feeling for a while was one of unmixed consternatio
She was not ambitious, she was only an humble Christian m
tron, longing rather to see her children virtuous than amo
the great ones of the earth. She was shocked, she was griev
she was full of apprehensions for the future.

"God grant it may be all for the best," sighed poor M
Nagle; "but I'm afraid of it. I would rather he had mar
Fanny Shield."

Dick wrote home the day after his arrival in New York.
marriage had been performed a second time, on this occa
by a clergyman, who had made the best of a bad bargain in
ing it.

They were stopping at the St. Nicholas Hotel, and w

not be home for a fortnight. Sybilla sent her love. The very day of their arrival they had been re-married, and were now putting up at the St. Nicholas, among the gilded grandees of the land.

Simple-minded Dick was quite dazzled by the untold splendors of that establishment, and had awful forebodings of the reckoning. They were not quite unprovided with funds—Sybilla had saved some five hundred dollars from grandpapa's liberal allowance of pocket-money, and had set herself to spending it with a reckless extravagance that appalled her husband. She had only been able to bring one large traveling trunk and valise with her, therefore the wants of her wardrobe must be supplied.

Dick, too, must be arrayed in all the purple and fine linen in which mankind are permitted to deck themselves. The theaters must all be visited in due order; they must drive all over the city every afternoon, and shop all morning. In short, Mrs. Dick Nagle went the pace so fast the first week that, when the hotel bill was paid, they made the appalling discovery that only twenty-five dollars remained out of five hundred!

There was no alternative but to go home, for *he* had no money, and Mrs. Nagle faced the alternative with a very ill grace, indeed.

While the five hundred lasted, all had been well—when it was gone, she realized for the first time she had married a poor man!

It was worse than that with Dick. When Sybilla's summons

to come to Virginia at once reached him, Dick had no funds for the journey. It was from hand to mouth with them at the farm, and highly creditable to him that matters were so well. What was he to do?—for go he must. Borrow! There was Frank Shield saving up for the past two years to marry black-eyed Bessie—*he* would lend it. Frank gave him his whole little fortune of one hundred dollars right willingly, and Dick bought a new suit of clothes, a few fixings for the cottage, and started.

That was all gone, Sybilla's was gone, and they must go home. The bride's pretty face looked decidedly sulky all the way during that long day's ride in the cars. It was a rainy day, and the windows were steamed, and the landscape wet and dismal.

It was almost dark when they reached the village, still raining, and no conveyance there to meet them. They were not expected for another week, and, of course, must walk home through the pouring rain. Of course, this little promenade did not tend to improve Mrs. Nagle's temper. Her jaunty hat and willow plume, and trim traveling-dress, and buttoned gaiters were ruined with wet and mud, and Mr. Nagle's silk hat and superfine broadcloth were deplorable to look at; but they reached home at last, to find only Mrs. Nagle, Sen., in.

Bessie had gone up to Shield's to spend the afternoon.

They were not expected, and nothing was prepared. The fire was out on the kitchen hearth, and the parlor was at sixes and sevens, paints being cleaned, ceilings whitewashed. Ev

thing was cold, and dreary, and comfortless to a degree unheard of in that tidy household.

Sybilla waited not to hear the widow's grieved apologies; she ran up to the chamber that had been prepared for her, flung herself on the bed, and burst into a passion of hysterical weeping.

And *that* was the bride's return home!

CHAPTER XIII.

AWAKENING.

Sybilla lay awake for hours that night, for the first time thin
ing seriously of what she had done. At last she was beginni
to realize that the step she had taken was of a grave, nay,
awful nature, and involved not a month, nor a year, but l
whole future life.

She had gratified her whim, as she had gratified a hund
others—rashly, impetuously—and now she must abide the c
sequences to her dying day. She had given up wealth, luxu
devoted friends, a happy home—for what? For a pair of ha
some dark eyes, and a well-shaped nose.

Well, she had got them, and ought to be satisfied. She h
not bargained for education, refinement, gentlemanly manne
high principles, or anything of the sort, and, if they were la
ing, what right had she to complain? She knew beforeha
what she had to expect; but she had shut her eyes, and t
the fatal plunge head foremost, and what was there to cry abo
But she *did* cry—quiet, miserable tears of repentance.
spoiled child was sick of its gratified whims, tired of its new
and wanted to go home again.

But it might never be—she was a farmer's wife—a farmer who knew how to read, mispronouncing the words, and write, misspelling; and, as for grammar—well, Mr. Nagle and Mr. Lindley Murray had never made each other's acquaintance yet. She was a farmer's wife, and doomed to associate with farmer's wives, and exist minus a piano, or new silk dresses every other week; and perhaps, by and by, fall so low as to be obliged to hem her own pocket-handkerchief.

She was never more to know the luxury of a maid, or a pet poodle; never more listen to Mendelssohn's songs without words; never more wear an opera cloak, or gallop on an Arab charger like a modern Di Vernon; never more reign queen of the ball-room; never more spend money like water. Never more, never more!

Life must go on in this stagnant village, where Tennyson and Shelley were unheard of, and the theater never came. She had sold her birthright for a mess of pottage.

It was marry in haste, with a vengeance, and repent at leisure.

Poor little Sybilla!

Mr. Nagle was very much concerned, next morning, to see his bride with pale cheeks and swollen eyelids, and all the signs of a night spent in tears instead of slumber. Perhaps he understood dimly, for he was not obtuse, this unlettered young man; and, when Sybilla snappishly told him to "let her alone, there was nothing the matter," he desisted at once. She had not much respect for her husband, whom little shock-headed boys

and girls, playing in the streets, hailed as "Hallo, Dick!" She who had once dreamed of wedding a Corsair, a Count Lara, a grand, unapproachable being, with ferocious whiskers, and a cimeter at his side!

The family met at breakfast. Mrs. Richard received Bessie's greetings with a degree of coldness that gave that young lad mortal offense. She noted, too, the sullen silence she main tained, her averted looks, Dick's overcast face, and saw at glance how matters stood. Miss Nagle compressed her lip and paid no more attention to her high-born sister-in-law fro that hour forth.

After breakfast, Dick would have liked to go to work. was the busy harvest-time, and his presence was badly need among the hired men in the fields. But his lady had issue her sovereign commands—he was to take her driving. So Di had the newly-painted gig brought round, and took his seat b side her, and drove off.

Bessie and her mother looked after them with a very dissat fied air.

"Dick ought to know better," said Bessie. "He ought be in the harvest-fields instead of riding like a king round country."

"It isn't Dick's fault," said her mother, gently; "and for her, poor thing! why, she doesn't know any better."

"She'll have to learn, then," retorted Bessie; "she can' my Lady High Hopes any longer, and she may as well find first as last."

It was two o'clock when they returned, and dinner and Bessie's temper were neither of them improved by waiting. Judging from the faces of the happy pair, the drive had not been over and above delightful, and Dick scarcely ate a mouthful. Still—it might have been from a spirit of perversity, for who can tell a woman's motives?—Sybilla was determined to keep him in her service.

She wanted, in the afternoon, to start on a woodland ramble, and he must be her escort.

It was a sultry, August afternoon, and they had a nice dusty walk to the woods, during which Sybilla did not speak ten consecutive words.

In former days she had found enough to say to him, now she could find nothing. What did he know of her tastes and sympathies?—of Byron, and Shelley, and Dickens, and Bulwer, and Thackeray, and "L. E. L.?" What did he know of poetry, and painting, and fair foreign lands, and all the themes she delighted to chatter of to Eustace? Ah! if she had married Eustace, she never could have been at a loss for something to say.

You see, this unfortunate Sybilla was one of the very numerous class of mortals who never value their blessings until they lose them, and then they assume a value trebly beyond their deserts.

Sybilla was beginning to think how much happier she might have been had she been a good girl, and married her cousin. She never would have been ashamed of *him*; his outrageous

grammar would never have made her wince; he would not have been awkward, and countrified, and silent, or had large, sunburned hands. He was not handsome, to be sure; but what did it matter about a man's looks?

She felt herself degraded—she had made a "low marriage," and lost caste forever!

She felt herself as far above these New England rustics as the sky above the earth—and here she was one of them! She had made a horrible, irreparable mistake!

The love that tinged all things hitherto with *couleur de rose* had evaporated, like morning mist in sunshine, and she was left a miserable, lost creature!

Were not all the heroines of her novels and poems unspeakably unhappy young women? Had not Gulnare, and Medora, and Jane Eyre, and Edith Dombey supped sorrow in spoonfuls?

To be haughty, and handsome, and wretched, Miss Tresylian had considered the height of earthly ambition—but Mrs. Nagle looked on these things with a very different eye. She was as wretched as heart could wish; but where was the romance?

To have married an old millionaire, and hated him, and been in love with a poet, and lived in splendid misery, with diamonds, and velvet, and point-lace for every-day wear—*that* would have been delightful. But in this unhappiness there was all the prose, and none of the poetry of life—in this misery, where the men dressed for dinner by taking off their coats and

dining in their shirt-sleeves, and the women scrubbed their own floors. Who could endure degradation like this?

So Sybilla, having obtained the desire of her heart, was very, very unhappy.

"Give a woman her own way, and it will kill her," says an old adage, and I fear there is a good deal of truth in it, although, being a woman myself, I hate to own it.

The miserable days dragged on until nearly a fortnight had passed away, and Mrs. Richard Nagle managed to make herself and everybody around her exquisitely uncomfortable. Did she hate her husband? By no means. But she had been a spoiled child, and she was never satisfied. She must have been very unreasonable to find any cause of dislike to him, for certainly he was a model to all married men.

Let her be ever so petulant, ever so exacting, ever so querulous, he bore with every whim in silence, he obeyed every command—he went with her or staid at home, just as she desired.

He talked or was silent, read aloud or did not, drove her, walked with her, or staid at home, as it pleased her capricious will. He wore his best clothes every day, and played the gentleman of leisure to meet her approbation. But he never met it.

All he got for his pains were cold, averted looks, bitter, regretful words, and torrents of despairing tears—very hard to be borne. But he bore it, and Bessie's eyes flashed as she saw all.

"You are more like a spaniel dog than her husband," said said she to him, with passionate scorn, "licking the hand that strikes you! No wonder she despises you! I should despise you, in her place! What has come over you? You used to have spirit enough, but you would disgust any one now!"

They were standing together in the kitchen, the brother and sister, alone. He had just entered, moody and downcast, after seeing his wife crying as if her heart were breaking, and Bessie's words were the last drop in the full cup.

"Let me alone!" he cried, starting up, vehemently. "Let me alone, or I shall go mad between you! I try to keep down the devil that rises within me, and here you must come and arouse it again. Listen to me, Bessie Nagle," he caught her arm in a fierce, hard grip; "when I married her, and thought of all she gave up for me, I swore inwardly that, if she ever regretted her marriage, it would not be my fault, and I'll keep that vow. I don't care what she does, or what *you* say, I'll keep that promise."

Bessie shrunk back, frightened at the outburst.

"She would think more of you if you did not keep it," she said.

"Perhaps so; but that makes no difference. Whatever happens, she shall never say it was my fault."

He left the house abruptly.

Bessie interfered no more. She saw now why he had grown so pale and thin of late, and what that rigid compression of his firm lips meant.

She wondered if he cared for her still, in spite of all; but, with all her tact, she could not find that out.

"She despises him," thought Bessie, "for his want of spirit in putting up with her, and, if *I* were in his place, I should hate *her*."

Miss Nagle came pretty near it as it was, and took no pains to conceal her dislike.

Sybilla looked down on her with contempt, and Bessie returned it with hearty, undisguised dislike.

Sybilla wept and sulked, and was taunting and cruel to her husband, and he bore it with a fortitude that would have been heroic in a wealthy man. Perhaps it was heroic in him—Sybilla thought so afterward, but the beginning of September brought her a dreadful shock. Bessie was the primary cause. Dick was lying under a tree, in the afternoon sunshine, reading aloud to his wife, who might just as well have read to herself, when Bessie approached with a very determined look.

"Dick," she began, without troubling herself to make an excuse, "Peter Lyman has cut himself, and there's another man wanted to mow in the East field. I think you have played fine gentleman about long enough, and had better take Peter's place."

Dick looked up at his wife. The angry blood had rushed to her face, but she sat silent.

"Shall I go?" he asked.

"Just as you please," replied Sybilla, shortly; "it is nothing to me."

"It may be something if he does *not* go," said Bessie, stung to the quick. "When a man owes a hundred dollars, and is not worth a hundred cents, it is time he is up and doing. Your husband is only a farmer, Mrs Nagle, not a gentleman, as you seem to think."

"I never thought so!" said Sybilla, bitterly.

Bessie's retort flamed in her crimson cheek, but her brother grasped her arm in a vise-like clutch.

"Silence!" he cried, in a voice that made his sister quail; "not one word!"

Sybilla looked at him astonished. It was a new revelation to her, but she forgot it in a moment.

She sat where they had left her all the afternoon, and Dick Nagle doffed his fine feathers and went out into the fields, to spend the pleasantest afternoon he had passed since his ill-starred wedding.

At supper-time Sybilla saw him. He came in flushed, hot, and in his shirt-sleeves with the other men. She heard them call him Dick, and slap him on the shoulder, and tell him he *could* work, after all.

And this was *her* husband—*hers*—Sybilla Tresylian, of Tresylian Hall!"

Oh! what had she done? What had she done? Was it for this she gave up grandpapa, and home, and future, and friends, and all the luxuries of life? It was too much. She ran out of the kitchen and up stairs, and flung herself on her bed, and

wept such tears—such passionate, rebellious, burning tears—as she had never shed before in her life.

"Oh, I wish—I wish I had never been born!" she sobbed aloud, in her despair. "I wish I had died before I ever came to this! Oh, grandpapa! grandpapa! if I were only home again!"

They had missed her in the kitchen, and Dick had come up in search of her, with a lighter heart than he had had for many a day. Came up just in time to hear these pleasant words, and to witness these anguished sobs. He turned and walked down stairs again without a word.

CHAPTER XIV.

GRANDPAPA'S LETTER.

Golden September came, bringing long days of amber sunshine, and breezes scented with new-mown hay. Trailing vines—hops and honeysuckle—overran the cottage-front, darkening the windows with curtains of Nature's own festooning. Roses and heart's-ease bloomed in the garden, and any sentimental or moralizing stranger who chanced to pass might have exclaimed, in the language of Tom Moore—

"If there is peace to be found in the world,
A heart that is humble might hope for it here."

Pleasant alliteration of h's in that!

Perhaps it was that the hearts were *not* humble, but puffed up with ungodly pride, that peace was not to be found there. Once it had been the abode of peace and hospitality, and all other agreeable things; but that was before Mr. Dick Nagle had the honor of marrying an heiress. Since the auspicious day on which Mistress Dick came home, gloom and discontent had ruled supreme.

Dick Nagle had gone back to his old life, and slaved as never did one of the negroes on Grandpapa Tresylian's estate. He was up and out, morning after morning, while the stars that

keep the latest hours yet winked in the sky. He toiled as he had never toiled before, bearing the day's burden and heat, and the late-rising moon found him at it still. His wife was seldom made wretched by his society, and he kept himself and his homespun clothes, and imperfect grammar, as much out of her way as possible.

He donned purple and fine linen no more to please her. Where was the use, since the *man* was the same inside? He changed from the lightest-hearted, gayest young fellow in the place, to a silent, grave, thoughtful man. I had almost said gloomy man, but the word would not fit. He was neither gloomy nor morose, only silent and dispirited, as he well might be, poor fellow!

But he accepted his fate with a brave patience that was grand and heroic if Sybilla could only have known it—*more* heroic, perhaps, than the deeds of that pet gentleman of hers, who

> "Left a Corsair's name to other times,
> Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

He never complained; he worked like a giant, and grew thin and sallow, and lost half his beauty.

As for Sybilla—wicked, guilty little girl, whom I am afraid you will learn to hate—she was just as miserable as her worst enemy could wish.

She had made a wretched marriage, and, of all the misfortunes of this earthly sphere, I think no misfortune can surpass that.

She wished she had never been born; she wished she was

dead; she wished she had married Eustace; she wished all manner of things rebellious and sinful, but she never got any of them. All she had valued so little while in her possession, assumed a value now absurdly out of reason. Oh! to be a free and happy girl once more, riding among the lovely Virginia woods, with servants at her beck and call, and all the luxury and poetry of life around her, the envied, courted heiress. She had given the world for love, and thought it well lost, and now even the love that she had fancied, in her romantic ignorance, would gild their poverty, seemed to have died a natural death.

What did she care for this low-born New England farmer, unworthy to unloose the latchet of her imperial shoes—this uneducated young man, who thought Dickens stupid, not to say silly, and could never make head or tail of the Revolt of Islam?

How could any one care for a husband who preferred Lever to Thackeray? And yet I am not sure Sybilla did not care a little, after all, for a pang sometimes smote that cruel, selfish little heart at sight of his altered face, and the brave silence with which he bore some cruel taunt. Sometimes when he sat late into the night in the moon-lit porch, his head leaning dejectedly against its vine-clad posts, her better angel whispered to her to go down and comfort him with one kind word.

"It is not his fault, Sybilla," that pitying spirit would say, "and he is your husband, after all. *Do* go!"

But Sybilla never went. Pride rose up and hardened her heart.

"He had no business to marry me!" pride said bitterly, and

very unjustly; "he might have known I would be miserable. I'll never stoop to one so far beneath me as he is!"

So the gulf widened and widened, untill it grew at last quite impassable.

In a week, perhaps, they did not exchange a dozen words. Sybilla spent her time rambling about the country, listless and unhappy, reading [illegible] books when she could get them, and writing bad ve[illegible]hen she couldn't. Sometimes she would find a new novel laid on her chamber-table, or a bouquet of wild flowers, or a bunch of grapes, and she would feel a momentary return of that pang of remorse.

September came to a close, and Dick Nagle's honey-moon was at an end.

Everybody in the village knew how matters were, and he and his wife were the current gossip of the place. Young men who had envied him, and wondered at his good luck, began to think it might not be such a desirable thing, after all, this carrying off an heiress.

People pitied him, and abused her unmercifully. The airs of her, they said—the women, of course—were sickening. She looked at them as if they were the very mud under her feet, and turned up her nose when they spoke to her. What business had she to be so high-stepping?—she was no better than they were now. If she *could* play the "pianner," and talk French, and paint flowers on pasteboard, where was the good of it when she hadn't a "pianner," and nobody could understand the French?

They hoped she would be brought down yet. And, as for Mrs. Nagle and Bessie, they didn't see how they endured their life in the same house with her.

In all this time there came no letter from Virginia. Her friends might have been all dead and buried, for all she knew to the contrary. Day after day she toiled through heat and dust to the post-office, with a fluttering, hoping heart, and day after day she came back sick with disappointment. We all know what a trying thing it is to wait for a letter which we want to get punctually, and which *won't* come. When October came, she nearly gave up in blank despair. Her crime had been too great—grandpapa would never forgive her, never write to her in the world! She must live and die here, and never hope to get a glimpse again of the bright world she had left!

She sat thinking such miserable thoughts as these, one rainy afternoon early in October. She sat at the window, looking out at the leaden sky, the sodden earth, and slanting, persistent rain, crying wretched, silent tears. It had been too wet for her to venture out all day, and there was no prospect of its clearing up. It was mail hour, and some one must go, if it rained pitchforks with the points downward.

She got up and went to the head of the stairs, and called imperiously:

"Mrs. Nagle!"

She always addressed herself to her mother-in-law, for Bessie would put up with no ordering around. Mrs. Nagle came to the lower landing.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Is Dick in?"

"Yes—he is in the kitchen. It is too wet to be out."

"Tell him I want him."

Dick came up stairs obediently.

"I want you to go to the post-office," said Sybilla, without waste of words; "it is too rainy for me. There *may* be a letter."

Dick descended the stairs again to the kitchen, and put on his hat and jacket without a word. Bessie paused in her washing to look at him.

"Where are you going, Dick?"

"To the post-office."

"In this downpour? I wouldn't go a step! If people are so worried about letters," said Bessie, raising her voice for Sybilla's benefit, "let 'em go themselves! They ain't sugar nor salt, I guess."

"Hush! Bessie," said her mother, gently.

It was a very frequent admonition from the good woman's lips of late, and she sighed as she said it, and looked anxiously after her son walking in the rain.

"Poor boy!" she thought, and for a moment there was an angry, rebellious feeling in her heart for the capricious beauty up stairs; but she was a true Christian, and it was but momentary.

Sybilla waited with characteristic impatience. How slow he was! She could be there and back in half the time.

But at length he came, wet and weary, and she flew to meet him.

"Have you got it?" breathlessly.

"Yes!" he pulled a letter out of his pocket, and handed it to her.

She glanced at the writing, and, with a scream of joy, flew up stairs. It was in her grandfather's hand, and post-marked Taunton. She kissed it, in a sort of rapture, a hundred times, then tore it open, and devoured its contents:

TRESYLIAN HALL, Sept. 28.

MY DEAR CHILD:

For you must ever be dear to me, do what you will. I might have written to you sooner, but I thought it advisable to wait. I will not speak of the blow I have received, of the sufferings I have endured. You know how I love you, and can imagine it all. I am neither restored to health, nor reconciled to your loss, and yet I can never see you until you come to me of your own accord, after breaking the trammels that bind you.

I am sure, my child, that the mad infatuation which hurried you on to this deplorable step has ended, long ere this. I am sure you regret this mad marriage quite as much as I do. If so, my dearest daughter, it is not yet too late. Leave that man—that base, mercenary villain who entrapped you in your girlish innocence—leave him, and come home. My arms are open to receive you—never will you hear one reproachful word from my lips. The laws of the land will set you free. We may be happy yet again, as in the days gone by.

I will write no more, lest I write too much. I will never see you while you live with the man you have married! When you leave him and return to me, it will be the happiest day of my life.

Oh, my Sybilla! my heart is full of my subject, but I will pause. Come back to me, my darling; I am desolate without you! Come back to your devoted grandfather,

GEORGE P. TRESYLIAN.

CHAPTER XV.

"OH, MY COUSIN, SHALLOW-HEARTED!"

Mrs. Nagle wept for fully two hours over this epistle of grandpapa, and yet it was a great comfort to her, too. She wiped away her tears, presently, and fell into a reverie, the most agreeable she had indulged in for some time. She let her fancy drift away to what *might* be if she willed it. Home in dear old Virginia—home, and grandpapa, and the pleasant life gone by awaited her again. She had only to say the word, and all she had forsaken would be restored. She had an instinctive conviction that the man she had married would not oppose her—that he would bear this as he had borne so much already, and make no sign.

And if he did, what mattered it?—what was *he* against the Tresylians? She had very vague ideas of husbandly authority, and fancied that the chain that galled her could be broken as easily as she could draw off her wedding-ring. As for any moral obligation to cleave to her husband, Sybilla never thought of *that* at all.

She would have opened her big gray eyes in wide wonder, if you had told her she could not desert him without grievous sin.

She was very ignorant and foolish, poor child—drifting about on the sea of life, without rudder or compass, whither her own capricious will bore her.

So she sat while the October rain beat against the glass, and the evening darkened down, and thought of what might be. She might leave this dreary life, and go back to Tresylian any moment now.

She thought, until she could see the waving trees, the late-blooming Virginia roses, the familiar black faces smiling "young missus" welcome back, and darling grandpapa, stately and kingly, with his white hair and loving smile, holding her in his arms.

All might be as of old again, and yet—ah! Sybilla, why is it you pause, and look down with that regretful face at your shining wedding-ring? Is there—so deep in your wayward heart that you cannot see it—the old love, strongest of all on earth, lingering still?

She sits there, twirling that golden circlet round and round, while the daylight darkens, and the picture of Tresylian Hall grows dim. By and by she rises, and, leaning over the banister, calls:

"Dick!"

Her husband came to the foot of the stairs.

"Will you please bring me a lamp?"

Her tone was far less arbitrary than usual, but perhaps he did not notice it. In a few minutes he was in her chamber with a lighted lamp.

"Would you like to know what grandpapa says, Dick?" Sybilla asked carelessly, but not unkindly.

"No, not particularly—unless you wish it."

"Oh, *I* don't wish it," said Sybilla; "but I thought you might. He wants me to go home again."

She looked at him as she said it, expecting some demonstration, perhaps.

If he had lost his power over her, she had no idea of losing hers over him. He was to be still her slave—her adoring lover, fit to go mad at the bare idea of losing her.

No such demonstration came—he heard her, grave, and pale, and silent.

"You will do as you please."

"Which means, I suppose," was the angry retort, "that *you* don't care."

"It would not matter much, if I did," said Dick Nagle, calmly. "You are your own mistress. You shall do as you like."

He walked out of the room as he spoke. Sybilla was thoroughly provoked.

"I have a good mind to write and say I *will* go on the spot," she thought, angrily; "*he* doesn't care."

But she didn't.

She began a long, passionate letter, full of compound adjectives of endearment, notes of admiration, and innumerable errors in orthography and grammar. She wanted time—would darling grandpapa give her a little while longer to consider?

Supper cut her short.

Frank Shield and his sister Fanny were there when she went down, and the kitchen looked clean and bright. Mrs. Richard Nagle never noticed these low people, and for Miss Shield, who was tall and handsome, she had a particular antipathy. She was jealous of her without knowing it, and never opened her lips all supper-time, except twice, to say, frigidly, "no more, thank you."

The moment it was over she returned to her room and her letter, which she did not finish until ten o'clock.

After that, Sybilla's life was considerably more endurable. She could put up with the dreariness of existence here, knowing she could leave it forever at any moment. Why did she not go at once?—you ask. I cannot tell—no more could she. I only know she didn't.

She lingered, and lingered, and made the lives of those around her a misery to them, and tormented that unfortunate husband of hers, and felt a sort of pleasure in doing it. She knew he loved her still, and there is a spark in the breast of almost all womankind that makes them take a delight in torturing those who love them best. Perhaps it is to feel their power, knowing with one penitent word they can more than atone, perhaps.

But never mind, reader, take facts as you find them.

October passed, then November, and Sybilla began to grow seriously uneasy at grandfather's prolonged silence. He had never answered her letter, or rather letters, for she had written about a dozen, and here was the winter coming on. The thought of

the winter frightened her—the long, long, desolate winter in this gloomy cottage among the hills and sandy plains of Massachusetts.

What if he had changed his mind, and withdrawn the offer she would not accept at once? Sybilla was frightened, and troubled in her mind. Matters between herself and her husband were rather worse, if possible, and she had cause to dread the wild, long winter so very near.

One desolate November afternoon, Sybilla Nagle stood thinking of all this with a gloomy face. She stood leaning against the pasture-bars, her hood thrown back, and showing her face pale, and thin, and fretted. Her shawl fluttered in the long, cold blast, and her chestnut curls were blown about under her hood. That anxious, worried look seemed to take away half her beauty—the rose-bloom had faded, the bright hair was dry and dim.

She stood there, a lovely figure against a gray background of sky. Brown, bleak fields spread away on every hand, over which the long, lamentable blasts swept sighing, and the low, dark sky closed over the landscape like a pall. It was all desolation, like her life, a ruined blank, and she shivered miserably, and drew her shawl closer around her. Cold and dreary as it was, it was preferable to her lonely room, and so she lingered while the dull afternoon grew darker, and a few feathery flakes of snow whirled through the opaque air.

Presently the figure of a man, striding across the bare, brown fields, caught her eye.

What was there familiar in the figure and walk? What was it that, as he drew nearer, set her heart plunging so wildly? In two minutes he stood before her, with both hands outstretched.

"Sybilla!"

"*Eustace!*" she said, with a cry of joy; and then, pale and faint, she leaned against the bars for support.

"And so we meet again," he said, still holding her hands, and looking at her altered face. "Oh, Sybilla! Sybilla!"

She covered her face at that reproachful cry, and burst into tears.

"Spare me!" she said; "I have done wrong, but forgive me, Eustace—I have suffered as well as you!"

"I see you have," he said, looking at her thin, pale features. "You were happier with us, Sybilla; you would have been happier with me!"

"Hush! hush!" with an imploring gesture. "Tell me of him, of grandpapa. Have you come from Virginia?"

"Yes, direct."

"And grandpapa—why did he not answer my letters?—why did he not write?"

"To tell the truth, I urged him not to. I told him no good could come of it; to wait and let me see you. I know you will return with me, Sybilla."

She sighed bitterly, and looked with dreary eyes over the darkening prospect.

"I don't know what to do! I want to go home, and yet——"

"And yet—— Can you have any doubt about it? Oh, Sybilla! surely you have awakened from your mad hallucination long ere this? How can you bear the degradation of the life you lead? But, come; it is beginning to snow afresh; can we not talk within doors?"

"Will *you* come in?" asked Sybilla, shrinking a little at the thought.

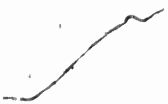
"Certainly," said Eustace, coolly; "why not? These kind of people have no feelings, at least not like ours. It is impossible to talk here, and talk to you I *must*."

The snow was beginning to fall thick and fast now, and they hurried across the fields in the teeth of the blast.

"Ugh!" said Eustace, with a shiver, "these horrible New England winters! Why, Sybilla, if you survive the other horrors, the cold alone would kill you."

They were at the cottage while he was speaking, and Sybilla opened the door and entered, followed by her cousin. She led the way into the little parlor, which looked humbler and barer than ever before, and she blushed with mortification as she thought of the superb drawing-room at Tresylian Hall. A bright fire was burning, and before it sat Sybilla's husband, in his *working clothes*.

Poor Sybilla! the contrast was a cruel one. She almost hated the man she had married, at that moment. She could see the



contempt in her cousin's eye, the sneer on his lip, and her bitter mortification was complete.

The two men looked at each other. Mr. Tresylian bowed stiffly. Mr. Nagle made no bow at all.

"This is my cousin," Sybilla said, and, instead of the conventional "very happy," &c., Mr. Nagle replied, sternly:

"I know it!"

Eustace, serenely contemptuous, took a seat, Sybilla took another, and both looked at Mr. Nagle, as much as to say, "Be good enough to leave the room." Perhaps Dick Nagle understood it, for his face settled into a look of dogged determination, and he kept his seat.

If his wife and her cousin, once almost her husband, had anything to say, they must say it before him, or not at all. Sybilla's eyes were flashing, and her cheeks aflame, but she dared not make a scene before her cousin. She could not very well take him up to her chamber, and there was no other apartment, save the kitchen and Bessie's sleeping-room, in the house. So she sat, humbled to the very dust, and inwardly raging at the clod she had married, who knew no better, when his wife had company, than to sit persistently in the same room.

Of course confidential conversation, in this state of affairs, was out of the question.

Eustace sat about fifteen minutes, the snow-storm was increasing, night was drawing on. He arose to take his leave, with a cold nod to Dick. Sybilla followed him to the porch. There they lingered, talking in a low, confidential tone for ten

minutes, then he walked away, and Sybilla returned to the parlor, where her husband still sat.

Then the storm burst.

Sybilla had a tongue, and used it. She paced up and down the room in a towering passion, and scolded as vehemently as the lowest born farmer's wife in the place could have done.

"It was very hard she could not speak five words to her cousin in private; but the ignorance and stupidity of some people was past belief. She would not endure it—she had stood this degrading life long enough—she was going home—it would be a comfort to associate with civilized beings once more. She had been mortified to death, but it served her right. She might have known better than to expect anything else. She always was, and always would be, a little fool!' etc., etc.

Dick Nagle never said a word. He bore the tirade with the stoicism of an Indian chief at the stake. His very silence exasperated Sybilla beyond everything else, until at last she flung out of the room, and tore up stairs to vent her anger in passionate tears.

The snow-storm did not amount to much, after all—next day's sunshine dissipated it all.

Sybilla was confined to bed all the forenoon with a violent headache; but, when her cousin called, she sent down word to return in the afternoon, when she hoped to be better.

Dick came up at noon to see how she felt; but she turned her face to the wall, and answered very coldly. He did not return.

He was busy about the farm until after four o'clock, and then he flung himself down upon a projecting rock in the East field, among the yellow stubble and broom-stalks. He lay looking at the low yellow light in the Western sky, and thinking of the picture he had just seen—his wife and her cousin walking together over the distant road.

He lay for upward of an hour, then footsteps and voices sounded in the still evening air—familiar voices, and the rustle of a silken skirt.

Sybilla and Eustace were drawing near. They sat down on the very rock under which he lay, without ever seeing him.

He did not get up. He lay still as a statue, with his hat drawn over his eyes, and heard them.

Eustace was urging his cousin to depart with him for Virginia the following week.

"Why do you hesitate?" he demanded, impatiently; "what under heaven can detain you here? I cannot be that you still care for that man?"

"It isn't that," said Sybilla, passionately. "I *don't* care for him—sometimes I think I almost hate him! I don't know what it is—I want to go, but something seems to hold me back."

"Then bring him with you," said artful Eustace; "if you can bear the humiliation, we can. These are your grandfather's words. If you accept, I remain until next week; if you refuse or hesitate, I leave to-morrow, and the offer will never be re-

newed. It is your grandfather's decision; he sets out at once for Europe."

"I will go!" said Sybilla, suddenly, tearing up handfuls of withered grass, and flinging them impetuously away. "I will go! I am sick to death of all this—sick of myself, of everything, and of everybody around me. I will tell him what you have said. If he accepts, let him come; if he refuses, I will go alone!"

She arose as she spoke, and the mute listener heard them depart together.

But he did not stir. The daylight faded, the cold November stars came out silver-white, crystal-clear. The melancholy November wind whistled wildly around him, and he was lying there still.

When he did get up, his limbs were cramped and numb, and the face the starlight shone on was as white as the face of a dead man.

CHAPTER XVI.

FREE.

Supper was over long before Dick Nagle reached home, but Bessie had his hot under the kitchen-stove. She alone was in the kitchen—his mother had gone to see a sick friend. As she poured out his tea, his sister said:

"She" (Bessie always referred to Mrs. Richard Nagle as an indefinite personal pronoun), "*she* left orders that she wanted you up stairs as soon as you came in."

Dick drank his tea and arose.

"Why!" Bessie exclaimed, "what's the matter with you? Are you sick, that you can't eat your supper? I thought you looked kind of pale."

"I am well enough," Dick answered, slowly going out of the kitchen and up stairs.

He found his wife pacing up and down the floor in a high state of excitement, her cheeks rosy flame, her eyes starry bright. A half-written letter lay in loose sheets on the table.

"I have been writing to grandpapa," began Mrs. Nagle, with startling abruptness, pointing to the scattered sheets; "I am going home!"

He made no reply. He closed the door and leaned against it, looking at her.

"I can't endure this life longer!" burst out Sybilla, passionately; "I am wretched, and must be wretched as long as I stay. I shall die if I don't go home, and so I am going!"

Still no reply.

"Grandpapa says *you* can come, if you've a mind to. I am writing to him to-night—what shall I say?"

"Whatever you please."

She stamped her foot with passionate impatience.

"Don't answer me like that! Tell me whether you will go or not?"

"Do you *want* me to go?"

"That is no answer, either!" she said, reddening, violently. "I want to know whether I am to tell grandpapa you are coming or not."

"Tell your grandfather whatever you like—it is nothing to me. No," he said, raising his hand, with an air of authority so sudden and imperative that she recoiled, "say nothing to me—I do not think I can bear any more! Go or stay, as you think fit—I shall not interfere."

They were the last words he spoke; it was the last time she saw him!

Oh, had she known what that parting meant!

He descended the stairs and left the house. His coat and hat hung in the porch; he put them on as he walked. The night was frosty and starlight. The young man walked rap-

idly, and soon left the twinkling lights of the village far behind.

Sybilla did not finish her letter. She was perplexed, anxious and angry. She sat up until late, and added a few more lines before going to bed.

"I don't know whether my husband is coming or not. In *any case*, I shall go."

She slept late next morning. Breakfast was over when she entered the kitchen.

"Do you know where Dick is?" Mrs. Nagle asked. "he has not been in to breakfast."

"No," said Sybilla; "he was out all night."

The mother and daughter looked at each other, but neither spoke.

Sybilla finished her breakfast, and went up stairs again. About ten o'clock she saw Eustace walking in front of the cottage, and went to meet him. They sauntered away together, and it was late in the afternoon before Sybilla returned. She had announced her departure for the second day after, and ran up stairs to begin packing up. She had been busy for nearly an hour, and the short November day was darkening down, when the door was unceremoniously flung open, and Bessie burst in.

Sybilla turned around angrily, but the girl's whi[illegible] startled her.

"When did you last see Dick?" Bessie demanded, breathlessly.

"Last night, about eight o'clock."

"Did you and he quarrel?"

Sybilla colored, then grew pale.

"Why?" she asked, in vague apprehension.

"Because he has never been seen since!" cried Bessie, violently excited. "He left home last night, and that is the last that has been seen or heard of him! What did you want of him? What did you say to him? Tell me, for I *will* know!"

"Nothing," faltered Sybilla, frightened, "only that I was going home. I asked him if he would come, too."

Bessie Nagle burst into a hysterical laugh.

"Oh, you're going home, are you, and you wanted him to come, too? You wanted him to go with you! Oh, yes! I know how you wanted him! You've driven him mad! that's what you've done; and I only wonder he did not go mad long ago! I don't know what has happened; but, if any harm has come to him, I'll—I'll *murder you!*"

She burst out of the room again, leaving Sybilla white and trembling.

Oh, what had she done! what had she done!

That night passed—another day—a third night—still no news of the lost man!

Frank Shield, and half a dozen young men of the village, were on the search. The place was in a state of unprecedented excitement; nothing else was thought of.

In the cottage the mother was like one distracted, and Bessie was not much better. Sybilla kept her room, in such a state

of terror, anguish, and remorse as is indescribable. Oh! what, *what* had she done?

The third day passed, the fourth, and the fifth brought them a letter. It was in his well-known handwriting, addressed to Mrs. Nagle.

Eustace brought it to Sybilla from the office, and she tore it open; but it was not for her. It began "dear mother." Still she read it in an ecstasy of thankfulness. He was not dead, after all. Her most terrible fear was removed.

NEW YORK, Nov. 17.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

I am sorry to have given you so much anxiety on my account as I know you have felt; but I could not help it. I think I should have gone mad, or did something dreadful, if I staid any longer. The night I left home I walked to Boston, and took the cars for New York next morning. I went to the docks; a steamer for San Francisco sailed next day. The steamer is the Golden Star. Before you get this, I shall be hundreds of miles away. You must not think hard of me—it might be worse if I staid. The devil was so strong in me, sometimes, that I think I must have killed myself, or some one else, if I did not leave. Pray for me, and it will be all for the best. Give my love to Bessie and the Shields. Tell Frank, if I live I will pay him what I owe him in six months. I don't know when I will come back—never, perhaps—but always pray for your affectionate son,

RICHARD NAGLE.

Not one word of her, the cause of all—his wretched, guilty wife!

Sybilla flung down the letter with a despairing cry that rang wildly through the house.

"Oh! what have I done? what have I done? Oh, Heaven above! what have I done?"

They were in the room, the mother and daughter, and Eustace read them the letter. Sybilla's wild, hysterical sobs were terrible to hear.

Mrs. Nagle dropped into a seat, pale and stunned.

"Gone!" she said, faintly, "gone!"

Even Eustace was touched with that look of hopeless woe, and tried to comfort her; but Bessie flung him off frantically.

"Go!" she cried, wildly; "go! both of you, or I shall drive you out! Listen to her," pointing to Sybilla, "the cheat, the hypocrite, the wicked, deceitful creature! She broke his heart—my brother, who was worth a thousand like her! Take her away," screamed the girl, in a sort of frenzy, "take her away before I tear her eyes out! I hate her, and I won't have her another hour under this roof!"

She might have kept her word in her momentary madness, and torn her eyes out, if Eustace had not come between them. Somehow—Sybilla never knew how—she was out of the house, and walking with Eustace to his hotel. She seemed stunned—dazed; she let him do with her as he would. Sometimes her despair broke forth in that wild, terrified cry, "Oh! what have I done?" but mostly she sat in a dumb sort of way, "passive to all changes."

Eustace took her home.

Never once during the journey did she rouse to anything like interest. He took her home—a something that bore a shadowy resemblance to the bright, gleeful girl they had lost. He

took her home—a haggard, hollow-eyed woman, with sunken cheeks, and a heart full of untold remorse!

So Sybilla had the desire of her heart once more—she was free, and at home.

The old faces looked on her with tender pity and love; the old luxury surrounded her; all things hateful and low were shut out—she was free!

Oh, no, no! More hollow than the apples of the Dead Sea was all she had pined for. She had lost him, and the old love returned with tenfold force. She had lost him, and he was dearer than all the world beside, now. At last she could see him as he was—noble, and brave, and heroic, and great-hearted, generous, and self-sacrificing. At last she could see her own guilt—the scales had fallen. She had loved him once for his beauty—she loved him now for something far beyond all the beauty of Apollo.

But it was too late!

Do you think this changefulness unreal and unnatural? If so, you know nothing about it. You have heard long ago that never was the wind half so changeful as woman, and, in most cases, it is gospel truth.

Mr. Tresylian's joy at recovering his granddaughter was considerably modified by this change in her—this settled sorrow and remorse.

He dare not broach the subject of the divorce yet. He waited; he could afford to, now. Time would work wonders.

Six weeks passed away, and the old year was dying in sapping rain and enervating mist. Sybilla sat alone in the gloaming, one dismal December day, staring blankly into the red embers in the grate, and shivering even in their warmth. Eustace came in hastily, his face pale, a newspaper in his hand.

"Sybilla," he said, his voice unsteady, "I have news for you."

She looked up in a sort of dull apathy. Nothing interested her now.

"What is it?" she listlessly asked.

"I fear it may be a shock to you, my dear Sybilla; but prepare yourself. You know what wild, windy weather we have had of late. It has been worse on the coast, worse at sea; there have been many disasters."

She started up in wild affright, and looked at him. He put the paper in her hand, pointed out a column, and hastened from the room. There was light enough in the glowing coals for her to read.

"Disaster at sea! Frightful loss of life! Wreck of the California steamer Golden Star!"

She read on, with eyes that seemed starting from their sockets—a heart that seemed to have ceased beating. It was a detailed account of horrors, with lists of the saved and the lost. Conspicuous among the latter was the name of "Richard Nagle."

Fifteen minutes passed, twenty, half an hour, Eustace grew alarmed, and re-entered the room. She had slipped from her chair, without cry or groan, and lay on her face on the carpet, cold and lifeless as a stone!

CHAPTER XVII.

AFTER THREE YEARS.

At the window of a house in Beacon street, a young lady sat looking out at the crowd ebbing and flowing along the Common. It was a bright, sparkling November afternoon, and that "beauty-spot on the ugly face of Boston" was well filled. The young lady who watches is Sybilla, and three years have passed away.

Three years!

Can three years pass over any of us and leave us unchanged? Look at her, and see the difference between the girl of eighteen and the woman of twenty-one. She has grown taller and less fragile; her form is womanly, her face fuller and more markedly handsome, but it is fixedly pale. No tinge of color lights the rounded cheek; no careless curls flow over bare white shoulders, as was her jaunty wont. It is twisted in a shining coil carelessly at the back of her head, and is two or three shades darker.

The large gray eyes have taken a more tender light, a sadder beauty than of old. She is dressed in black silk, guiltless of trimming—up to the throat, down to the wrist—a young nun

could hardly be more austere. But she is very lovely—more so, perhaps—chastened and saddened, than in her sparkling, thoughtless girlhood.

She is Sybilla Tresylian once more—by no legal formula, of course, but by grandpapa's earnest desire. She has yielded against her will, but she has learned to sacrifice her own will to that of others, at last. The humble name of Nagle is far more precious to her now than the patrician one of her girlhood, but to please grandpapa she has consented, and is *Miss* Tresylian once more.

Very few ever knew of that short-lived marriage; her friends South had taken it for granted she had been on a second visit to Mrs. Wayland; and, though there were suspicions afloat, they died away, after a time. Some plausible reason was assigned for the postponed marriage, and Mrs. and Miss Waldron were very discreet. At the North still less was known. The Waylands, of course, knew all about it, but no one besides. It had been kept wonderfully quiet, and her old friends accepted her as Miss Tresylian at once, and only wondered that the Southern beauty and heiress was Miss Tresylian still. They found her unaccountably changed, and set it down to some unfortunate love affair. People were wont to say of her now, "Yes, she is very handsome, of course, but *too still*. She looks like a person who has seen trouble."

She and grandpapa have spent three years traveling over Europe—perhaps it is to that she owes her reason, her very life. A long brain fever had followed the shock of her husband's

death, and when, after hovering for weeks and weeks between life and death, she recovered, but only to fall into hopeless melancholy, her physicians looked grave, and recommended immediate and prolonged change; so that her devoted grandparent had taken his darling to the fair foreign lands she had so often longed to see. They wandered together through Italy, and Germany, and Switzerland, and Greece, and the years had gone by and Sybilla's reason and life were saved; but the old light-heartedness never came back. Never came, and never would—for in all these distant lands, under the stars of Athens and the moonlight of Venice, in the crowded ball-room and thronged street, the reproachful ghost that ever haunted her arose from the stormy sea, and stood looking at her with fixed dead eyes!

She had caused a fellow-creature's death—the death of the man who had loved her to his own destruction, whose memory was dearer to her now than all the world besides. All her life seemed a dream, save that short time of her marriage. The past was unreal, the present a weary blank. These three months alone stood out vivid and clear in the retrospect. Oh! if that brief time could come over again, if Richard Nagle could rise from the dead, how different it all might be. She would love him so dearly, she would make him so happy, she would be so unselfish, so tender, so true. But it was too late, and the pain and remorse that sometimes drove her half wild, must last until they wrapped her in her winding-sheet.

She sat, this November afternoon, thinking very sadly of all

this. It was the anniversary of that mournful day when she had driven him from his home to his death, and her heart lay like lead in her bosom. She was alone in the house. Mrs. Wayland was out, and grandpapa—ah, grandpapa!—was far away in dear old Virginia, fighting for his fatherland.

For the "great rebellion" had broken out, and its first echo had reached them in Germany. They had hurried home—Mr. Tresylian burning with a younger man's desire to mix in the fray.

He was a "rebel" to the backbone—nay, backbone and all—and so was Sybilla, but for all that he had left her with the Waylands, who were just the other way. In New York he had met Eustace, whom, he took it for granted, would burn with his own fire, and hasten to strike for "God and his native land." But no, Mr. Eustace Tresylian held a captaincy in the ——th New York, and calmly declined. It was absurd in the South, Eustace said, to suppose that they could ultimately win what they were fighting for; the North must gain; it was inevitable, and he and Jefferson Davis & Co. would all go to the dogs together. It was for his interest to keep on the side of the strong, and he meant to keep on the safe side. A terrible quarrel had ensued between the two, and they parted enemies for life.

Mrs. Waldron and Eleanor had come North to avoid the horrors of war, and were residing in New York very comfortably, on a little fortune presented them by the generous Virginia gentleman.

So Sybilla was all alone, and very, very sad this bright November afternoon. Her thoughts were all of the past, of her brief wedded life, and the trouble she had caused in that humble home.

Were they thinking of *him* in the cottage—the mother and sister who had been so proud of him, whose hearts she had wrung?

Suddenly she started up.

"I will go and see," she thought; "I will go and ask Mrs. Nagle to forgive me—yes, on my knees. She is a good woman—she may be able to forgive me now."

She left the room, threw on her bonnet and cloak, and in five minutes was ready.

The Western train left at half-past five; there was just time to catch it. She sent a servant for a hack, and, while waiting, she dashed off a note to Mrs. Wayland, telling her where she was going, and when to expect her home.

The November sun had gone down in red and gold long before she reached the village, and the gray gloomy night was coming on.

Oh! these familiar streets and houses—the post-office, the meeting-house, the church.

She drew her vail over her face to hide the gathering tears. These three years, that had made her feel as though she were forty, had passed here, and left scarce a trace of their passing. Even the faces she knew, and the old time came vividly back as if it were but yesterday. Once when Fanny Shield, tall and

handsome as she remembered her, passed, looking at her vailed face curiously, a great heart-pang smote her. If *he* had married her, he might be alive and happy yet. She reached the cottage.

The round, white moon, cold and clear, was rising over the dark tree-tops, and the stars were spangling the sky. A broad, red light streamed out from the parlor window far into the road. All, all as she remembered it! She leaned against the garden-gate, her heart beating so fast that she seemed choking, her courage all ebbing away. A sound of footsteps coming along the road startled her. She hastily opened the gate, and walked up the graveled path.

There was no curtain down over the parlor window, and the ruddy glow tempted her to pause and look in. The picture that met her gaze rooted her to the spot. All things were unchanged, the chairs, the lounge, the bed, the fire. In the rocker sat old Mrs. Nagle, the fire-light falling dimly on her black dress and widow's cap, and sad, kindly face, paler than three years ago.

In the corner, smoking, Frank Shield sat, with the air of a man in the bosom of his family, and kneeling before him, holding up a crowing baby, was Bessie. Her laughing face was flushed, her black hair tumbling about her, but looking oh! so infinitely content.

They were all happy, and *he* was forgotten; they did not even remember what day this was. Sybilla turned away, and walked resolutely to the hotel to remain for the night. Next day she went back to Boston,

Sybilla went back—back to the old life—the miserably, weary, tread-mill existence. Went back to the endless routine of shopping, and dressing, and calling, and party-going that was vapid as dust and ashes, and that left her heart-sick, tired to death of herself and every one around her. She was *blase*, and there was "nothing new, and nothing true, and it doesn't signify."

But Sybilla had some pleasant and some profitable hours. When her grandfather's letters came—and they *did* come with tolerable regularity, considering all things, and were filled with glowing accounts of heroic deeds—her heart burned, and the spirit of the old Tresylians lighted her face. Oh, to be a man, and fight with him side by side in his glorious cause of freedom!

Sometimes the old romantic spirit filled her, and she felt half tempted to gird on the sword, and go *en garcon* to fair Virginia. But she was too much of a woman for that, and so she contented herself with praying for them at home, and improving her mind.

Yes, she was improving her mind at last, and you know how sadly it needed improving. It was Mrs. Wayland's good-natured suggestion.

"My love," that lady had said, "you know I never interfere in politics, but the South *may* lose, and, if it does, I fear your grandfather will lose everything with it. You have nothing to do, why not improve yourself in music, and French, and drawing? You may find these accomplishments of great service to you hereafter."

Sybilla took her at her word, and had masters once more, and practiced her three hours a day as zealously as Ellen Waldron herself, and made rapid progress. And so the weeks strung themselves into months, and the months into years, and the fourth and last year of that long struggle came. Sybilla was five-and-twenty, and "an old maid," budding belles said; but, for all that, she was as handsome as ever, and as much admired.

There was no telling how many offers she might have had, if she had not invariably looked so coldly on all suitors out of her deep, dark eyes.

One only had ever got beyond silent admiration, and that was George Wayland. How much it pained Sybilla to refuse, only Sybilla knew.

"You honor me by thinking me worthy to be your wife," she said, falteringly. "I esteem and respect you more than any other man on the earth; but I will never marry. What I am now I will go to my grave, faithful to the husband to whom I was so unfaithful in life, whose memory is dearer to me now than any living man can ever be."

So it ended, and they parted, esteeming each other more than ever.

He saw how fixed her resolution was, and made no attempt to change it.

That fourth year was destined to bring Sybilla a terrible shock. There came to her one day a letter, sealed and bordered with black, dated from the Confederate lines, and signed "Francis Evandyke."

The name was familiar to her. He was a colonel, next in command under her grandfather, General Tresylian. He had entered the ranks a private, and risen by his deeds of daring. Half a year before, he had saved his general's life at the risk of his own, and for the brave deed won a captaincy. He was colonel now, and her grandfather's dearest friend. His letters had been full of the young man's praises, until his name had become familiar as a household word to his granddaughter. She, loving all whom grandpapa loved, had sent sisterly messages in her answers to this modern Cœur de Lion, who had a double claim on her gratitude for saving that beloved life.

The letter from Colonel Evandyke was a very sad one. It announced the death of Colonel Tresylian, fighting like a hero at the head of his men.

"He seemed to have a presentiment of his impending fate," wrote the Southern colonel, "for the night before the battle he called me to him, and told me if anything happened I was to write to you. Do not grieve for him—he died a soldier's death, and sleeps in a hero's grave. I have taken the liberty of retaining your picture, as a souvenir of him and of you. With your kind permission, I will keep it. My loss is far less than yours, but I mourn one of the bravest and best men I ever knew."

Ah! what a blow that was.

She sat there in tearless anguish for hours after, feeling as though her heart was dead within her. But this, too, passed, as all the blows of this weary earth-struggle with pain must, and outwardly there was little change. Somewhat paler, somewhat

thinner, somewhat sadder and quieter, but, to the casual observer, much the same.

The mourning she wore outwardly told little of the deeper *deuil* of the heart—that must be hers while life remained.

"Oh," she sighed, wearily, "how I live, and live, with nothing to live for—all desolate in the wide world! Others would be happier—they would suffer and die—I only suffer and live!"

It was wrong, of course, but I am afraid it was natural. Those rebellious cries *will* ascend from the best of us, sometimes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

The last sun of January had set, and its latest red ray lingered around the fair hair of Sybilla, as she sat in a low rocker in her room at Mrs. Wayland's.

She looked anxious and care-worn, with dark circles around her sunken eyes that told of "tears at night instead of slumber."

As the light faded out of the sky, and the darkness came in, some one came running fleetly up stairs. There was a *swish* of silk skirts, a breath of perfume, and Mrs. Wayland came breathlessly in.

"I have run up, without ever stopping, to tell you," she began, panting. "I know what an impatient thing you are. It is all right—you are to have the situation."

Sybilla's face flushed, and then grew very pale.

"I am very glad," she said, slowly; "yes," in a more assured tone, "I am *very* glad."

"Of course you are," cried Mrs. Wayland, impatiently, "always glad to have your own willful way. I don't see any sense in it myself—going drudging as a governess, when there is not the slightest necessity for it."

"My dear Mrs. Wayland! Not the slightest necessity for it?"

"No!" pettishly, "not the slightest. Supposing this horrid war *has* swallowed up your fortune—suppose you *are* poor, and so on—still there is no necessity."

"What am I to do, then?" asked Sybilla, smiling; "sit with my hands folded, and live on the charity of my friends?"

"No," replied her friend, bluntly; "take George Wayland at his word. Marry him! You'll never get a better man!"

A shadow passed over Sybilla's pale, sad face.

"No," she said, "better drudge all my life than that. He is a thousand times too good for me; but I don't love him, and I can't; and marriage does not enter into the scheme of my life at all. It is the only atonement I can make to the dead."

"Fiddlestick! I don't enter into your Utopian notions at all. What good will it do to the dead, your slaving and making yourself miserable, when you might be as happy as the day is long? You have done wrong, and repented, and that is all any of us can do. Think better of it, Sybilla."

"It is of no use—I am deeply grateful, but—there, don't let us talk of it. You distress me—tell me, instead, of the situation."

"Headstrong, obstinate child! Well, then, Mrs. Simons has a sister in New York who wants a governess. Mrs. Simons wrote an account of you—your proficiency in drawing, and music, and French, and her sister wrote back to secure you if the

terms suited. The terms are two hundred dollars a year—not very magnificent—and there are three pupils, all girls. What do you say?"

"That I am very much obliged to Mrs. Simons, and will go at once. Yes, at once—don't say a word, my best friend. I have been a drone too long in the busy hive of life—it is time I was up and doing. Work will do me good. I will start to-morrow."

"Oh, Sybilla! not to-morrow."

"Why not? Better begin at once. Since it *must* be done, 'twere well it done quickly—I shall go to-morrow."

"Well, of course, if you *will*, you will—it is of no use talking. You always would gang your ain gait. And now I believe I must go down—won't you come?"

"No, I must pack up. I shall leave by the express in the morning. What is the name of my employer?"

"Mrs. Plummer—her husband is a well-to-do stock broker, and they will sympathize with your Southern proclivities. Mr. Plummer is a Tennesseean, and was a friend of the South all the time, *sub rosa*."

She left the room as she spoke, and Sybilla arose at once and commenced her packing.

She did not want to think—on the eve of her new life there must be no faltering, no tears, no repining. It had come to this—Sybilla Tresylian was going out as a governess! In losing her grandfather, she had lost everything—fortune, home, all was swept away!

Yet, she need not have gone. Mrs. Wayland wanted a companion—she pressed her to stay—George Wayland came nobly forward with a renewal of that offer before rejected, to be rejected again.

Perhaps Sybilla was willful still—a governess among strangers she would be, and nothing else.

While busily packing, the door opened again, and Mrs. Wayland looked in.

"I forgot to tell you such a piece of news! You won't faint?"

"Not if I can help it—is it anything very dreadful?"

"Very! Eustace Tresylian is married."

"Oh, is that all? To whom?"

"Eleanor Waldron! Don't you want a glass of ice-water!"

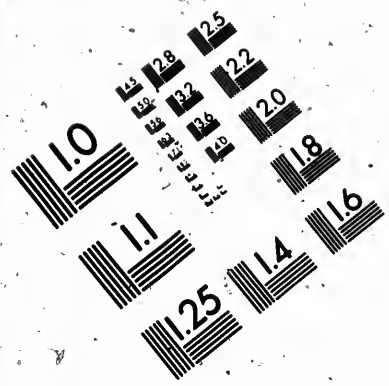
"No, thank you," said Sybilla, smiling. "Where are they?"

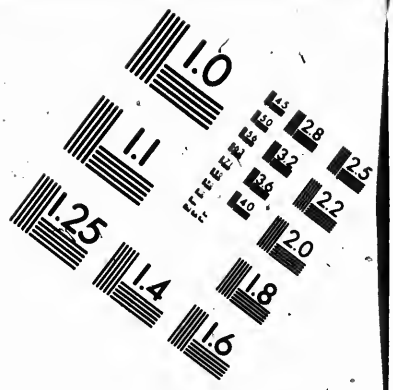
"Boarding in New York—very likely you'll meet them there. But I'm afraid she'll cut your acquaintance. Sha'n't I send Jennie to help you?"

The evening was like all last evenings, a little sad. Early next morning Sybilla departed to begin the battle of life for the first time on her own account. She read persistently all the way, determined not to think.

It was late, long after dark, when they reached the noisy New York terminus.

Sybilla took a hack, and drove to Mrs. Plummer's address,





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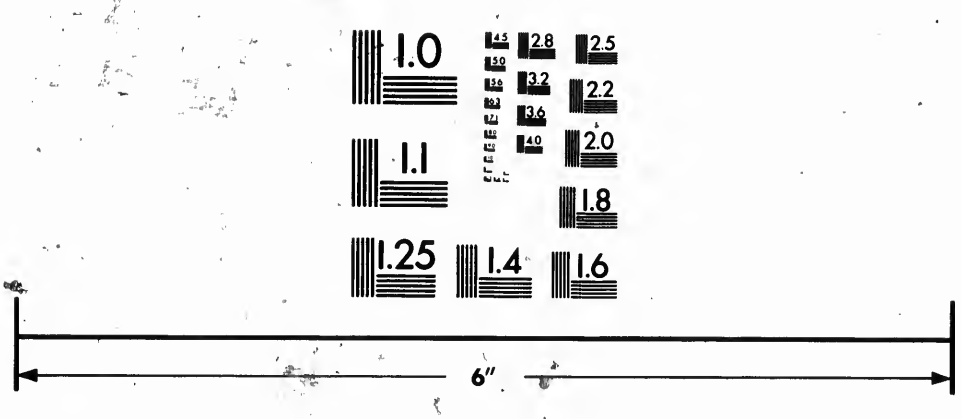

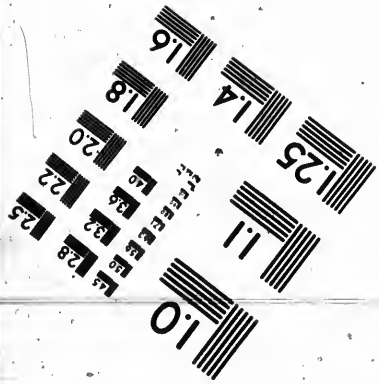

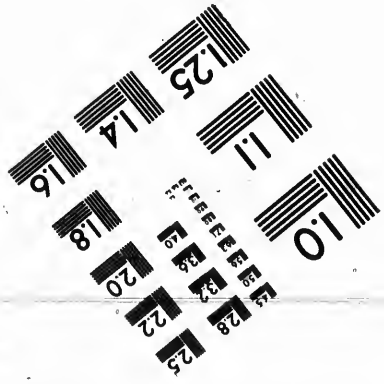

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— West Twenty-seventh street. Her heart beat fast as the servant admitted her, and ushered her into a handsome parlor to await the coming of her future mistress. Sybilla, all robed in sables, and very pale, sat awaiting that first interview with a painful sense of humiliation.

Bells rang, people crossed the hall, and went up and down stairs, and nearly half an hour passed before the lady of the mansion entered.

Sybilla arose, and saw a matron, fair, fat, and forty, richly dressed, and with an evident sense of her own importance. She looked at Sybilla from head to foot, yet not unkindly.

"You are Miss Tresylian, the governess, from Boston?"

"Yes, madam."

Her heart was throbbing so fast she could hardly speak, and her eyes fell under that prolonged stare.

"Are you sickly? You look very pale."

"I am fatigued after my journey, that is all."

"My sister speaks of your accomplishments very highly. She has told me you have lost a fortune by the war. I sympathize with you deeply. We will endeavor to make you as happy among us as possible."

"You are very kind," said poor Sybilla, falteringly.

"And now I will let you go to your room. There is a dinner-party at the house to-day, so I will not have time to introduce you to your pupils, but you will see them at breakfast."

She rang the bell, and a smart servant-girl appeared.

"Susan, show this young lady to the governess's room, and

bring her anything she wants. Good-night, Miss Treylian."

Sybilla followed the smart young woman up three long flights of stairs, and into a neat little bedroom, very comfortable, but very unlike anything she was used to.

"Is there anything I can fetch you, miss?" asked Susan, scanning the new governess curiously.

"A cup of tea, if you please—nothing more."

Susan brought the tea and departed, and Sybilla was alone. She turned up the gas, took off her bonnet and shawl, and walked to the window.

She could see the sky sparkling with frosty stars, and innumerable chimneys and house-tops, and spires, and back yards. The noises of the city came far and faint—up in her lofty room no sound of life from below could reach her.

She leaned heavily against the window, feeling sick at heart.

"Twenty-five," she said, "and but beginning life. Only twenty-five! Oh, me! I feel as though I were fifty."

Sybilla slept little that night, and she arose feverish and unrefreshed at daybreak. Her head ached and burned, and she threw up the window, and let the cold February wind sweep over her face.

It was seven by her watch. She had two hours yet to pass, so she unpacked her trunks, and arranged her dresses in the wardrobe. Then she took a book and read until nine.

At that hour she rang, and Susan, with a sleepy morning face, appeared.

"Will you be kind enough to show me to the breakfast-room?" she said.

"Yes'm," responded Susan, leading the way down stairs, and into an elegant apartment where an oval table was set with china and silver, and the morning sunlight danced fandangoes amid sparkling glass. The room was quite empty. "They aren't down yet," said Susan; "I guess they'll be here soon."

Sybilla took a seat and waited, but it was nearly ten before the door opened.

Then Mrs. Plummer, *en rube de matin*, sailed in, with ribbons fluttering.

"Good-morning, Miss Tresylian [illegible]re late; but then we were up late last night also. The [illegible] will be here directly. How did you sleep?"

Before Sybilla could reply the door opened again, and a slender damsel of seventeen, in white cashmere and flowing ringlets, entered.

Mrs. Plummer presented her at once.

"My eldest daughter, Miss Tresylian. Gertrude, my love, your governess."

Miss Plummer bowed, smiled, and inspected her new governess, and sat down to table.

"Can't we have breakfast, mamma?—I am famished. For whom are we waiting—papa?"

"Yes, my dear. Ah, here he is."

Enter Mr. Plummer, a short, plain, bald-headed, good-humored looking man. Miss Tresylian, the governess, was introduced.

"How do you find yourself, my dear?" said Mr. Plummer, with a paternal shake-hands. "A little fagged after your journey? You belong down East, don't you?"

"No, sir," said Sybilla, smiling, "down South."

"My love," said Mrs. Plummer, reproachfully, "don't you remember Miss Tresylian is from Virginia?"

"Ah, from the Old Dominion! All the more welcome for that—all the more welcome. Sad times there lately. Any relation to the late General Tresylian, may I ask?"

Before Sybilla could answer this unexpected question, Miss Gertrude Plummer cut in, plaintively:

"Pa, I do wish you would come to breakfast. You don't know how hungry I am. Ma, it is of no use waiting for Alice and Adeline; and I am sure Miss Tresylian must be almost starved. I know I am."

"That's right," said her father, taking his seat at table; "I like to see little girls hungry. It isn't fashionable, I believe, but it's sensible, and I think I'm hungry myself. Mary, my dear, I'll take a cup of coffee. Come here, Miss Tresylian, and don't look so pale and forlorn, child."

There were tears in Sybilla's eyes as she took her place near him.

He might have noticed them, but at that instant the door was

flung wide, and two young misses, of the respective ages of fifteen and twelve, burst noisily in.

"Here they come!" cried papa, "two whirlwinds in petticoats. Miss Tresylian, have you a large stock of patience laid in? You'll need it, I can tell you, with these young limbs. Here, girls, this is your governess; mind you don't give her too much trouble, or *I'll* take you in hand. Now sit down. 'For what we are about to receive,' etc. Miss Tresylian, let me give you some of this omelette."

Sybilla held her tongue, and used her ears during breakfast.

The talk was desultory, but chiefly ran on the dinner-party last night, the guests, and a certain Miss Jocyln, who appeared to be a great belle.

"You have no chance, Gertie," said Alice; "the colonel won't look at you beside that tall, black-eyed, splendid creature. I heard Clara Somers say yesterday they were engaged."

"Hear her," cried her father, "fifteen years old, and talking of engagements, when she isn't out of her horn-book. Miss Tresylian, you see what's in store for you."

Alice pouted.

"I don't see why I haven't as much right to *talk* of engagements as Gertie has of thinking of *being* engaged. She's only two years older than I am, and I'm as tall as she is, and a great deal better looking. Colonel Evandyke said so."

The sudden start Sybilla gave, at mention of that name, escaped notice in the laugh Miss Alice's last remark created, in which, however, her eldest sister did not join.

"Oh, Alice! he never!" cried Adeline.

"He did, too!" persisted Alice, stoutly; "it was last week. Alice Jocyln and Clara Somers were in the parlor, and I was there; and they were arguing whether Gertie or I was handsomest. Miss Jocyln said Gertie was—she admired blondes—and Clara said *I* was, and Colonel Evandyke came in, and they left it to him."

"And what did the colonel say, Miss Vanity?" asked her father.

"He said Gertie was very pretty, and that he admired blondes; so you need not look sour, Sis; but that I was the handsomest of the two, *decidedly*."

Sybilla sat very still and thoughtful, listening. So Colonel Evandyke was a friend and visitor of the family—he to whom she had written so often, who kept her picture, who had been her beloved grandfather's best friend, who had saved his life, and been with him in his latest hours. She might see him, speak to him, this young hero of whom she had heard so much.

Her heart throbbed fast at the thought. Of all the men in the wide world, there was not one she desired to see as she desired to see him.

Breakfast over, Sybilla's duties commenced at once. Mrs. Plummer and her daughters led her to a large, airy room on the third floor, which was to be the school-room, and where six hours each day must be spent.

Then she was conducted to the drawing-room, and the grand

piano opened. Her white hands swept over the keys in a storm of melody, and Mrs. Plummer was more than satisfied.

"You play remarkably well," she said. "I want you to pay particular attention to my girls' music. Do you sing, Miss Tresylian?"

Sybilla sang a plaintive song from Lucia, and again her employer was charmed. She had got a musical treasure, and could appreciate her.

So Sybilla's new life began, and went on, day after day, with tread-mill regularity.

Outwardly she was a pale, quiet, passionless automaton, going through her daily drudgery with faultless precision, and winning golden opinions from parents and pupils. Inwardly there was neither quiet nor peace—there were mutiny and rebellion enough to drive her wild.

She hated it all, this horrible routine of piano-playing, and French verbs, and Bristol board, and crayons—this never-ending teach, teach, teach.

But her face never showed it, except for its unspeakably weary look. She was patient and gentle always, and never shirked a duty, however disagreeable.

Long ago, in those romantic days of hers, she had thought it a fine thing to be a governess. Was not Jane Eyre, and Ruth Pinch, and half of her heroines, governesses? But, like all her dreams, the realization was not half so charming as she had imagined.

She was not snubbed, nor insulted, nor ill-used in any way. Her employers treated her like a lady, and her pupils were tolerably good and obedient. What right had she to complain? It is true, her position was very different from that of Eleanor Waldron at Tresylian Hall.

Mrs. Plummer was kind, but that made the governess feel she was a dependent. No duty could be shirked with impunity. If there was company, the governess was expected to come down and sing for their amusement. She was expected to read aloud for Mrs. Plummer, to darn her gloves, and mend her torn lace, and make herself useful generally. In short, she was the governess, and expected not to give herself airs, but to keep her place, and do as her mistress chose, not as she chose herself.

Of course, all this was very galling, and bitter, and humiliating to an undisciplined mind like Sybilla's. But—all the rebellion was inward—I am happy to say she was a model governess, to observing eyes, only a little *too* much of the automaton.

She was *so* mechanical, Mrs. Plummer complained; she took so little interest; she performed her duties well, as a mechanic might, but, it was quite evident, with thoughts thousands of miles away.

Poor Sybilla!

Three weeks passed. Sybilla's desire to see Colonel Evandyke was as strong as ever, but as yet was ungratified. He had been at the house the day after her arrival, but she had not seen

him, and he had left New York very soon after. Neither had she met Eustace or Eleanor. They were not on the Plummer visiting-list, and she went out very rarely. Her whole day was fully occupied, and she was too weary and wretched when evening came to care for anything but to lie down in her darkened room and be at rest.

One day, toward the close of the third week, Gertrude burst into the class-room in a high state of excitement.

"Oh, Miss Tresylian!" she cried, "I have such news for you! Next Wednesday is my birthday, and mamma is going to give a grand party, Won't it be lovely?"

Miss Tresylian, just glancing up from Alice's drawing, said she had no doubt it *would* be lovely, and resumed her work.

"And I am to learn that duet from Linda, Miss Tresylian, and sing it with you, and two or three more besides; so you see you must come down, too."

The governess knit her brows, but made no reply, as she went on with her work.

Alice looked up suddenly.

"Has Colonel Evandyke come back?"

"Yes," said her sister.

"Ah, I thought so!" said shrewd Alice. "He'll be here, of course. Miss Tresylian, don't you want to see the gentleman Gertie is dead in love with? Oh! you needn't blush so—it's nothing to be ashamed of. Half the young ladies that come here, from Miss Jocyln down, are in the same state."

"Is he so handsome, then?" asked the governess, carelessly.

"Handsome!" cried Gertrude, "he's splendid! Wait till you see him, Miss Tresylian. He looks like a banished prince, or something of that sort—tall, and dark, and dignified, and melancholy, as if he had a secret sorrow, you know. Oh, he's magnificent!"

Sybilla could hardly forbear laughing.

"I'm afraid what Alice says is true, Gertrude—you're in love!"

"Oh, pshaw! he takes no notice of me—of any one, for that matter. He doesn't care for ladies, and he says he will never marry—I heard him myself. But half the girls in our set are dying after him, for, besides being so divinely handsome, he's enormously rich. And then there's a mystery about him that makes him more interesting than anything."

"A mystery—what is it?"

"Oh, I don't know. Some folks say he's a widower, and that he is separated from his wife; but no one knows. I have even heard that Evandyke is not his real name. I shouldn't wonder if he had a wife shut up somewhere, like Mr. Rochester—but perhaps you never read Jane Eyre. There must be something in it, or he would not be so bitter, and cynical, and misanthropical about women. He thinks not one of us is to be trusted, as far as he can see us; and ma says some woman must have used him badly, to get him into such a state of mind as *that*."

"Is he old?" asked Sybilla, interested in this modern Corsair.

"Oh, no—about thirty, I should think. But you'll see him for yourself Wednesday night; and you will say he is the very handsomest man you ever laid eyes on."

The old leaven of romance being by no means dead in the breast of Sybilla, all this did not tend to lessen her interest in the Southern colonel.

She caught herself sometimes looking forward to the eventful birthday night almost as eagerly as Gertrude herself. She even went, on one occasion, so far as to wonder what she should wear.

"But, bah!" she said to herself, directly after, "what a simpleton I am! As if he, or any one else, will ever look at the governess—or as if I wanted to thrust myself on his notice."

So Miss Tresylian drove the matter resolutely from her mind, and walked up and down her tread-mill as steadily as any other unfortunate jail-bird, and waited for the eventful Wednesday to come.

CHAPTER XIX.

A SHADOW FROM THE DEAD.

It came, that momentous Wednesday night, and found Sybilla up in her room reading, while she waited for her summons down, and trying to still the expectant beating of her heart. What business had it to beat? What business had Colonel Evandyke to be intruding himself perpetually in her mind? She did not want to think of him, or wonder about him—she had better things to do, and here she was at it every other hour. She was in a rage with herself, and that only made her think of him more.

She sat in her room and read, dressed as she dressed every day for dinner, in plain black silk, trimmed with crape, jet earrings in her ears, and a plain circlet of gold on the third finger of her left hand—her wedding-ring. All the past was a vague, sad dream, but the great event of her life, of which that was the symbol, was a reality.

It was eleven o'clock.

Sounds of music and dancing reached her from below, and distracted her sadly from her book.

She had been very busy helping Gertrude, and Alice, and Ad-

eline to dress. Her own toilet did not occupy fifteen minutes.

She had sat listening to the arrivals and the sounds from below, and thinking of the gay scenes and birthday *fetes* of which she had been queen, until her grandfather rose from the grave, and stood beside her.

She tried in vain to fix her attention on her book; she laid it down in despair, and, as she did so, her door opened unceremoniously, and Adeline rushed in.

"You are to go down stairs, Miss Tresylian; Gertie is going to sing the duet."

Sybilla rose in considerable trepidation, and followed Adeline down stairs.

The long drawing-room was so filled with people, standing, and walking, and sitting, that she managed to cross to the piano almost unobserved.

Gertrude was on the watch, and came up.

"I am going to sing pretty soon," she said; "and, meantime, I want you to play that charming Scottish waltz I like so much. I heard Colonel Evandyke whistling it a little while ago."

"*Where* is Colonel Evandyke?"

"Oh, surely!—you haven't seen him. Look—standing there with papa and all these gentlemen. You can't see him very well, though."

Sybilla looked, and saw a tall, dark, rather distinguished-looking man, with jetty hair, beard, and mustache. She could

only see his face in profile—what the mustache and beard did not cover—but that was enough to show he was eminently handsome.

She turned away, and sat down at the piano.

"I want to waltz," said Gertrude, "and I can waltz in better time to that tune than anything else. I expect it's a favorite of Colonel Evandyke's, too."

Sybilla sighed as she began to play.

It was a sweet, mournful Scotch melody she had often played for her grandfather — often sung for her husband, and her heart was with them both as her fingers floated over the keys.

Gertrude Plummer, and two or three more couples, were waltzing as if inspired, and people began to look at the player, and wonder who the slender, black-robed girl, with the pale, beautiful face and fair hair, might be.

"That was charming. I never saw you waltz so well," said a voice close beside her to Gertrude.

Sybilla's hands fell from the keys. She barely repressed a cry.

That voice!

She looked around wildly, but it was only Colonel Evandyke speaking to Miss Plummer, with a laughing face. Only Colonel Evandyke, and for one moment she had thought it a voice hushed forever in the stormy sea!

She laid her hand on her throbbing heart, white to ghastliness!

"The lady is fainting!" said the same voice, and then every thing was swimming before Sybilla in a mist.

But she did not faint.

Gertrude held a glass of ice-water to her lips, and the dizziness passed away.

"Dear me! what was it?" asked Mrs. Plummer, coming up. "The heat?"

Sybilla lifted her eyes, and met the searching glance of a pair —the darkest, the brightest, it seemed, she had ever seen—belonging to that startling Southern officer.

He bowed.

"Miss Tresylian, my daughter's governess, Colonel Evandyke," said Mrs. Plummer, a little stiffly. "Gertrude, my love, I thought you were going to sing?"

Sybilla's hands were on the keys again, and she was trying to sing second in that fly-away duet; but for once her touch was uncertain, her voice faltering, and the duet was a melancholy failure.

Miss Plummer looked amazed—daggers—at the governess, never dreaming that the stately colonel standing calmly near was the cause of it all. As she moved off in displeasure, and Sybilla was about to escape, that officer came coolly up and cut off her retreat.

"I beg your pardon, but I *must* speak half a dozen words to you. I know you are the original of the portrait you have kindly permitted me to retain, and the granddaughter of my la-

mented friend and general. I take it for granted we are friends."

He held out his hand with a smile, but Sybilla did not touch it. She was staring at him like one who had lost her senses. *Was* she going mad?

That voice, that smile, those dark, magnetic eyes! Could two men on earth be so much alike, or was it only the ghost of Richard Nagle!

"Won't you shake hands with me?" said he. "Have I frightened you, or *what* is it?"

He might well ask. She put her hand to her head, in a lost, bewildered sort of way. Oh! she *was* mad, to think such things!

"Yes," she said, tremulously, "you frightened me. You —you look so much like—like——"

She broke down, and with a sort of gushing, hysterical cry, ran out of the room.

Half a dozen wondering eyes looked on in amazement, too far off to hear, but near enough to see, Mrs. Plummer among them.

"What *does* it mean?" she asked him, wonderingly.

The Southern colonel was very grave, and very, very pale—all saw that.

"I knew her grandfather, and he is dead; I spoke of him, and, I suppose, too abruptly; perhaps you had better send and see after her."

"Her grandfather!" echoed two or three curious voices. "Who was he?"

"General George Tresylian, of Virginia, and my commanding officer."

There was a little volley of astonished ejaculations all round.

"General Tresylian her grandfather!" cried Mr. Plummer, coming up. "Impossible, colonel. She has often heard us speak of him, and never told us he was any relation."

"Not at all impossible, nevertheless. I happen to be certain of the fact. And, if you ask the young lady the question, you will find the answer yes. Of course, her fortune has been swept away, and so you have her for governess."

He walked off as he spoke, with a look on his face that said the matter was ended, and had nothing further to say on the subject that night.

But it did *not* end there. His revelation had created a sensation not easily subdued, and the guests were anxious for another glance at the pale patrician face that shone among them and was gone.

Mrs. Plummer lay awake that night for fully an hour after her lord was asleep and snoring, thinking with vexation of the discovery she had made. If Mrs. Plummer had not had a marriageable daughter, she would have been decidedly proud of it, but *having* a marriageable daughter, and the dearest desire of her heart being Colonel Evandyke for a son-in-law, she was thoroughly vexed. Miss Tresylian in the character of

governess, was all that could be desired — Miss Tresylian in the character of Gertrude's rival, was not desirable at all.

"I'll get rid of her," thought Mrs. Plummer, "or the colonel will never look twice at Gertie. I thought, from the first, she was a great deal too good looking."

Mrs. Plummer might have found it a harder matter to get rid of the governess than at first appears, for Mr. Plummer "delighted to honor" the granddaughter of so distinguished a man as General Tresylian, and he was emphatically master in his own house. But the fates stepped in and declared in favor of his spouse. Miss Tresylian was no longer eligible as a governess.

From that night a startling and unaccountable change passed over her—her health and spirits failed all at once—she seemed no longer the same being. The mechanical power of teaching had left her all in a moment, and she moved about like a being in a trance, with an indescribable look of vague horror in her eyes.

She lost the power to sleep or eat—in a week she was gone to a shadow, and Mrs. Plummer lost patience with her altogether.

"What *is* the matter with you, Miss Tresylian?" she cried, impatiently. "Are you sick, or losing your senses? Since the night of the party, you have been like one beside yourself!"

Sybilla looked at her with a long, dreamy shiver, and then far away into vacancy without speaking. It naturally provoked Mrs. Plummer.

"Are you aware," she said, sharply, "that you have not given my daughters a lesson fit to be called a lesson for a week? Pray, rouse yourself, Miss Tresylian, or send for a doctor. This state of things, you must be aware, will not do."

She sailed away in majestic displeasure, yet wondering and uneasy at the unaccountable change. Her fears of the governess as a rival were considerably set at rest by this time. In the first place, Miss Tresylian was rapidly losing her good looks, and fading away to a mere skeleton; in the second place, Colonel Evandyke showed little or no interest in her. He had asked for her health once or twice in his calls in an indifferent way, but beyond that betrayed no solicitude about her. If the governess would only rouse herself from the abnormal and uncomfortable state into which she had fallen, she might retain her situation yet.

The beginning of the second week brought a visitor for Sybilla—Mrs. Wayland.

That lady started back at sight of her, as if she had seen a ghost.

"For Heaven's sake! you unfortunate child, what have you been doing to yourself? But I knew all along how it would be The idea of *your* becoming a governess! Why not take a dose of strychnine at once, and close matters by less lingering suicide? You shall come home with me this very day, back to Boston, whether you like it or not. You shall not stay here another hour!"

Energetic Mrs. Wayland was as good as her word. Sybilla

seemed to have no life left to remonstrate or explain, and Mrs. Wayland, all in the dark, took Mrs. Plummer rather sharply to task.

"I don't pretend to understand Miss Tresylian or her illness," retorted Mrs. Plummer, with some asperity. "She makes no confidantes in this house, and has more whims than any governess *I* ever came across. She has been treated well, madam; it is no fault of ours. She has not been like the same person since the night she met Colonel Evandyke."

"Colonel Evandyke!" exclaimed Mrs. Wayland, surprised. "The Southern colonel?"

"The same," stiffly; "I see you know him."

"My step-son is his lawyer—he has been at our house. Pray what has Colonel Evandyke to do with this marked change in Miss Tresylian?"

"That I am unable to inform you, madam, unless it be his knowledge of her antecedents, and his abrupt mention of her grandfather."

"*Knowledge of her antecedents!*" repeated Mrs. Wayland, frowning and coloring. "How does Colonel Evandyke come to know anything of her?"

Mrs. Plummer got up impatiently.

"I cannot tell you—I cannot understand Miss Tresylian. If you wish her to return with you, I will pay her what is due, and free her from her engagement."

The two ladies parted the reverse of amicably. Sybilla, at the

last, tried faintly to remonstrate, but her friend would not listen to a word.

"You *shall* go!" she exclaimed, peremptorily. "You have had your own way long enough, and much good it has done you. I go by the night-train, Sybilla Tresylian, and you go with me!"

For once, Sybilla was passive as a child. She bade Mrs. Plummer and her daughters good-by, and followed Mrs. Wayland to her carriage.

A visitor was coming up the steps as the front door opened—a gentleman wrapped in a cloak. It was Colonel Evandyke, and it was the only time he and Sybilla had met since the party. He lifted his hat, and held out his hand with a surprised smile to Mrs. Wayland.

"*You* here, madam! This is an unlooked-for pleasure. I was with Mr. Wayland just now, and he did not mention it. Do you remain long?"

"About three hours. I came to see how Miss Tresylian got on, and, finding her at death's door, am carrying her off, as you see."

Colonel Evandyke turned the light of his handsome black eyes on the governess.

A sort of bluish pallor had overspread her face, and her eyes were full of wild affright.

"You *do* look ill," he said, gravely; "very ill. Mrs. Plummer gave me to understand you were quite well. It is nothing serious, I hope, Miss Tresylian?"

Her lips parted as if to speak, but only an inaudible murmur came forth.

She made a hurried motion forward, and he held out his hand to help her into the carriage. The fingers she gave him were icy cold, and her eyes never lost the stare of frozen affright.

"For goodness' sake, Sybilla, what ails you?" cried Mrs. Wayland, in wonder and alarm. "How you looked! how you acted! Are you going mad?"

"Yes!" answered Sybilla, with sudden vehemence—with a sort of hysterical cry. "Yes—that is it—I am going mad!"

Mrs. Wayland turned pale with horror.

"For God's sake! Sybilla, what do you mean?"

"What I say! Either I am mad, or the grave has given up its dead!" she answered, wildly.

"Sybilla!"

"Yes—yes—yes! I know it—I feel it! Ever since that night I have felt I was going insane, when I first thought he was Richard Nagle risen from the dead!"

"*Who?*"

"That man! Colonel Evandyke! Don't you see it? The same eyes, the same hair, the same features, the same smile, the same voice!—all, all the same! Oh, I forget—you never saw him. *Am* I mad, or *is* it my husband risen from the dead!"

Mrs. Wayland was never so much scared in her life, as Sybilla went off into violent hysterics then and there. But they

reached the hotel, where her step-son awaited her, and they managed to get the unfortunate girl up to a chamber and into bed.

Mrs. Wayland, applying restoratives, gave Mr. Wayland a *resume* of the alarming conversation in the carriage.

"The effect of this hallucination may be very serious," Mr. Wayland said. "She must have been in a morbid state of mind for some time. Colonel Evandyke probably bears some resemblance to Richard Nagle, on whose unhappy fate she is perpetually brooding. I only hope brain fever may not be the result."

"Will you mention this unfortunate affair to the colonel?"

"Most certainly not," said her step-son, in grave surprise. "I could not do so without revealing Sybilla's past history."

"He may know that already," said Mrs. Wayland, thoughtfully. "He was the intimate friend of her grandfather, you you."

"I don't think so. However intimate they may have been, Mr. Tresylian would never reveal the story of his child's disgrace to an utter stranger. Poor girl! she is atoning bitterly for that mad marriage."

Sybilla escaped brain fever—tenderest care prevented that—and in a week she was able to travel. Every day the Southern colonel presented himself at Mr. Wayland's office to inquire for the daughter of his friend. On one occasion Eus-

face Tresylian chanced to see him there, and stared as he was by no means in the habit of staring at utter strangers.

"Who *is* that Colonel Evandyke, Wayland?" he asked, when Evandyke had gone.

"Colonel Evandyke, a Kentuckian, and the richest man I know of. Why? You stared uncomfortably."

"By George! the likeness is marvelous. Only the fellow is dead, and at the bottom of the sea, I could swear it was—"

"*Who?*"

"Dick Nagle, the chap that Sybilla married!"

Mr. Wayland was startled—yes, exceedingly—but his face did not show it.

"So they resemble one another?" he asked, carelessly.

"They might be taken for twin-brothers. Barring the whiskers, and the polished manners, and the wealth, Colonel Evandyke might pass for Richard Nagle with Richard Nagle's own mother. A barber would make the likeness complete. I hope poor Sybilla will never come across him, or she'll take him for a ghost."

The two men parted, but George Wayland sat lost in a maze all day. *Was* this likeness a freak of nature, or was it Richard Nagle alive and in the flesh? Seven years might have given him the wealth, the whiskers, and the polished manners. Had there been a mistake in the paper, and was he not lost with the rest of the crew of the Golden Star? Such things did happen, sometimes, but oftener in novels than in real life. Oh, pshaw! It was impossible. Richard Nagle was drowned, safe enough,

and the likeness was one of those coincidences that startle people every day. The age of miracles was past—Colonel Evandyke had never in his life heard the name of Richard Nagle.

Mr. Wayland drove the matter from his mind, and was very busy all day. But in the evening, wending his way to his boarding-house, he called at the St. Nicholas and inquired for Colonel Evandyke. He had made up his mind, by a few judicious inquiries, to discover whether he had ever heard of the New England farmer lost in the Golden Star.

But the inquiries were destined not to be made. Colonel Evandyke had left New York, the waiter said, and told him (the waiter) to inform Mr. Wayland so if he called. He had not said where he was going, or when he would be back.

"It matters very little," thought George Wayland, pursuing his homeward way; "he would know nothing, of course. This resemblance is one of nature's freaks—nothing more. That poor girl, though! In the present state of her nervous system, Heaven only knows what the consequences may be. I'll run down to Boston, in a week or two, and see how she gets on."

CHAPTER XX.

COLONEL EVANDYKE MAKES A REVELATION.

Three weeks passed before George Wayland found time to take that "run down to Boston." Business flowed in upon the young lawyer; but one day, toward the close of March, he gave business the slip, and fled on the wings of steam to the "hub of the universe."

"How is Sybilla?" was his first question.

Sybilla stood on the threshold to answer for herself—a wan, hollow-eyed shadow. Out of the lovely eyes the light had died—out of the fair hair the tinsel luster had faded—out of the sweet, beautiful lips, the rosy glow had gone. Her dress hung loose around her wasted form. The hand she gave him was almost transparent in its thinness. The smile that came and went in welcome was cold as moonlight on snow.

"What can I do with her?" asked Mrs. Wayland, in despair. "I see her dying by inches before my eyes, and cannot help her. She absolutely refuses to see a physician—they cannot minister to a mind diseased, she says—they can do her no good. She neither eats nor sleeps, and I am half distracted looking at her. That unfortunate hallucination about Colonel Ev-

andyke is stronger than ever, and takes firmer hold of her mind every time she sees him."

"Every time she sees him—what do you mean? Is Evandyke in Boston?"

"Of course. Did you not know it? He has been here two or three times, and we have met him at parties and the theater. He seems to fascinate Sybilla; she sits gazing at him breathlessly, like one in a trance. People see it, and wonder, and make remarks. I would think she was hopelessly in love with him, if I did not know the unlucky resemblance to her husband was the cause of it all."

"And Evandyke—how does he take it?"

"He does not appear to notice; in fact, beyond 'how do you do?' he rarely addresses her at all. His indifference provokes me. I wish he would fall in love with her and marry her—*then* she might forget the dead man in his living image."

Mr. Wayland rose abruptly, and walked to the window; there was a brief silence.

"She wants constant change and cheerful society," he said at last, turning around; "she is too much alone, and has grown morbid. This state of mind may end in melancholy madness, if not averted. I will remain at home for the next fortnight, and do my best to amuse her."

Mr. Wayland was as good as his word. For the next two weeks he gave himself up to cheering that poor, melancholy girl, as devotedly as if he had been her accepted lover. Popular rumor set him down for that, beyond possibility of doub

Was he not constantly with her—at the theater, at concerts, at parties, riding, walking, driving? He was her shadow; and could anything warrant such attention but prospective matrimony?

Sybilla seemed to have changed her nature—she was docile enough now—she had done with objecting and willfulness, it seemed, forever.

Among the many who had heard and believed in Mr. Wayland's engagement and speedy marriage, was Colonel Evandyke. He saw them repeatedly together, when they did not see him, and watched them with grave eyes. His visits to the Wayland mansion were rare, but he presented himself one morning and inquired for Mrs. Wayland.

"Mrs. Wayland was out," the servant said; Mr. Wayland, too, when he asked next for him. There was no one at home but Miss Tresylian.

Colonel Evandyke paused for a moment, his eyes fixed on the floor, his brows knit. Suddenly and abruptly he lifted his head, like one who has come to a determination. "Tell Miss Tresylian I wish to see her."

The servant ushered him into the drawing-room, and took his card up stairs to the young lady.

She came down at once, all white and trembling, as she invariably was, even at the sound of that man's name.

Colonel Evandyke arose as she entered, strangely pale and pale looking.

No smile of greeting met her, no polite conventionality—he looked cold, and hard, and unsmiling as stone.

"I would not have disturbed you, Miss Tresylian," he began, abruptly, and with a metallic ring in his voice, "if Mrs. or Mr. Wayland had been at home. However, as what I have to say relates most to you, perhaps it is best, after all, said to you. Pardon a seemingly very impertinent question—are you not about to be married?"

She sat looking at him, her eyes dilating, her lips apart, wonder, terror, recognition in her blanched face. He arose, and stood sternly before her.

"I see you know me. Seven years have changed me, but not past recognition. I saw you knew me from the first. Yes, Miss Tresylian, I am RICHARD NAGLE!"

She did not faint, she did not scream—she sat looking at him as if turned to stone.

"I am Richard Nagle," he went on, pitilessly, unmoved by that wild look. "The sea spared me when it swallowed my comrades. Fortune smiled on me in a foreign land—fame has been mine in this. I am Richard Nagle, the man you married, whose life you so nearly ruined, and that I am alive and speaking to you now, no thanks are due to you."

She slid from her chair on her knees, and held up her clasped hands.

"Pardon—pardon," the white lips tried to say, but no word would come.

"Rise, madam," he said, with cold sternness, raising her

"kneel not to me. You have been one of the worst wives the sun ever shone on, but kneel and ask pardon of God, not of me. The past is past—I am your equal at last—I owe you nothing, and ask nothing. Allow me to repeat my first question—are you going to be married to George Wayland?"

Still no reply.

Had her life depended on it, she could not have uttered a single word! Every pulse of her heart seemed stilled and frozen!

"I ask, through no wish to interfere, or prevent the marriage," pursued Richard Nagle, in the same hard tone; "merely for your sake. Supposing me dead, of course there never was a divorce. Unfortunately I am *not* dead, and your marriage will not be legal until that divorce is obtained. It is a pity this obstacle stands in the way of your happiness, but it relieves my conscience to tell you I leave you to act as you please. The world knows me as Evandyke; do not fear I will ever let that world know you once fell so low as to marry me. I seem doomed to be a bar and stumbling-block in your way now, as then; but Mr. Wayland will understand the easiest and briefest method of obtaining the divorce. *Then* you will be free to marry and be happy. Permit me to offer my congratulations beforehand. Any woman might be happy as the wife of George Wayland. Should he wish to communicate with me, I am to be found, for the next week, at the Revere. Pardon me for this disagreeable interview, and permit me to wish you good-morning."

He was gone!

She had not uttered a word—the menlal paralysis held her speechless!

Not dead—her living husband, Richard Nagle! She realized it now for the first time. His blood was not on her head—the husband she loved with her whole heart, lived! With a gasping cry she fell forward, all life and feeling gone!

Half an hour after, when Mrs. Wayland and her step-son entered the drawing-room, they made the alarming discovery that Miss Tresylian was lying on the carpet in a dead faint. In a moment all was confusion, the bell was rung violently, and the servants questioned.

The servants knew nothing about the matter. Miss Tresylian had come down to see the gentleman, as he wished, and that was the last they knew of her. The gentleman had left half an hour before, and Miss Tresylian had not come out of the drawing-room.

"What gentleman?" asked Mrs. Wayland.

"Mr. Evandyke, ma'am. He asked for you and Mr. Wayland, and then for Miss Tresylian. He only staid abont fifteen minutes."

The servants were dispatched. Sybilla came out of her swoon after a long time. The great deep eyes fixed themselves on her friend's face.

"He lives!" she whispered, almost inaudibly, "he lives! he lives! Oh, thank God! thank God!"

"*Who?*" cried Mrs. Wayland, "for pity's sake!"

"My husband!" Sybilla exclaimed. "I knew it—I felt it! Oh, Mrs. Wayland, Colonel Evandyke *is* my husband, Richard Nagle!"

CHAPTER XXI.

HARD AS IRON.

Colonel Evandyke—Richard Nagle—whichever you like, sa at the window of his hotel, enjoying the morning sunshine and a fragrant cigar. He sat looking thoughtfully at the ceaseless crowd below him, and waiting for a visitor he felt sure would soon come.

The inward prescience did not deceive him; a little before eleven a servant entered and announced Mr. Wayland.

"Show him up," said Colonel Evandyke.

Mr. Wayland entered. Colonel Evandyke took out his cigar and rose up to receive him.

"Good-morning, Wayland!" he said, smiling; "I felt sur you would come."

Mr. Wayland took his extended hand, and held it while h looked searchingly in his eyes.

"*Is* it true?" he demanded; "I *can't* believe it; I can't re alize it; it's too romantic altogether."

"My little masquerade, do you mean? It is true as preach ing—truer than a great deal of preaching. I have been sailin under false colors for the last four years. Take a seat."

"And you are indeed Richard Nagle?"

"Verily and indeed! Astonishing, isn't it? But you know truth is stranger, etc.? I am, or was seven years ago, Richard Nagle."

"Then what am I to call you, pray, now that you have dropped your mask?"

"Evandyke, 'an' thou lovest me.' I have promised to retain that cognomen, and it is prettier than Nagle, on the whole. Besides, the change would involve endless inquiry, which I have no wish to excite."

There was a brief pause. Mr. Wayland looked rather at a loss. Evandyke laid his hand kindly on his shoulder.

"I am sorry, for your sake, Wayland, but how could I help it?"

George Wayland colored.

"For *my* sake? I do not understand!"

"No? That is odd! Are you not about to be married to Miss Tresylian?"

He spoke her name as coolly as if she had been an utter stranger, lighting another cigar.

"No," replied the lawyer, emphatically, "I am not—through no fault of mine, though—Miss Tresylian—nay, *Mrs. Nagle*, refused me twice!"

Colonel Evandyke made an impatient motion of his hand.

"Pray give her the former title. That she has still any right to the latter, is all owing to that unfortunate mistake about my being drowned. A divorce would have set all right long ago."

"I believe you are mistaken. I believe Sybilla never would have consented to any step of the kind. No one could possibly regret the past more than she did. The shock of your death affected her so, that for a time her life, her reason was despaired of. She realized, from the moment you had left her, the injustice she had done you, and the silent heroism with which you bore it. Believing herself free, she yet refused numbers of highly eligible offers—she had determined to remain true to your memory until death, as some slight atonement. That she does not still bear your name is no fault of hers—she assumed her maiden appellation to please her grandfather. Believe me, no truer or more faithful wife ever lived than Sybilla will be to you now."

Evandyke gazed at him with piercing eyes.

"Mr. Wayland," he said, "you told me Miss Tresylian refused you twice. Is it impertinent to ask if you *love* her?"

Again the blood mounted to George Wayland's face.

"I do not know," he said, after a pause, "that you have any right to ask that question; but I will answer it. I *did* love her as I think I shall never love any one again."

"Then how is it you are so ready to give her up?"

"Give her up! What possible claim can I have on her—a married woman?"

"You forget the law of divorce. I resign most readily in your favor."

George Wayland's brows contracted sternly.

"I do not know, Colonel Evandyke, what manner of man you take me for; but, believe me, a thousand divorces would

not induce me to marry any woman while her husband lived. Sybilla is your wedded wife—I desire her happiness above my own. Nothing will gratify me so much as to see you reconciled."

"That you never *will* see," said Evandyke, coldly. "We may as well drop the subject. I am a man slow to anger, Mr. Wayland, but quite as slow to forgive. When I left her, seven years ago, I left her forever! Miss Tresylian will go her own way through life, and I will go mine. You don't know half the wrong she has done me. I have lost faith in man's friendship and woman's love! I left home a reckless, desperate man, caring little what became of me. The sea that swallowed up so many others that clung to life, spared me. I know not by what mistake my name appeared among the list of lost—I did *not* know it until my return to this country. I and one other, whose life I had saved, clung to a spar, tossed about on the wide ocean for three days, then we were picked up. The ship was bound to Brazil, as it chanced, the native place of the man whose life I saved. His family was wealthy. In their home I remained for three years, and became what you see, a man not quite illiterate. At his death he remembered me generously in his will. Then, with wealth and education, came a longing to see my native land and my mother once more. I arrived just in time to take part in the great struggle. The South was my birthplace—the land I loved—for it I fought. There, Mr. Wayland, you know my story; but in all those years the bitterness that drove me from home has never left me. I try to forgive

her—I hope I have done so—but to take her back, to trust her once more—no, Wayland, I never will!"

His eyes flashed, and his hand involuntarily clenched. Only for a moment; then he was calm again.

"You can tell her what you please—all I have said or not just as you like. Only, if she entertains any idea that I will take her back—that I will put my neck under her heel again—undeceive her. I wish her well; but I care not if I never see her more!"

George Wayland took his hat, without a word, and turned to go. On the threshold he paused.

"I have no more to urge," he said. "You are a brave man, but you are not generous. She has sinned, but she has likewise suffered and repented. Believe me, she will not press her claims upon one so merciless and unforgiving."

He left the house, and walked slowly homeward. When he reached the house he found Sybilla awaiting him in the drawing-room. She was pacing up and down, a fever-fire in her eyes, a fever-flush on her cheeks. She paused as she saw him, and in his clouded face she read her doom.

"He will not forgive!" she said, clasping her hands in despair.

"Hope nothing from him," said Mr. Wayland, kindly; "he neither forgives nor forgets. I had hoped to bring you better news, but he is harder than iron."

She sank into a seat, her face dropped on her hands, and tears fell thick and fast.

"He is right," she said. "I deserve it; but it is hard! it is hard!"

Yes, it was hard—loving him as she loved him now. Surely her punishment was greater than her sin.

Next day brought Mr. Wayland a note. It was from Colonel Evandyke, saying farewell; he had left Boston for the South, and it was uncertain when he would return.

He gave the note to Sybilla, who read it through a rain of despairing tears.

"She will sink now, surely," he thought, gloomily; "her last hope goes with him."

But she did not. Strange to say, she roused herself, and grew better and stronger.

These women are such enigmas, you know, never doing what might be expected; but you need hardly be surprised.

He was alive—his blood lay not on her head—that was the thought that buoyed her up. He was lost to her forever; well, he had deserved that, and could bear it—it was her punishment fully earned. She had lost him, and henceforth her life must be desolate; but she could endure her pain, and thank God that he lived.

So, while "they stood apart like rocks that have been rent asunder," the spring months waned and went by, and the pleasant summer came once more. It brought new health and strength to Sybilla, and gave her courage to take, unknown to Mrs. Wayland, a rather formidable step.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAYING GOOD-BY.

Late in the afternoon of a rainy June day, Sybilla wended her way slowly along the sloppy pavements and muddy streets. Poising an umbrella in one ungloved hand, and daintily holding up her skirts with the other, she tripped down Beacon street. There was a flush in her cheek, a sparkle in her eye, an elasticity in her step all unusual, and that told of returning mental and bodily health. She was learning resignation—learning, as we all *must* learn, to bear the inevitable. She was guiltless of the death of the husband she loved. Ah! *that* was the blessed thought that never left her night or day. Oceans might divide them—they might never meet this side of eternity—but he was *hers* still—she was his wife, and nothing but death could sever that holy tie!

In the years to come he might learn to forgive her, and when time rolled away, and eternity opened, they might be reunited once more.

So Sybilla roused herself from sinful sorrow and repining and faced her life with new courage. Calm followed—almost peace—and just at this moment she is happy as she rings the silver door-bell of the Wayland mansion.

Mrs. Wayland was in her boudoir. Taking off her wet shawl and hat, Sybilla entered and flung herself, with a long breath of relief, into an arm-chair. Her friend looked up from the book she was reading.

"Where have you been?" she asked, languidly—"out in the rain?"

"Yes," answered Sybilla, "out on business."

"On what?" opening her eyes.

"Business, Mrs. Wayland. Oh! I have a great secret to tell you; but first you must promise not to be angry."

She went and seated herself on an ottoman at her friend's feet, and twined her arms coaxingly about her waist.

"Why should I be angry?" asked Mrs. Wayland; "what have you been doing?"

"Something very shocking! Look here!"

She took out of her pocket a paper, a week old, and pointed to an advertisement. It was from a clergyman who wanted a governess proficient in music and French, and "who would not object to travel."

"Well," said Mrs. Wayland, sharply, a suspicion of the truth dawning upon her, "what has this to do with it."

"Everything. I'm the governess proficient in French and music, and with no objection to travel. I have got the situation."

"You! Oh, you wretched, deceitful child! You shall not go!"

"Yes, I will! It is better I should. This idle, aimless,

worthless life won't do any longer. I have youth and strength, and duty ordains I should work for my living, like other folks. Dear Mrs. Wayland, my best friend, don't think me ungrateful. But it is *right* for me to go. I should lose my self-respect if I remained dependent any longer. I knew you would not hear of it—that is why I have been acting *sub rosa*. Now it is too late to draw back if I would—I am signed, sealed, and, in three days, will be delivered."

"And where, pray, may you be going, Miss Tresylian?—to Kamtschatka?"

Sybilla laughed.

"Not quite so bad—only to New Zealand!"

"New—*what!* Good Heaven, child! are you crazy?"

"I hope not; else the Rev. Mr. Parks will have made a bad bargain! No, but I really am tired of Boston. I want to go away, and forget the wretched past in hard work. Oh, don't oppose me, my dear, kind friend—help me against myself. You don't know what a struggle it has cost me to do this. Oh, help me to be strong and brave—tell me to go!"

"You shall go if you desire it, but I know how it will be—a repetition of life at Mrs. Plummer's. In three weeks you will be skin and bone."

"No," said Sybilla, earnestly; "no, indeed. The *care* that wore me to a shadow in New York can never come again. I am innocent of the crime I thought I was guilty of, and, what I mistook there for a haunting apparition, is my living husband. Oh, believe me, I shall be better and happier far from here and

its associations, and if I should die there, what should it matter? There!" pointing upward, "is the only true country!"

Mrs. Wayland sighed.

"Ever willful, I know it is no use to contend. Do as you will, my darling Sybilla, and God bless you wherever you go."

Sybilla kissed her, and silently left the room.

At dinner Mrs. Wayland broke the news to her husband and son.

The former protested loudly against any such step; the latter said very little, but was thoughtful, and a little sad. As they arose from the table, he said to Sybilla, in a low voice:

"Whom do you think is in Boston?"

She lifted her eyes with a quick, searching glance, and a sudden paling.

Ah, she knew!

"Yes, he is here," said the lawyer, answering that look, "at the Revere. He leaves again at the end of the week, to take up his permanent residence at the South. Would you not like to say good-by?—you may never meet again."

"Yes," said Sybilla, drawing a long, hard breath, "yes."

"If you will write a line to-night, I will deliver it to-morrow. He asked how you were."

He strode away abruptly, and Sybilla went slowly up to her room.

Ah! how rebelliously her heart beat, and she had thought he was resigned.

She sat for hours at her table, the white sheet spread open be-

fore her, not knowing what to say. At last, in very desperation, she dashed off a few abrupt lines:

I leave this country in two days, in all likelihood never to return. I do not deserve it, I know; but, oh! if you would send me away happy, by coming to say farewell, I should never forget it to my dying day! I have no right even to address you, much less right to ask you to forgive me; but I will never cease to pray that some day—some day—you may learn to do it. You know all my sin and folly, but you do not know how bitterly I have repented and suffered. If you will not come, send me one little line of adieu, and even *that* will make me happy.

SYBILLA.

Had Sybilla's heart been less full, she might have been able to write much more. She cried until her eyes and heart ached alike over this epistolary composition, and only went to bed when the new day was red in the sky.

Mr. Wayland delivered the note next morning, and Sybilla sat in a fever of expectation at home. Oh! would he come, or would he even send her one poor line in farewell?

She grew sick with anxiety as the day wore on, and threw herself in a sort of despair on the lounge.

"He will not come! He will not come! I might have known it, and yet—oh! he might, he might, if he knew how miserable I am."

Just then the door-bell rang. She sprang up, flushed and trembling, and a minute later the housekeeper ushered in Colonel Evandyke.

He was little changed—somewhat thinner and paler, perhaps—but bearded, and grave, and stately, and handsome as ever.

Poor Sybilla rose up, trembling so she could hardly stand,

and far beyond the power of speech. The gentleman was perfectly self-possessed—outwardly, at least.

"I am happy to see you again," he said, bowing gravely, and just touching her hand, "and looking better than when I left."

He sat down.

Sybilla followed his example, and tried to speak.

"It was very good of you to come," she said, falteringly. "You received my note?"

"From Wayland? Yes. You are going away—may I ask where?"

"To New Zealand."

Colonel Evandyke opened his eyes in surprise.

"To New Zealand! So far! What can possibly—but I beg your pardon, I have no right to ask."

"Yes," said Sybilla, sadly, "you have. I am going as governess; I may never come back; that is why—" She stopped, half choked.

"Let us hope for better things," he said, kindly; "let us hope you may yet return. I should have deeply regretted it, had you left without my seeing you—without a chance to say good-by."

The tears were coming; it was very hard to keep them back, but she did it, somehow.

She dared not look at him—she knew the dark, penetrating eyes were fixed on her face.

"You have asked me to forgive you—I *do* forgive you, freely.

It is more than I could have said a few months ago, but perhaps I was too hard, too bitter. A true friend of yours has been talking to me since, and brought me to look on things gone by in a more Christian light."

"Who?" she faltered.

"My mother!"

The tears came now. That poor, wronged, heart-broken mother!

She laid her face on the arm of her chair, and the tears fell like rain.

"Since we must part, let us part friends," he said, rising, and holding out his hand. "I forgive you, with all my heart. Good by, my friend, and God bless you!"

She gave him her hand without looking up; the convulsive sobs shook her from head to foot. Oh! it *was* hard—it *was* bitter—it was cruel as death, this parting! Her very heart seemed breaking!

He pressed her hand, dropped it, and walked to the door. There he paused. Those anguished, tortured sobs moved him as hard as he had resolved to be, and he loved her in spite of all he knew it, now.

He turned, hesitated irresolutely; there was a momentary struggle, and then the noble nature conquered. He advanced; she heard him; his arms were around her, his voice, loving and forgiving, in her ear!

"Sybilla!" he said, "*my wife!*"

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT PEACE.

It was a great disappointment to the Rev. Mr. Parks, no doubt, to lose his governess; but, as the governess had gone and bettered herself, what could he do?

Sybilla was to leave Boston on the day appointed, but not for New Zealand. It was the sunny South, this time, and Dick Nagle was to be her traveling companion, and not the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Parks, and the five little Parkses.

The parting with the Waylands is over; they have promised to spend Christmas with Mrs. Nagle in her Southern home. It is Mrs. Nagle again, for the ex-colonel has dropped the title of Vandyke.

"It was the name of my benefactor and friend," he said; "but I think, on the whole, I prefer sailing under true colors, even if they *be* less aristocratic."

So the happy pair are off and away.

Don't ask me to tell you how happy they were, because the English language is inadequate to the task, and, if you don't know from experience, you *will* some day. It is enough for you to know they were happy, and forgot all the darkness of the past in the radiance of the present.

Sybilla never asked where they were going. It might be Florida, Virginia, or the moon. What did it matter, since was with her?—and Mr. Nagle did not enlighten her. He spoke of "home" vaguely; it was somewhere in Virginia and gave her to understand his mother was there awaiting them.

They reached Richmond. A handsome carriage met them at the depot as they arrived, and Mr. and Mrs. Nagle entered and were whirled off.

Sybilla sat very silent, her husband's hand clasped in her looking dreamily out at the familiar landscape, and thinking with tender sadness, of poor grandpapa. Ah! if only he were alive to see this happy day!

Her husband watched her, half smiling.

"You recognize these familiar landmarks, Sybilla, I hope?"

"Oh, yes," languidly. "Where are we going?"

"Home, of course."

"Is it near?"

"Very near, my darling."

They entered an inn-gateway, and rattled up a long avenue as he spoke. Sybilla started up with a cry—

"Why, Dick, this is *home!*"

"Of course, my dear; that is what I have been telling you all along."

"But it is *my* home, only the house is new, and—oh, Dick do *you* own Tresylian now?"

His smile was her answer, and Sybilla, in a rapture, impetuously ki——well never mind.

She sprang out, and ran up the steps of the handsome new mansion, and into the hall. There old Mrs. Nagle, with a smile of welcome, caught her to her breast, and Bessie, with her baby in her arms, stood shyly in the background. And Sybilla was crying, and kissing everybody, and asking them to forgive her, and so happy she hardly knew what to do with herself.

* * * * * * * *

And so—that's all!

That's the whole story of the Virginia Heiress, and it is time for me to put on my bonnet and go. I can't deny that she behaved badly, and you must have felt indignant with her; but, as Mr. Dick Nagle has forgiven her, I don't see why you shouldn't. I know she has been a model from that day to this, and in all broad America there is not a happier couple than Richard Nagle and his pretty wife.

Mamma Nagle lives with them, serenely happy in her old age.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Shield are at home on the New England farm, and thriving, of course.

Eustace and Eleanor flourish in New York, and live very contentedly together.

George Wayland is in that city, also, a bachelor still, and likely to remain in that blessed state.

So we leave Sybilla, a model housekeeper and Virginia matron. All we have to say is, in the language of the fairy tales, "and she lived happy forever after."

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