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was heard, save as the distant fire bells pealed forth their warning voices, or some watchman went hurrying by. The great city was asleep, and to Morris the silence brooding over the countless throng was deeper, more solemn, than the silence of the country, where nature gives her own mysterious notes and lullabies for her sleeping children.

Before his marriage, a jealous thought of Morris Grant had found a lodgment in Wilford's breast; but he had tried to drive it out, and fancied that he had succeeded, experiencing a sudden shock when he felt it lifting its green head, and poisoning his mind against the man who was doing for Katy only what a brother might do. He forgot that it was his own entreaties which kept Morris there away from his Silverton patients, who were missing him so much, and complaining of his absence. Jealous men never reason clearly, and in this case, Wilford did not reason at all, but jumped readily at his conclusion, calling to his aid as proof all that he had ever seen pass between Katy and her cousin. That Morris Grant loved Katy was, after a few moments' reflection, as fixed a fact in his mind, as that she lay there between them, moaning feebly as if about to speak. Years before, jealousy had made Wilford almost a mad-man, and it now held him again in its powerful grasp, whispering suggestions he would have spurned in a calm frame of mind. There was a clenching of his fist, a knitting of his brows, and a gathering blackness in his eyes, as he listened while Katy, roused partially from her lethargy, talked of the days when she was a little girl, and Morris had built the play-house for her by the brook, where the thorn-apples grew and the waters fell over the smooth white rocks.

"Take me back there," she said, "and let me lie on the grass again. It is so long since I was there, and I've suffered so much since then. Wilford meant to be kind, but he did not understand or know how I loved the country with its birds and flowers, and the grass by the well, where the shadows come and go. I used to wonder where they were going, and one day when I watched them, I was waiting for Wilford and wondering if he would ever come again. Would it have been better if he never had?"

Wilford's body shook as he bent forward to listen, while Katy continued:

"Were there no Geneva, I should not think so, but there is, and yet Morris said that made no difference when I telegraphed for him to come and take me away."

"Do you think her dying?" Wilford asked, and Morris replied: "The look about the mouth and nose is like the look which so often precedes death."

And that was all they said until another hour went by when Morris's hand was laid upon the forehead and moved up under the golden hair where there were drops of perspiration.

"She is saved! thank God, Katy is saved!" was his joyful exclamation, and burying his face in his hands, he wept for a moment like a child.

On Wilford's face there was no trace of tears. On the contrary, he seemed hardened into stone, and in his heart fierce passions were contending for the mastery. What did Katy mean by sending for Morris to take her away? Did she send for him, and was that the cause of his being there? If so, there was something between the cousins more than mere friendship. The thought was a maddening one. And, rising slowly at last, Wilford came round to Morris's side, and grasping his shoulder, said:

"Morris Grant, you love Katy Cameron."

Like the peal of a bell on the frosty air the words rang through the room, starting Morris from his bowed attitude, and for an instant curdling the blood in his veins, for he understood now the meaning of the look which had so puzzled him. In Morris's heart there was a moment's hesitancy to know just what to say—an ejaculatory prayer for guidance—and then lifting up his head, his calm blue eyes met the eyes of black unflinchingly as he replied:

"I have loved her always." A blaze like sheet lightning shot from beneath Wilford's eyelashes, and a taunting sneer curled his lip as he said:

"You, a saint, confess to this?" "Should my being what you call a saint prevent my confessing what I did?"

"No, not the confession, but the fact," Wilford answered, savagely. "How do you reconcile your acknowledged love for Katy with the injunctions of the Bible whose doctrines you indorse?"

"A man cannot always control his feelings, but he can strive to overcome them and put them aside. One does not sin in being tempted, but in listening to the temptation."

"Then according to your reasoning you have sinned, for you not only have been tempted, but have yielded to temptation," Wilford retorted, with a sinister look of exultation in his black eyes.

For a moment Morris was silent, while a struggle of some kind seemed going on in his mind, and then he said:

"I never thought to lay open to you a secret which, after myself, is I believe, known only to one living being."

"And that one—is it Katy?" Wilford exclaimed, his voice hoarse with passion, and his eyes flashing with fire.

"No, not Katy. She has no suspicion of the pain which, since I saw her made another's, has eaten into my heart, making me grow old so fast, and blighting my early manhood."

Something in Morris's tone and manner made Wilford relax his grasp upon the arm, and sent him back to his chair, while Morris continued: "Most men would shrink from talking to a husband of the love they bore his wife, and an hour ago I should have shrunk from it too, but you have forced me to it, and now you must listen while I tell you of my love for Katy. It began longer ago than she can remember—began when she was my baby-sister, and I hushed her in my arms to sleep, kneeling by her cradle and watching her with a feeling I have never been able to define. She was in all my thoughts, her face upon the printed page of every book I studied, and her voice in every strain of music I heard. Then when she grew older, I used to watch the frolicsome child by the hour, building castles of the future, when she would be a woman, and I a man, with a man's right to win her. I know that she shielded me from many a snare into which young men are apt to fall, for when the temptation was greatest, and I was at its verge, a thought of her was sufficient to lead me back to virtue. I carried her in my heart across the sea, and said when I go back I will ask her to be mine. I went back, but at my first meeting with Katy after her return from Canadaigua, she told me of you, and I knew then that hope for me was gone. God grant that you may never experience what I experienced on that day which made her your wife, and I saw her go away. It seemed almost as if God had forgotten me as the night after the bridal I sat alone at home, and met that dark hour of sorrow. But God was very merciful and sent me work which took up all my time, and drove me away from my own pain to soothe the pain of others. When Katy came to us last fall, there was an hour of trial when faith in God grew weak, and I was tempted to question the justice of His dealing with me. But that too passed, and in my love for your child I forgot the mother in part, looking upon her as a sister rather than the Katy I had loved so well.

Morris paused a moment, while Wilford said: "She spoke of telegraphing for you. Why was that, and when?" "Thus interrogated, Morris told of the message which had brought him to New York, and narrated as cautiously as possible the particulars of the interview which followed. Morris's manner was that of a man who spoke with perfect sincerity, and he earned conviction to Wilford's heart, disarming him for a time of the fierce anger and resentment he had felt while listening to Morris's story. Acting upon the good impulse of the moment, he arose, and offering his hand to Morris, said: "Forgive me that I ever doubted you. It was natural that you should come, but foolish in Katy to send or think Geneva is living. I have seen her grave myself. I know that she is dead. Did Katy name any one whom she believed to be Geneva?" "No one. She merely said she had seen the original of the picture," Morris replied.

"A fancy—a mere whim," Wilford muttered to himself, as, greatly disquieted and terribly humbled, he paced the room moodily, trying not to think hard thoughts either against his wife or Dr. Grant, who, feeling that it would be pleasanter for Wilford if he were gone, suggested returning to Silverton at once, inasmuch as the crisis was past and Katy out of danger. There was a struggle in Wilford's mind as to the answer he should make to this suggestion, but at last he signified his willingness for the doctor to leave when he thought best.

It was broad day when Katy woke, so weak as to be unable to turn her head upon the pillow, but in her eyes the light of reason was shining, and she glanced wonderingly, first at Wilford, who had come in, and then at Morris, as if trying to comprehend what had happened.

"Have I been sick?" she asked in a whisper, and Wilford, bending over her, replied: "Yes, very sick for nearly two whole weeks—ever since I left home that morning, you know." "Yes," and Katy shivered a little. "Yes, I know. But where is Morris? He was here the last I can remember."

Wilford's face grew dark at once, and stepping back as Morris came in, he said: "She asks for you." "With a rising feeling of resentment, he watched them, while Morris said to Katy, telling her she must not allow herself in any way to be excited.

"Have I been crazy? Have I talked much?" she asked, and when Morris replied in the affirmative, she said: "Of whom have I talked most?" "Of Geneva," was the answer, and Katy continued: "Did I mention any one else?"

Morris guessed of whom she was thinking, and answered indifferently: "You spoke of Miss Hazelton in connection with the baby, but that was all."

Katy was satisfied, and closing her eyes fell away to sleep again, while Morris made his preparations for leaving. It hardly seemed right for him to go just then, but the only one who could have kept him maintained a frigid silence with regard to a longer stay, and so the first train which left New York for Springfield carried Dr. Grant, and Katy was without a physician.

Wilford had hoped that Mrs. Lennox, too, would see the propriety of accompanying Morris, but she would not leave Katy, and Wilford was fain to submit to what he could not help. No explanation whatever had he given to Mrs. Lennox or Helen with regard to Geneva. He was too proud for that, but his mother had deemed it wise to smooth the matter over as much as possible, and enjoin upon them both the necessity of secrecy.

"When I tell you that neither my husband nor daughters know it, you will understand that I am greatly in earnest in wishing it kept," she said. "It was a most unfortunate affair, and though the divorce is, of course, to be lamented, it is better that she died. We never could have received her as our equal."

"Was anything the matter except that she was poor?" Mrs. Lennox asked, with as much dignity as was in her nature to assume.

"Well, no. She had a good education, I believe, and was very pretty; but it makes trouble always where there is a great inequality between a husband's family and that of his wife."

Poor Mrs. Lennox understood this perfectly, but she was too much afraid of the great lady to venture a reply, and a tear rolled down her cheek as she wet the napkin for Katy's head, and wished she had back again the daughter whose family the Camerons despised. Of course Wilford chafed and fretted at what he could not help, making himself so generally disagreeable that Helen at last suggested returning home. There was a faint remonstrance on his part, but Helen did not waver in her decision, and the next day was fixed upon for her departure.

"You don't know how I dread your going, or how wretched I shall be without you," Katy said, when for a few moments they were alone. "Everything which once made me happy has been removed or changed. Baby is dead, and Wilford, oh! Helen I sometimes wish I had not heard of Geneva, for I am afraid it can never be with us as it was once; I have not the same trust in him, and he seems so changed."

As well as she could, Helen comforted her sister, and commending her to One who would care for her far more than earthly friends could do, she bade her good-bye, and with her mother went back to Silverton.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Wilford was in a most unhappy frame of mind. He had been humbled to the very dust, and it was Katy who had done it—Katy, towards whom his heart kept hardening as he thought over all the past. What right had she to go to his mother's after having once declined; or, being there, what right had she to listen and thus learn the secret he would almost have died to keep; or, having learned it, why need she have been so much excited, and sent for Dr. Grant to tell her if she were really a wife, and if not to take her away? That was the point which hurt him most, for added to it was the galling fact that Morris Grant loved his wife, and was undoubtedly more worthy of her than himself.

"She had no right to complain of me," he thought, forgetting the time when he had been guilty of a similar offence in a more aggravated form. He could not reason upon anything naturally, and matters grew daily worse, while Katy's face grew whiter and her voice sadder in its tone.

When the Lenten days came on, oh how Katy longed to be in Silverton—to kneel again in its quiet church, and offer up her penitential prayers with the loved ones at home. At last she ventured to ask Wilford if she might go, her spirits rising when he did not refuse her request at once, but asked:

"Whom do you wish to see the most?"

His black eyes seemed reading her through, and something in their expression brought to her face the blush she construed according to his jealousy, and when she answered: "I wish to see them all," he retorted:

"Say, rather, you wish to see that doctor, who has loved you so long, and who but for me would have asked you to be his wife!"

"What doctor, Wilford? whom do you mean?" she asked, and Wilford replied:

"Dr. Grant, of course. Did you never suspect it?"

"Never," and Katy's face grew very white, while Wilford continued: "I had it from his own lips; he sitting on one side of you and I upon the other. I so forgot myself as to charge him with loving you, and he did not deny it, but confessed as pretty a piece of romance as I ever read, except that according to his story, it was a one-sided affair confined wholly to himself. You never dreamed of it, he said."

"Never, no never," Katy said, panting for her breath, and remembering suddenly many things which confirmed what she had heard.

"Poor Morris, how my thoughtlessness must have wounded him," she murmured, and then all the pent up passion in Wilford's heart burst out in an impetuous storm.

He did not charge his wife directly with returning Morris's love; but he said she was sorry she had not known it earlier, asking her pointedly if it were not so, and pressing her

for an answer, until the bewildered creature cried out:

"Oh, I don't know. I never thought of it before."

"But you can think of it now," Wilford continued, his cold, icy tone making Katy shiver as, more to herself than to him, she whispered: "Life at Linwood with him would be perfect rest, compared with this."

Wilford had goaded her on to say that which roused him to a pitch of frenzy.

"You can go to your rest at Linwood as soon as you like, and I will go my way," he whispered hoarsely, and believing himself the most injured man in existence, he left the house, and Katy heard his step, as it went furiously down the steps. For a time she sat stunned with what she had heard, and then there came stealing into her heart a glad feeling that Morris deemed her worthy of his love when she had so often feared the contrary.

"Poor Morris," she kept repeating, while little throbs of pleasure went dancing through her veins, and the world was not half so dreary for knowing he had loved her. Towards Wilford, too, her heart went out in a fresh gush of tenderness, for she knew how one of his jealous nature must have suffered.

And all that day she was thinking of him, and how pleasantly she would meet him when he came home at night, and how she would try to win him from the dark silent mood now so habitual to him. More than usual pains she took with her toilet, arranging her bright hair in the long glossy curls, which she knew he used to admire, and making sundry little changes in her black dress. Excitement had brought a faint flush to her cheeks, and she was conscious of a feeling of gratification that for the first time in months she was looking like her former self. Slowly the minutes crept on, and the silver-toned clock in the dining room said it was time for Wilford to come, then the night shadows gathered in the

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rooms, and the gas was lighted in the hall and in the parlor, where Katy's face was pressed against the window pane, and Katy's eyes peered anxiously out into the darkening streets, but saw no one alighting at their door. Wilford did not come. Neither six, nor seven, nor eight brought him home, and Katy sat down alone to her dinner, which, save the soup and coffee, was removed untasted. She could not eat with the terrible dread at her heart that this protracted absence portended something more than common. Ten, eleven, and twelve struck from a distant tower. He had staid out as late as that frequently, but rarely later, and Katy listened again for him, until the clock struck one, and she grew sick with fear and apprehension. It was a long, long wretched night, but morning came at last, and at an early hour Katy drove down to Wilford's office, finding no one there besides Tom Tubbs and Mills, the other clerk. Katy could not conceal her agitation, and her face was very white as she asked what time Mr. Cameron left the office the previous day.

If Katy had one subject more loyal than another it was young Tom Tubbs, whose boyish blood had often boiled with rage at the cool manner with which Wilford treated his wife, when, as she sometimes did, she came into the office. Tom worshiped Katy Cameron, who in his whispered confidences to Mattie, was an angel, while Wilford was accused of being an overbearing tyrant, whom Tom would like to thrash. He saw at once that something unusual was troubling her, and hastening to bring her a chair, told her that Mr. Cameron left the office about four o'clock, that he had spent the most of the day in his private office writing and looking over papers; that he had given his clerks so many directions with regard to certain matters, that Mills had remarked upon it, saying: "It would seem as if he did not expect to be here to see to it himself," and this was all Katy could learn, but it was enough to increase the growing terror at her heart, and dropping her veil, she went out to her carriage, followed by Tom, who adjusted the gay robe across her lap, and then looked wistfully after her as she drove up Broadway.

"To father Cameron's," she said to the driver, who turned his horses towards Fifth Avenue, where, just coming down the steps of his own house, they met the elder Cameron. Katy would rather see him first alone, and motioning him to her side she whispered: "Oh, father is Wilford here?"

"Wilford be —," the old man did not say what, for the expression of Katy's face startled him.

That there was something wrong, and father Cameron knew it, was Katy's conviction, and she gasped out:

"Tell me the worst. Is Wilford dead?"

Father Cameron was in the carriage by this time, and riding towards Madison Square, for he did not care to introduce Katy into his household which, just at present, presented a scene of dire confusion and dismay, occasioned by a note received from Wilford to the intent that he had left New York, and did not know when he should return.

"Katy can tell you why I go," he added, and father Cameron was going to Katy when she met him at his door.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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