

Family Pride

By

Timothy Shay Arthur, 1850

CHAPTER 1.

There are but few people in the city of Bolton who do not recollect that ancient pile of buildings which once stood on the northern suburb, just beyond what was formerly called Buell's Orchard. Embowered amid branching sycamores and tall poplars, the *Alms-House* presented an appearance both imposing and attractive. Not until after its sad, life-wearied inhabitants were removed to their more attractive home at Colchester, did I enter its halls and chambers.

I cannot soon forget the emotions that were called up, as I passed from room to room, in which was no sound but that of my own echoing footsteps; nor the multitude of thoughts that crowded upon my mind. Within those time-worn and crumbling walls, how many a *victim* of unrestrained passions, of the world's wrong, had closed up the history of a life, the details of which would chill the heart with the most painful sympathy! And numbers of these were of my own city, and of those who had once moved in brilliant circles of wit, of talent, of fashion. The impressions then made, the thoughts then called into activity, have never passed away.

While engaged in business, one of my customers was an old man who had been for years employed about the Alms-House. He was intelligent, and much given to reminiscence. The incidents about to be related, are founded upon his narrations, and will be given as if detailed by him to the reader. And if they awaken in the heart any emotions of human kindness, the writer will not have woven in vain, the many-colored threads of human life into a web, with forms and figures, whose actions may be seen and read of all. But I will step aside, and give place to one whose narration, I doubt not, will hold the reader in bondage to intense interest —

I never was disposed to indulge in gloomy reflections on *my own* destiny. To me, everything in external nature has, all my life long, worn a smiling face. And, as I have never desired the blessings which others have received at the hands of a bountiful Providence, my state of mind has been that of *contentment*. But no one can live in this world, without feeling "a brother's woe," and many a *heart-ache* have I had, and many a *tear* have I dropped, over the *misery of others*. My station at the Alms-House made me familiar with *wretchedness* in a thousand distressing forms; but did not touch my feelings with the *icy finger of indifference*. Motherless babies were there, and old men tottering upon the brink of the grave. And both were *wretched*. The first, just entering upon the world, orphaned by death or desertion, unconscious of their sad condition, and yet *miserable* from neglect. The others, numbering the *last grains in time's hour-glass*, and looking back in dreary wretchedness, over the rough and thorny paths of a misspent life.

No fond mother can tell, when a child is born unto her, and she clasps it with a thrill of maternal delight to her bosom, what will be its *future destiny*. How often have I looked at the old men and women, at the middle-aged and the young children, who crowded that *last refuge of the indigent and distressed*, and said musingly to myself: "Little did she dream, when the small gentle cry of her new-born babe touched her ear, that her child would ever be in *this place!*" More than all, did I pity the babes that were brought in. The Alms-House is no place for infants. Hired nurses, with a dozen or two of children to attend, are not usually possessed of many maternal feelings; and, even if they were — what woman can properly minister to ten or twenty babes? Little kind and loving care did they get. Lying upon their backs for hours, many of them did nothing but moan and cry, during all their waking moments. But more than two-thirds of all the little ones that were brought in, speedily found rest from their troubles. I was always *glad* when it was said "another child is to be buried." Few visits did I make to their rooms. I could not better their condition — and I did not wish to witness their sufferings.

Those of all ages and sexes, and from all conditions in life, were there. And in each face was written, in lines too legible, characters that told of *hereditary evils*. *Sin* and *misery*, are united as one — they are joined in inseparable union. The sure price of transgression, is pain. But I will not weary, by giving way to the tendencies of old age, a disposition to moralize. The young reader looks for active life.

Standing one day upon the small porch which led into the entrance of the building on its northwest front, I observed a common wood-cart driving up the avenue, and went down to the gate to open it, in order to let the vehicle pass. As it was driven in, I saw that it contained a female, who was seated upon the bottom of the cart, leaning against one of the sides, with her head resting upon her bosom. Although her garments were worn and faded, and her face entirely concealed, I instinctively felt that she was one who had fallen from some *high place in society*. I never liked to see *such* people coming into our institution, and could not help the passage of a shadow of sadness over my spirits. When the cart stopped before the main entrance to the buildings, I went up to the side of it, and touching the woman, who did not lift her head, or make a motion to rise, said in a kind way,

"Let me assist you to get down, madam."

"Ha!" she said, in a quick voice, suddenly turning her face toward me. It was a pale, thin face, but full of womanly beauty. Her large, dark eyes seemed to flash, and the point of light in each, was as bright as the ray of a diamond. I was startled for a moment by such an apparition. But recovering myself, I said again,

“Let me assist you to get down, madam; you are at the end of your journey.”

“Ha! ha!” she laughed, with an expression on her countenance of *bitter irony*. “I would think I was! But what is this?” looking up at the time-worn structure in the shadow of which we all were, “where am I?”

“This is the Alms-House, ma’am,” I replied.

“The Alms-House!” she said, clasping her hands together and looking up, with a face convulsed and still paler, “Merciful Father, has it come to this?”

Then, covering her eyes with her hands, and bowing her head again upon her bosom, she seemed lost to all consciousness of the presence of anyone.

“I’ll bring her out for you, Mister, in less than no time,” said the carter, a stout Irishman, at the same time making a motion to seize hold of her feet, and *drag* her down to the bottom of the cart. This, I of course prevented. Taking the commitment paper from him, I pretended to examine it very minutely, for the purpose of giving the poor creature time to recover herself. After a few minutes, I said to her in a mild, soothing voice,

“You will have to get out here, madam. Let me assist you. You shall be kindly treated.”

She made no reply; but rose to her feet, and, giving me her hand, allowed me to help her down. Mechanically she accompanied me into the house, and, after her name was registered, she was given over, without having uttered a word more than the necessary replies, to the matron.

“Who is this woman? Do you know?” I said to the carter, as I paid him his fees.

“I don’t know anything about her. Only I heard somebody say, as I drove up the street *‘If that isn’t General Thompson’s poor daughter Emily, in that cart!’*”

“It can’t be *her*, surely!” said I, “for she gave her name as *Mrs. Watson*.”

“That doesn’t matter at all, sir,” said the Irishman. Names are plenty in this country.”

“Who sent her here? Where did you take her from?” I asked.

“As to who sent her, that is more than I can tell. Those who did it, seemed anxious enough to have her taken away from off the steps of a big house in York Street, where she had seated herself, and wouldn’t be persuaded to move. I had to take her up in my arms, and put her into the cart by main strength.”

“General Thompson lives in York Street, does he not?”

“Yes, I believe he does. And now I remember, it was on his very door-step, that she was seated.”

“Then, I suppose, she is no other than his unhappy daughter.”

“I suppose so,” responded the carter, indifferently; and, cracking his whip, he dashed away, leaving me to my own thoughts.

CHAPTER 2.

In the course of a day or two, I learned from the matron that *Mrs. Watson* was no other than the accomplished and once brilliant *Miss Thompson*, who had been, some *ten* years before, the particular bright star of the fashionable hemisphere in our city.

Among the many suitors who flitted about her, was the son of a rich merchant named *Darwin*. This young man had received his education in one of the first institutions in the country, and was accomplished and highly intelligent. He soon won upon a heart not easily affected — a heart that had withstood already many well-directed assaults. Between General Thompson and the father of Darwin, had long existed the warmest feelings of friendship, and both were interested in seeing their children united by marriage.

Nearly a year had passed since Darwin became pointed and particular in his attentions to Emily, but he could not determine to propose for her hand. He found *no objection* to her existing in his mind, and yet there was something that held him back. Others had yielded up the field to him; and, urged by a principle of honor, he felt the reluctant and opposing spirit growing stronger and stronger within him. The quick instinctive perceptions of one like the daughter of General Thompson, were not long in detecting the aberration of her lover's affection, and all of her *woman's pride* was roused into indignation. After taking counsel of her own thoughts, and debating the question for some days, she determined to satisfy herself of *his lukewarmness*, and then to throw him off indignantly. On the evening after this resolution had become fixed, Darwin came to see her as usual. She seemed to him greatly changed; to be *colder* and more *reserved*.

"You appear *very thoughtful* tonight, Emily," he said. "You are not accustomed to being *so serious*."

"Nevertheless, I must own to being in rather a sober mood tonight," she replied, fixing her bright black eyes upon his face, with an earnestness that showed her determination to read his very thoughts, if possible.

Darwin did not understand, and felt strangely *uneasy* under their searching expression.

"May I presume to ask the *cause* why Emily Thompson is in so unusual a mood?" he said, with forced playfulness.

"Do you possess the *right* to ask me such a question, Edward Darwin?" she said, again looking him so searchingly in the face, that his eyes fell beneath her gaze.

"I claim not the right to know your thoughts, Emily," he replied, seriously. "I asked you lightly."

"And you never will have the *right*, sir!" she said, with a sudden, passionate energy, her eyes flashing as she spoke. "You have been *trifling with me* too long, Edward Darwin. But that is past. Now we will understand each other. Do not interrupt me," she continued, seeing that he was about to speak; "I must be heard first. Did you think that I could not detect the *insincerity* of your attentions? You mistook, sir, the *woman* with whom you were *trifling*, day after day, week after week, and month after month. From this hour, I reject your false attentions. From this hour we meet, if we meet at all, as *strangers*. I will neither *forgive* nor *forget*, the *insult* you have offered me, nor the violence you have done to my feelings!" And rising to her feet, she made a movement to retire.

"We part not thus!" he said, rising also. "Your hasty resolution, Emily, has cut me off from the power of showing the *sincerity* of my regard. You have *rejected* me, in anticipation. And I submit, without a murmur or a word of reproach. But I will say that my regard for you has been sincere — my esteem unbounded."

"Your regard! Your esteem!" she said, quickly interrupting him, while her lip curled in *indignant scorn*.

"Yes, and my *lo* — " but he could not utter the word. She knew what he would have said, and understood the cause of his hesitation. Turning instantly away, she glided from the room, and he was left alone with his own perplexed thoughts and agitated feelings. For a moment he stood irresolute; then ringing the bell, he directed the servant who answered the summons, to request General Thompson to afford him an interview. To him he detailed, in a few words, the *scene* which had just occurred; and then, without waiting for a reply from the astonished and confounded father, left the house.

Three months after, Edward Darwin led to the altar a lovely maiden, and claimed her for his bride. She was in every way the opposite of Emily Thompson, and her disposition harmonized more perfectly with that of the man who had chosen her from among all her beautiful companions. She was not so imposing and brilliant as Emily, nor so much under the influence of *strong passions*. The one was the *mountain stream*, now sparkling and glancing in the bright sun-beams — and now dashing over some barrier with ungovernable power; the other was the *gentle rivulet*, winding through green, quiet meadows, or gliding along, in light and shade, far down in the bosom of some lovely valley.

Early upon the evening that was to witness the happy union of Edward Darwin and his lovely bride, Emily Thompson was seated in her own chamber, her head leaning upon her arm, that rested upon a small table. An observer would almost have taken her form for that of a *statue*, with drapery of free and perfect arrangement. But, *within*, all the elements of her mind were in wild commotion. She had loved Edward Darwin deeply, passionately — fondly loved him. And when, in obedience to the dictates of a *proud indignation*, she had cast him off — the effort to do so, had well near unseated her

reason. Nor were all her struggles to hate and despise him, successful. His *image*, that she would gladly have blotted out from her memory — still held its place; and the sound of his voice still echoed through the inner chambers of her heart. Three months had wrought great changes in her, externally as well as internally. Her full, blooming beauty had passed away; and her large bright eyes lighted up her thin pale face, which bore the expression of *concealed*, but wearing internal sorrows.

She had sat thus, motionless, for some twenty minutes, when suddenly the door opened, and her mother entered. Mrs. Thompson was a woman of tall stature, with a proud carriage, and an expression of arrogance and conscious superiority in her face. This evening her countenance was lowering, and she seemed agitated by contending emotions.

“Are you not going to Darwin’s tonight?” she asked, in a quick voice, approaching the table at which Emily sat, and looking her steadily in the face.

“No, mother, I am not!” was the prompt and positive answer.

“Emily! You have *disgraced* yourself, and the whole family, and nothing will wipe it out, but your presence at Edward Darwin’s wedding tonight. You have been *invited*, and you must go.”

“It is no use to urge me, mother, I cannot! It would break my heart!” and she allowed her feelings so far to overcome her, as to burst into tears.

“Shame! shame on you, Emily! Have you not a drop of your mother’s blood in your veins, nor a spark of your mother’s spirit? Did you not cast off Edward Darwin as *unworthy of your love*, and will you let the world see that you have repented? Where is your pride? Where is your woman’s true dignity? Your father is ashamed of you, and deeply mortified at your conduct, since Edward was so hastily rejected.”

“Spare me, mother! In pity spare me!” replied the daughter, in a mournful tone. “I miscalculated my strength, when I resolved to cast off Edward Darwin. I would do anything to gratify you. But not *that*, mother, not that!”

“Emily, your father will be satisfied with nothing short of your attendance at Mr. Darwin’s tonight. He has ordered the carriage to be at the door by seven, and will accompany you.”

“O, mother!” said the distressed maiden, in a tone of deep despondency.

“Rouse yourself, Emily! Be a woman! Let no man who prizes not your love, see that you value his a single jot. He is unworthy of you. In the strength of pride, stand boldly up, and see him wed another. Even if your heart should be breaking, let your face wear a smile of careless mirth! Be a woman, Emily! Prove yourself to be the daughter of one who has cast off a dozen suitors — and not felt a pang. What will the world say if you are not there? You have already made yourself the subject of remark by your weakness, and if you brave it all off, then you will regain your character. Come, there is no time to be lost.”

Mechanically Emily arose from the table, and proceeded to dress herself for the wedding. With the active assistance of her mother, she was quickly arrayed in a style of costly elegance.

“But your cheeks are too pale, Emily,” said Mrs. Thompson, surveying her with a look of pride.

“That is easily remedied,” replied the daughter in a low voice; and soon, under the careful application of rouge and powder, her pale cheeks presented a natural and healthy bloom.

“That will do. Now you look like *yourself*,” said her mother. “One thing more. The carriage has driven up, and it is full time for you to be away. Promise me, that you will be *yourself* tonight!”

“If I have the power within me to control my feelings, then, mother, I will do as you desire!” she replied firmly, for she was beginning to *rally* herself. Her *pride* was coming to her aid.

Struggling against her feelings with all the energy of a proud spirit, now fully roused, from necessity, into firmness — she met her father below, with something like a cheerful air, and in a few minutes was seated in the carriage. No words passed between them on the way. When the carriage stopped, her heart fluttered wildly for a moment; but, one brief struggle restored her self-control. With a light step, and a high bearing, she entered the rich and crowded rooms, and none who saw her face could detect the trace of a single *hidden emotion of pain*. The *mask* she had assumed, was one of perfect concealment.

The first shock of entering the house, which, of all others, she desired most to avoid, being over — her spirits gradually rose, and she found herself fully self-possessed. Her father watched her closely and anxiously, and soon ceased to fear.

Half an hour after they had arrived, it was announced that the nuptial ceremony would begin. Again her heart fluttered, but in an instant all was calm as the surface of a mountain-encircled lake. The crowd gave way, and, for the first time since the night of their painful interview, Emily beheld Edward Darwin, with the beautiful creature leaning upon his arm who was soon to be pronounced his bride. Again a thrill passed through every nerve, and again every emotion was hushed into stillness. She stood close by his side, while the imposing ceremony was progressing, and heard him promise to be all in all to another — without showing the existence of a single internal pang. And when it was over, no one congratulated the blushing bride with more *seeming* cordiality, or appeared on better terms with Darwin than she.

“I am pleased to see you in such fine spirits tonight,” said Edward to her, on one occasion during the evening, when they happened to be thrown together.

“A happy time makes a happy company,” she replied, smiling. “But I always enjoy myself.”

“A *cheerful disposition* is a great blessing. You are favored in that respect,” he said.

“Yes, highly favored. I endeavor always to be governed by a *conscious sense of right*, and then I have nothing to check the even and natural flow of my spirits. The secret of *happiness* is, to act from an *obedience to reason*, and not from a *slavery to passion*.”

“There is, no doubt, much truth in your remark, Miss Thompson, but, how few of us can thus act! I, for one, must own that I have not yet learned that happy art.”

“To each one is given, if he chose to exercise it, an internal power of self-control under “circumstances,” she replied, looking him steadily in the face. “No one who chooses to command the strength that is a constituent of the mind, need ever be enslaved by *passion*, or held in bondage to *feeling*. I would lose my own self-respect, if I did not possess entire control over every temporary weakness of character.”

Edward Darwin was puzzled. He had heard of her, as having secluded herself from society, and every report that had reached his ears, represented her as pale and emaciated — the image of distress. His heart had ached with every thought of her. He could not forget, that, in their last interview, Emily had exhibited a *powerful feeling of indignation*; that she had declared, that, if ever they met, it should be as *strangers*. Now she seemed, intentionally, to throw herself in his way, and to exhibit a degree of *cheerful self-possession* that he could not account for. He felt, by no means, as easy in her company, as she seemed to feel in his. He inclined to the opinion that she was *playing a part*, for he knew her to be a *woman of strong mind*. It was for her *very strong character*, that he had been unable to give her his entire affections. To her last remark, he was about to reply, when someone proposed that Miss Thompson should favor the company with a song. She was an exquisite performer, and had a voice of surpassing sweetness. This was known, and when she was led to the piano, all conversation was hushed, and every eye turned toward her.

Emily Thompson paused but a moment, and then touched the keys in a prelude to a beautiful tune. Almost breathlessly did everyone present listen to the rich, warbling melody of her voice, as she sang with unsurpassed skill and feeling, the lovely words of the song. Never before had General Thompson felt so proud of his daughter.

“Now give us another!” said a lady, standing near her, as the lingering sweetness of her voice died on the ear, in closing the last line of the song.

Without hesitating a moment, Emily turned over the leaves of the music book, and then again let her fingers fall gently upon the keys of the instrument, before which she was seated. The first verse of the song was given with great tenderness of style. The tones of her voice were sweet and low, and trembled as from deep emotion. But when she commenced the second verse, it was evident to all, that she was *losing the command of her feelings*. Her voice rallied with inconceivable power and sweetness upon the lines,

“With lightsome heart I plucked a rose,
Full sweet upon its thorny tree.”

But when she sang,

“But my false lover stole my rose,
And left, alas! the thorn with me,”

it fell to a low, wailing sound, that brought the tears into every eye, and made every heart throb with a sudden and painful interest in the singer. In the pause that followed, there was a stillness as profound as if every human form had on the instant changed into a marble statue. This silence was broken by the exclamation, “*Oh my —*” from a lady who stood near. In the next moment, Emily fell insensible into the arms of her father, who had sprung forward at the instant he perceived her condition.

CHAPTER 3.

Without waiting for medical attendance, or even for the usual temporary efforts to restore fainting people, General Thompson had his daughter removed at once to his carriage, and taken home. She showed no signs of returning consciousness for several hours afterward. When the vital energies of her body again revived, it was many days before her mind was restored to any degree of activity; and, even then, it was painfully apparent, that it was with enfeebled powers.

For months, General Thompson and his wife made use of every means they possessed to dispel from her mind, the gloom which pervaded it, and to rouse within her an activity that should restore the lost vigor of her intellect. To effect this, without exhibiting her sad condition in the circles where she had once been the center, they removed temporarily to Washington City during the winter. Here she was dragged into company, and stimulated with fashionable excitement. This, with time, gradually changed her *settled indifference* to almost everything. She began to be something like her former self while in company, and to find, in *dissipation* — false fires to animate her. But it could not be concealed from her parents, that the bright star of her once brilliant mind, no longer burned with a steady light. At times, *clouds* would come over and obscure its luster. There was in her eye, a constant unnatural wildness; and in her temper, an unsteadiness which could not be relied upon. A year or two, made no very great change in her. She still continued the victim of nervous excitement or depression.

Gradually her disappointed parents lost all interest in, or care for her. The *obstinate disposition* which she would at times exhibit, *estranged* them more and more, and when, finally, she married a poor man into whose company she had been thrown, while indulging an erratic propensity to visit at the houses of several neighbors of whom she knew nothing — they threw her off as an *encumbrance*. Her husband, whose greatest fault was *idleness*, had hoped to obtain money enough by her, to enable him to *live without labor*, and with this hope, he had persuaded her to marry him clandestinely.

He was, by trade, a *carpenter*. With manners somewhat polished and a soft and winning address, he had succeeded in influencing the weak-minded girl to accept him. His name was *Watson*. The change from a rich and spacious mansion, to a very small house, poorly furnished — added to a peremptory refusal of her parents to *see* her or to *communicate* with her — startled her to a sudden and distressing sense of the rashness of an act which could not be recalled. Nor was her husband at all disposed to believe, that, in gaining a wife, he had added very greatly to his *stock of happiness*, when he found that no money was to come with her, and that she possessed none of the qualities requisite for a poor man's companion. Let us look in upon them three weeks after their marriage.

The house they occupy, is a small two story house, without a passage. The parlor in front, has a neat, plain carpet on the floor, and contains; in the way of furniture, six windsor chairs, a table, a looking glass, and a pair of small andirons, enclosed on the hearth by a green wire fender. The back parlor is used as a sitting and eating room, and here we will find the unhappy couple. The tea things having been carried down into the basement kitchen, by a black girl, the servant, and in the middle of the floor stands a pine table, stained red. An old ingrain carpet covers the floor, and upon the mantelpiece are two high plated candle-sticks, in one of which burns a candle. A half dozen common chairs make up the completion of furniture.

Watson sits moodily by the table, upon which he rests his elbow and reclines his head upon his hands. His young wife, nearly in the same position, occupies a chair at the opposite side of the table. The eyes of both are averted from each other. The appearance of Mrs. Watson, shows that she has been weeping, and the distressed expression of her face, indicates, that the cause of her tears is still active within. A deep-drawn sigh, and a sob which seems to force itself up from her heart, in spite of strong efforts to keep it down, causes her husband to make an uneasy and irritable movement. In a minute or so, they are repeated, and Watson can no longer refrain from speaking.

"I declare, Emily, I am out of all patience with you! You've done nothing but sob and cry for a week. No mortal man can endure it!"

Hitherto, he had steadily endeavored to soothe her distress, but the small share of patience which he possessed, had become as he truly said, from large draughts, entirely exhausted. His words roused up the stricken spirit of his wife, and something of her former fires were kindled within. Lifting her head, she looked him steadily in the face, while her dark bright eye, assumed an expression of *wild defiance*.

"What do you mean, sir, by such language to me!" she said, indignantly. "Is this the *pleasant home* I was promised?" glancing her eye around the small room, and upon the poor and meager furniture, while her lip curled with a scornful expression. "You have *deceived* me in every way! And, now that I am cut off from my father's house, and all its comforts and elegancies — I am to be denied the poor privilege of weeping over my forlorn condition! Let me tell you at once, sir, that I never have allowed myself to be trifled with, and never will!"

"Well, never mind, Emily," he replied soothingly, for he was something of a quiet man, and had no wish to have his wife remain many minutes in the *passionate mood* to which she had been roused; "I spoke rather warmly. But indeed, I

would feel much pleasanter, if I saw you more contented. Let us make the *best of our condition*, now. and, I doubt not, but that it will soon be bettered.”

“And *how* are you going to better it, I would like to know? What more can you offer me, than this *dog-house*, and a prospect of *starving* on ten dollars a week?”

“Many better people than either you or I, let me tell you, madam, have lived in a house no larger than this, and on ten dollars a week too!” retorted Watson, a good deal irritated at her remark in reference to the provision he had made for her, and which, in his idea, was very comfortable and genteel.

The eye of his young wife seemed to flash, and her face grew dark from suffocating passion. Her lips parted in the effort to make some angry reply, when her shattered intellect yielded, temporarily, to the force of excitement, and she sank to the floor, sobbing and crying hysterically.

Watson’s *angry* feelings were instantly changed to *alarm*, and lifting the body of his wife, he carried her up to their chamber, and, by endearing words, and gentle manners toward her, endeavored to soothe her agitation. After a long time she grew calmer, but took no notice of her husband. In vain did he speak of his love, and of his willingness to make any sacrifice that would promote her happiness. She turned her face away from him, and neither by word nor gesture, indicated that she even heard him.

It was two months from this time, before she again gave utterance to a word in his presence. Though her mind was somewhat impaired, yet neither her *pride* nor her *passions* were in any degree weakened; and as they were no longer under the steady control of *reason*, their influence over her was of course, more potent. Neither the *threats*, nor *entreaties*, nor *neglect* of her husband could move her. Sometimes for whole days together, she did not rise from her bed, and but rarely came downstairs.

But, gradually, she became weary of her own perverseness, and showed some little disposition to recede from her state of *moody reserve*. This, her husband quickly perceived, and, although his angry feelings and indignation had been roused so high as to cause him seriously to think about *abandoning* her, his relief at finding that there was a *prospect of change for the better* caused him to make use of every kind attention toward her in his power. This had a good effect, and she soon recovered, in some degree, a more cheerful temper; though still there was a shadow upon her feelings.

Unexpected by her husband, she began to busy herself about the house, and to take an apparent interest in the management of its internal and economical arrangements. He could not but exhibit the pleasure he felt at this change; and this manifested pleasure, gratified her, and caused her to increase in her domestic attentions, and to study in many ways to add to his comforts. Thus were they drawn to one another, and something *like true affection* kindled up in their bosoms. She seemed to forget the condition in life from which she had fallen. Her *little world* appeared circumscribed to the interior of her own dwelling, and beyond this she never appeared, even if her *thoughts* wandered away from its quiet confines. For a few times, her husband urged her to go out with him, but he soon ceased to do so, for he saw that she was always disturbed by such requests.

The *wild turbulence of her temper* did not again break out. There was a subdued and quiet air about her, that was ever sad, unless when her husband was present — and then there was a visible effort to appear cheerful and interested, for his sake. She was beginning to entertain for him a tender affection, and gradually her feelings became intensely interested in him. At the end of a year, a *babe* blessed their union. A new fibre of Emily’s heart was touched, and a new emotion given. She was a mother!

And now the couple so ill-matched at first, began to be happy in each other. The even-going temper of Emily’s mind for so long a time, and the absence of all causes for false excitement — had tended in a good degree to strengthen it, and to give her distinct perceptions. She was beginning to see what was right, and to choose rationally. Still, she felt no inclination to go out, and steadily avoided doing so, although from so long a state of confinement — her *health* was beginning to suffer.

CHAPTER 4.

Nearly four years from the time Emily left her father's house had passed away, and in that time she had not yet allowed herself, from inclination or persuasion, to venture upon the street. Her babe had changed to a little girl of three years old, that all day long played about her mother, and with its innocent prattle, made music for her heart. Mr. Watson, from a mere journeyman carpenter, had commenced business for himself, and, being a pretty fair draftsman, had made several very profitable building contracts. He still occupied the same house, but it was furnished in a style much superior to what it was when the reader first glanced at its interior arrangement.

One pleasant Sunday afternoon in June, Mr. and Mrs. Watson were seated on a sofa near the window, watching with mutual interest the innocent gambols of their little girl, and listening to her wandering prattle.

"I want to go a walking, papa," said the child, pausing suddenly in her play, and coming up to where her father and mother were sitting.

"Do take her out a walking," said Mrs. Watson. "Will you, dear, if I get her ready?"

"Yes, Emily, if *you* will go along," he said, smiling.

"O, no. I don't care about going out," Emily responded, with a slight change of manner.

"Indeed, indeed, Emily, I wish you would only consent to go out with me *once*; you will, after that, go out often enough, I know. You are getting paler and thinner every day," he added, looking her tenderly in the face.

"Do come, mamma!" urged the child, taking hold of her gown, and pulling at it with all her might.

"See there, *little Emily* wants you to go," said her husband, with an appealing smile. "You can't resist her, I know."

"Come, mamma, do come!" continued the child, still pulling at the gown.

For a minute or so, she sat almost motionless, endeavoring to decide against her own reluctance, in favor of gratifying her husband and child.

"I will go out a little way with you," she at length said, in a voice slightly changed from its cheerful expression. "Come dear, let me put on your bonnet."

Taking little Emily by the hand, she went upstairs with her, while her husband's heart trembled with a feeling that was a mingling of delight and fear. Mrs. Watson soon had her little girl dressed, and then sent her downstairs to tell her father that she would be ready in a few minutes. She was exceedingly pale and weakened, and her dark eyes shone with an almost supernatural brightness, yet their light was tempered by the out-beamings of *woman's gentle spirit*. For a moment after her little girl had gone down, she stood by the side of the bureau, leaning against it, with an irresolute air. Then going slowly to a closet, she brought out a bandbox, and, removing the lid, lifted from it a beautiful bonnet, that had lain there untouched for three years; in all that time, she had not once looked upon it. A sigh struggled up from her bosom, and her face seemed to grow still paler, as her eyes fell upon this *relic of other and better days*. After removing from it a bunch or two of rich French flowers, the bonnet had nothing obsolete in its appearance, and none would have perceived that it varied materially from the then prevailing fashion.

A beautiful silk dress, which had not been worn for a time equal to that during which the bonnet had lain untouched, was next taken from a drawer. In the course of twenty minutes, she came downstairs, elegantly dressed, and ready to walk out. Her husband surveyed her with a look of pride and pleasure, but when he perceived that she was paler, and agitated, and felt her arm trembling within his — he half repented that he had urged her to go out.

They walked slowly up the street, and, in a short time, Mrs. Watson's mind became interested and revived by the fresh air, and by the happy voice of little Emily, which fell upon her ear incessantly. Their walk was extended some short distance, and then they turned toward home.

An air of *cheerfulness* was pervading the mind of Mrs. Watson, and she was beginning to converse freely upon the unimportant subjects suggested by the walk, when, as they came along on their return home, she startled at perceiving her *father and mother* rapidly approaching them in an open carriage. In a moment more they were whirled past, not, however, without the eyes of both parents and child meeting. But no expression of pleasure or of recognition, was in the face of either parent. The look they gave their child, was cold and stern. Dark, and sad, and all-pervading, was the *shadow* which fell upon her spirit. In an instant was the light extinguished, which had shed over her mind a cheerful ray. Her husband noted the change, and knew too well the cause; and his heart trembled as much as the arm that rested heavily upon his own.

In vain he attempted to rally her from the instantaneous shock and depression. Sadder and sadder grew the shadow which rested on her pale face after their return, and her eyes seemed looking inward, as if uniting with the spiritual vision in contemplating the gloomy specters that were passing before her mind. In this state of abstraction, she remained for several days. From it she was suddenly aroused, one afternoon, by the servant entering her chamber, where she was lying on the bed lost in sad musings, and putting the question with a concerned manner,

“Is little Emily up here?”

“No, she is not. Isn’t she downstairs?” responded Mrs. Watson, rising up with an alarmed expression in her countenance.

“No, ma’am, she is not. I thought she was up here.”

“Mercy me! Where can she be, then?” ejaculated the mother, with a look of terror, all her maternal fears at once aroused.

“She must have gone out of the front door. She was playing in the parlor while I was at work in the yard, and the door was open. I will run out in the street and see if she is there,” said the servant, hurriedly.

“Run, run quick, then!” exclaimed Mrs. Watson, her face almost as white as snow.

The black girl ran up and down the street, and into the houses of the different neighbors, but she returned in about ten minutes with no tidings; during which time, the poor, almost distracted mother, was in an agony of suspense. Her fears, easily excited, owing to the nervous state in which she was — were now overpowering.

“O ma’am, where can she be? Nobody has seen anything of her!” said the girl, coming in with breathless alarm.

“Go quickly for Mr. Watson! O, run quick!” and the sentence was scarcely half uttered, before the colored girl was hurrying off at full speed for Mr. Watson. It seemed an *age* to the distracted mother, before her husband arrived. He at once commenced by searching the house, cellar and yard, thoroughly, all over. This convinced him that the child had wandered away from the front door.

“Don’t be frightened, Emily,” he said, with an encouraging look which but ill-concealed the trembling anxiety that was at his heart. “She has only wandered off up or down the street, and has, of course, been picked up by someone, and will be kept safely for us, until we can find where she is. No harm can certainly happen to her.”

But such a representation brought no comfort to the terror-stricken mother. There was an awful sensation of *fear* about her heart — a brooding conviction that she would never again behold the face of her dear child. Finding all efforts to soothe her feelings vain, the father hurried away in search of his dear lost one, now rendered doubly dear. He went from house to house for more than a square on each side of the street, above and below his dwelling; and enlisted as many neighbors in the search as possible, which was extended in a much larger circle and, finally, employed bell-men; and yet to no purpose.

Night came rapidly on, and, with its somber shadows, brought *double gloom and terror* to the hearts of the distracted parents. Even until twelve o’clock were bell-men employed to sound the alarm in all parts of the city; but it was sounded in vain. Advertisements were handed in to the newspaper offices at that late hour, offering a liberal reward to any person who would restore the little innocent.

“Have you found her?” was the eager question, asked in a tone of agonizing suspense of the husband, as he entered pale and agitated, at the hour of midnight. He shook his head mournfully. His poor wife could endure this terrible state no longer; with a groan of despair, she sank insensible into his arms!

All the night through, she remained in a state of unconsciousness. From this, she began slowly to revive, as the dim light of the morning came into the chamber, its cold rays struggling with the flickering candle. She was soon restored to full consciousness, and then came back upon her, with overwhelming agony, the idea that her little angel was lost to her, perhaps forever. There stood the empty, untumbled crib; and in it lay the baby doll, which ever rested within her arms at night, her untutored mind investing with life the unconscious effigy. For the first time, the mother’s feelings softened, and the fountain of her tears was unsealed. For a long, long time she wept upon the bosom of her husband. But again the waters were sealed, and a stern and terrible sense of her loss fell upon her.

“I shall never see her again, my husband! I know I shall never see my sweet angel again!” she said, looking him in the face with a strange and fearful calmness. “She is dead, dead!” she added, shaking her head mournfully “dead, dead! And I shall never see my sweet babe again.”

“Do not give way to such thoughts, Emily,” urged her husband. “We must find her. Our advertisement in the papers will surely bring tidings of her.”

“No, no, no!” murmured his wife sadly. “We shall never see her again! Do you know,” she said quickly, and with startling emphasis “what I have just thought has become of her?”

“No, Emily. Where do you think she is?”

“Somebody has *stolen* her!” she said, in a low thrilling whisper, leaning over toward her husband, and looking him in the face with a countenance as white as marble.

“H-u-s-h!” replied the husband, half averting his face, while his heart seemed almost to die in his bosom at the terrible idea.

“It is true. I am sure it is,” continued the wife, in the same ominous whisper. “Have you never heard of babes like her being stolen away? I have, many a time. And somebody has *got* her! I know they have! I know they have!” and she began to rock her body backward and forward, moaning and muttering to herself incoherently.

CHAPTER 5.

Poor Watson was dreadfully shocked at the idea so suddenly suggested by his wife, and also greatly distressed at the evident *imbecility* which was again stealing upon her mind. Through the whole of that day, he looked in vain for some tidings of his child. But no word of her, reached his anxious ears. And day after day, and week after week passed, and yet nothing was heard of her.

From the morning on which his wife had started the idea that she had been stolen away, she evinced *no hope*. She soon fell into a state of musing melancholy, and evinced no interest in anything, not even in her husband. In this condition, she continued for many months. Gradually, however, she began to recover from this gloomy state, and to show some little care for her husband. But even in him, she became little interested. Two years passed away from the time the child had disappeared, and the mother was still moping, gloomy, and uninterested. From this state, she was aroused by the sudden and alarming illness of her husband. Ten days were enough to work destruction on his frame; at the end of that period he passed into the eternal world.

Every perception of her mind was now acutely sensitive. The tenderness and affection which had slumbered for two years, were all awakened; but alas! were active now, only to bring intense and abiding grief. The body of her husband was soon buried out of her sight, and she was left, in every sense of the word, *alone*. During the six years of her marriage, she had not paid a single visit, nor made a single acquaintance. And now, besides the family servant, there was not a familiar face for her, nor a familiar voice. The image of her lost child had never once faded from her mind, during all the months of her gloomy abstraction, and now its sweet face came up before her more vividly than ever, and her bosom yearned toward it with a more fond and maternal desire.

The new impulse which the character of her husband had received, had made him more earnestly bent upon accumulating property. His sudden death occurred, just as his prospects were rapidly opening. During six years he had saved something like two thousand dollars, and this was paid over into the hands of his widow by the executor. In a condition of *aimless and gloomy isolation*, never once venturing beyond the threshold of her dwelling, did Mrs. Watson live for the next *four* years, when she found the *means* which had thus far supported her, just upon the eve of exhaustion. This aroused her from a state of lethargy, into one of *anxious solicitude*. What could she do? No single available resource did she possess within herself, and almost her last dollar was spent.

Finally, all her money was exhausted, and the *stern necessity* of her poor condition drove her into action. By the aid of her black hired servant, who had become attached to her, she procured the services of an *auctioneer*, who sold for her every piece of furniture that she could possibly spare. The proceeds of this sale was two hundred dollars. With her few remaining articles of furniture, she removed into one room, which she had rented in a house where her servant could have the use of the kitchen and garret.

It was about six months from this time, that she found herself reduced to *extremity* again, and with no further resource. *Absolute starvation* stared her in the face. A willingness to *do something for a living* arose in her mind, but she could think of nothing. In this state of acute distress of mind, after a long debate, she finally resolved to seek, humbly, in brokenness of spirit, a *reconciliation with her parents*, and to beg a home where she might find rest and protection, for the few brief years that she felt were to bring the hour of her *release* from temporal evil. Once resolved, she lost no time in putting her resolution into effect.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning, when she stood, for the first time in *ten years*, upon the door-stone of her father's house — that house from which she had been banished. The pulsations of her heart were quick and fluttering while she waited almost breathlessly, for an answer to the summons she had given. In a few moments the door was opened by a well-known servant, one who had grown old in the family.

"Miss Emily!" she exclaimed, startling and lifting her hands in astonishment, as the attenuated and trembling form of her young mistress stood before her.

Then turning suddenly, she ran upstairs, and bursting into the chamber where the mother of Emily was sitting, exclaimed, hurriedly,

"O, mam, Miss Emily is downstairs! I don't know what she wants, but she looks as white as a sheet, and trembles all over!"

"Tell her to go out of the house!" said Mrs. Thompson, rising up instantly, her face flushed with *anger*, and sudden alarm. Tell her to go away at once! She can't come here!"

"O mistress!" said the old servant in an appealing voice.

"Do you hear me, Nell?" she answered in an excited tone, stamping her foot upon the floor. "Obey me this instant!"

The servant descended the stairs, into the hall where Mrs. Watson was standing with an aching heart.

"Your mother will not see you, Miss Emily," she said to her in a mournful tone.

“But I *must* see her, Nelly! Tell her I *must* see her.”

“Indeed, indeed, Miss Emily, it’s no use; your mother won’t see you. She is *very angry*.”

“Is *father* home?” now asked Mrs. Watson.

“No, he has been out an hour.”

“Then I’ll wait here until he comes,” she said, seating herself in the hall.

For nearly an hour did Mrs. Watson sit, trembling between hope and fear, and struggling against a depressing gloom, under which she seemed every moment about to sink. While seated there, a little girl, about *nine* years old, came dancing and singing along the passage. When she saw a stranger, she paused suddenly, and then with a child’s curiosity, came slowly up to her, surveying her all the while, with a look of curious interest.

A strange and sudden thrill passed through the heart of Mrs. Watson, when she heard the voice of the little girl, and as she approached, her eyes were riveted upon her young and innocent face, with a look of intense and yearning interest. The child seemed slightly alarmed by the steady gaze that was fixed upon her, and, slowly retreating, she went upstairs, turning at every step to catch the earnest look of the stranger. Mrs. Watson felt an impulse to spring forward and follow the child, she scarcely knew why — when the front door was swung open and her *father* came in with his usual measured and heavy tread.

“O my father!” exclaimed the poor creature, suddenly springing to her feet, and standing before him with clasped hands.

“Away!” he said angrily, hurrying past her. “I have no child!”

“Father! father!” she cried after him, but he passed up the stairs at two or three strides, and disappeared from her sight.

In a few minutes, a strange man-servant came down, and told her she must leave the house. She went out of the door mechanically, and seated herself upon the marble steps. Here she had remained for nearly an hour, motionless, and almost in a state of unconsciousness, when an order was procured by the direction of her father, for her admission into the *Alms-House*, where she was removed, as the reader has seen.

CHAPTER 6.

The *particulars* just related, I learned subsequent to her admission into our institution. They increased the interest awakened in her on the day of her entrance, and led me, frequently, to converse with the matron as to her condition of mind. For the first week or two, she seemed stupefied, and sat, for the greater part of the time, moping and melancholy in the room allotted to her. By the special direction of the Board of Trustees, who were made acquainted with her relationship to General Thompson, and whose sympathies were awakened by a knowledge of her condition — she was not required to perform any menial employments, but left almost entirely to act as her inclination might dictate.

She had not uttered a word, unless in reply to a question, for the first three weeks following her admission. She was sitting one afternoon, about this time, as the sun was going down, looking out of the window. The expression of her face indicated an unusual excitement of feelings. The matron, whose duties called her into the room where Mrs. Watson was sitting, could not help observing that she was disturbed more than usual. A tear or two stole out from each eye, and passed down her pale cheek, while a heavy sigh struggled painfully up from her bosom. The matron's feelings were touched, and approaching her, she said, tenderly:

"All affliction, Mrs. Watson, is for our good. Try, my dear madam, to feel this, and then you will extract some comfort, even from your present condition."

Mrs. Watson shook her head mournfully, but made no reply.

"Let me urge you," continued the matron, "as one who has known much sorrow, to look *upward to God* in your affliction. There is a strong consolation for all who will seek it. A haven of repose for all who choose to escape there."

The tone of voice, so tender and maternal, or the words, so unusual to her ear, caused the poor *child of affliction* to fix her eyes, with an expression of inquiry, upon the face of her kind matron. But still she replied not, and the matron, encouraged to proceed, went on.

"In the Word of Life, it is said 'Come unto Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' This is addressed, particularly, to you, for you are heavy laden."

"O yes, yes I am heavy laden, pressed down, never to rise again," she said mournfully.

"Do not give way to such a *despairing* thought. While there is life — there is hope for days of comfort. And such days are for all."

"Not for me — no never, never," responded Mrs. Watson. "Can I receive back my only *treasure*? Can there be for me days of comfort, and my *stolen child* not restored to me? No, no! never, never!"

"Of one thing be certain, Mrs. Watson," said the matron, slowly and impressively. "In all things that befall us, there is a *direction* or a *permission* of Providence, and if we duly submit to them, great good will result to us. The same over-ruling Providence which permitted your child to be stolen from you, as you say, can so control circumstances, that your lost one will be restored."

"Say that again! say that again!" exclaimed the half-distracted creature, springing to her feet in an instant, and looking the matron with a wild expression of hope which seemed like a faint and flickering ray glancing up from the stagnant waters of despair.

"Be calm, my dear madam!" said the matron, half alarmed.

"Say it again! O, madam, say those words again!" urged Mrs. Watson, entreatingly.

"I said," repeated the matron, "that the same over-ruling Providence which permitted your child to be stolen from you, can so control circumstances, that your lost one will be restored."

"And the Lord is said to be good and very merciful, is He not?" Edith asked eagerly.

"His tender mercies are over all men. He pities us, even as a father pities his children," said the matron slowly and distinctly.

"And does he pity *me*?" asked the almost broken-hearted woman, the tears running in streams down her face, at the thought that she was pitied by One so *able* to help her.

"He has for you, my dear Mrs. Watson, a yearning tenderness. He loves you with unspeakable love, and desires, of all things, to make you happy."

"And then He will, surely, give me back my child, if I ask Him," she said. "But what if my dear little Emily should be dead?" she added, the eager flush of hope that had lighted up her countenance giving way to a pale and death-like hue.

"Then, Mrs. Watson," said the matron, "your child is an angel in Heaven, and is happy, unutterably happy. And it is for you to wait patiently, in obedience to all the precepts of our holy religion, until you are called to join her, to be no more separated. But why thus distress yourself by indulging such thoughts? He who rules all things well, can out of this affliction — bring you a great comfort; and He will do it, if you look up to Him in patient faith and calm obedience."

Mrs. Watson bowed her head upon her bosom, and stood some moments, evidently in self-communion. After awhile, she looked up with a calmer expression upon her face, but with something intensely earnest in her eyes, and said, "What ought I to do?"

"That is, Mrs. Watson," replied the matron, with a glow of heart-felt satisfaction, "the most important question you could have asked, and I am glad that it is so earnestly made. In the first place, then, you ought to make a strong and constant effort, to feel *confidence* in the Lord, as ruling and guiding all things for the good of His creatures; and as never sending, or permitting any affliction, unless for the purpose of working a greater and more lasting good. As soon as you can begin to realize such a confidence, your mind will react, in a great measure, from its state of gloom and despondency."

"I am willing to try," she responded thoughtfully, "for I clearly perceive that there is much truth in what you say. But I fear that my mind will soon go back into gloom and despair, in spite of all my feeble efforts to help it."

"If you will be advised by me, I think I can help you here also," said the matron.

"I will be advised by you in anything," replied Mrs. Watson, earnestly.

"A mind, *unoccupied* in some *useful task*," said the matron, "will prey upon itself, and make even those who have no real trouble, quite miserable. How much, then, will a *sorrowful* mind, *unemployed* — add to its own distress! It will be necessary for you to *employ* yourself in something that will divert your thoughts. To have something to *interest* you, and to awaken a feeling of *care* in your mind. In a place like this, I need not tell you, that there are numerous ways of passing your time in *useful employments*."

"I feel the force of what you say," responded Mrs. Watson. "But I also feel reluctant, I must confess, to tasking myself in any way. Still I will be governed by you."

"Tomorrow, then, I will suggest to you some employment that will be pleasant, and at the same time draw upon your attention. But my duties call me away, and I must leave you. Do not, let me entreat of you, allow your mind to go back again into its state of inactive gloom. If sad thoughts begin to steal over you, endeavor to look up to Him whose ear is ever open to the cry of the mourner."

It was a long time since Mrs. Watson's mind had been roused into such a state of sudden and healthy activity; and that activity continued until her senses were locked that night, in the oblivion of sleep. On the next morning, she awoke from more pleasant dreams than she had known for a long time. Early after the frugal and coarse breakfast had been served, the matron came to her with a small bundle in her hand.

"Good morning, Mrs. Watson," she said, "I am glad to see that you *look* better than you did yesterday."

"I think I *feel* a little better too," she replied, while a *faint smile* flitted across her pale face.

"I am sure you do, for your countenance expresses a much calmer state than you have experienced since you came here. I have brought you a *garment* to make. Are you willing to work upon it?"

"Certainly, I am. If I would not be unutterably miserable — then I must not be *idle*."

The matron smiled upon her encouragingly, gave her some plain and brief directions about the work, and then left her, to attend to other numerous duties. Frequently through the day, as she came into Mrs. Watson's room, would she drop a cheerful and encouraging word. None of these were lost upon her, and they frequently came, just at the moment when her spirits seemed about to sink under the weight of sad emotions that, ever and always, swept like waves across her mind.

CHAPTER 7.

Gradually, and by small accumulations of strength, did Mrs. Watson, now fairly in the effort of reformation, aided by a kind and constant monitor, gain a degree of power over herself, which promised an entire change in her character. Of course, the reacting energy of evil in her mind, would often bring into temporary subjection the good principles which were forming there; but the good only retired for brief periods. It rallied again with renewed activity.

This process of reformation had been progressing slowly but surely, for nearly six months, when the matron, who had become much attached to her, came into her room one day, and said,

“Mrs. Watson, I have just learned something that I think it my duty to communicate to you. Your *mother died* yesterday.”

The matron could not calculate the effect of such a communication upon a mind but half restored to fortitude and self-control, and under circumstances of privation and mortification. She had hesitated and debated some time before determining to make the communication. The shock was painful in the extreme. The sudden consciousness that all hope was forever cut off of again seeing her mother’s face in reconciliation, a hope she had not ceased to cherish in the inner chamber of her heart, like a solitary and dim candle, serving only to reveal the surrounding gloom — weighed down her spirits, and paralyzed every energy of her mind. All through the day she sat in dreamy abstraction, scarcely answering any question put to her by the matron, and not offering to resume the work which she had laid aside.

On the day preceding, a solemn scene was passing in the house from which, for ten years, Emily had been banished. But *two people* were present, besides a poor trembler on the brink of mortality. One was the husband. General Thompson — and the other a slender and beautiful little girl, not much beyond her ninth summer. The former sat upon one side of the bed, his face expressive of deep affliction. The latter stood upon the other side, her hand clasped within that of the dying woman, while large drops were stealing slowly down her young cheeks. A profound silence reigned for some time through the chamber where *death* was about to enter; at length the dying woman said, in a feeble voice, looking at the child, “Go downstairs for a little while, Agnes, dear. We will send for you again in a few minutes.”

The child obeyed. As the door closed after her, Mrs. Thompson turned toward her husband and said:

“We have never allowed ourselves to breathe the name of *Emily* for years. But I must speak of her, now that the *fatal and ruinous pride of my heart* has lost its power over me. I wish to see her!”

“You cannot!” ejaculated General Thompson, with sudden energy, a dark passionate shadow passing over his brow. “She is no longer our child!”

“No denial of ours, can change the relationship! She is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh! Years ago I thought all natural affection for her extinguished, but it is swelling up in my heart with unutterable yearnings. Oh, husband, let me see my child before I die!” and she raised herself up, and leaned over toward him with a look of pleading agony.

“You cannot!” was the brief stern answer.

The face of the dying woman became convulsed with the wild energy of her maternal feelings, now rushing with the force acquired by their long accumulation.

“On my knees, I plead with you!” she said, endeavoring to raise herself in the bed.

“No, no, no!” he responded, taking her in his arms and laying her gently back upon the pillow. “Why will you poison the last moments of your life, by a vain and weak desire?”

“Oh, my child! my child! my child!” murmured the dying mother, sinking down upon the pillow. “My poor child! My poor child!”

In a few moments, the powerful struggle that had convulsed her frame, subsided, and with her face nearly hid in the pillow, she lay for a long time as still and as motionless, as if the *sleep of death* had passed upon her.

General Thompson sat by her side, with his thoughts and feelings in a whirlpool of agitation. Suddenly she startled, quivered as if struck by an invisible arrow, and half raising herself up, looked her husband in the face with a terror-stricken countenance.

“One word!” she said, in a husky whisper, leaning over toward him.

General Thompson bent his head down and listened.

“Promise me!” urged the dying woman, “promise me, in the name of Heaven!”

The proud, stern man, drew himself up with forced composure.

“*Anything but that!*” he said, impatiently, while his frame shook with deep internal agitation.

“God will require her of our hands, and it is now, for *me*, too late to be merciful, or I would hope for mercy. Promise me, then!”

The eye of the dying woman, dilated to its full extent, glared wildly upon General Thompson. Her lips were again about to part.

“I promise!” said her husband, in a low, hesitating voice.

“It is enough!” murmured the dying mother, clasping her hands together, and sinking back upon her pillow. In the next moment, her spirit had taken its flight!

CHAPTER 8.

Mrs. Watson was sitting in her room one morning, about a week after she had heard of her mother's death, her mind much calmer than it had been since the painful news had reached her, when the matron entered with a bundle of clothing and a bandbox.

"An order has been received for your removal from this uncomfortable home, Mrs. Watson," she said. "Here is a change of clothing and a bonnet, which someone has sent. A carriage is waiting for you at the gate."

"O Mrs. Landry, do not trifle with me!" she said. "I cannot bear it!"

"I would not trifle with you thus, Mrs. Watson. What I say is true!"

"Who sent for me?"

"Indeed I do not know."

"Is anybody waiting for me?"

"No one but the driver. He came alone."

For a few moments, Mrs. Watson paused to take counsel of her own thoughts, and then said firmly, "I will go."

In a brief space of time, she was dressed in the garments which had been sent, and they fitted her as well as if they had been her own. Taking an affectionate and even tearful farewell of the matron, who had been a *mother* to her, she got into the carriage and was driven off.

A ride of ten or fifteen minutes brought her in front of a neat house, before which the carriage stopped. The driver helped her out and rang the bell. The servant who opened the door, ushered her into one of the handsomely furnished parlors, where she started to perceive, standing in the middle of the floor, in tears, the same little girl she had seen when last repulsed from her father's house.

"Mother!" said the child, advancing hurriedly toward her.

"My child? My little Emily? O, yes! yes! You are my long-lost darling!" she said, catching her to her bosom, after looking into her dark eyes for a moment with a searching yet fond expression.

"My name is *Agnes*," said the child, with something of doubt in her tone.

"They have only changed your name, that is all. You are my own child! My heart tells me so! But what are you doing here? Whose house is this?"

In answer to this, the child pointed to a small package upon a pier table, which she immediately handed to her new-found relation. It was addressed "Emily Thompson."

On breaking it open, she found it to contain certificates of stock to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, and this short note:

"Your child is restored to you. This house is your own, and also the enclosed property. Forget the past, and be happy."

"Who is here besides you?" she asked, turning to her child.

"No one but the servants. It's *your* house now," replied the child, looking up earnestly and fondly into her mother's face.

Mrs. Watson again clasped her to her heart, and imprinted kisses all over her blooming young cheeks.

"I fear this is all a *fond dream*," she murmured to herself, looking earnestly around her. "But where is your grandfather?"

"I don't know," said the child, sadly. "He brought me here an hour ago, gave me a letter which told me all about how I was *stolen* from you when I was but a little child, and then he kissed my cheek, while a tear fell upon my face, and said, *'I shall never see you again, Agnes. Be a good child. Love your poor mother, who will soon be here, and don't forget your old grandfather, who will never forget you.'* Then he held me to his bosom, for a long time. After that he kissed me again, and went away."

The child wept bitterly on making this recital, and the mother's tears flowed as freely.

From that hour, a new morning dawned upon the heart of Mrs. Watson. Her lost one, long mourned for — was restored, and under circumstances more favorable than any she could have hoped for. Still, she could not disguise from herself, after the passage of a few days, that the child pined for her grandfather, towards whom she entertained the most tender affection.

"He said he would never see me anymore," was her only reply, to the oft-repeated hope expressed by her mother, that he would come to them again; and this was generally uttered with a trembling voice, and tearful eyes.

"You loved your grandfather very much?" Mrs. Watson remarked, one day, about a week after she had been restored to her child.

"O yes! For he loved me, and was always good to me. And so was grandma. But I don't know what ailed her for a good while before she died. Almost every day, if I happened to go into her room after she had been alone there for a good

while, I would find her crying. If I went up to her, and asked her what ailed her, she would sometimes try to smile, and say that nothing ailed her; but very often she would draw her arm around me, and look for a long time into my face, so strangely that I used to feel afraid. Once, I remember, she said, after looking at me for a good while, as if to herself,

“How like her mother!”

“Then she startled, as if something had frightened her, and said,

“You can go downstairs, dear — I wish to be alone.”

“Then she never told you anything about me?”

“No. But I heard about you often from *old Nelly*. Once, I remember coming downstairs, and seeing a woman in the passage who looked at me very strangely, so that I felt a little afraid. I went up to grandma, and told her about it. She seemed very much troubled about something, and said I mustn't go down while that woman was in the passage — that she would carry me off if she could.”

As the child said this, Mrs. Watson burst into tears, and wept violently for some time. But regaining, at length, her composure, she asked of the bewildered child,

“Did you hear anything more of that woman?”

“O yes. She stayed down in the passage until grandpa came home. He was terribly angry about it, and made the waiter put her out into the street. Old Nelly cried a whole day about it. I heard her say to the waiter that it was a cruel shame, and that no good ever came to people who acted in that way — that *Miss Emily*, as she called the lady, was the best of the whole of them, and that she would work her finger-ends off for her, if she knew where to find her. After the woman had been put out, I went downstairs, and heard Nelly talking in this way. I listened to all she said, and once or twice asked her who the woman was; but she wouldn't tell me then. But one day, about a week afterwards, she said it was *my mother*. Oh! how quickly I ran up to grandma, and told her what Nelly had said, asking at the same time, with eagerness, if she was *really* my mother.

“I never saw grandma so *angry* as this made her. Her face grew very pale, and she couldn't speak for some time, while I kept asking her if what Nelly had told me, was so. At last she took me upon her lap, and said

“I am your only mother, Agnes. You have no other. You must not think about the *idle stories of the servants*. I shall see that Nelly is well-punished for this.’

“O no, grandma, don't punish her,” I said in alarm. “She didn't mean anything wrong. She only said the woman was my mother.’

“But grandma seemed very angry when she thought about what Nelly had told me, and said something in a low voice that I could not understand, while her face was very angry. Poor Nelly! I never saw her after the next day. Grandpa took her off — no one knew where. I cried for a great many days after she had gone away, for she had always been good to me, and seemed to love me more than all the other servants did.”

“*Poor Nelly!*” murmured Mrs. Watson, half aloud, as Agnes closed the last sentence, while she could with difficulty restrain a gush of passionate tears. “And was your love for me, thus cruelly repaid?” Then, rallying herself, she asked,

“Have you ever heard where Nelly was sent?”

“No. I have often asked the other servants, but none of them knew. But tell me, mother, was it you, indeed, whom grandpa put out of the house?”

“It *was*, my dear child, your own mother, who was so cruelly treated. But let us try and forget that. The recollection of it is too painful to me. At some future time, when you have learned to *know* me better, and to *love* me and to *confide* in me as indeed your mother — I will explain all to you. For the present, I will merely say, that *my offence* against my parents, which it seems is not to be forgiven me, was no act for which my child need blush. My father and mother's *pride of family* was very great. In marrying, I offended this, and was *disowned* by them. You, by some means, they managed to steal away, and leave me to bear the unspeakable anguish of your loss. But you are again restored to me, and by my father. Thus far he has endeavored to repair the wrong I have suffered, and for all that is past, I forgive him. And as for all that I have done of evil, I hope to be forgiven of my Father in Heaven.”

As Mrs. Watson said this, she once more drew her little girl to her bosom in a long and close embrace, kissing her dear young face and watering it freely with her tears.

Time passed on, and Mrs. Watson continued to live in deep seclusion with her daughter. She rarely went out, and then only for the purpose of attending to necessary business. One or two friends of the family ventured to call upon her, and with these a pleasant, though, at first, quite a reserved fellowship was entered into. A year passed, and no word from her father reached her. It was said that he had gone abroad, but even of this, she had no *certain* news. It might — or it might not be so. Between her and her child, had come to exist the most confiding tender, and unreserved relationship. After having explained the *past events* of her life fully enough to make *Agnes* (as she continued to call her) feel satisfied that her mother had been guilty of no moral defection — she ceased to allude to them altogether, but spoke of her father with great kindness, and sighed as earnestly for his return as did her child.

While at the Alms-House, under the kind promptings of the excellent matron, her mind had gradually been elevated to those *higher and purer considerations* which regard our duty to *Him* who is the Heavenly Father. It was this which had sustained her while there, and enabled her, when removed from that painful condition to one so pleasant as that which awaited her, to look up still, and bless the *divine hand* that gave her benefits. The confidence in Divine Providence, upon which her heart continued to repose, she endeavored, as far as Agnes was capable of understanding it, to impart to her. Gradually, she led her young and tender mind to look up to Him who *governs all events by infinite wisdom from infinite love*, and who, both by prosperous and adverse circumstances, is ever leading us to Himself, that He may bless us with unspeakable blessings. The result of all this, was beneficial in a high degree. Agnes felt the beauty and sacredness of a religious principle in life. Its purity accorded with her innocence. God she felt to be over all and in all, governing events for good.

“Even the absence of your grandfather,” her mother said to her one evening, about two years after General Thompson had gone away, while leading her tender mind upward, where alone she had found true peace, “will, I cherish continually the hope — prove ultimately a blessing both to him and us. He will, I feel sure, yet return. He must return. Advanced in years, and alone among strangers, his heart cannot but turn towards you at least, and you will draw him home. I pray for his welfare daily. I pray that he may be restored to us. And I feel every day a strong and a stronger assurance that he will be restored to us, if alive.”

At the last word, the voice of Mrs. Watson trembled, while Agnes burst into tears. The thought of *death* melted down both of their feelings in an instant.

The hour had worn away until nearly the time for retiring for the night. As had been the mother’s custom for nearly a year, she opened the *Bible*, after having recovered her usual calmness of mind, and read a portion of Sacred truth. Then, bending with her child, she offered up to Him, whose ear is ever open to the petitions of His creatures, her humble acknowledgments for *past mercies*, with prayers for future good, such as *His wisdom* might see best for her. Nor did she forget the loved absent one, for whose return her heart pined daily and nightly. Thus bending before Him who *sees the secrets of all hearts*, we will leave, for the present, the mother and her child.

CHAPTER 9.

Early one morning, two years from the time of which General Thompson had restored Agnes to her mother, an elderly man was pacing backward and forward, with hurried steps, a room in one of the largest *London* hotels. He was evidently suffering from painful reflections. Sometimes he would take up from a table a small richly-set picture of a child, and gaze upon it long and earnestly; then he would lay it down with a sigh, and continue his walk, but more hurriedly than ever. At length he sat down beside the table, and again fixed his eyes upon the picture.

“Dear, dear child!” he murmured, in a low, broken voice. “Shall I never look upon your living face again? Living!” he added with a shudder, as a new thought flashed across his mind. “How do I know whether she be living or dead! Heaven be merciful!” he continued, his face assuming an expression of terror. “What if she is dead!” and again a nervous shudder went thrilling through his frame.

For some time he sat leaning his head upon his hand, as if debating some question, and still irresolute about coming to a decision.

“I have been a fool, a madman!” he at length muttered to himself.

“Yes, *worse* than a fool or a madman!” he added, after a few moments’ pause.

“I will see my child!” he at length said, springing suddenly to his feet, as if he had consummated a growing resolution, by a sudden and violent effort.

Three days from that time, saw him on board of a New York boat, gently gliding down the Thames. His eyes were not cast back upon the mighty city he was leaving, but eagerly forward; measuring with his eye, the distance from object to object, which indicated the progress of the vessel. Now that he had resolved to cross the ocean, he was all eagerness to hurry on his way. Morning after morning, would he seek the deck of the vessel, even when but a few days out, and strain his eyes musingly, and with a vague hope of land in his mind, far over the billows. Thirty days of pleasant weather brought him safely into New York. It was but an hour before the Philadelphia steamboat was to start, when the vessel arrived; when the steamboat drew off, the old man was one of her passengers.

It was night, owing to an unusual detention on the day after, when he arrived in Bolton, and he was fast failing in strength under the powerful excitement of mind which had prevailed since he left London.

Just at nine o’clock, a carriage brought him to the door of Mrs. Watson’s pleasant dwelling. He was trembling all over like a leaf.

“Where is Mrs. Watson?” he asked of the servant who opened the door.

“She is in her chamber,” said the servant, in surprise at the strange earnestness and demanding tone of the question.

Without pausing, he glided by the servant, and hurried upstairs. Just as he placed his hand upon the lock of the door, he heard a voice, and he was suddenly impressed with a desire to listen.

It was the voice of Mrs. Watson. And the tones were those of prayer.

“And my *dear father*,” she said, “wherever he may be — O send him consolation! Soften his heart, and, if it be Your will, grant that we may yet meet, before we die.”

“Your prayer is answered, Emily,” said her father, for it was he, throwing open the door, and staggering toward her with extended arms.

Instantly springing to her feet, in momentary alarm, Mrs. Watson turned toward the door. One glance told all — and, in the next moment, father and child were clasped in each other’s arms.

“O grandfather!” cried Agnes, by which name her mother continued to call her, as soon as she perceived who was the intruding stranger, also starting forward.

“Do I indeed see that angel face again!” he said, disengaging an arm that was around his daughter, and drawing Agnes to his bosom. “I could not live without you, my dear child! and so I have come back, to go away no more.”

This was said in a broken voice, while the tears wandered down his time-worn cheeks. Two years of intense and almost constant *struggles of pride against affection; of reason against blind and powerful passion* — had done more to break down and enfeeble his frame than twenty years of a life unmarked by such fierce contests with cherished evils. His head had whitened, his cheeks had become sunken and pale, and his body was slightly bent.

How wild and tremulous was the joy that fluttered through the heart of Mrs. Watson! Two years of calm devotion to her child, so unexpectedly restored to her, with the earnest cultivation of a Christian principle, had restored her mind to a sober and rational perception of the *good* and the *true*, in all things. She was no longer the *slave of passions and feelings* which found excitement in false perceptions. She had passed through the *fires of affliction*, and out of them she had come with the *dross of her character consumed*, and the *gold refined*. Now, the joy of her heart, although it swelled almost into ecstasy, was not a *selfish* joy at the restoration and reconciliation which had taken place. It looked to the happiness of her father, as well as to her own delight.

“I am so happy!” she said, after they were all calmer, and had become seated, leaning her head back upon her father’s bosom, and looking up into his face, while the tears of joy rolled from her eyes.

“How can you ever *forgive* me?” he said, “for — ”

“Don’t speak of that, dear father,” she said, hastily. “Out of the *painful afflictions of the past* — we have all come wiser and better. All these things may have been *necessary* for our good. Let us now forget them. We have the present to improve and to enjoy. I needed only your return to be happy. May our presence restore you to all lost delights.”

General Thompson did not reply, for his tongue could not have obeyed the impulse of his thoughts, but he bent down and kissed the cheek of his child with fervor.

But I will dwell no longer on this *scene of joy*. General Thompson had sought, in *travel*, to wean his thoughts and feelings from their intense and yearning desire for the presence of his grandchild, whose gentle spirit had touched his heart with unusual tenderness. But he sought in vain. Gradually, his abiding state of unhappiness purified, in a good degree, his *moral perceptions* — and he was led to see and to shudder at the wickedness and cruelty he had so wantonly indulged. An emotion of *pity* for the *child* he had so injured, begat some feeble touches of affection; and these increased, until he was at last forced back, as the reader has seen, to consummate the eager wishes of himself and his children.

The introduction of Mrs. Watson into the Alms-House, under circumstances so distressing, was one among the most singular of those reverses of fortune, to which nearly *all* who found their way there had been subject. The knowledge of it prevailed, I believe, in certain circles; but it was not known in the city generally. Few who saw her afterward, with her beautiful daughter, moving in the most select and intelligent circles in Bolton, would have dreamed of such a passage in her life. She was ever cheerful in conversation, and pleasant and easy in manners. But the *shadow* which had been so long reflected upon her brow, never became entirely effaced, though every passing year softened it more and more.

Old General Thompson has been dead many years. Agnes married a rich southern planter, several years ago, and, with her mother, removed to the South. Where they are, or what is their condition — I know not.

And here the curtain drops.

THE END.