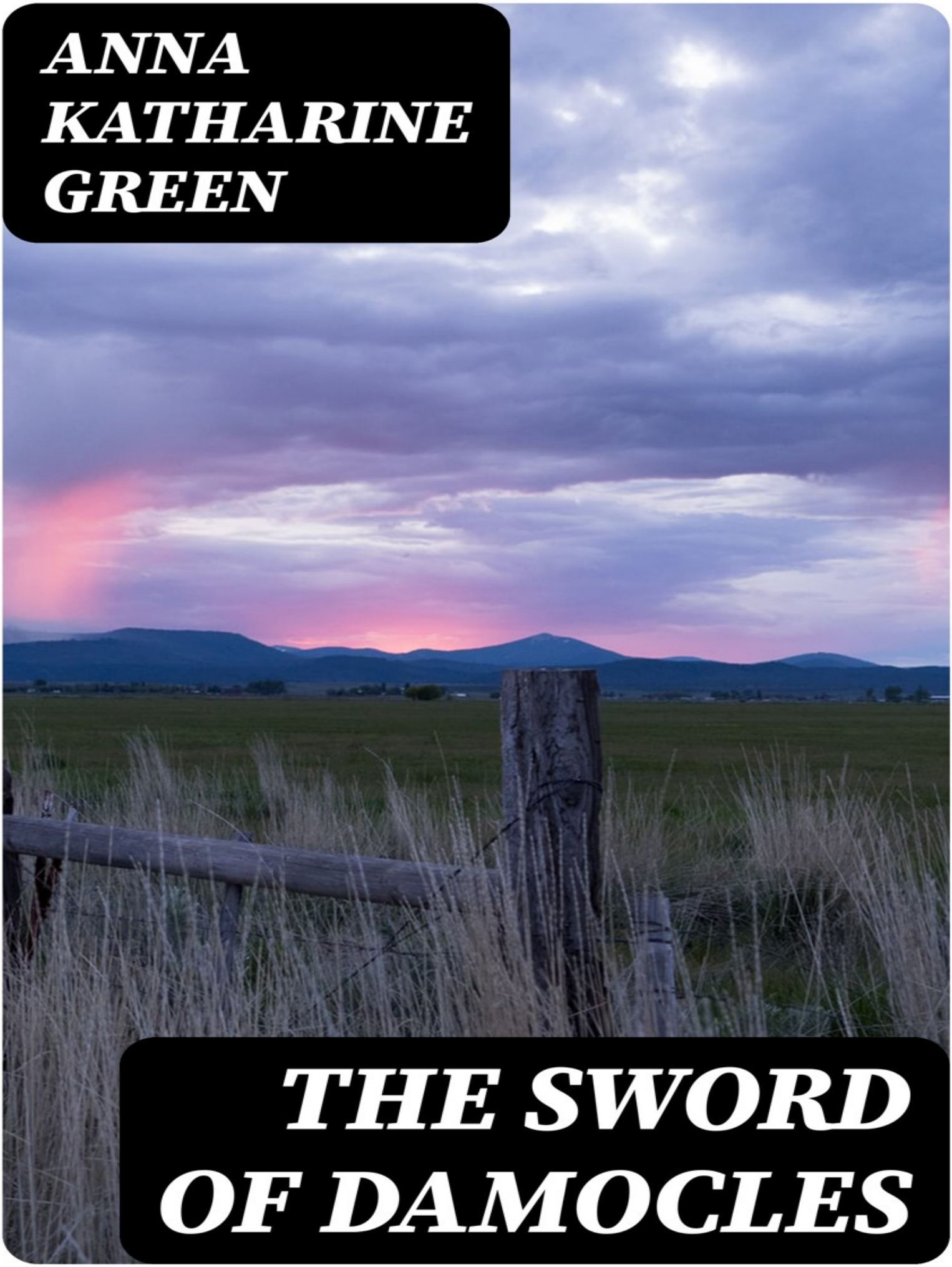
ANNA KATHARINE GREEN
THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES

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# THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES

**Anna Katharine Green**

# The Sword of Damocles

## A Story of New York Life

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# Table of Contents

# BOOK I.

Table of Contents

# TWO MEN.

Table of Contents

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# I.

Table of Contents

# A WANDERER.

Table of Contents

"There's no such word."—BULWER.

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A wind was blowing through the city. Not a gentle and balmy zephyr, stirring the locks on gentle ladies' foreheads and rustling the curtains in elegant boudoirs, but a chill and bitter gale that rushed with a swoop through narrow alleys and forsaken courtyards, biting the cheeks of the few solitary wanderers that still lingered abroad in the darkened streets.

In front of a cathedral that reared its lofty steeple in the midst of the squalid houses and worse than squalid saloons of one of the dreariest portions of the East Side, stood the form of a woman. She had paused in her rush down the narrow street to listen to the music, perhaps, or to catch a glimpse of the light that now and then burst from the widely

swinging doors as they opened and shut upon some tardy worshipper.

She was tall and fearful looking; her face, when the light struck it, was seared and desperate; gloom and desolation were written on all the lines of her rigid but wasted form, and when she shuddered under the gale, it was with that force and abandon to which passion lends its aid, and in which the soul proclaims its doom.

Suddenly the doors before her swung wide and the preacher's voice was heard: "Love God and you will love your fellow-men. Love your fellow-men and you best show your love to God."

She heard, started, and the charm was broken. "Love!" she echoed with a horrible laugh; "there is no love in heaven or on earth!"

And she swept by, and the winds followed and the darkness swallowed her up like a gulf.

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# II.

Table of Contents

# A DISCUSSION.

Table of Contents

"Young men think old men fools, and old men know young men to be so."—RAY'S PROVERBS.

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"And you are actually in earnest?"

"I am."

The first speaker, a fine-looking gentleman of some forty years of age, drummed with his fingers on the table before him and eyed the face of the young man who had repeated this assent so emphatically, with a certain close scrutiny indicative of surprise.

"It is an unlooked-for move for you to make," he remarked at length. "Your success as a pianist has been so decided, I confess I do not understand why you should desire to abandon a profession that in five years' time has procured you both competence and a very enviable reputation—for the doubtful prospects of Wall Street, too!" he added with a deep and thoughtful frown that gave still further impressiveness to his strongly marked features.

The young man with a sweep of his eye over the luxurious apartment in which they sat, shrugged his shoulders with that fine and nonchalant grace which was one of his chief characteristics.

"With such a pilot as yourself, I ought to be able to steer clear of the shoals," said he, a frank smile illumining a face that was rather interesting than handsome.

The elder gentleman did not return the smile. Instead of that he remained gazing at the ample coal-fire that burned in the grate before him with a look that to the young musician was simply inexplicable. "You see the ship in haven," he murmured at last; "but do not consider what storms it has weathered or what perils escaped. It is a voyage I would encourage no son of mine to undertake."

"Yet you are not the man to shrink from danger or to hesitate in a course you had marked out for yourself, because of the struggle it involved or the difficulties it

presented!" the young man exclaimed almost involuntarily as his glance lingered with a certain sort of fascination on the powerful brow and steady if somewhat melancholy eye of his companion.

"No; but danger and difficulty should not be sought, only subdued when encountered. If you were driven into this path, I should say, 'God pity you!' and hold you out my hand to steady you along its precipices and above its sudden quicksands. But you are not driven to it. Your profession offers you the means of an ample livelihood while your good heart and fair talents insure you ultimate and honorable success, both in the social and artistic world. For a man of twenty-five such prospects are not common and he must be difficult to please not to be satisfied with them."

"Yes," said the other rising with a fitful movement but instantly sitting again; "I have nothing to complain of as the world goes, only—Sir," he exclaimed with a sudden determination that lent a force to his features they had hitherto lacked, "you speak of being driven into a certain course; what do you mean by that?"

"I mean," returned the other; "forced by circumstances to enter a line of business to which many others, if not all others are preferable."

"You speak strongly, speculation evidently has none of your sympathy, notwithstanding the favorable results which have accrued to you from it. But excuse me, by circumstances you mean poverty, I suppose, and the lack of every other opening to wealth and position. You would not consider the desire to make a large fortune in a short space

of time a circumstance of a sufficiently determining nature to reconcile you to my entering Wall Street speculation?"

The elder gentleman rose, not as the other had done with a restless impulse quickly subsiding at the first excuse, but forcibly and with a feverish impatience that to appearance was somewhat out of proportion to the occasion. "A large fortune in a short space of time!" he reiterated, pausing where he had risen with an eagle glance at his companion and a ringing tone in his voice that bespoke a deep but hitherto suppressed agitation. "It is the alluring inscription above the pitfall into which many a noble youth has fallen; the battle-cry to a struggle that has led many a strong man the way of ruin; the guide-post to a life whose feverish days and sleepless nights offer but poor compensation for the sudden splendors and as sudden reverses attached to it. I had rather you had accounted for this sudden freak of yours by the strongest aspiration after power than by this cry of the merely mercenary man who in his desire to enjoy wealth, prefers to win it by a stroke of luck rather than conquer it by a life of endeavor." He stopped. "I am aware that this tirade against the ladder by which I myself have risen so rapidly, must strike you as in ill-taste. But Bertram, I am interested in your welfare and am willing to incur some slight charge of inconsistency in order to insure it," and here he turned upon his companion with that expression of extreme gentleness which lent such a peculiar charm to his countenance and explained perhaps the almost unlimited power he held over the hearts and minds of those who came within the circle of his influence.

"You are very good, sir," murmured his young friend, who to explain matters at once was in reality the nephew of this Wall Street magnate, though from the fact of his having taken another name on entering the musical profession, was not generally known as such. "No one, not even my father himself, could have been more considerate and kind; but I do not think you understand me, or rather I should say I do not think I have made myself perfectly intelligible to you. It is not for the sake of wealth itself or the eclat attending its possession that I desire an immediate fortune, but that by means of it I may attain another object dearer than wealth, and more precious than my career."

The elder gentleman turned quickly, evidently much surprised, and cast a sudden inquiring glance at his nephew, who blushed with a modest ingenuousness pleasing to see in one so well accustomed to the critical gaze of his fellow-men.

"Yes," said he, as if in answer to that look, "I am in love."

A deep silence for a moment pervaded the apartment, a sombre silence almost startling to young Mandeville, who had expected some audible expression to follow this announcement if only the good-natured "Pooh! pooh!" of the matured man of the world in the presence of ardent youthful enthusiasm. What could it mean? Looking up he encountered his uncle's eye fixed upon him with the last expression he could have anticipated seeing there, namely that of actual and unmistakable alarm.

"You are displeased," Mandeville exclaimed. "You have thought me proof against such a passion, or perhaps you do not believe in the passion itself!" Then with a sudden

remembrance of the notable if somewhat indolent loveliness of his uncle's wife, blushed again at his unusual want of tact, while his eye with an involuntary impulse sought the large panel at their right where, in the full bloom of her first youth, the lady of the house smiled upon all beholders.

"I do not believe in that passion influencing a man's career," his uncle replied with no apparent attention to the other's embarrassment. "A woman needs be possessed of uncommon excellences to justify a man in leaving a path where success is certain, for one where it is not only doubtful but if attained must bring many a regret and heart-ache in its train. Beauty is not sufficient," he went on with sterner and sterner significance, "though it were of an angelic order. There must be worth." And here his mind's eye if not that of his bodily sense, certainly followed the glance of his companion.

"I believe there is worth," the young man replied; "certainly, it is not her beauty that charms me. I do not even know if she *is* beautiful," he continued.

"And you believe you love!" the elder exclaimed after another short pause.

There was so much of bitterness in the tone in which this was uttered, that Mandeville forgot its incredulity. "I think I must," returned he with a certain masculine naïveté not out of keeping with his general style of face and manner, "else I should not be here. Three weeks ago I was satisfied with my profession, if not enthusiastic over it; to-day I ask nothing but to be allowed to enter upon some business that in three years' time at least will place me where I can be the fit mate of any woman in this land, that is not worth her millions."

"The woman for whom you have conceived this violent attachment is, then, above you in social position?"

"Yes, sir, or so considered, which amounts to the same thing, as far as I am concerned."

"Bertram, I have lived longer than you and have seen much of both social and domestic life, and I tell you no woman is worth such a sacrifice on the part of a man as you propose. No woman of to-day, I should say; our mothers were different. The very fact that this young lady of whom you speak, obliges you to change your whole course of life in order to obtain her, ought to be sufficient to prove to you —" He stopped suddenly, arrested by the young man's lifted hand. "She does not oblige you, then?"

"Not on her own account, sir. This lily," lifting a vase of blossoms at his elbow, "could not be more innocent of the necessities that govern the social circle it adorns, than the pure, single-minded girl to whom I have dedicated what is best and noblest in my manhood. It is her father—"

"Ah, her father!"

"Yes, sir," the young man pursued, more and more astonished at the other's tone. "He is a man who has a right to expect both wealth and position in a son-in-law. But I see I shall have to tell you my story, sir. It is an uncommon one and I never meant that it should pass my lips, but if by its relation I can win your sympathy for a pure and noble passion, I shall consider the sacred seal of secrecy broken in a good cause. But," said he, seeing his uncle cast a short and uneasy glance at the door, "perhaps I am interrupting you. You expect some one!"

"No," said his uncle, "my wife is at church; I am ready to listen."

The young man gave a hurried sigh, cast one look at his companion's immovable face, as if to assure himself that the narrative was necessary, then leaned back and in a steady business-like tone that softened, however, as he proceeded, began to relate as follows:

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# III.

Table of Contents

# A MYSTERIOUS SUMMONS.

Table of Contents

"Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin."—DRYDEN.

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It was after a matinée performance at —— Hall some two weeks ago that I stopped to light a cigar in the small corridor leading to the back entrance. I was in a dissatisfied frame of mind. Something in the music I had been playing or the manner in which it had been received had touched unwonted chords in my own nature. I felt alone. I remember asking myself as I stood there, what it all amounted to? Who of all the applauding crowd would watch at my bedside through a long and harassing sickness, or lend their sympathy as they now yielded their praise, if instead of carrying off the honors of the day I had failed to do justice to my reputation. I was just smiling over the only exception I

could make to this sweeping assertion, that of the pale-eyed youth you have sometimes observed dogging my steps, when Briggs came up to me.

"There is a woman here, sir, who insists on seeing you; she has been waiting through half the last piece. Shall I tell her you are coming out?"

"A woman!" exclaimed I, somewhat surprised, for my visitors are not apt to be of the gentler sex.

"Yes sir, an old one. She seems very anxious to speak to you. I could not get rid of her no how."

I hurried forward to the muffled figure which he pointed out cowering against the wall by the door. "Well, my good woman, what do you want?" I asked, bending towards her in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the face she held partly concealed from me.

"Are you Mr. Mandeville?" she inquired in a tone shaken as much by agitation as age.

I bowed.

"The one who plays upon the piano?"

"The very same," I declared.

"You are not deceiving me," she went on, looking up with a marked anxiety plainly visible through her veil. "I haven't seen you play and couldn't contradict you, but—"

"Here!" said I calling to Briggs with a kindly look at the old woman, "help me on with my coat, will you?"

The "Certainly, Mr. Mandeville," with which he complied seemed to reassure her, and as soon as the coat was on and he was gone, she grasped me by the arm and drew my ear down to her mouth.

"If you are Mr. Mandeville, I have a message for you. This letter," slipping one into my hand, "is from a young lady, sir. She bade me give it to you myself. She is young and pretty," she pursued as she saw me make a movement of distaste, "and a lady. We depend upon your honor, sir."

I acknowledge that my first impulse was to fling her back the note and leave the building; I was in no mood for trifling, my next to burst into a laugh and politely hand her to the door, my last and best, to open the poor little note and see for myself whether the writer was a lady or not. Proceeding to the door, for it was already twilight in the dim passage way, I tore open the envelope which was dainty enough and took out a sheet of closely written paper. A certain qualm of conscience assailed me as I saw the delicate chirography it disclosed and I was tempted to thrust it back and return it unread to the old woman now trembling in the corner. But curiosity overcame my scruples, and hastily unfolding the sheet I read these lines:

> "I do not know if what I do is right; I am sure aunty would not say it was; but aunty never thinks anything is right but going to church and reading the papers to papa. I am just a little girl who has heard you play, and who would think the world was too beautiful, if she could hear you say to her just once, some of the kind things you must speak every day to the persons who know you. I do not expect very much—you must have a great many friends, and you would not care for me—but the least little look, if it were all my own, would make me so happy and so proud I should not envy anybody in

the world, unless it was some of those dear friends who see you always.

"I do not come and hear you play often, for aunty thinks music frivolous, but I am always hearing you no matter where I am, and it makes me feel as if I were far away from everybody, in a beautiful land all sunshine and flowers. But nurse says I must not write so much or you will not read it, so I will stop here. But if you *would* come it would make some one happier than even your beautiful music could do."

That was all; there was neither name nor date. A child's epistle, written with a woman's circumspection. With mingled sensations of doubt and curiosity I turned back to the old woman who stood awaiting me with eager anxiety.

"Was this written by a child or woman?" I asked, meeting her eye with as much sternness as I could assume.

"Don't ask me—don't ask me anything. I have promised to bring you if I could, but I cannot answer any questions."

I stepped back with an incredulous laugh. Here was evidently an adventure. "You will at least tell me where the young miss lives," said I, "before I undertake to fulfil her request."

She shook her head. "I have a carriage at the door, sir," said she. "All you have got to do is to get into it with me and we shall soon be at the house."

I looked from her face to the letter in my hand, and knew not what to think. The spirit of simplicity and ingenuousness that marked the latter was scarcely in keeping with this air of mystery. The woman observing my hesitation moved towards the door.

"Will you come, sir?" she inquired. "You will not regret it. Just a moment's talk with a pretty young girl—surely—"

"Hush," said I, hearing a hasty step behind me. And sure enough just then my intimate friend Selby came along and grasping me by the arm began dragging me towards the door. "You are my property," said he. "I've promised, on my word of honor as a gentleman and a musician, to bring you to the Handel Club this afternoon. I was afraid you had escaped me, but—" Here he caught sight of the small black figure halting in the door-way, and paused.

"Who's this?" said he.

I hesitated. For one instant the scale of my whole future destiny hung trembling in the balance, then the demon of curiosity got the better of my judgment, and with the rather unworthy consideration that I might as well enjoy my youth while I could, I released myself from my friend's detaining hand and replied, "Some one with whom I have very particular business. I cannot go to the Handel Club to-day," and darting out without further delay, I rejoined the old woman on the sidewalk.

Without a word she drew me towards a carriage I now observed standing by the curbstone a few feet to the left. As I got in I remember pausing a moment to glance at the man on the box, but it was too dark for me to perceive anything but the fact that he was dressed in livery. More and more astonished I leaned back in my seat and endeavored to open conversation with my mysterious companion. But it did not work. Without being actually rude, she parried my questions in such a way that by the end of five minutes I found myself as far from any knowledge of the real situation

of the case as when I started. I therefore desisted from any further attempts and turned to look out, when I made a discovery that for the first time awoke some vague feelings of alarm within my breast. This was, that the window was not covered by a curtain as I supposed, but by closed blinds which when I tried to raise them resisted all my efforts to do so.

"It is very close here," I muttered, in some sort of excuse for this display of uneasiness. "Cannot you give us a little air?" But my companion remained silent, and I felt ashamed to press the matter though I took advantage of the darkness to remove to a safer place a roll of money which I had about me.

Yet I was far from being really anxious, and did not once meditate backing out of an adventure that was at once so piquant and romantic. For by this time I became conscious from the sounds about me that we had left the side street for one of the avenues and were then proceeding rapidly up town. Listening, I heard the roll of omnibuses and the jingle of car-bells, which informed me that we were in Broadway, no other avenue in the city being traversed by both these methods of conveyance. But after awhile the jingle ceased and presently the livelier sounds of constant commotion inseparable from a business thoroughfare, and we entered what I took to be Madison Avenue at Twenty-third Street.

Instantly I made up mind to notice every turn of the carriage, that I might fix to some degree the locality towards which we were tending. But it turned but once and that after a distance of steady travelling that quite overthrew any calculation I was able to make at that time of the probable

number of streets we had passed since entering the avenue. Having turned, it went but about half a block to the left when it stopped. "I shall see where I am when I get out," thought I; but in this I was mistaken.

First we had stopped in the middle of a block of houses built, as far as I could judge, all after one model. Next the fact of the front door being open, though I saw no one in the hall, somewhat disconcerted me, and I hurried across the sidewalk and up the stoop in a species of maze hardly to be expected from one of my naturally careless disposition. The next moment the door closed behind me and I found myself in a well-lighted hall whose quiet richness betokened it as belonging to a private dwelling of no mean pretensions to elegance.

This was the first surprise I received.

"Follow me," said the old woman, hurrying me down the hall and into a small room at the end. "The young lady will be here in a moment," and without lifting her veil or affording me the least glimpse of her features, she retired, leaving me to face the situation before me as best I might.

It was anything but a pleasant one as it appeared to me at that moment, and for an instant I seriously thought of retracing my steps and leaving a domicile into which I had been introduced in such a mysterious manner. Then the quiet aspect of the room, which though sparsely furnished with a piano and chairs was still of an order rarely seen out of gentlemen's houses, struck my imagination and reawakened my curiosity, and nerving myself to meet whatever interview might be accorded me, I waited. It was only five minutes by the small clock ticking on the mantel-

piece, but it seemed an hour before I heard a timid step at the door, and saw it swing slowly open, disclosing—well, I did not stop to inquire whether it was a child or a woman. I merely saw the shrinking modest form, the eager blushing face, and bowed almost to the ground in a sudden reverence for the sublime innocence revealed to me. Yes, it did not take a second look to read that tender countenance to its last guileless page. Had she been a woman of twenty-five I could not have mistaken her expression of pure delight and timid interest, but she was only sixteen, as I afterwards learned, and younger in experience than in age.

Closing the door behind her, she stood for a moment without speaking, then with a deepening of the blush which was only a child's embarrassment in the presence of a stranger, looked up and murmured my name with a word or so of grateful acknowledgment that would have called forth a smile on my lips if I had not been startled by the sudden change that passed over her features when she met my eyes. Was it that I showed my surprise too plainly, or did my admiration manifest itself in my gaze? an admiration great as it was humble, and which was already of a nature such as I had never before given to girl or woman. Whatever it was, she no sooner met my look than she paused, trembled, and started back with a confused murmur, through which I plainly heard her whisper in a low distressed tone, "Oh, what have I done!"

"Called a good friend to your side," said I in the frank, brotherly way I thought most likely to reassure her. "Do not be alarmed, I am only too happy to meet one who evidently enjoys music so well."

But the hidden chord of womanhood had been struck in the child's soul, and she could not recover herself. For an instant I thought she would turn and flee, and struck as I was with remorse at my reckless invasion of this uncontaminated temple, I could not but admire the spirited picture she presented as, with form half turned and face bent back, she stood hesitating on the point of flight.

I did not try to stop her. "She shall follow her own impulse," said I to myself, but I felt a vague relief that was deeper than I imagined, when she suddenly relinquished her strained attitude, and advancing a step or so began to murmur:

"I did not know—I did not realize I was doing what was so very wrong. Young ladies do not ask gentlemen to come and see them, no matter how much they desire to make their acquaintance. I see it now; I did not before. Will you—can you forgive me?"

I smiled; I could not help it. I could have taken her to my heart and soothed her as I would a child, but the pallor of womanhood, which had replaced the blush of the child, awed me and made my own words come hesitatingly.

"Forgive you? You must forgive me! It was as wrong for me," I went on with a wild idea of not mincing matters with this pure soul, "to obey your innocent request, as it was for you to make it. I am a man of the world and know its *convenances*; you are very young."

"I am sixteen," she murmured.

The abrupt little confession, implying as it did her determination not to accept any palliation of her conduct

which it did not deserve, touched me strangely. "But very young for that," I exclaimed.

"So aunty says, but no one can ever say it any more," she answered. Then with a sudden gush, "We shall never see each other again, and you must forget the motherless girl who has met you in a way for which she must blush through life. It is no excuse," she pursued hurriedly, "that nurse thought it was all right. She always approves of everything I do or want to do, especially if it is anything aunt would be likely to forbid. I have been spoiled by nurse."

"Was nurse the woman who came for me?" I asked.

She nodded her head with a quick little motion inexpressibly charming. "Yes, that was nurse. She said she would do it all, I need only write the note. She meant to give me a pleasure, but she did wrong."

"Yes," thought I, "how wrong you little know or realize." But I only said, "You must be guided by some one with more knowledge of the world after this. Not," I made haste to add, struck by the misery in her child eyes, "that any harm has been done. You could not have appealed to the friendship of any one who would hold you in greater respect than I. Whether we meet again or not, my memory of you shall be sweet and sacred, I promise you that."

But she threw out her hand with a quick gesture. "No, do not remember me. My only happiness will lie in the thought you have forgotten." And the last remnants of the child soul vanished in that hurried utterance. "You must go now," she continued more calmly. "The carriage that brought you is at the door; I must ask you to take it back to your home."

"But," I exclaimed with a wild and unbearable sense of sudden loss as she laid her hand on the knob of the door, "are we to part like this? Will you not at least trust me with your name before I go?"

Her hand dropped from the knob as if it had been hot steel, and she turned towards me with a slow yearning motion that whatever it betokened set my heart beating violently. "You do not know it, then?" she inquired.

"I know nothing but what this little note contains," I replied, drawing her letter from my pocket.

"Oh, that letter! I must have it," she murmured; then, as I stepped towards her, drew back and pointing to the table said, "Lay it there, please."

I did so, whereupon something like a smile crossed her lips and I thought she was going to reward me with her name, but she only said, "I thank you; now you know nothing;" and almost before I realized it she had opened the door and stepped into the hall.

As I made haste to follow her, the sound of a low, "He is a gentleman, he will ask no questions," struck my ear, and looking up, I saw her just leaving the side of the old nurse who stood evidently awaiting me half down the hall. Bowing with formal ceremony, I passed her by and proceeded to the front door. As I did so I caught one glimpse of her face. It had escaped from all restraint and the expression of the eyes was overpowering. I subdued a wild impulse to leap back to her side, and stepped at once over the threshold. The nurse joined me, and together we went down the stoop to the street.

"May I inquire where you wish to be taken?" she asked.

I told her, and she gave the order to the coachman, together with a few words I did not hear; then stepping back she waited for me to get in. There was no help for it. I gave one quick look behind me, saw the front door close, realized how impossible it would ever be for me to recognize the house again, and placed my foot on the carriage step. Suddenly a bright idea struck me, and hastily dropping my cane I stepped back to pick it up. As I did so I pulled out a bit of crayon I chanced to have in my pocket, and as I stooped, chalked a small cross on the curbstone directly in front of the house, after which I recovered my cane, uttered some murmured word of apology, jumped into the carriage and was about to shut the door, when the old nurse stepped in after me and quietly closed it herself. By the pang that shot through my breast as the carriage wheels left the house, I knew that for the first time in my life, I *loved*.

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# IV.

Table of Contents

# SEARCHINGS.

Table of Contents

"Patience, and shuffle the cards."—CERVANTES.

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If I had expected anything from the presence in the carriage of the woman who had arranged this interview, I was doomed to disappointment. Reticent before, she was absolutely silent now, sitting at my side like a grim statue or

a frozen image of watchfulness, ready to awake and stop me if I offered to open the door or make any other move indicative of a determination to know where I was, or in what direction I was going. That her young mistress in the momentary conversation they had held before our departure had succeeded in giving her some idea of the shame with which she had felt herself overwhelmed and her present natural desire for secrecy, I do not doubt, but I think now, as I thought then, that the unusual precautions taken both at that time and before, to keep me in ignorance of the young lady's identity, were due to the elderly woman's own consciousness of the peril she had invoked in yielding to the wishes of her young and thoughtless mistress; a theory which, if true, argues more for the mind than the conscience of this mysterious woman. However, it is with facts we have to deal, and you will be more interested in learning what I did, than what I thought during that short ride in perfect darkness.

The mark which I had left on the curbstone behind me sufficiently showed the nature of my resolve, and when we made the first turn at the end of the block I leaned back in my seat and laying my finger on my wrist, began to count the pulsations of my blood. It was the only device that suggested itself, by which I might afterward gather some approximate notion of the distance we travelled in a straight course down town. I had just arrived at the number seven hundred and sixty-two, and was inwardly congratulating myself upon this new method of reckoning distance, when the wheels gave a lurch and we passed over a car track. Instantly all my fine calculations fell to the ground. We were

not in Madison Avenue, as I supposed; could not be, since no track crosses that avenue below Fifty-ninth Street, and we were proceeding on as we could not have done had we gained the terminus of the avenue at Twenty-third Street. Could it be that the carriage had not been turned around while I was in the house, and that we had come back by way of Fifth Avenue? I could not remember—in fact, the more I tried to think which way the horses' heads were directed when we went into the house, the more I was confused. But presently I considered that wherever we were, we certainly had not passed over the narrow strip of smooth pavement in front of the Worth monument, and therefore could not have reached Twenty-third Street by way of Fifth Avenue. We must be up town, and that track we crossed must have been at Fifty-ninth Street. And soon, as if to assure me of this, we took a turn, quickly followed at a block's length by another, after which I had no difficulty in recognizing the smooth pavement of the entrance to the Park or the roll down Fifth Avenue afterwards. "They have thought to confuse me by an extra mile or so of travel," thought I, with some complacency, "but the streets of New York are too simply laid out to lend themselves to any such easy mode of mystification." Yet I have thought since then how, with a smarter man on the box, the affair might have been conducted so as to have baffled the oldest citizen in any attempt at calculation.

When we stopped in front of the Albemarle I quietly thanked the woman who had conducted me, and stepped to the ground. Instantly the door shut behind me, the carriage