

The Gambler or the Policeman's Story

Charles Burdett

Preface

It has been the author's privilege in all the books which he has heretofore given to the public, to find all the principal incidents therein narrated, upon actual occurrences. In the present volume, he has presented a narrative, not alone *founded* on fact, but entirely and essentially true, imparted to him by an officer connected with the Police Department, the mention of whose name, would, if the author were at liberty to use it, carry a weight of conviction which a simple declaration of the author might fail to convey.

The author is not insensible to the fact, that by this acknowledgement, he has deprived himself of much of the credit which might, perhaps, be accorded to him had he permitted the work to go forth without the announcement. But he is cheerfully willing to forego that credit, under the conviction that much more of good may be effected by the perusal of a narrative of actual occurrences, than by a work of a character purely imaginative.

Few persons are perhaps fully sensible of the terrible tenacity with which the passion of gambling grows upon, and clings to those who have permitted themselves to be enticed to the gambling table. The narrative herewith presented, is intended, and the author would hope, is calculated to show forth the power of this soul-destroying habit, and the inevitable consequences which it entails upon its unfortunate victims, who, lured on from step to step by the *ignis fatuus* of hope advance gradually but surely, until they find themselves on the edge of that precipice from which it is almost impossible to recede.

To many it may seem incredible that a man situated as was the party, whom I have called James Andrews, could sink so low, and become so utterly degraded, but the every day records of the Police afford abundant evidence that such things are, and few who read the daily papers of our city, can fail to be familiar with the great number of crimes committed by parties, who acknowledge that their first lessons in vice were imparted at the gaming table.

If one man shall be warned from the indulgence of this vice by the picture here presented of actual occurrences—if one shall be convinced that the fate of James Andrews may be his own, and shall forsake the path which leads to such certain ruin here, with the promise of such a dreadful future, the author's object will have been accomplished and his labor abundantly rewarded in the conviction of having "converted one sinner from the error of his ways."

The reader will perceive that in the earlier part of the narrative the term "watchman" is used, and at the close "policeman." The occurrences detailed here, *commenced* before the organization and operation of the present admirable and efficient system of Police, and terminated during the Mayoralty of the Hon. A. H. Mickle, to whom, (having been honored by his permission,) I have inscribed the work, and who is connected with some of the transactions detailed by an intimacy inseparable from himself.

Charles Burdett

Chapter I.

One evening in the month of February, about four years previous to the commencement of this narrative, I had stationed myself in B— street, watching for a party against whom I had a warrant. While leaning against the railing of an area way, instinctively my eyes wandered to the windows of a house on the other side of the street, the curtains of which were closely drawn, and which I knew was a noted gambling house.

It was frequented by the better class of the community—by which I mean, those who, still maintaining measurably their reputation and standing in the community, scrupled not to spend at this place hours which of right belonged to their families, and lost money at the table there, which of right belonged to their creditors. While standing there I amused myself by fancying the scenes which might be even then enacting within the walls of that house, and now and then I would change my position, for it was a very cold night, and the raw north-east wind was driving furiously down the street, the precursor of the tremendous snow storm which followed in a few hours afterwards.

Having become quite chilled by standing in one place so long, I gave my arms a few good thrashings, to start the sluggish circulation, and crossed to the other side of the street, pausing for a moment directly in front of the house which I had, unwittingly as it were, been watching, and leaned listlessly against the lamp post which stood in front of the door.

I had been in that place but a very few minutes, when the door of the gambling house was opened and a gentleman rushed out, I might almost say, but he came out very hurriedly, and as he descended the steps, he caught sight of myself standing there.

Coming up to me with outstretched hands, he grasped one of my own, and exclaiming, “All right, watchman—all right,” he suddenly let my hand fall, and thrusting his own into his waistcoat pocket, he pulled out something, which he tendered to me, saying, in hurried and excited tones, “there watchey, take that,” and he pressed it in my hand. (I may here as well mention that I frequently went out at night in the dress and appliances of a watchman, a disguise which my position warranted me in assuming, and which was often rendered necessary by the peculiar nature of the duties I was called on to discharge, and in which I should have been foiled without this necessary precaution.)

“No, I thank you,” I replied, pushing back his hand, and at the same time trying to catch a glimpse of his face by the light of the lamp under which I stood, but in which I failed. “I don’t want your money—you’ll want it all yourself, if you don’t stop going to that place—you’d better leave it off, I assure you—it is a mighty bad business.”

“Oh, never fear—never fear,” he said with an air of affected gaiety— “All right; good night. I’ll take good care, I’ll engage; good night;” and he started off at a shambling, shuffling pace, which once seen could not be forgotten.

There was something so singular in the behavior and manners of the stranger as he first emerged from the gambling house, my curiosity was strongly excited to know more of him, and waiting

until he had turned into Broadway, so that I might follow him with less fear of detection, I started after him. He walked very rapidly, and I had great difficulty in keeping him in view, at all, as he crossed the Park, the dim oil lamps scarcely giving light enough to render darkness visible, and at length, in spite of all my efforts, I lost sight entirely of him, having traced him, however, as far as City Hall Place, through which street I was confident he had passed.

I cannot to this day account for the sudden and extraordinary interest excited in me by the behavior of this stranger, but it was so, and I was really sorry that I had been foiled in my endeavors to discover who he was.

I fancied that I had caught a flying glimpse of his features as we stood under the lamp in front of the gambling house, and was almost confident that I should recognize him if I ever met him again in the day time, and I had little doubt that I should soon come across him.

He had a restless, uneasy, nervous movement about him, so peculiar I never could forget or mistake that, and his shuffling, shambling gait was also singular, as was his manner of rapidly rubbing his hands together when conversing. Perhaps it struck me as more than ordinarily remarkable, from the fact that he was at that time very much excited, but whether from good or ill luck was of course more than I could divine.

For two or three nights successively, I posted myself in front of the same place, but my mysterious stranger had not made his appearance. I was sure he was inside, and on the following night I resolved to see him again if I waited the whole night. So preparing myself for a night's work, I took my station about eleven o'clock, and watched the entrance to that house with an anxiety as intense as though I expected a brother or a son to go in or come out.

This time, however, I had my labor for my pains, for though I staid there until the house was emptied of all its inmates, a fact which I knew by seeing the negro extinguish the lights, there was no sign of my man. I saw, however, some whom I knew, and who little dreamed that their going there was known to one who had it in his power to ruin them. I saw there the confidential clerk of a large house in Pearl street, who in less than a year afterwards absconded, leaving a wife to die of a broken heart, and his confiding employers to make up a loss of about seven thousand dollars, which he had abstracted from them and lost at the gambling table. I saw, too, more than one young clerk scarcely out of their teens, who were fast learning to be inbred villains. But as I have said, I did not see the man whose actions and manners had so much excited my curiosity, and for that reason I paid less attention to the others.

The next day some private business called me to the Exchange, in Wall street, and while there, waiting for a friend who had appointed to meet me, I observed a gentleman approaching the spot where I was standing, and in a moment I recognized my friend of the gambling house. The recognition was effected, not so much by seeing his features, for from the slight glance I had of them on the night when I first met him, I could not have identified him with certainty, although as I have said, I felt quite confident that I could, but that shuffling, shambling, rapid gait was not to be mistaken, nor the peculiar mode of rubbing his hands together, when talking, and which I now discovered was a habit peculiar to him, as much when engaged in the ordinary business of the day, as when excited, as I had seen him on coming from the gambling house.

This time I determined not to be foiled, and forgetting my own business, which, however, was not important, I kept my eyes on him and followed him from spot to spot, until at length he left the building and proceeded towards Pearl street, down which he turned. He entered a large wholesale dry goods store between Wall street and Coenties Slip, and I stopped at the door, where a cartman was engaged in loading his cart.

I entered into conversation with him, and framing my questions so that he could have no reason to suspect the purpose I had in view, obtained from him information that the gentleman who had just entered the store was the senior partner of the firm whose name was on the door, that his name was Andrews, and that they were doing a most prosperous business.

I was now perfectly satisfied, and it seemed as though from that moment my interest in Mr. Andrews increased—I could not tell why. I predicted for him a speedy and downward career, and determined to watch, and if possible save him, for, from the little I had seen of him, and that, too, under such singularly disadvantageous circumstances, I felt assured that he was fast becoming an infatuated gambler, and if correct in that surmise, his ruin was as certain as the rising of the sun, unless Providence should interpose to save him. And I was equally sure that he was new at the business, a fact which my long intercourse (officially) with men thus engaged, enabled me to determine from his conduct and manner.

Chapter II.

A month or more passed over, and I had thought much less of Mr. Andrews than before. Possibly it was that my curiosity in regard to him had been gratified, or else I might have had more business of my own than usual to attend to. One night, however, about six weeks after this affair, I had been to Brooklyn on business connected with an extensive robbery, and did not return until after midnight. As I turned into Broadway from Fulton street, the moon, then about two weeks old, shone full upon the Astor House, and the sight recalled to me the adventure in B— street. The night was clear and cool, and almost unconsciously I found myself, with my cap drawn over my eyes, and my coat closely buttoned up, standing in front of the same house from which I had first seen Mr. Andrews emerge. All my interest in him seemed to revive with redoubled ardor, and it appeared to me absolutely impossible to move from the spot.

I had remained there more than three hours, and was getting tired, but still I held to my post, attracted by some unknown, irresistible power. Once or twice I turned off to go home, but the impression seemed to come to me with a force and certainty for which I could not account, that Mr. Andrews was inside, and that if I would wait I should see him, possibly render him a service, though in what conceivable manner, never once entered my mind.

Patiently I maintained my position, and remained until the sky in the east was grey with the morning's dawn, and my perseverance was at last rewarded. The front door, opened and Mr. Andrews was bowed out by the polite negro, whose duty it was to admit and escort visitors from the house, and to whom I could see he gave something, a sure indication as I judged, that he had been favored with a run of luck.

As he turned from the negro to descend the steps, his eye caught my figure standing there, and approaching me rubbing his hands with great glee, he said— “All right, watchey—all right, this time.”

“Good luck, tonight?” I said inquiringly, in a hoarse and disguised voice.

“First rate— first rate,” he replied hurriedly. “Here, take this— its an X, I guess— there, good bye,” and thrusting a crumpled bill into my hand, he turned away, but paused, half turning on his heel, as I exclaimed, “Here, sir, I don’t want your money—take it back.”

“The man’s a fool,” he half muttered, putting back the bill which I handed to him. “There, good night—queer fellow that—won’t take money. Well, there’s plenty that will, when they can get it.”

“Stop one moment,” I said, advancing and laying my hand gently upon his arm, and he turned again with, “Well, what is it?” uttered rather impatiently.

“Only that you had not better go up Broadway at this time of day.”

“And why the d—l shouldn’t I go into Broadway, I should like to know,” he said, putting his face close to my own, and gazing steadily and earnestly at me as he spoke.

“Only because your cartman may be coming along, and he may know you, and may think it strange to see you out at such an hour”—I replied, returning his gaze with interest.

“You know me, then,” he said, turning full upon me and grasping my arm with all his might, for I could feel his fingers actually grinding into the flesh.

“To be sure I do,” I replied in the same gruff voice which I had assumed and kept up from the first. “To be sure I do, or I wouldn’t have told you what I have,” and I tried to shake myself loose from his grasp, but I found it impossible.

“I tell you what, my friend,” he said, fairly digging his fingers into my arm, and glaring at me under my cap, “you are no watchman—you’re in a poor business watching me here, do you know that?”

“I am a watchman,” I replied, “but if it hadn’t been for that very place,” and I pointed to the gambling house, “I’d have been as good now as you are—better than you’re like to be if you don’t stop this work. You’d better take a friend’s advice and leave off this kind of work.”

“Pshaw—confound your preaching, I know what I’m about. Hit or miss, is my motto, and I think I can take care of myself. Nothing venture nothing have—so good night, and mind your own business my fine fellow, or it may fare worse with you,” and he turned away from me with his shuffling, rapid walk.

I don't know now—in fact I never could account to myself for the interest I took in that man, for I have seen and had many individuals in my custody whose circumstances and connections in life were calculated to excite a far greater degree of interest than this stranger.

For a moment or two after he had left me, I remained standing there in front of the house, lost in my own thoughts, and I started to go home, walking slowly towards Broadway.

I had not half measured the distance when I heard the door of the gambling house shut, and in a few moments the steps of several persons approached behind me.

“He made a good haul,” said one of them, and I knew that they were conversing of Mr. Andrews. “Twenty-five hundred, wasn't it? or somewhere in that neighborhood.”

“Yes,” replied a voice which I well knew, for the speaker was the most celebrated and successful gambler in the city—one who had ruined more men, and broken up more families than any man I had ever heard of—one whose track was fairly marked, to speak metaphorically, by the blood of his victims, and I knew that if *he* was connected with Andrews, ruin must soon follow. It was the celebrated gambler, Robert W. Pearson.

“Yes,” he replied, “but its all good. You can't keep him away—he'll be in again tomorrow to win as much more—*if he can*,” he added after a pause, and with an emphasis, which I knew well how to interpret.

Robert W. Pearson, whose name I have had occasion to mention, and who bears a prominent relation to the parties thus far introduced to the reader's notice, was by courtesy called a gentleman, and by right of birth and association fully entitled to that appellation.

He was descended from a family who, in name and wealth, stood first among the worthy and respectable families in the interior of this State, and his education had been cared for with a view to the position which it was hoped he was destined ultimately to fill in society.

Soon after leaving college, where his vices had already made him an object of disgust to many, and contempt to nearly all who had watched his career, he was sent to Europe, where he passed three years in wasteful extravagance and dissipation, returning a confirmed roué, and an inveterate and most skillful gambler.

Notwithstanding his character in these regards was well known, he was admitted into the first circles: courted, flattered, and caressed, for the golden cloak which he wore was of ample dimensions to cover all his vices and evil habits, and he might at that time, notorious as he was, be seen daily walking the streets of this great metropolis, escorting some of our fairest and purest daughters.

He was, as I have said, a roué; he was worse, he was thoroughly an unprincipled libertine, and would not scruple to adopt any means, no matter how base, by which he might attain his ends. In manners he was exceedingly agreeable, for association with the refined of Europe had made him so. In conversation he was very entertaining, for he had seen and studied much of the world, and

he was one who, to guess from what could be seen and heard, from mere outward intercourse, was fully worthy of representing the highly respectable and wealthy family whose name he disgraced.

At the time of this occurrence which I have just narrated, he had only been home from Europe about a year, and in that time he had covered himself with infamy, and that not alone by his dishonorable conduct at the gaming table, but still he was courted and caressed by parents having marriageable daughters, for he was entitled to immense wealth, if he survived an aged relative, and this fact seemed to blind them to his vices.

Weeks rolled on, and I had nearly forgotten Mr. Andrews, when, one day, being in the vicinity of his store, I thought I would pass along, and see if time had wrought any change. The name of Andrews & Co. was no longer over the entrance, and I read at once the whole truth; but, to make assurance sure, I inquired of a cartman, who was standing near by, where Andrew & Co. had gone to.

“Gone to smash,” was his forcible but inelegant reply. It was enough, however; but I made a few more inquiries, and ascertained that they had made a bad failure, but that both acted very honorably, and had given up everything to their creditors. I fancied that I knew the real cause of their failure, and felt that my prediction had been fulfilled, and that Andrews, as had thousands before him, had fallen a victim to his passion for gambling.

As I was desirous of learning what had become of Mr. Andrews, I entered the store, and made some inquiries as to his whereabouts; and from the replies I learned that he was filling the station of salesman for a large house in the same line of business on the same street, and was getting a good salary.

When I left the store, I observed Andrews himself coming along from Wall street, with a bank book in his hand; but had it not been for the well-known and unmistakable gait which had at first attracted my attention, I should have failed to recognize him, so much had his appearance altered in the short space of time which had elapsed since I last saw him. He was pale and somewhat haggard, while there was that restless, uneasy, Indian-like movement of the eyes—ever wandering from one object to another, as if apprehensive that there was a hidden enemy at every step, which to me afforded sure indications of guilt. I felt that he knew it, and constantly dreaded detection; and it would not have caused me a moment’s surprise, if, at that instant, an officer had stepped up and arrested him for stealing, or some other crime.

He passed on, however, and I watched his form until it disappeared within the store of his employers, when I turned and proceeded into Wall street, occupying myself by imagining how long it would be before Mr. Andrews should be arrested for defrauding his employers, for I had quite made up my mind that such must be his fate, if he continued his visits to the gambling house, of which I had no doubt. I fixed a time in my own mind for this termination of his career, but as the sequel proved, I placed that occurrence at a period too remote.

Chapter III.

Not very long afterwards, I was seated at home before my comfortable fire, when I was told that a gentleman wished to see me on private business. Desiring the servant to show him up stairs, I told my wife she had better retire, as the business might be of a nature not proper, and which, perhaps, the visitor did not wish to have communicated to her at present, and she left the room.

In a few moments, an elderly gentleman, with the most benevolent countenance I ever beheld, entered, and at my invitation, took a seat in front of the fire.

After a few moments passed in discussing the ordinary topics of the day, such as the weather, business, &c., my visitor turned to me and said, "I have a little piece of business for you to manage, but it will require some tact."

"Had you not better let me know your name first, sir," I said, inquiringly.

"True—true," he said hurriedly; "Eldridge, sir, Eldridge & Thompson, in Pearl street. We have been robbed of quite a sum of money, and I think I have fixed upon the thief. He is a young clerk, who has been living, from what I can learn, very far beyond the salary which we allow him. I am afraid it is he, and yet I would not have his name breathed to any human being, in connection with this affair, at present."

"Have you any other reason to suspect him?" I inquired. "How is the money missing?"

"Oh! taken from the safe from time to time, and we missed it yesterday when we balanced the accounts."

"How long since you missed any?"

"Never before. We have been rather careless, perhaps, in keeping our cash loose about, but we have never been able to discover, as, indeed, we did not suspect any loss, until yesterday, as I said. In fact, we have never dreamed that any one was robbing us, and, of course we were entirely unsuspecting."

"But what induces you to suspect this clerk?" I inquired, desirous of knowing his reasons for the suspicion.

"Simply because I know he lives beyond his real means, and I am afraid he gambles," he added, in low tones, as if fearful that the very walls might overhear the accusation.

"That is bad," I said, the remembrance of Andrews coming to my mind at the moment. "How many clerks have you?"

"Four in all. There is young Partridge, whom I suspect—Bronson, the book-keeper— Jones, who acts as salesman and assistant book-keeper—and Andrews, head salesman."

"What Andrews?" I said, mastering the feelings which the mention of that name had excited.

“He used to be in business just above me, but failed, and we gave him a situation of salesman.”

“What kind of man is he? Excuse my asking so many particulars, but I don’t wish you to do anything rashly, for if I can judge from your countenance, you would be very loath to suspect any one unjustly, or to inflict a wrong upon any person, without the strongest possible reasons, and good grounds for suspicions.”

“Indeed I would—and it is very proper in you to ask. He is a very worthy man, but somewhat eccentric. I have known him a long time, and have implicit confidence in him. Besides, he has a very lovely wife and daughter looking to him, and he worships them. I wish I had more clerks like him.”

“He don’t gamble?” I said inquiringly.

“He gamble! what, Andrews! — why, I don’t believe he has been out of his house after nine o’clock, this year, except when I have kept him. Why, sir, I should think of my partner gambling as soon as Mr. Andrews.”

“Have you observed any change lately in him, Mr. Eldridge?”

“No, I can’t say I have—except, perhaps, that he is a little more restless than usual; but that is owing to his nervous temperament. He is naturally very excitable, and I can readily make allowances for so great a change in his situation in life. He was, until very lately, doing a large and prosperous business, and no doubt his failure must have operated severely on him.”

“Does he know of the money being missed?”

“No— no one but my partner knows anything about it; we thought it best not to say anything, until we had advised with some one conversant with these matters.”

“I can tell you where your money has gone,” I said, with a prompt, positive air, which quite astonished Mr. Eldridge.

“Indeed—well, you shall be abundantly rewarded,” he said. “But I don’t want any noise made about it. If that poor boy has been induced to steal, I don’t want to ruin him forever, if it can be avoided. I am sure he must have been led away by some older and more finished villains.”

“Partridge does not know anything about your money,” I said; with an air of perfect assurance.

“And pray, how do you know that?” inquired my visitor, resting his elbows on the table which was placed between us, and staring at me with an air of astonishment.

“Well, there are a great many circumstances, which to my mind, afford abundant proof that young Partridge is not the rogue. I think I had better not mention to you the person on whom I have fixed my suspicions.”

“And why not, pray?”

“I should, perhaps, go to work very differently from yourself—possibly I should not be quite so delicate about the matter as you are, and as you desire to be.”

“For that very reason I desire to know whom you suspect. I cannot permit any steps to be taken which might compromise any one in my employ, without first knowing it,” he said very earnestly.

“You will be surprised to hear me name the person on whom my suspicions are fixed—nay, the man who I am quite assured has taken your money,” I said quite confidently.

“Come, Mr. Starr, plainly—tell me whom you suspect, and don’t keep up this air of mystery,” he said, evidently uneasy and anxious to know the worst at once.

“Your money has all been lost at the gambling house in B—— street, and Andrews is the man,” I exclaimed, and I became so excited by the conviction of certainty that I was right, which seized me at that moment, I brought my hand down upon the table with a force which made the lamps on it jump again.

Mr. Eldridge was so completely taken by surprise at my abrupt and unexpected accusation of one who had never for an instant been suspected, he sat motionless, but I could see by his countenance how very loath he was to fall in with my views.

“Mr. Starr,” he said, at length, “you know your business, I have no doubt, thoroughly, but you must give me excellent reasons before I can be brought to suspect James Andrews of such, or indeed of any crime.”

“I do know my business too well to give you the same information I have in my possession. If you choose to do as I say, I can tell you—or, rather, Andrews will tell you where the money has gone, and he will name the same place as myself.”

“What! a gambling house! — oh! no, I can’t believe it,” he said with an air of incredulity, shaking his head as he spoke.

“Well, if you won’t believe it, of course I can’t make you. But we can very readily arrange it, if you will consent to do as I say, and I will risk my reputation that you will in the end say that I am right.”

“I will, on one condition,” he said hesitatingly.

“And what may that be?” I inquired.

“That you will take no action whatever, which may result in injury to any person, guilty or innocent, without my assent.”

“Oh, certainly. In the present case, a criminal prosecution would only tend to the certain ruin of the suspected and, as I believe, guilty party, without bringing you one inch nearer a recovery of your money; that is gone, past hope, unless you choose to institute civil proceedings against those who have won it from him, and even then your chances would be marvelously small.”

“You speak as if you were positively certain where the money was,” he said.

“I feel so,” was my reply. “But to my plan. Do you request Mr. Andrews, to-morrow evening, to walk with you to see a friend upon matters of business. Then bring him here, without mentioning my name, much less my profession, and leave the rest to me. The result will show that I am right.”

“Had I not better bring young Partridge with me?” said Mr. Eldridge, who clung with great pertinacity to the suspicion which he entertained of the lad’s guilt, and which I felt assured was unfounded.

“No, no— let the boy alone. If he is good for anything all, it would break his heart to be suspected of such a crime.”

“But why do you show so little consideration for Mr. Andrews?” he inquired in a tone indicating some vexation, at what I suppose he thought my hard-heartedness.

“O, he won’t mind such a trifle.”

“Umph— you call it a trifle, do you— well, we won’t say any more about it. I will bring Mr. Andrews here to-morrow evening. You will, of course, take all the responsibility of the suspicion, for mind, I am as conscious of his innocence as of my own.”

And the matter being thus arranged, on account of which Mr. Eldridge had called on me, the conversation was changed, and in a few moments he took his leave, his parting injunction being to remind me that he did not entertain the least suspicion of Andrews, and that I would, for this time, at least, be mistaken. He did not know all that I did, or his opinions might have undergone a material change in this regard.

It was about ten o’clock when Mr. Eldridge left me, and as I had nothing particular on my hands at that moment, I thought I would take a stroll down to the gambling house, and I might see Andrews. Perhaps, I might be the means of saving him, for, as I have said, I felt an interest in him, for which I could not account, but which was now increased since I had heard Mr. Eldridge speak in such warm terms of his wife and daughter.

Accordingly, I repaired to B—— street, and after looking around in one or two places in that vicinity, where I thought I might find a man against whom I had a warrant, I took my station to watch the door of the gambling house.

Soon after midnight, the door was opened, and two men came out, one of whom I at once recognized as my old acquaintance, and I judged, by the peculiar rubbing of his hands, that he had met with a run of good luck at the table.

I crossed over as they passed up to Broadway, and by the light of the gas lamp on the corner, which shone full in their faces as they turned, I recognized in the companion of Andrews, Pearson, whose remark on the previous occasion, "Yes, but its all good," had made me tremble for the fate of the person to whom he alluded.

I kept at a respectful distance, near enough to have them in my eye, and far enough remote to dispel any suspicion that I was following them if either should chance to observe me.

Chapter IV.

At the corner of Broadway and Grand street, Pearson turned down, and Andrews, when left alone, quickened his pace, and in an instant the determination came over me to accost him. I knew not why, but it seemed as though good would come of it, and without a moment's further reflection, I hurried on and soon overtook him.

As I came along by his side, he turned suddenly and merely glanced at me, expecting of course that I would pass on; but I slackened my pace to suit his own, and bade him good evening, addressing him by name.

He peered into my face inquiringly, as if endeavoring to recall my features, but failing to do so, he coldly returned the compliment and turned away.

"I am glad you were so lucky, tonight," I remarked, in a disguised voice, and as I spoke, he turned suddenly upon me and said, almost fiercely,

"And what is that to you if I was?"

"Oh, nothing— only I thought perhaps you would be glad, so that you might make up some of your heavy losses," and I watched him closely as I uttered these words.

"Look here, Mister, I suppose you've got a name, though I don't care for hearing it," and he paused in his walk, facing me so that the gas light opposite to which we were standing shone full upon his ghastly face, —"if you've got any business of your own to attend to, you had better be about it— your room is better than your company."

"It generally is with persons situated as you are. Just now, however, I fancy it may be useful to you, and for that reason I am here."

"I can do very well without it—good night," he replied, and was moving onward, when I laid my hand rather heavily upon his shoulder and said with sternness, "Mr. Andrews, it may be the worse for you that you refuse to listen to me now. I may say unpleasant things, but solely for your good. My name is of very little consequence just now; you may hear it some of these days,

when I shall not have the power or inclination to serve you as at present. I speak as a friend, though you do not know me, and for that reason doubt me I have good reason to believe that at the present moment a most serious crime has been laid to your charge, and I desire to be of assistance to you.”

“Me, sir—crime,” he said,” and I could feel that he trembled violently. “Do you know to whom you are speaking?”

“Perfectly—I have not been watching your course these many months without an object, and however you may feel disposed to doubt me, I assure you that object has been solely to serve you. Now let me advise you as a friend, to go to Mr. Eldridge the first thing in the morning, confess your guilt, and throw yourself on his mercy. “You see,” I continued, “I know more of your affairs than you think I do.”

“Oh God—oh God, what have I come to?” exclaimed the unfortunate man, completely overcome by hearing this discovery of his criminality so unexpectedly made known, at such an hour, and under such extraordinary circumstances— alone in the streets of New York, and at an hour when the stillness of the grave pervaded everything. For an instant he covered his eyes with his hands, as if to shut out the shocking reality, and seeing how dreadfully he was agitated, I took hold of his arm gently, and said,

“Come, come, Mr. Andrews, I know it is a bad business, but it might have been much worse. Now, do you follow my advice and it might yet be well with you.”

“I cannot—I dare not,” he exclaimed, with frantic eagerness.

“But what do you propose to do? Of course you will pay back what you won tonight.”

“Look here, Mr. Blank, for I suppose that must be your name,” he said, suddenly changing his tone, and grasping in turn my arms with a power to which I thought him unequal,—“you seem to know a great deal about my business—you have made a fool of me once, now go your way or it will be the worse for you. I don’t feel like being trifled with just now,” and flinging me off with a force that fairly staggered me, he moved on.

Seeing him so determined to have his own way, I made no farther effort to change his purpose, but after gazing sadly at his receding form until it was lost to my sight, I returned to my house, quite convinced that before the same hour on the morrow, he would bitterly repent of his present conduct.

I may remark here, that as I often had occasion to go out at times and in places where a strict incognito was necessary, as well for my personal safety, as for the success of my plans, I had various disguises for those occasions, and at this time my face, naturally innocent of any quantity of beard, was ornamented with a huge pair of whiskers, matching a red wig which concealed my own hair; and in other respects my personal appearance was so altered that my most intimate friend must have failed to recognize me, except upon the closest scrutiny.

On the following evening Mr. Eldridge came, punctual to his appointment, and accompanied as I expected, by Mr. Andrews. A few moments of ordinary conversation sufficed to set Mr. Andrews somewhat at his ease, for I noticed that on his first entrance he made great efforts to conceal his agitation.

“Now, Mr. Starr,” said Mr. Eldridge, “let us proceed to business. Mr. Andrews, I have brought you here at the request of Mr. Starr—we have discovered recently that a considerable sum has been abstracted from the store and my suspicions are fixed on one of the clerks. Mr. Starr, who is a police officer of many years’ standing, and of much experience, has thought as you were principal salesman, and familiar with the clerks, you would be the proper person to advise with on this subject, and I have asked you to accompany me here at his request.”

During these remarks I watched narrowly the countenance of the person addressed, and I never felt more pity for any human being in my life. He turned pale and red by turns, and trembled so violently, Mr. Eldridge must have been blind not to have perceived his emotion.

For a few moments he maintained a profound silence, and I thought I could perceive by the workings of his features, the character of the struggle going on within. It was plain he did not recognize me, and the question which he seemed to be revolving in his own mind was, whether he had better make a full confession (for I was as certain of his guilt as that I was alive), or brave it out, and suffer some innocent party to bear the crime and consequent punishment, for he had doubtless so worked his cards, that however strongly suspicion might attach to him, it would be impossible to fix the crime on him with such certainty as to ensure his punishment.

Mr. Eldridge watched his clerk with painful anxiety, and unable longer to bear the suspense of ignorance, for his conduct had tended to strengthen the impression of his guilt, which my conversation on the previous evening had imparted to him, he said, “Why do you not speak, Mr. Andrews—you surely have no cause for apprehension.”

Mr. Andrews, whose eyes had during his silence been fixed steadily upon the carpet, now for the first time raised them, and met my gaze fixed full upon him, cold, calm, and steady. With a slight and scarcely perceptible shudder, he turned away, and for an instant looked in his employer’s countenance—it was beaming with benevolence. There was hope there; pity for the weakness which had suffered him to fall—and walking steadily up, until he almost touched his person, he said, in tremulous tones,

“Mr. Eldridge, none of your clerks have taken your money— I alone am the guilty one.”

“You, Andrews,” exclaimed Mr. Eldridge, but not so much astonished as if I had not broached my suspicions, strengthened, I am sure, in his mind by this interview. “You, Andrews! and what could have tempted you—surely, you get an abundant salary?”

“Oh, sir,” said Andrews, now completely softened, by finding that he was not at once condemned. “Oh, sir, it was the devil, I am sure—God knows I have never had one single moment of peace since I commenced robbing you. Oh, for the sake of my wife, my dear unoffending daughter, my helpless children, forgive me—do not crush me forever, for God’s

sake,” he almost screamed, so terrible was his agony, and sinking on his knees with his eyes streaming tears— “For God’s sake, do not ruin me forever.”

“Get up, James—get up,” said Mr. Eldridge, mildly. “That is no posture for any man, except to his Maker. Now let me hear how and why you have suffered yourself to commit this crime—surely you have not thought of the consequences, not alone to yourself, but to those who love you, and look to you for protection and example. How *could* you do so?”

“Oh, sir, it has been the accursed passion for gambling. But, indeed, I intended—I hoped to repay you all.”

“Yes, by stealing more to risk and lose again, That was foolish enough.”

“Oh, sir, forgive me—I will do all I can—I will make every restitution in my power. I will be your slave, but do not ruin me—do not kill my poor wife. Here, sir,” and he tore from his breast pocket a wallet, which he held out to Mr. Eldridge— “Here is more than half of all you have lost. I will work and pay you the rest, but do not ruin me;” and the poor fellow’s agony was so intense, big drops of sweat poured from his clammy forehead.

“And where did you get this?” inquired Mr. Eldridge, taking the pocket-book from his outstretched hand.

“I won it, sir, last night,” replied Andrews, hanging down his head.

“At the gambling table?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And what were you doing with it now? were you going there again, James?”

“Yes, sir, I was. I have hoped to win enough to pay back all I have taken from you, and then forswear the gambling table forever.”

“Ah, James, then it would have been too late. But I am glad you show such sincere repentance and will not be unforgiving—may God strengthen you in your good resolutions now.”

“May God bless you for it,” said Andrews, covering his face with his hands, and giving unrestrained vent to his tears and sobs— “I never— never, so may God help me, will forget it.” Then suddenly springing up, he looked around the room as if in search of something, and spying my family Bible on the table, he took it, and placed it on the floor; then kneeling on it, he made the most solemn pledge I ever heard from mortal lips, never to enter again the door of a gambling house, or to do anything by which he might forfeit his own self-respect, or the goodwill of his kind friend; and he invoked the direct curses on his head, if he should violate his pledge.

No doubt the poor fellow was sincere, but, as I looked upon him, I could not help feeling that he mistook his own position and his own feelings. He thought that his present suffering was an atonement for his crime, and that his guilt was wiped away by his present bitter remorse. For my own part, however, I did not place much confidence in the strength of the resolutions thus formed, or the sincerity of his repentance, for I knew enough of human nature to feel assured that the dread of public exposure and punishment had wrung thus much from him.

I had thus far maintained a silence through the whole transaction, preferring to let Mr. Eldridge take his own course. He had done so, and I now felt I might with propriety interpose.

“It is a pity,” I said, as Andrews rose from his knees and replaced the Bible, “that you had not done this a long time ago.”

He looked at me in astonishment, as did Mr. Eldridge, and interpreting their looks, I said to him, “Don’t you remember what I told you the night you won the twenty-five hundred dollars?”

“And you were the watchman?” he asked doubtfully.

“I was at the door when you came out, and I have watched your course ever since. I am not at all astonished at the turn matters have taken.”

“Then you did know that he gambled?” inquired Mr. Eldridge.

“I did, and warned him when he first commenced. But I hope he has done with it now.”

“I have, indeed—I have, indeed,” replied Andrews, sorrowfully, shaking his head.

“Well, I believe you, Andrews—I will try you again. Now, I want you to tell me exactly how much you have taken, and how much you have lost.”

“Here is a memorandum,” he said quickly; and pulling a card-case from his pocket, he proceeded to sum up the various amounts which he had taken from time to time, and of which it appeared he had kept a regular account. “Nine hundred and seventy dollars in all have been taken. There are a little over two hundred only to be made up, and I will work cheerfully and faithfully to make that up. Only trust me again— try me once more, and if I prove faithless, then condemn me.”

“Does your wife know of your habits?” inquired Mr. Eldridge, who felt that he had the right to ask these questions.

“She—God bless her, no. It would break her heart. I have told lies enough to her, to account for my absence at night, to sink my soul in perdition. Thank God, she believes me worthy of her love.”

“Oh, Andrews, you have had a narrow escape,” said his kind-hearted employer; “I am sorry to say, I believe there are few who would have trusted you again even for the sake of the innocent

ones whom your course would have dragged down to ruin with you. And only think how great a wrong I might have inflicted on poor little Partridge. Thank heaven, I was spared from that. You had better go home now, and come to the store in the morning. I will endeavor to forget all that has passed—but mind, Andrews” — and the old gentleman pointed his finger at him with a meaning and emphasis, which he truly interpreted.

“Oh, sir, do not doubt me—do not mistrust me—I shall never forget, and never prove unworthy of your kindness. May heaven bless you, sir,”—and wiping away the tears which had again forced themselves to his eyes, he withdrew.

“What do you think of him?” inquired Mr. Eldridge, after a pause of a few moments.

“Well, he thinks he is sincere,” was my reply. “For some time, at least, he will keep away from that house; but Pearson won’t let him go, so long as there is a chance of securing a dollar out of him. He won’t mind ruining him forever, or breaking his wife’s heart.”

“Who is this Pearson?”

“One whom I know full well— a desperate, unprincipled gambler, who has led poor Andrews on from step to step, and but for this discovery, he would have made him as bad as himself. If he can shake him off, he will do well. I shall watch him closely.”

“And you will do both of us a service. I can’t bear the thoughts of the misery he will bring upon his family, if he should forfeit his pledge. Of course you will not say anything of this matter.”

“Oh, no, certainly not; but I think it better Andrews should know that he is watched.”

“That you can arrange as you choose— poor fellow, I really pity him. Well, good night, Mr. Starr— you shall hear from me in a day or two,” and he took his departure, leaving me alone to ruminate upon the strange events with which my profession at times made me acquainted.

Chapter V.

“Mr. Starr is requested to call immediately at the store of Messrs. H. & J. No. — Pearl street.”

“Such was the tenor of a note which I received one morning, about a year after the occurrences previously narrated, while seated at the breakfast-table, and hastily finishing my meal, I proceeded to the place designated, a large silk jobbing and importing house in Pearl Street.

One of the partners, Mr. H., whom I knew by sight, was at the front door, evidently waiting for me, and as I advanced, he said, “Walk right in the back office and don’t say anything;” and I followed him thither, where Mr. J., his partner, was engaged in looking over the books.

“Here is Mr. Starr,” said Mr. H., as I entered; and Mr. J. starting up, exclaimed vehemently, “Ah, that’s right— we’ll have it now—we’ve been robbed, Mr. Starr.”

“Hush, not quite so loud, J.” said his more cautious partner; “I don’t want the boys to know that we’ve found it out yet—you’re too rash about it.”

“Oh, they’ll know it soon enough—I’ll warrant it”— he was proceeding impetuously, when his partner again interrupted him.

“Come, J., now don’t be so rash. Just tell Mr. Starr the simple facts. He will draw his own conclusions, and will come nearer the truth than either of us.”

“Well, the plain fact is, that we have been robbed of some hundreds of dollars of silks, and I don’t know but it may be thousands.”

“When was it done?” I inquired.

“That’s just what we want to know,” they both replied in a breath.

“Oh, your store has been weeded, I suppose,” I said, quite readily conceiving such to be the case.

“Been what, Mr. Starr?” they exclaimed.

“Weeded—that is, small quantities have been taken out from time to time, or as an opportunity warranted, to render discovery more improbable, and detection less possible.”

“That’s it, I’ll bet my life,” said Mr. H. “But how has it been managed, and we know nothing of it?”

“Oh, that is very easy,” I replied— “now answer me a few questions— “where and how did you first discover any loss?”

“The day before yesterday. We had an order for a lot of shawls, of which we ought to have eighty on hand; but when we came to lay them out, we found only sixty-eight. I went over the sales from the first of their arrival, and we must have had eighty left. “Of course that astonished me,” continued Mr. H., who had been the speaker, and I began to think that something else might be gone; so I took by chance a lot of silk scarfs, and on going through them, I found seven missing. Well, we have had a partial overhauling, and I find goods gone to the value of several hundred dollars, and all gone piecemeal— that is, a few from this parcel, and a few from that.”

“Yes,” I replied, “your store has been weeded, that’s plain. Now, who keeps the keys of the store?”

“I’ll call him in;” and Mr. H. started for the door to execute his purpose, but I hastily stopped him.”

“No, no— that won’t do— you must not excite any suspicion at present. Make some excuse to call the person in—send him on some errand—anything, so I can have a good look at him.”

“Edmund,” said Mr. J., going to the door; and a boy some sixteen years old entered the room. “Here, go to the bank and get that in small bills,” he continued, filling up a check, and handing it to the boy as he came in.

The lad was a bright-eyed, shrewd-looking youth, showily dressed, but not bearing any particular indications of depravity. He might be the guilty one, but if he was, he was the victim of older heads than himself— such, at least, was my impression, as I fixed a scrutinizing gaze upon him, watching him until he left the office.

“Well, what do you think?” said Mr. J., as the boy left the store.

“I should not like to give any definite opinion without further inquiry. Of course, having the keys of the store in his possession, suspicion would naturally attach to him. Now I will walk through the store and take a look at the other clerks;” and accompanied by Mr. H., I made the round of the store, he managing to engage each one in conversation for a moment or so, so as to allow me an opportunity of examining him. But I saw nothing which could lead me to suspect any one of the clerks, so far as I could judge from their manners or appearance, and I returned in the back office to await the arrival of Edmund, the lad who had been sent to the bank.

They managed to keep him in the office several minutes on some pretense or other after he returned, and I embraced the opportunity to converse with him. I soon discovered that he was excessively vain, easily flattered, and just the boy, in my opinion, to be led away by any plausible villain. I was almost sure that he was indirectly connected with the robbery, but of course said nothing leading to such an inference, until I could examine a little more thoroughly, for Mr. J. was so impetuous, had I hinted that there was the least ground for suspicion, he would have caused the lad to be arrested at once, and thus foil all my schemes.

Cautioning the gentlemen against making any unnecessary remarks on the subject, I took my leave, promising to follow up the investigation, and to communicate with them at the earliest moment.

My plan now was to watch the conduct of Edmund, and if I discovered anything to justify with greater certainty the suspicions I entertained, I would arrest him at once. His boarding place, I was told, was in the upper part of the city, and the same evening I proceeded thither to make inquiries in that vicinity.

While passing through Jane street, in which the house was located, a man passed me at a rapid pace, who, by the peculiarity of his walk, I at once knew to be Andrews, my old acquaintance, and instinctively I quickened my pace to follow him, and see whither he went, though I had no definite object in view in thus pursuing him.

To my surprise, he entered the very house where Edmund boarded, and without ringing the bell. Could it be that he lived there— that he was — but no, I would not think of that. That he lived there, I had no doubt for he entered without any ceremony; but to make assurance sure, I waited a few moments, and taking out a small memorandum-book, which I always carried, I ascended

the steps and rang the bell.

The servant promptly answered the summons, and as she opened the door, I pretended to be making an entry in the book.

“Does Mr. Andrews live here?” I inquired.

“Yes.”

“Does he keep the house?”

“Oh, no—he and his family are only boarding here.”

“And Edmund Blake,” I asked, looking at my memorandum-book, as if I had his name down, and was inquiring with especial reference to that, “does he reside here also?”

“You mean a boy in a store down town?”

“Yes—the same.”

“Yes, he boards here also.”

“Thank you;” and shutting up my book, I left the house.

My thoughts now ran in a new current. If Edmund was really accessory to the robbery of the store, Andrews was no doubt the leader—the instigator, and if so, I would have to work my cards very cautiously. I was not long in coming to a determination, and that was to watch the store closely. The rogue, whoever he was, if he was engaged in weeding, would make his visits frequently, and it would not be many nights before he returned for more plunder.

Accordingly, I posted off to the residence of Mr. H., who I knew had duplicate keys of the store, and merely telling him that I had, as I believed, some clue to the rogue, obtained them for the purpose of entering and remaining in the store during the night.

Chapter VI.

For four nights in succession I watched there, and lonesome work I had of it— but there was no indication that any fresh attempt was to be made upon the store, and I was beginning to feel the want of a little patience, half-regretting that I had undertaken the task at all. On the following night, however, I was destined to be rewarded for my pains, for about eleven o'clock I heard a key inserted in the front door, and turning the dark lanthorn which I had with me so as to exclude all light, I crouched behind the counter, but so placed myself that I could have a full view of whatever might be going on, without a possibility of being seen.

For a few moments after the bolt had been turned the door remained closed. The rogue was no doubt watching to see if he was observed. Soon, however, it was opened and hurriedly but gently shut, and I heard the hard breathing of the robber who had entered.

It was as dark as Erebus when he entered, and of course I could see nothing. He seemed, however, to be familiar with the store, and advancing, seated himself on a box near the spot where I was posted, and his hard, quick breathing was heard with fearful distinctness. He was evidently excessively agitated—doubtless he was a new hand at this kind of work, and I anticipated an easy capture.

After resting a few minutes I could hear him drawing a match across the sand paper on the bottom of the match box, and soon he produced a small piece of sperm candle which he had brought with him. I had now an opportunity of examining the man, as he prepared for his work.

He was a spare man about the medium height, with long, dark bushy whiskers, and heavy eyebrows—one whom I had never seen before, so far as my memory served me; and I was quite certain, so far as the dim light which he had, enabled me to examine and decide, that it was not Andrews, whom I expected to find. I must say I was glad to see that it was not him, and was quite contented to have my predictions, or rather suspicion falsified.

After resting himself and getting over his excitement, the burglar proceeded leisurely to work. He seemed to know exactly where the best goods were placed; and he certainly practiced a great deal of self-denial, for he took only one or two from each package, while he might with equal safety have taken half of the entire quantity. He had his reasons for this course, and one of them doubtless was the greater facility with which he could dispose of the smaller articles, and the fewer chances which he incurred of detection, than if seen coming out of the store at such an unseasonable hour with a bundle.

I was so much interested in watching the movements of the man, I almost forgot the object for which I had passed four lonely, sleepless nights, and before I was quite aroused to a sense of my position, he had extinguished the light and was moving towards the door. Grasping firmly the “*billy*” which was fastened to my wrist, I sprang lightly over the counter, and as he reached the door, I laid my hand upon his collar, which I held with a vice-like grasp.

“Come, it’s all up,” I said— “there’s no use— you’re a keen one, but I’ve got you at last. Now, not a word, or, you feel this, do you?” and I pressed the bullet-headed billy to his ear; “you’re gone as sure as a gun. Now, come along quietly,” and I opened the door, at the same time shouting for the watchman.

He soon came up, and handing to him the key of the store, which I had procured from Mr. H., I directed him to lock the door and give me the key, which being done, I marched off with my prisoner. During all this time he had made not the slightest show of resistance, nor had he once opened his lips. He seemed to be completely stupefied by the suddenness with which everything had been done.

“How long have you been at this?” I inquired, as we walked along, with his arm in my own, and my left hand firmly holding the cuff of his sleeve, so as to have his right arm secure, and my own at liberty. The fellow vouchsafed no reply, and merely remarking to him, “I guess you’ll find tongue enough by and by,” I walked on in silence, my prisoner moving doggedly but quietly along, so quietly I was completely at fault what to make of him.

On the corner of Pearl and John streets, there was then quite a hole in the middle of the street, caused by the laying of some gas or water pipe, and as I turned to go off on one side, I was suddenly jerked from my legs with a force which seemed almost supernatural, and in the next moment I was laying doubled up in a most inconvenient shape in the bottom of the hole.

I was so tightly wedged in I could not even halloo, and in my efforts to extricate myself, I made the discovery that I had been severely and painfully injured. For several minutes I lay struggling and trying to straighten myself out, and at length I succeeded, but by this time I was pretty well exhausted, as well by my efforts as by the loss of blood, which was trickling from a wound in my left temple, caused by striking the end of an iron pipe, which protruded through the hole into which I had been thrown.

At length I managed to arise, and by shouting, for I could now shout, I brought a watchman to the spot, with whose help I was extricated. My prisoner, of course, was gone, and so great was my chagrin at the manner in which he had freed himself, I really believe I would at that moment have given all I was worth to have him once more within my grasp. But he was gone, and there was no help for it, and after briefly relating to the watchman the occurrence which had terminated so inopportunistically, I wended my way slowly homeward. In the struggle to free himself, the robber had wrenched himself so suddenly from my grasp, he left in my hand a portion of the cuff of his coat, which had been torn off, and this I put carefully away in my pocket, not doubting that in time to come it would aid me in discovering the rogue.

I was now more than ever resolved to discover the perpetrators of the robbery, and if time and perseverance could effect it, I felt sure of my man. The next morning I communicated to Messrs. H. & J. the result of my night’s work, and received a *carte blanche* to go on in my own way. The keys with which entrance had been effected were of course false. But how were they procured? There was the rub, and that was the first object of my inquiry. Long and fruitless had been my search, and at length I made up my mind that the boy, Edmund, must know something about it.

I then procured a warrant to search the house where he resided, intending to use it only in case I should draw from him something to justify such a step; and I proceeded thither the next evening.

He, as well as the other clerks, were now aware that a discovery of the robbery had been made, and I could, therefore, more readily approach him without the danger of creating unnecessary alarm. Accordingly, in the evening I called at his boarding house, and requested him to walk out with me. At first he refused, as I was a stranger to him, but on my hinting the nature of my business, and the suspicion which his refusal might engender, he promptly went for his hat and followed me into the street.

“Now, Edmund,” I said, when we had left the house, “I want you to tell me to whom you have ever entrusted the store keys.”

“To no human being out of my sight,” he replied with earnestness. “While at home I keep them in my bureau drawer, in the leather bag which I had made for them.”

“Is that drawer kept locked?”

“Oh, no, sir, never.”

“Who of the boarders ever comes into your room to sit?”

“No one except Mr. Andrews. Once in a while he comes in to smoke a cigar with me.”

“Does he know where you keep the keys?”

“Yes— and now I think of it, I remember his asking me about two or three months ago if I kept the keys; and I showed them to him, and the place where I kept them.”

“He has never asked to see them, has he?”

“Not exactly that; but when he first saw them he examined them closely, and I recollect he made the remark that he thought the lock must be very hard to pick.”

“What family has he?”

“A wife and one daughter, seventeen or eighteen years of age, and two young boys.”

“Now, Edmund,” I said, stopping— “You know the store has been robbed— as you have the keys, it is very natural that suspicion has fallen upon you; but I believe you innocent of any actual participation. Those keys have been obtained by some means or other, and I am afraid I know the man. You must keep perfectly quiet in the house about it.”

“You’re too late, now, he replied. “I have told at the table all I knew about it.”

“I am sorry for that— and what did Andrews say?”

“Nothing in particular, except that he thought the rogue must have been pretty skillful to have picked such a lock— you surely don’t think he had any hand in the robbery.”

“I can’t say— you must not say a word about my having seen you, or spoken to you on the subject. Now I’m going back to search the house. Is Andrews home?”

“Not that I know of.”

“Was he at home last Wednesday night?”

“Let me see— as near as I can recollect, I was in his room until about half-past eight, and we both went out together to get some oysters after that.”

“And you returned together?”

“Yes, but he went out afterwards. I remember now perfectly; it was Wednesday night, for he said he was going to a fancy ball with a friend.”

“Are you sure of that,” I inquired, a new light breaking in upon me.

“Oh, yes, I heard his door shut, and know his step. I can’t forget it, for I know I wished to have gone with him, but he made an excuse for not taking me, by saying that it was merely a private affair.”

“Did you hear him come back, Edmund?”

“No, I can’t say I did. I went to bed, and soon fell asleep.”

“But you are sure you did not hear him return?”

“No, I am quite positive of that.”

For a few moments I remained silent, revolving in my mind the various circumstances just detailed, and by putting them together, I reached the conclusion that I had good ground for suspecting Andrews, and for making use of the search-warrant which I had taken out. I dreaded the task, for I knew how dreadfully my appearance on such an errand must afflict his family. But I had my duty to perform, painful though it was, and repeating my warning to Edmund, to maintain a profound silence as to the conversation just had, I advised him to go to, and remain in his room, while I went to the apartments occupied by Andrews and his family. This being arranged we returned to the house, Edmund, most happy that he was relieved from the suspicion of being concerned in the robbery, and I, most sad at the probable prospect of bringing ruin and lasting misery on a worthy and innocent family.

He admitted me into the house with his night key, and after pointing out the door of Mr. Andrews’ room left me.

Chapter VII.

When I reached the door, I paused an instant involuntarily. A feeling of dread came over me for which I could not account, and I would have given ten times the reward I expected to receive if successful, to have dropped the matter. But there was now no help for it, and I knocked gently, a summons which was immediately answered by an invitation to enter, pronounced in a female voice.

As I entered the room which was occupied only by Mrs. Andrews and her daughter, they laid aside the work on which they were engaged, and rose to receive me.

Mrs. Andrews, the mother, was a lovely woman— that is, lovely for her years— the personification of a mild, good, virtuous, patient, but suffering wife. There was an expression of sadness on her fair countenance, which was really painful to behold, and her smile was sweet, but most touchingly sad.

The daughter, Julia, was a tall, elegantly formed girl, with flashing eyes— a sweet, rosy mouth, but expressive of great determination, and at first glance she struck me as one who *would* do just what she chose, without any regard to consequences. There was an air of haughtiness about her, instilled no doubt in her early and more prosperous days, which comparative poverty could not efface, and her smile was fascination itself. She was, if unprincipled, a most dangerous woman— if imbued with good principles, any man might be proud to call her his wife.

“Mr. Andrews is not at home, I learn,” I said, declining the chair which I was invited to take.

“He is not,” said Mrs. Andrews, advancing towards me. “Is your business of a nature which may be entrusted to his wife?”

“Unfortunately, madam, it is of an unpleasant nature, and I much regret that my duty compels me to communicate it to his wife,” I replied, bowing politely.

As I spoke I could see the sad countenance of the wife grew sadder, and a tear started to her fine eyes, while the daughter looked at me with a glance which spoke defiance, contempt, in fact almost everything disagreeable.

“And what may be the nature of the business?” inquired Mrs. A., with a slight tremor in her voice, which she vainly essayed to conceal.

“I should prefer to make it known to you alone, madam,” I said, wishing to spare the daughter the present mortification of hearing her father accused of burglary, though of course she must hear it sooner or later.

“Thank you, sir,” said Miss Julia, proudly, her fine form stretching to its fullest height. “You need not be so careful of my feelings— I am as deeply interested in what concerns my father, as *you can be*,” and her sentence terminated with a sneer, which brought the blood to my face, for I felt that her conduct was uncalled for.

“Julia,” said her mother, mildly but firmly— “that is no way to address a gentleman who has shown a very proper regard for your feelings—I thank you, sir, for your considerate kindness.”

“Well, and so did I,” said Julia, setting down to her work, with a sort of dogged, I-don’t-care-if-he-don’t-like-it air and manner.

“What is the nature of this unpleasant business, Mr. ——?” and she seemed to inquire my name more of course by her manner, for she did not ask it directly.

“Starr, madam,” I replied— my profession, a police officer, and my business to search your apartments,” I replied hastily, for I feared to trust myself, and made the worst known at a breath. Mrs. Andrews sank back in her chair stupefied, and Julia sprang up with flashing eyes, and a flushed countenance, throwing to the farthest corner of the room the work she held in her hand, and with an effort restraining herself from darting forward.

“Is that so?” said the poor stricken wife, scarcely able to speak from emotion.

“It is, indeed, and I am most pained to be obliged to say it. Circumstances which need not now mention, have forced myself and others to entertain a suspicion against him.”

“But of what, sir— a suspicion of what?” imperiously demanded Julia, coming close up to me and looking as though she would read my very soul. I gazed an instant from one to another— from the crushed and heart-broken wife, to the proud, haughty disdainful daughter, and actually dreading the effects which my words might produce, I said, “Of burglary.”

“Oh, Lord,” was all Mrs. Andrews could say, and she buried her face in her hands, as if to shut out some horrid vision, while Julia staggered back to her seat, paler than marble and trembling in every limb.

“*You* don’t believe him guilty?” said Mrs. Andrews, looking at me and struggling to keep down the emotions which my words had excited— and Julia, too, looked at me as if to say, “you dare not.”

“I dare not say anything further now— I desire to discharge my most unpleasant duty with as little pain as possible, and with every wish to spare you further mortification. Suffer me to proceed quietly, and no one in the house need know the object of my call.”

“But where is your authority, and what do you expect to find here?” exclaimed Julia in impassioned tones.

“My authority is here,” I said, producing the search-warrant, “and I hope I may find nothing which will verify the suspicion now resting against Mr. Andrews.”

“Proceed then,” said Mrs. Andrews,” struggling to keep down the rising tears. “Julia, show the officer everything we have.”

Accordingly I proceeded in the discharge of the most unpleasant duty I ever undertook, and after hurriedly passing through two of the drawers in a bureau which stood in the room, I came to the third, and the first thing that presented itself to my eyes, was, a pair of false whiskers, and eyebrows marvelously like— nay, I knew them to be the very ones I had seen on the countenance of the man who had given me such an ugly fall a few nights previous.

“To whom does this belong?” I said, holding it up.

“To my husband,” replied Mrs. Andrews, calmly. “He purchased it two or three months ago, to go to a fancy ball with Julia.”

“Has he ever used it except on that occasion?”

“I have never seen him with it— yes, I recollect last Wednesday night, he took it to lend it to a friend who was going to a fancy ball in the upper part of the city— a private ball.”

“You are sure it was Wednesday night?”

“Quite,” said Mrs. Andrews, little suspecting that every word was direct proof against her husband.

“And when did you see it again?”

“Why, the next morning— my husband went with his friends, and I suppose he brought it back with him.”

“At what hour did he go out, that night?”

“He did not leave the house until after nine, and returned before one, I think. But what has that to do with the charge against him?”

“Much, I am afraid. But what keys are these?” I asked, taking two rough-looking store keys from the same drawer.

“Keys to the store where he is employed.”

“Does he keep the keys?” I asked, anxious to know how he accounted to his wife for their possession.

“They are duplicates— the porter has one set, and my husband the other, so that in case anything is wanted after the store is closed, he can go down.”

“I must keep these for the present,” I said, putting them with the false whiskers; and proceeded in my search, which I continued and closed, without finding anything further, which could connect him with the robbery. “I must see your husband’s clothes now, Mrs. Andrews,” I said, when I had finished searching the bureau and the trunks.

“Open the closet, Julia,” was all she said, and I was permitted to take from the nails on which they hung the coats belonging to Mr. Andrews.

“This is his, I presume,” I said, taking down a brown overcoat, the right cuff of which was half torn off.

“Yes,” she replied hesitatingly.

“And here is the cuff,” I said, pulling from my pocket the piece of cuff which I had torn from the robber’s coat, as he threw me into the ditch.

“In God’s name how did you come by that?” she almost screamed.

“I dare not tell you, Mrs. Andrews— I have found enough to prove your husband” —

“Oh, not a thief— not guilty of robbery, Mr. Starr— don’t say that or I shall die at once,” and the poor heart-stricken wife approached me with uplifted hands.

“It is even so, Mrs. Andrews,” I said, and as I spoke I noticed that Julia had suddenly left the room.

“Oh, my God, has he come to this?” has he brought this disgrace upon his family. Oh, Heaven have mercy on us,” and she threw herself on a chair, sobbing as if her heart was breaking.

I could not offer a word of comfort or consolation. The proofs of his guilt were strong and not easily to be refuted.

“Now, madam, where does he keep his papers?” I inquired, hoping among them to find some clue to the missing goods.

“There is his desk,” she replied, pointing to a small upright counting-house desk, but without moving from her seat.

“It is locked,” I said, trying it. “I shall be under the necessity of forcing it.”

“You know your rights and duty— do as you feel called on,” she replied, between her sobs and tears; and I soon forced it open with the aid of a poker.

Among his letters I found some from a merchant, in Harford, ordering certain goods, and others acknowledging the receipt of goods, in which drafts or money had been enclosed.

These I secured, as I doubted not they would afford some clue by which I could recover the stolen property, and having tied up in a bundle the articles I thought it necessary to take, I announced the close of my search, and my intention to wait for Mr. Andrews’ return.

“You need not put yourself to that trouble,” said Julia, who had returned into the room.

“Indeed! and why not?” I inquired, wondering what she could mean.

“Simply because I have seen my father, and have told him you were here. He will not be at home, tonight. I don’t believe him guilty— I know he is not,” she added with increased energy; “and I don’t mean to have my father dragged before the world as a felon, to gratify the malice or hatred of any one.”

I could not well conceal an expression of chagrin which this cost me, and I might have said something harsh, had I not at that moment looked at Mrs. Andrews. Her countenance was upturned, and she wore an expression of such unutterable misery, such agony, such anguish, at the dreadful truths forced upon her by the results of my search, I could not find it in my heart to add anything to her present sufferings. I therefore took my leave for the present, determined to watch the house, for I was assured that he would return at some future time when I hoped to secure him.

Proceeding home, I examined the letters which I had brought with me, and from them gathered such information as would lead to the recovery of at least a portion of the goods. The party in Hartford, by whom the letters were written, was, as I judged from their tenor, under the impression that Andrews was a principal in the house, or if not, he must have known of the manner in which they were obtained, and that was my next duty to ascertain.

The next day I communicated the result of my visit to Messrs. H. & J., who were pleased that the boy Edmund had cleared his skirts, but who were prepared at once to discharge him for his carelessness with the keys. My intercession, however, prevented that, and he was retained. I was then empowered to proceed to Hartford, and act when there in my own discretion.

From their store I went to Messrs. Eldridge & Thompson, where I inquired for Andrews, but he had not yet come down; and Mr. Eldridge recognizing me, called me aside and asked the object of my visit. I disclosed to him in confidence the discovery I had made, and requested, if he should come back, of which I entertained many doubts, that he would give me immediate information.

Mr. Eldridge was dreadfully shocked on hearing of the fate of his clerk, whose reformation he thought was so sure, and many and heartfelt were the hopes he uttered that his poor family might not suffer from his misconduct.

But it is not material that I should detail with minuteness the events of the next few days. I proceeded to Hartford, where I found that the party who had been in the habit of receiving goods from Andrews, was entirely above suspicion of any collusion with him, and he not only surrendered every article he then had, which came from Messrs. H. & J., but offered to pay the entire loss if they should demand it.

As for Andrews, he had fled— whither, of course I knew not, and the watch whom I had placed over his house during my absence had not discovered anything by which a clue to his whereabouts could be ascertained.

Chapter VIII.

About twelve months after my last and severe disappointment in my efforts to arrest Andrews, I had occasion to go, at an early hour in the morning, in C—— street, to watch the premises of a very notorious receiver of stolen property, a man, who, by virtue of his license as a dealer in second-hand articles, managed to drive a thriving business by purchasing stolen property, which was immediately shipped to a southern port.

Incredible as it may appear, he kept one small vessel constantly on the go, laden with the spoils of his nefarious traffic, which he had managed with such adroitness, as to put at naught all the efforts of the police to punish him.

I had reason to believe that a notorious rogue, who had committed a bold and successful burglary, was in the habit of dealing with this man, and I determined to watch his premises, hoping thereby to kill two birds with one stone, the thief and the receiver. As I knew that the rascal who kept the den was always on the look-out, I disguised myself, so as to defy his scrutiny, and started for the spot.

It was, as I have said, very early in the morning, and scarcely any persons were stirring, but the *chiffoniers*, or rag-pickers, one of whom was engaged directly in front of the premises which I proposed visiting.

The shop was not yet open, and I amused myself by walking slowly along, watching these men, who, as I well knew, did not confine themselves to this business alone, but whose bags were the ready receptacles of any trifle which might chance to fall in their way.

While watching there, I heard steps approaching, and turning suddenly, I beheld a squalid-looking man, miserably dressed, approaching me, his bent form scarcely concealed by the tattered garments which only half covered his nakedness.

So far as I could guess from a hasty glance at the haggard countenance, the features were those of a person whom I had never seen before, but there could be no doubt as to the walk— that quick, shuffling gait, the restless, uneasy gaze— the rapid rubbing of the hands— there was no mistaking that, and in the miserable looking object before me, I recognized again my friend Andrews.

It was, indeed, himself; but oh, how sadly changed— how deeply had he sunk in vice and infamy— how low had he descended in the scale of human degradation. A second glance at his countenance showed that he was a victim now to intemperance, and to that alone he must attribute his present position; that having lost his reputation and character as well as his fortune, at the gambling table; having been driven even to stealing with the vain hope of recovering his losses, he had fled for refuge to the bottle, and seeking to drown his cares in liquor, had gradually acquired a passion for drinking which was fast killing both soul and body.

“Poor fellow,” I said to myself, “he has gone to the glass to drown his troubles,”— and my thoughts reverted instantly to the patient, suffering wife at home. My heart bled for her, for I knew from the few moments of conversation I had with her on the occasion of searching his house, that she was one of those devoted, self-sacrificing women, who was ever ready to exclaim,

“I know not, I ask not, if guilt’s in that heart, I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.”

And his daughter Julia— the proud, haughty, lovely Julia— how would she feel were she to see her unfortunate father now? Would she fly to his embrace, or would she turn from him with the loathing which his miserable appearance would be most likely to inspire?

“Poor fellow,” I ejaculated, as he passed me at a rapid pace, little dreaming, as he brushed my very clothes, that he whom he had just passed without even a look, had it in his power to consign him to a felon’s cell for the brief remnant of his miserable life? And then the remembrance of Pearson crossed me, and I dared not believe that he would go through this world unvisited by the wrath of the offended Deity, the violation of whose laws, and the mockery of whose power, seemed to be the sole objects of his life.

It was all his work, and I thought if some of those young men whom I had seen in his company, could but witness the certain consequence of being led away by him, how quickly they would pause in their wild career. If some of those fair and pure daughters who moved through Broadway so proudly conscious in their loveliness, escorted by him, and proud of his attentions, could but see what I then saw, and could but know how unmoved he would gaze upon his work, they would turn from him as from the touch of pestilence.

While engrossed in these thoughts, Andrews hurried on, and in an instant I felt all my interest in him awakened with redoubled ardor. True, it was perhaps my duty to have arrested him, having such abundant reason to believe him guilty of a high crime, but then Messrs. H. & J. might not feel inclined to prosecute, and I should have my labor for my pains. I determined, therefore, to follow him, and having ascertained his abode, if indeed the poor fellow had any abode, to communicate with them and act under their instructions.

Forgetting, therefore, for the time being, the business which had called me there, I started after Andrews, and kept him constantly in view. He passed down C—— street to James street, and thence through Orange street to that disgraceful, polluting sink of iniquity, which has been too permitted to contaminate our city, and known world-wide as the Five Points.

He entered a grocery kept there, if indeed a den could be called a grocery, where thieves, vagrants and women, sunk to the lowest depth of human degradation, congregated, and poured down liquid poison from morn to night. Proceeding to the bar, behind which stood a dirty ruffian-like man in his shirt sleeves, he laid down a copper on the counter, and received in return therefor a portion of poison which must have proved almost certain death to any well-regulated constitution, but which he quaffed with the most evident satisfaction.

This done, he turned away and entered into conversation with some of the inmates, who, early as it was, had already thronged there in great numbers, to quench the burning thirst which the orgies of the past night had left.

I saw that he was known, or that he knew well by whom he was surrounded, and feeling well assured that if he made this place his rendezvous, I could find him at any moment, I left the spot, resolved to go to the store of H. & J. as soon as they were there, and make known to them the discovery I had made. If they were inclined to prosecute, I could easily arrest him— if not, he might live on a few weeks or months, perhaps, and at last find a grave in Potter’s Field, or

possibly he might be reclaimed to society, and once more be restored to the wife who I was sure loved him so devotedly.

As soon as I had finished my breakfast, I hastened to the store of the gentleman named, where I found Mr. H., to whom I made known the adventure of the morning, and when I had concluded, I inquired if he still wished to prosecute Andrews for the robbery.

“Poor wretch—no,” exclaimed the good-hearted merchant; “I tell you, though, Starr, what I should like. If you thought you could frighten him into honesty and sobriety, you might arrest him for his family’s sake— for Heaven knows I do not wish to injure them.”

“I am afraid he is past reformation, Mr. H.,” I replied. “He is lost to all sense of humanity— a poor, miserable, besotted wretch. He can’t live a year if he continues in his present career— that is impossible.”

“Poor fellow, I am really sorry for him, and more sorry for his family. Do you know where to find them?” he inquired, with an air of sympathy.

“It is six months since I have heard or seen anything of them, but I think I can find out.”

“His wife must be dreadfully straitened,” he said, inquiringly.

“I fear she is. The last time I saw her she was carrying a heavy bundle of slop clothing down town. It was as much as she could lift, and she looked feeble enough, I assure you. I have no doubt she is miserably poor.”

“Look here, Starr— find her out if you can, and give her this for me. Tell her if I can do anything on earth for her, I will do it cheerfully. I would rather have lost twice as much as we did, than have caused her such wretchedness as she must suffer”— and he put in my hand bills for twenty dollars, the tear of sympathy twinkling in his eye as he spoke.

“I will find her out if possible,” I said, moved at seeing the evident distress of Mr. H., who I could perceive accused himself mentally of having caused all the trouble and misery which the innocent family had suffered.

My next business was to find the poor heartbroken wife, and to accomplish that was no easy task. I knew where she resided when I last saw her, some six months before; but to find her now was more than I dared to hope for, without protracted searching, for I knew well enough the ways of New York, to be assured that if she was compelled to resort to needle for her sole support, she would not be apt to reside long in any place, for she could hardly earn enough to keep body and soul together, without paying any of her hard-earned money for rent.

However, I was determined to find her, and find her I did; but oh! in such a place, and in such a condition. I cannot even think of it with out a shudder.

In the back room, on the second floor of a small frame house in the upper part of Mangin street, I discovered the object of my search. I found her by applying to the visitor of the out door poor of the Alms House, on whose book I found her recorded as the recipient of the weekly sum of fifty cents, being the amount allowed to her by the charity of the city. She occupied a small room, entirely unfurnished, save an old pine table, two wooden chairs without backs and a bunch of straw in one corner covered with an old cloak, which had to pass for a coverlet.

It was cold weather, but the only fire she had was in a small furnace, and that was filled with chips and a few pieces of hard coal which had been picked from the ashes thrown in the streets, over which were laid the irons with which she was pressing the work on which she was engaged— heavy round-about jackets, so heavy and coarse, her hands, enfeebled by sickness, and benumbed by cold, could scarcely force the needle through it.

Her own garments were soiled, and torn, and faded, and an old shawl was thrown over her shoulders to keep out the chilling wind which forced itself through the broken panes, and the wide crevices in the windows and doors.

And was this Mrs. Andrews, the happy wife, who comparatively speaking, but a short time since was surrounded by every comfort which heart could ask, or money procure? Was it possible that she was so utterly abandoned—so world-forsaken and forgotten by those who had known and loved her— for truly such a woman was worthy of all love. But then, perhaps her pride— her dread of imposing her misery upon others, had kept her silent, and she had preferred to pine and suffer in secret.

She was alone. No daughter was there to comfort and cheer her in the midst of her desolation, poverty and wretchedness. There was no smiling face of an affectionate child to gladden her heart amid its sorrows. She was alone, in the saddest, dreariest sense of that sad and dreary word. She had outlived her friends.

Chapter IX.

As I entered the room in obedience to her summons, she looked up from her work, and I saw that she failed to recognize me. Time and suffering had taught her to forget. “Walk in, sir,” she said, with a sad, mournful smile, which showed that dark and troublous as it was without, within, all was peace and quiet.

“Mrs. Andrews, I believe,” I said, respectfully, approaching nearer to her.

“Yes, sir,” she said, a shade of apprehension crossing her pale, wan face, as she scanned me attentively, at the same time laying down her work. “Did you wish to see me?”

“You forget me, I see,” I said, advancing towards her; and as I spoke, she arose and gazed steadfastly at me for a moment, as if striving to recall my features.

“I am Mr. Starr, the officer, and—”

“Oh,” she exclaimed, darting forward and grasping my arm, while every feature was convulsed with excitement, “My husband—where is he? my poor husband,” and she burst into an agony of tears.

“Pray, be calm, Mrs. Andrews,” I said, leading her to a chair, into which she sunk almost powerless, burying her face in her hands. “I am sorry, very sorry to see you thus reduced.”

“Oh, sir, never mind that. Where is my husband— my poor infatuated husband.”

“Indeed, Mrs. Andrews,” I replied, “you must not worry yourself for him. He is not worthy of your affection, much less your tears.”

“Oh, sir, was he not my husband? — was he not ever kind, ever loving? — was he not all my heart could wish, until—” and she shuddered, as if dreading to complete the sentence.

“Until he was led away by Mr. Pearson.”

“Too true— too true,” she said, shaking her head sorrowfully. “But where is he? Oh, if you have him in your charge, let me see him once more.”

“Indeed, I know not where he is. But you are sadly off, Mrs. Andrews— very sadly reduced,” I said, looking around the desolate room.

“Yes,” she said, with a sigh, gazing around her miserable apartment. “I have been better off, but it might be worse.” And she raised her eyes heavenward, with a look of pious resignation.

“Where is Julia?” I inquired. “Why is she not here to aid you? Surely, she has not deserted you at such a time?”

“Ask Mr. Pearson,” she said, with a mournful voice, which told volumes.

“And your other children?” I asked inquiringly.

“Heaven only knows; the boys have forsaken their mother in her poverty. I could no longer control them— they go and come as they choose. Sometimes I do not see them for days together. But my husband, Mr. Starr— have you seen nothing of him?”

“I have, Mrs. Andrews,” I replied, dreading to her the whole truth.

“Oh, I knew it—I knew it—my heart told me so as soon as I heard your name. Is he in prison? Oh, take me to him, and I will bless you.”

“No— I saw him yesterday. He is not in prison.”

“Can I not see him, Mr. Starr?” she said, mournfully.

“You would not wish it, Mrs. Andrews, if you—”

“Oh you do not know me,” she hastily interrupted. “You do not know the strength of a wife’s feelings, or you would not speak thus.”

“He could not appreciate your affection now, I do assure you.”

“Surely, he is not dead,” she said, misinterpreting my words, and her features were convulsed with terror.

“Oh, no— I did not mean that. I mean that he is sunk so low”—and I dared not finish the sentence.

“Well, and could I not raise him? — could I not restore him? — could I not pray for him, and with him?” she exclaimed, her voice rising with the excitement to which she was giving way.

“My dear madam,” I said kindly, “I do not wish to cause you further pain, but, believe me, your husband has sunk so low in infamy, is so lost to every sentiment of humanity, even your affection, your tears, nor your prayers could restore him. He is past hope, I fear.”

“May heaven be merciful to him,” she said, clasping her hands and raising her eyes upward.

“My visit to you this morning, Mrs. Andrews, is purely friendly. When I saw your husband yesterday, I at once resolved to see Messrs. H. & J., and ascertain their sentiments with reference to a prosecution.”

“Oh, they will not send him to prison now, will they? Heaven knows we have all suffered enough, without having further punishment inflicted for his crime. I wish I dared to see them.”

“Nothing is farther from their thoughts— on the contrary, the deepest commiseration was felt and expressed for you, and I was commissioned by Mr. H. to hand this to you, with the assurance that any further application would be most promptly and cheerfully responded to;” and I handed to her the bills which Mr. H. had given me in the morning.

“He is very, very kind, and I feel that I ought not to refuse it. I find it rather hard to get on, making these for eighteen pence,” and she held up with an expression of sadness, the jacket on which she had been working when my entrance interrupted her.

“It is shameful,” I said; “but in what can I assist you? True, you only have seen me as an officer, and in discharge of my duty I may have seemed harsh to you; but, indeed, I do sympathize most sincerely with you?”

“Oh, then, do you let me see my poor husband again. You can do me no greater favor.”

“Mrs. Andrews, it would be absolute cruelty to you to suffer you to meet him again.”

“I implore you, do not deny me. If you know where he is, bring me to him once more, and I will bless you forever.”

“Madam, you *shall* see him,” I said with energy, feeling that such devotion as she displayed deserved this at my hands. “But, Julia— what of her?”

“God only knows. That villain Pearson, not content with bringing the father to infamy has—”

“I understand it all,” I said, interrupting her; for I saw how painful was the theme.

“Yes,” she said; “she could not live in honorable poverty, but preferred disgraceful ease. Heaven pardon and save her. I am alone in the wide world now.”

“Your parents?” I said, inquiringly.

“Are dead,” she replied, sadly. “My father,—you may have known him, George Marvin— died several years ago; my mother, when I was quite young.”

“Is your name, Lucy?” I inquired, scarcely daring to believe my senses.

“Yes,” she replied, somewhat astonished at the question.

“Lucy Marvin—my little sweetheart, when we went to Mrs. Bacon’s school, so many, many years ago,” I exclaimed— “can it really be possible that you are Lucy Marvin.”

“Surely,” she said, doubtingly, and looking at me with an expression which I cannot depict,— “You are not Charles Starr, my old schoolmate and playfellow.”

“The same— poor little Lucy, and you have come to this;” I exclaimed, and in spite of myself, I, a police officer, felt the warm tear coursing down my cheek as I took her emaciated hand. How often had I played with her, and brought her flowers and oranges to school— and how many battles had I fought for her with the other boys, when they tormented me about her.

“We are both changed,” she said sadly, looking at her own faded garments.

“Thank God I have met you, Lucy,” I said. “Your father was a kind, good friend to me, and I will never forget it. I have it in my power now to serve you, I hope, and you will not refuse me the permission.”

“Bring me to my husband once more, Mr. Starr, and you will make as happy as I dare to think of being again on earth.”

“You shall see him, Mrs. Andrews— you shall see him if he is alive; and I will search for Julia, and see if I cannot win her back to your heart.”

“God bless you,” she said, wiping her eyes. “That would be too much happiness;” and her head fell upon her breast while the tears coursed down her wan cheeks.

“First, you must have more comfortable apartments than these. Lucy Marvin must not suffer while I can assist her.”

“I am thankful for these, Mr. Starr— I have been much worse off. But, oh, do bring my poor husband back to me. I know, I feel, that I can win him back to the path of virtue. Only bring him to me again, and even this room will be sufficient for my happiness. But those boys— can you not see them cared for? Oh, if they could but realize how their mother’s heart bleeds to see them go so widely astray, they would, I am sure, reform. They are not old enough to be hardened in vice; but I have now no control over them, and what will become of them, Heaven only knows.”

“They shall be provided for— if in no other manner, they shall go to the House of Refuge,” I said earnestly.

But I will not detain the reader by further detailing the minutiae of that interview. I sat there for a long time, and drew from Lucy a history of her past married life, and a chequered one it had been, since the day in which her doomed husband fell in with that fiend incarnate, Pearson.

The family was now entirely dissolved. The husband a drunken, worthless wretch, dead to every honorable of manly sentiment. The daughter, Julia, had fallen victim to the deliberately-planned acts of the same vile wretch, and had deserted her mother in this dark hour of sorrow and tribulation. The sons, fine, promising youths, freed from the restraints imposed by a father’s authority, had by contact with the vile and vicious of their own age, acquired habits which must lead to their certain ruin.

Chapter X.

In fulfillment of my promise to Mrs. Andrews that she should be made more comfortable, I consulted my wife, and she, true woman-like, at once gave directions that a room should be prepared for her in our own house, to which of course I made no objections; and I proceeded to her residence to inform her of our purpose.

To my surprise, however, she positively refused to remove from her present comfortless quarters, and would only give as a reason, that while her poor husband was in such a sad condition, she could not feel happy, even though she was surrounded with comfort. She had shared all of his prosperity, and was ready to share his adversity, dire as it was.

In vain I urged upon her the hopelessness of attempting to reform him. She would not believe it, and felt that once again under the influence of her love, and her prayers, nothing could be impossible. Much to my regret, therefore, I was compelled to abandon the project of removing her to my house; and I parted from her with the promise of bringing her husband to her in the course of a few days.

My wife was as much disappointed at this turn in her arrangements as myself, but she, with a woman's sympathy, entered into the feelings of the devoted wife and applauded them. I need not say how sincere were her aspirations that the wishes of her heart might be gratified, and her husband be again restored to her heart. My next step was to find Andrews, and I had arranged my plans with reference to him in this wise:

I purposed arresting him as a vagrant, and I could easily have him properly cared for, until sufficiently restored to his reason to be enabled to see his wife. In the evening, therefore, I proceeded to that sink of iniquity, the Five Points, where I was convinced I should discover him, and with a heavy heart, I commenced my search.

As it was about nine o'clock when I reached the place, I went directly to a well-known corner, called the soup-house, where I thought I might find him. As I entered, the den was filled with the miserable denizens of the Points, whites and blacks, mingled promiscuously, some seated on the floor, others on the boxes and barrels around the walls, while the counter, behind which stood a young German in his dirty shirt sleeves, was crowded with a motley group of both sexes, some devouring with the eagerness of famished wolves the mess called hotch-potch, for which they had paid a cent per bowl. This was made from the cold victuals begged through the streets, and sold to the keeper of the vile den for the liquid poison in which he dealt, and from such odds and ends as could be pilfered around the markets, and this horrid compound being cooked up together, was then served out to the company which nightly assembled there.

Others were pouring down the liquid fire, composed of turpentine and other equally salubrious ingredients, and which under the name of liquor was sold at the same price as the hotch-potch.

As I entered the filthy den, the noise and uproar, which was at the highest, suddenly ceased, for my person was perfectly known to all. I gazed about for an instant among the unfortunate beings crowded there, but there was no sign of Andrews. Entering further, as the crowd moved away to make room for me, I proceeded to a small room adjoining the store, furnished with a long filthy pine table, with benches on either side, which were filled with a group similar in appearance to those in the store, and who had, by coming first, secured seats in this room. These were also engaged in devouring the same horrid trash, and their appearance, as seated there, presented a scene to which the pencil of a Hogarth could alone do justice. Whites and blacks, male and female, —the young girl scarce out of her teens in years, yet aged in iniquity, was seated beside some bloated woman, whose blackened eyes and scratched face told of the scenes through which she daily passed; and every one before me was a professed thief. Not a human being in that house, but lived, if indeed it could be called living, by stealing. And even the stuff which they were swallowing with such eager haste, was purchased with the proceeds of something pilfered during the day.

I was glad that I did not see Andrews there. It was the lowest deep of that low place. Turning away with disgust from the sight, I emerged into the street and proceeded in my search. In one house, or cellar which I entered, the sounds of a violin and tambourine, which were heard from the street, ceased as I opened the door, and the two unfortunate wretches who had been dancing for the amusement of a crowd of half drunken sailors and thieves, paused and seated themselves, while each one looked at the other, as if expecting that his neighbor was the particular object of

my search. But Andrews was not there, and I gladly retreated to the street, half suffocated by the fumes of the poisonous liquor, the tobacco, and the foul air within.

As I passed along, the steps of the houses were filled with the wretched occupants of the vile den, but the moment they recognized me they arose and entered the house, without a word; for it is one of the rules of the place, and one strictly enforced, that they shall not be seen standing or sitting about the doors.

Just as I emerged from the house last named, I was astonished beyond measure to see an elegant carriage driven at a rapid pace through Cross street, and the horses reined in front of the “Old Brewery,” as it is termed, a house which at that time afforded shelter to some sixty or seventy families of the miserable wretches who were glad to have even such shelter as that place afforded.

I hurried up to ascertain the cause of this strange apparition in that place, but before I had time to ask any questions, the doors had been opened by the colored coachman, and a lady alighted, dressed in dark clothes, with her face closely veiled.

“Jacob,” she said to the coachman, not noticing me, “go and see if you can find a policeman.”

At this word I stepped forward, and said, “He need not go any further; I am one;” and I exhibited my badge of office.

“Then come through this building with me,” she said, with an imperious air, which I did not know how to translate.

“Suppose I don’t choose to do it,” I said, not intending, however, to refuse her, but hoping, by my refusal, to draw out the reasons which had induced her to visit that place.

“Jacob” she said, turning from me contemptuously, “this man is afraid; go and see if there are no others here— there ought to be.”

“I am not afraid, madam,” I said, “and will cheerfully accompany you, though I must say very candidly, you have the most cause for fear.”

“Never mind me— I will take care of myself; I want some one to go through this building and show it to me. Come, sir,”—and she was about entering the alley, which led to the house, and which is known as Murderer’s Alley, when I arrested her.

“One moment, if you please; it is as dark as a dungeon there. If you will sit in the carriage one moment, I will get a dark lanthorn; without it you could not stir a step without endangering your life.”

“As you choose; only be quick,” and she reentered the carriage, while I hurried off to the officers stationed there left the lanthorn. Having lighted it, I rejoined the strange lady, whose conduct was

most inexplicable, but whom I resolved to see safe through her adventure, for such I deemed it to be.

I would not pain my readers by narrating the awful scenes of misery, poverty and wretchedness which that building contained. The lady— she was an angel of mercy— was not contented with my assertion for anything. She came there to see and hear and judge for herself, and see and hear she did, for she visited every nook and corner of that vile hole, distributing freely, nay foolishly, to every person, so long as her well-filled purse held out, and when that was emptied, I was desired to produce such money as I had with me, which I did without a word of objection, for I had been satisfied from her air and manner, that she was a lady of wealth and mind. And this lady went through that dark, dreary, wretched house, without fear or a thought of herself. Nay, so much were her feelings aroused by the scenes of poverty and destitution which saluted her in every apartment; so deeply was she engrossed with the sorrows and sufferings of the poor wretches crowded there, that if every room had been filled with contagion, she would not have hesitated an instant upon entering, and relieving, if possible, the inmates. I never saw any one so strangely excited as was that lady, and at times, when passing from one apartment to another, she would pause, and leaning up against the door post, sob from emotion. She had read and heard much of the misery to be witnessed in that building, and her interest having been excited, she determined to visit it herself and see for herself, for the tales she had heard seemed to be too much for human credibility. As she went from room to room, I could see that the handkerchief was frequently applied to her eyes, and I could well imagine how the feelings of delicate and refined woman would be harrowed at the scenes which she had forced herself to witness.

“I am much obliged to you,” she said, as she re-entered her carriage, and threw herself back in the seat in a state of exhaustion. “I was wrong in saying you were afraid.”

“I should really like to know, madam, who you are, and what on earth could have brought you to such a place,” I said, respectfully putting my head close to the coach door.

“You will find out all in good time. But if you wish to know who I am, my name is Mrs.—,” and as she pronounced the name of one of the highest dignitaries in the city, instinctively I bowed and raised my hat, and the carriage was driven off. I watched the coach until it was out of sight, and remained rooted to the spot in amazement.

That she, the lady of wealth, of refinement, of fashion, could have been induced to visit such an abode of poverty and distress, as the “old Brewery,” passed my comprehension, and I could now no longer believe that the visit was made from mere motives of curiosity, or love of adventure. She had a higher, nobler, loftier purpose, and it was shown by the prodigal manner in which she lavished the contents of her well-filled purse, as well as by the bountiful supply of clothing and food, which she caused to be distributed among the inmates of that house on the following day. Extinguishing the lanthorn which I had lighted for the purpose of accompanying the lady in her visit, I returned it to the place where it was usually deposited, and resumed my search for the unfortunate Andrews.

Two or three houses of a similar character to those which I had already named, were visited, and with like success. At length I reached one on another street, around the door of which a large

crowd were gathered, listening to the violin and tambourine within. At the sound of my voice way was instantly made for me, and opening the door, I entered. The room was well filled, and on the floor were two couples dancing to this horrid sound which they called music. The women were ill-featured, bloated, miserable-looking objects. One of the males was a ruffian-looking man, in his red flannel shirt, and the other was a fair-haired, delicate-looking boy, really handsome, with fine features, and an intelligent eye, who could not have seen over sixteen summers. He was neatly dressed in a blue jacket, with a black handkerchief tied about his neck, and a snowy shirt bosom shone in marked contrast to the filthy habiliments of those by whom he was surrounded.

Sad to say, this was an inveterate thief— one who had been arrested many times, but whose ingenuity had always managed to elude the vigilance of the laws. Seizing him by the collar, I thrust him from the floor and bade him begone, a mandate with which he complied, but not without muttering oaths of vengeance upon me for presuming to interrupt him in his sport!

At this moment the violin ceased its horrid discord— the tambourine was laid under the bench on which the player was seated, and the dancers left the floor. As I have said, the room was full, and at the head of the orgies was an old man, not less than sixty years of age, whose authority seemed despotic, for he was obeyed by all without a murmur.

“And what is it ye want, Mr. Starr?” he said fawningly, rising and approaching me with deference in his manner, but as I well knew, with curses in his heart.

“Oh, I am only looking about,” I said, and I gazed around upon the group assembled there, all of whom well knew me as I did them.

One person alone sat silent, and not partaking of the amusements. He was seated in a corner of the room near the bar, with his hat drawn down over his eyes, and his head sunk forward on his breast.

Advancing to him, I slapped him smartly on the shoulder to arouse him, suspecting that he was some criminal who, knowing that I had a warrant against him adopted that mode of concealment.

The individual quietly raised his head as my hand fell, and I saw before me the object of my search— Andrews himself.

He failed to recognize me, for he was half stupefied with liquor, and his head fell again on his breast.

“Come, up with you,” I said, at the same time jerking him to a standing posture. “I want you.”

He looked at me with a vacant stare for an instant, then crushing his apology for a hat down over his eyes, he moved unsteadily towards the door without having spoken a word.

“What do you want of me?” he said, in a whining voice, as I took him by the arm and led him up Anthony street, towards the Tombs.

“You’ll find out in good time. I suppose you have forgotten the store of H. & J.,” I said, hoping to frighten him into something like sobriety.

“Wrong this time,” he hiccoughed, “you’ve missed your mark— you’d better not meddle with me. I’m an innocent man, and my friends won’t let me suffer for nothing— now mind.”

This was spoken in whining, half broken tones, and I could scarcely believe that they came from a man, who so short a period before, was a prosperous, honored and honorable merchant.

I saw he was in no condition to be addressed now, and I moved on in silence, wondering how it was possible for a man to have fallen to such a depth of degradation, in such a brief space of time.

On reaching the prison, I gave the poor wretch in charge to one of the assistant keepers, with a request that he would see him comfortably provided for, with which he promised compliance.

My next visit was to the physician, to whom I narrated briefly the purpose I had in view in arresting the unfortunate man, and I asked his co-operation, by the administration of such medicines as would ward off the horrors of delirium tremens, a sure consequence of total abstinence, after such indulgence as that to which he was accustomed. Entering at once into my feelings, the kindhearted man went directly to the prison, where he gave the necessary directions, and my task for the night being thus accomplished, I returned to my home, intending to see Andrews on the following day, when, if his situation should warrant it, proposed to communicate to him the object of my arresting him, and my promise to bring him again before his injured, but most devoted wife.

Chapter XI.

During the forenoon of the next day I visited the prison, and went directly to the cell occupied by Andrews. It was not one of those appropriated to prisoners temporarily confined, and which *were* a disgrace to humanity, there being nothing for the occupant to repose on, save the damp, cold floor; and this, too, without reference to the condition of the prisoner, whether sick or well— provided only that he was poor.

Andrews was in one of the cells in the main building, which was provided with a comfortable bed, and on the shelf was the Bible— the book of life, into which he had too seldom looked, or he might not have fallen to his present state. So judicious had been the directions of the kindhearted and skillful physician, and so faithfully had they been carried out, I found Andrews quite sober and rational, though suffering dreadfully from the want of that soul-killing stimulant which was now the very essence of his existence.

He was sitting on the bunk when I entered, and either from weakness or a dread of trusting to himself, for he trembled violently, he did not arise, but looked at me with an inquisitive air.

“So you are here at last, Andrews,” I said as I closed the door and stood gazing at him.

“Yes,” he replied, looking vacantly about the room, the walls of which were ornamented with rude drawings, the work of some former occupant.

“Do you know me,” I inquired.

“No, I don’t— I’d like to know why I am here,” he said.

“Have you forgotten the robbery of H. & J.’s store,” I asked.

“Oh, that’s it, is it— well it can’t hurt me now— only one thing I would like.”

“And what is that?” I inquired, wondering what request he would have to prefer.

“Can’t I be tried by some other name than my own?”

“And why, Andrews?” I said, pleased to see this spark of feeling left in him.

“Oh, never mind,” he said, suffering his head to sink to his breast and half muttering to himself— “she’s dead, now— she won’t know of it. Never mind.”

“Where is your wife, Andrews?” I inquired, noticing the current into which his thoughts were running.

It was a simple question, but the effect on him was greater than I had looked for. He started from his seat, and while his knees trembled under him, he asked in a hoarse whisper, as if he hoped his words were true— “she’s dead, ain’t she?”

“Where is your daughter Julia?” I pursued, evading his question, and the poor fellow seemed turned to stone to hear these questions asked by one whom he at least thought he had never seen before. Without a word he sank back on his seat, and seeing that he was not then in a proper condition to converse on the subject, I adopted a new plan.

“Now, Andrews, you are not going to be tried for that robbery. That is all arranged, but I am going to keep you here a few days, until you get over the effects of the poison you have been pouring down. Do you behave yourself, and you shall be well taken care of. I don’t mean any harm to you.”

“Won’t you tell me what I’m in here for, and who you are? You seem to know me— I hoped I was forgotten.”

“Do you remember the man who warned you from that gambling house? Do you remember the man you threw in the ditch, in John street? I am that man.”

“Yes,” he said, half to himself, “I know it all, now. And what are you going to do with me?”

“Do you keep perfectly quiet— mind what the Doctor bids you, and in a day or two, I will let you know. Do you want anything?”

The poor wretch, trembling as he was, already on the verge of delirium, replied— “Won’t they give me something to drink here? I shall die if they don’t.”

I could almost feel the tears rise to my eyes as I heard this question, and looked upon the man who made it, whom I had known under such different auspices. His dress was old, filthy and tattered beyond description. His feet were shoeless, and his whole appearance that of a man in the most abject state of destitution. His face was pale and haggard— his beard long and grizzly, and his hair matted with filth stood about his head in disgusting profusion. His eyes were far sunken in their sockets— but I cannot describe his appearance. Every reader can see a counterpart of Andrews as he then appeared, if they will go where I found him. They may be seen there in scores.

“No, Andrews,” I replied, “you shall have every comfort— liquor, you cannot have. You’ll soon get over that. Now do as I bid you, and I will see you in a day or two;” and I turned to take my leave, but he darted forward, and grasping my arm, exclaimed, “Only one thing— don’t, don’t for God’s sake, don’t tell anybody who I am.”

“I won’t— I will not, I assure you. Nobody here knows you. Now good by, and mind what I tell you,” and I took my departure.

For two days I kept away from Andrews, but on inquiring each day, I learned that he was improving, and was really quite a promising man. By my directions, he underwent the process of ablution, which certainly had the benefit of novelty to recommend it to him, and new and comfortable garments were furnished to him; but everything was done without the most remote hint as to the purpose which was had in view.

On the third day, I went again to his cell, and on being admitted, I was surprised and pleased at the change which had taken place. True, the consequences of his long continued indulgence in the poison which had destroyed him, were not obliterated. His countenance was haggard, his eyes were still sunken, and he trembled yet; but he was changed for the better. His garments were neat and clean. His matted hair had disappeared, as had his grizzled beard, and there were visible, marks of humanity about him which could not have been perceived before.

“Well, Andrews, how do you feel to day?” I asked, as he arose to meet me.

“Better— much better. I feel like a man again— but oh, sir, this awful thirst.”

“Oh, well, you’ll get over that in time,” I said— but the poor man shook his head sorrowfully.

“Have you been comfortable?” I inquired. “You’ve been reading, I see,” I continued, taking up the Bible which lay on the bunk, instead of the shelf, thus showing that he had taken it down.

“A little,” he replied. “Mr. Starr, can you tell me anything of my family?” he added, with an expression of interest which was quite unexpected.

“Your wife is alive, Andrews;” and as I spoke I could see a quiver pass across his features. “How is it possible that you have descended so low. How could you—”

“Oh, sir, don’t ask me any questions,” he interrupted eagerly. “If I had heeded your first warning I would not have been here.”

“If it had not been for Pearson, you mean,” I said. “But come, there is no use in speaking of that now. I promised to tell you the next time I came, what I wanted of you. Do you want to see your wife?”

“Mr. Starr, you wouldn’t crush me any further, would you?” he said, with an expression of feeling which I did not think he had left in him.

“Not for the world, Andrews. I am as sorry to see you here as though you were my brother. I am in sober earnest— would you like to see your wife?”

“Yes,” he said, after a pause, “if I could die the next minute. I wouldn’t have her know where I am and live. Is *she* alive?”

“She is, and it is at her request I have brought you here.”

“She is not here, is she?” he exclaimed, starting up with an expression of apprehension. “Oh, she is not here— don’t let her see me here.”

“She shall not, Andrews. I am glad to see that you care for her, though you have lost all regard for yourself.”

“Mr. Starr, I have been dead for more than a year,” he replied, sorrowfully and solemnly.

I looked at the man in amazement, utterly unable to comprehend his meaning. Poor fellow, he had more feeling than I had given him credit for, and as I afterwards learned, he referred to his moral death.

It was well spoken, and the small seed left in his heart sprung up in time, and for a time into a goodly tree. But to my story.

“Come, Andrews, I want you to go with me?” and I moved towards the door.

“Will you tell me what you intend doing with me?” he inquired.

“No harm shall happen to you,” I replied. “Come, I am pressed for time,” and I left the cell, followed by him, for having been committed as a vagrant, I had readily obtained his discharge.

As we emerged from the prison into the fresh air, Andrews' spirits seemed to revive, and he appeared another man. Noticing this I entered into conversation with him as we walked along, and drew from him the history of his connection with Pearson, and the arts which had been used to entrap him, and which had resulted in bringing him to his present deplorable condition.

Chapter XII.

"Come, Andrews," I said, in a familiar, friendly tone, as we walked along, "tell me how it was you fell in with that scoundrel Pearson, for I know it was he who has led you away, and has been the cause of all your troubles."

"It was, indeed, sir," he said sorrowfully, shaking his head. "It was, indeed. It is a very simple story, sir, and shows what fools men can be. I was going home one day, from the store," he continued, "and I had fifteen hundred dollars in my pocket, which I had to pay the next day as part of the purchase money of a nice house I had bought in Mercer street, and the balance was to remain on mortgage.

"It was just before dark, and as I was passing the American Hotel, I saw a gentleman on the steps whose countenance I thought was familiar to me, and I turned to look at him. As I did so he appeared to recognize me, and advanced towards me.

"Is your name Andrews?" he inquired, making a motion as if to take my hand.

"Yes," I replied, not yet recalling perfectly the features, though they were familiar to me.

"Why, don't you remember your old college chum, Pearson?" he said, eagerly grasping my hand, and in an instant the recognition was complete.

"Come in, my dear fellow," he said warmly, fairly dragging me into the house. "Come in and sit down and let us have a chat over old times."

"Well, sir, I went in, and we talked over our college days for an hour or more, and kept drinking all the time, for he would insist upon my joining him, for old acquaintance sake, and I did not feel that I ought to refuse, although I never was fond of, or had indulged in wine at all, of any consequence.

"He was a singularly interesting man in his manners and conversation, and the time seemed to fly while talking with him, or rather listening to him, for he had a wonderful amount of adventure to narrate:

"It was nearly nine o'clock when I arose to leave him, and on his learning that I was going home, he insisted on my going with him instead, 'Come' he said gaily, 'and I will show you a little of life. I dare say you Benedicts don't know what it is.'

“I don’t know how I came to accede to his request. Perhaps I had drank too much— perhaps I was fascinated with Pearson. At all events I put myself under his direction and we went to that house in B—— street, from which you have seen me come out more than once.

“In the parlor up stairs, we found half a dozen gentlemanly-looking men to whom he introduced me as an old college mate, and forthwith they insisted that I should join them. So champagne was ordered, and as I had already drank enough not to know how to stop, I readily fell in with their humor, and drank again with them, until I scarcely knew what I was about.

“While thus engaged, I heard the voices of men in conversation in another room, and as I expressed an anxiety to know what was going on, Pearson at once arose, and followed by the friends with whom he had been drinking, conducted me into the back-room where we saw five or six persons seated around a faro table.

“I was not so much under the influence of the wine I had drank, but that I knew what I was about, and instinctively I shrank back, for I had a horror of everything pertaining to gambling; but Pearson, who had watched my movements, checked me, and laughed at me for being afraid of myself. ‘A pretty man you are, too,’ he said, laughingly, ‘afraid to look at a faro table.’ I told him I did not wish to play, but he interrupted me by saying, gaily, ‘hadn’t you better wait until you are asked.’

“This made me ashamed of myself and my fears, and I remained looking on the players, every now and then going to the sideboard, which was loaded with choice refreshments, and drinking with some of Pearson’s friends, who insisted on my joining them.

“While standing there, watching the progress of the game, which appeared as fair as it was simple, and while my attention was deeply engrossed, Pearson, who stood by my side, whispered to me, ‘There, see that confounded fool— he is going to lose now because he bets on the wrong card— he should have betted on the other,’ naming another card.

“Sure enough, he did lose, and the card which Pearson named, would have won.”

“If I had some money I would try my luck,” said Pearson, seeing the effect which this prediction had on me; and as he spoke, feeling in his pockets. “I havn’t a dollar with me,” he said, turning to me.

“I have plenty,” I said, on the impulse of the moment, for I was completely under the influence of the wine I had poured down, and the strange excitement of the scene, and I pulled out my pocket-book which I opened and tendered to him.

“Well, you are flush,” he said, smilingly, taking an hundred dollars in twenty dollar bills. “But I tell you what, Andrews, I won’t take this unless you’ll go halves this way— you shall have half if I win, and I will bear all the loss myself.”

“Not a bit of it— I’ll go halves through and through,” I said, putting up my pocket-book.

“Well, just as you say”— and he advanced to the table, where he changed his bills for ivory counters, marked so as to represent five, ten, and twenty dollars, some of which he laid down on his favorite card.

“Luck alternated with him— at first he won, and then he lost all he had borrowed, but without waiting to be asked, I again tendered him the offer of my pocket-book, from which he took another hundred dollars, and now he commenced winning steadily.

“Blinded and infatuated, I seated myself by his side, and almost without knowing it, I was deeply engaged in a game which I had never played before, and betted my money with perfect rashness.

“I could not detail to you the occurrences of that night. I drank and gambled until every dollar I had in my pocket was gone, and I arose from the table with feelings which I can not describe.

“Pearson endeavored to cheer me up, by promising that he would win it all back for me, and having swallowed another glass of wine, I left the infamous den, half crazed.

“The cool, fresh air, as I emerged into the street revived me, and I began to reflect upon my folly and wickedness. The money which I had lost, I had that very day drawn from the firm, as I had said, for the purpose of paying part of the purchase of the house for which I had bargained, and how was I to account for it to my wife.

“And now for the first time since I entered the gambling house, the thoughts of my wife and children crossed me, and I was shocked beyond measure when I heard the clock strike three, as I was wending my way homewards. I knew how dreadfully she would feel if she learned that I had been gambling, and I tortured my brain to invent some excuse for the extraordinary hour of my return, as well as for the loss of my money. Of course I must invent some lie, and by the time I had reached the house, I was half distracted at the prospect which presented itself to me.

“As I inserted the night key and opened the door, I heard a sound of feet as of one hurrying down stairs, and before I had fairly entered the house, my poor, distressed wife was hanging on my neck, weeping and sobbing as though her heart was breaking.

“Well did I know the cause of her emotion, but I had no words at that moment, and loosing myself from her embrace, we went into the upper room, where I threw myself into a chair more dead than alive.

“Oh, where, where have you been, James,” she exclaimed, sitting down by my side and looking in my face with an expression of love and anxiety which went to my very heart.

“The devil tempted me, sir,” continued Andrews, drawing the sleeve of his jacket across his eyes. “Yes, sir, and he conquered, too. I told her a foul, wicked lie, and she believed every word of it. I told her that as I was coming home in the evening I saw a poor woman with two small children, begging in Broadway, and I stopped to give something to her, and she commenced telling a tale of distress which went to my very heart— that I told her I would go to her home with her, which I did, and found that she lived in a low den in Anthony street. While there, three

men suddenly entered, who fell upon me, and after maltreating me, had robbed me of every cent I had with me, and that I had been, ever since I had got clear from them, engaged with police officers, trying to hunt up the robbers, but without success.

“My haggard appearance served to confirm the truth of this monstrous lie, and my poor wife was too rejoiced at my safe return and escape from the robbers, to think of anything but myself, and she exclaimed, ‘Heavens be praised that you are safe, James; and as for the money, why let it go. You will be more careful hereafter, and not suffer your good heart to tempt you into such places again— will you?’ she asked entreatingly.

“Oh how her words cut me to the very quick, to think that I had framed such a monstrous lie, and that she had believed it; but I excused myself to my conscience by thinking how much worse she would have felt, if she had known where and how I passed the night.

“But, sir, there is no use in detaining you with a narrative of the scene that ensued between us. I went to bed that night a guilty, conscience-smitten wretch, and in the morning when I looked into the face of my wife beaming with affection and gratitude for my escape, I felt that I was indeed unworthy of such a woman.

“Well, sir, to make a long story short, when I went down town in the morning, I narrated the same story, and I had handbills printed, offering a large reward for the apprehension of the robbers, and I made a great outcry about it all over. My friends sympathized with me, and I had little difficulty in borrowing the sum from them, which I had lost at the gambling table.

“You will hardly credit it, sir, but I was so infatuated I actually longed for night to come that I might return to the gambling house, and win back that which I had lost, for I felt sure of winning. I went home to tea, and framing an excuse of urgent business which would keep me out late, to satisfy my wife, I hurried away, and hunted up Pearson, whom I found at the hotel where he put up.

“ ‘Ah, my fine fellow,’ he said, pulling out his pocket-book, and taking thence two hundred dollars which he tendered to me, ‘I am glad to see you. You see I have replenished my stock,’ and he exhibited a large roll of bills.’

“ ‘But,’ I said, ‘I was to go halves, through and through, and you lost; so I am sure only half of this belongs to me.’

“ ‘That will do for you, but it isn’t my way of doing business. I borrowed— and I pay— now, then, what do you say; are you going to pay those fellows off.’

“ ‘I am, indeed,’ I replied; ‘I must win back what I lost, and—’

“ ‘Oh that’s easy enough,’ he interrupted; ‘only keep cool, and watch me. See here,’—and he pulled out a blank card covered with fine figures— ‘I have been making my calculations, and I know just how to win; so come along, and we’ll give them a trial.’”

“That night I won three hundred dollars, and I fancied I saw through the game so as to render success for the future certain. I left the house about eleven, and reached home in good season.”

“Ah,” I said, “that was the night I met you for the first time, wasn’t it?”

“Yes,” he replied, “and it would have been well for me if I had heeded the warning you gave me then. However, that is past. A few nights afterwards I went again, and then I won twenty-five hundred dollars, and that night, when I went home I went on my knees and swore as solemnly as man could swear, that I would never enter a gambling house again, or play for money.

“But I was not prof against the temptations which Pearson held out to me, and I went on from step to step until I had lost every cent of my own in the world, and had drawn so largely on the funds of the firm, we were compelled to stop.

“Still, sir, the infatuation was on me, and I held to the delusive hope of winning, and that, too, from professional gamblers.”

“But,” I said, “did you not know that Pearson was a principal owner of the place where you lost your money.”

“I learned it afterwards, sir,” he replied; “for when I had no more to lose, he offered to pay me a per centage on all whom I brought to the place, and who lost money. Well, sir, after I failed, Pearson appeared to sympathize very much with me, and offered any assistance in his power. He appeared so friendly, I introduced him to my family, and my wife at first glance conceived a strong prejudice against him, but, for my sake, concealed it from me.

“Julia, however, was very much pleased with him, and I was glad to notice that he appeared to admire her, for I had already conceived the idea of bettering my condition by seeing her the wife of Pearson. But, alas! I did not know what an infamous scoundrel he was until it was too late, and then he had me so completely in his power, I dared not open my mouth, for he knew well how I obtained money when I was in the employ of Eldridge and Thompson.

“But you know the rest as well as I do, Mr. Starr. I kept going down and down, though I managed to keep my habits a secret for a time from my wife, who attributed all my misfortunes to the evil machinations of others.

“But at length the truth broke upon her, and when she learned that I had ruined myself, and had brought all the troubles and sorrows upon my family, through my passion for gambling, her grief was enough to rend a heart of stone. She entreated and implored and prayed me to forsake it, and I promised—oh how solemnly I promised!— but I could not stop; it seemed as if I was drawn onward by some irresistible power, and I kept going down and down until I descended to downright robbery.

“The devil tempted me to get those keys from young Blake’s drawer, where I knew he kept them, and I had duplicates made, with which I could go in or out as I chose, and I had a constant customer for all I took, in a gentleman at Hartford, who did not know but that I was in business

for myself, and whose letters I received regularly, giving orders for such goods as he wanted—such as I knew were in the store of H. & J. I took, and the others I purchased.

“Yes, Andrews,” I said, “you were very near ruining an honest and honorable man.”

“I am glad if he got clear. Well, sir, what more can I say. You found me out; and though you did not know it was myself in the store at the time—”

“And how did you know that I did not recognize you?” I inquired, interrupting him.

“Because you did not call me by name. If you had, I am sure I should have betrayed myself. That night I hurried off to the place where I kept my stolen goods, and then went home placing my disguise and the false keys in the bureau drawer, where you found them. If I had thrown them away, you would never have found me out.”

“You are mistaken, Andrews,” I said, “I had another clue to you which you little dreamed of.”

“And what was that, Mr. Starr,” he asked, evidently astonished.

“The cuff of your coat, which you left in my hand when you threw me into the ditch. But no matter; go on.”

“Well— the night you were at my house, when I came home, Julia was watching at the door for me, and when she told me you were up stairs, of course I turned away, and the next day I left the city.

“After that everything went. Julia could not live with her mother, and ran off with that scoundrel, Pearson.”

“But how did you know that?”

“Oh, I came back in about a month, and saw my wife once, from whom I learned it all. She was nearly heart broken, and begged me to go and throw myself upon the mercy of H. & J., but I did not dare. So I went off again, and went on from bad to worse, until I went where you found me. That is all I have to say about it. I was completely infatuated by my passion for gambling— that led me to steal, and remorse drove me to drink. Now, sir, you know the whole.”

“You have suffered a great deal, Andrews,” I said, “but no more than you deserved. But I hope the worst is over, and we will see what can be done for you, if you can only manage to keep steady, and forego that passion for gambling.”

“Me gamble, sir! I look like a gambler, don't I, sir,” and he viewed himself from head to foot, while tears started to his eyes.

I said nothing, but we walked on in silence for the remainder of the distance, Andrews apparently lost in deep thought, possibly reviewing the occurrences which had led him to his present desperate condition.

Chapter XIII.

“Here we are, Andrews,” I said, as we paused in front of the house in which the devoted wife resided, and as I spoke, he looked at the miserable tenement, then at his own clothes, and in that moment all the changes which his sins had wrought in him and his family, crossed his mind, and a tear started to his eye.

“Poor woman,” he said, half aloud, as he entered the door and ascended the dilapidated stairs which led to her room.

“You may well say so,” I replied— “but I trust better and brighter days will come— only be a man,” and as I finished speaking, I knocked gently at the door, which I opened, without waiting for any invitation, and in another moment husband and wife stood face to face.

With a scream of joy, Mrs. Andrews dropped the work on which she was engaged, and springing forward, cast her arms about the neck of the long lost husband, who stood statue-like without the power to move or speak.

Raising her head from his shoulder, she pushed back the hair from his forehead, and gazed for a minute into his changed and haggard face; then bursting into a flood of tears, her head fell again on his shoulder, and she murmured, “my husband— my poor, forsaken husband.”

Suddenly leading him to the chair from which she had arisen, she seated him there, and kneeling before him, she took both his hands within her own, and with streaming eyes, gazed upon the sad wreck of him on whom had been placed all her hopes of happiness.

Andrews returned the gaze with an expression of sadness, sorrow, and anguish on his countenance, and after a pause of a full minute, during which the beating of their hearts could almost be heard, tears started to his eyes, and sinking gently to his knees in front of her, and clasping her neck he bent his head upon her shoulder and wept in silence.

They were tears of penitence— the first he had ever shed; and who shall say that they were not born aloft by the Recording Angel, and that there was not joy among the angels over on sinner who had repented.

I felt an unaccountable warmth about my own eyes, and before I was aware of it, a tear was trickling down my cheek. But I was happy, and I had a right to be happy; for had I not been instrumental in bringing about this meeting?

For some minutes a solemn silence prevailed, broken only by the sobs of the happy wife and the repentant husband, who knelt there before me.

At length they arose, and Andrews seating himself, clasped his hands across his eyes; while his wife turned to me and extended her hand with an expression of gratitude on her countenance which amply repaid me for all my trouble.

“Did I not tell you so?” she said at length, after a pause, and wiping away her tears. “Did I not tell you I could bring him back. Oh, my husband— James, my own dear James,” and approaching him, she pressed his head to her breast.

“You will never, never leave me again, will you, my husband? Oh, I have suffered sadly since you saw me,”— and he looked in her face, where he read the sad confirmation of her words. “We will never part again, James, will we?” she asked, fondling his head and kissing his pale forehead.

But the poor man could not speak— his heart was too full for words. His countenance, however, eloquently told of the emotions, and the struggle going on within.

“Oh, Mr. Starr, how I do thank you,” she said, turning to me. “God will bless you for this kindness. I wish you could know how happy I feel now.

“I want no thanks,” I replied, “for I was almost as happy as herself— “come, Andrews, now be a man. Thank your God that you have such a wife, and try to deserve her.”

“I try to thank Him, Mr. Starr— I try to— but I can’t.” Oh, what a wicked wretch I have been, too. Can I ever, ever be forgiven?”

“Oh, yes, James. God knows that I forget in this hour all the misery I have suffered, and the same God will pardon if you will go to him.”

“Poor, poor Lucy,” he said, sadly looking about the comfortless apartment. — “And it is I who have brought you to this?”

“Never mind that, James— brighter days are in store for us yet. But you will never leave me again, will you, my own husband? You will never make me so unhappy again?”

“Never, as God is my Judge,” he replied, with warmth. “But what can I do?— I am an outcast— a criminal. The seal of the law is set upon me.”

“Not so, Andrews,” I replied, “Only be true to yourself— abandon that vice which has brought you to this condition, and as your true-hearted wife has said, there may be brighter days in store for you.”

“That cannot be,” he said, mournfully shaking his head. “Who will employ a miserable wretch like me? I cannot be a burden to my poor suffering wife.”

“Hush— hush, James,” said his wife, placing her hand across his mouth. “You must not talk so; it is rebelling against God’s goodness. Has he not restored you to me? He has spared you for this hour, surely, for some good purpose.”

“Your wife is right, Andrews,” I said. “I never expected to see you so far restored as you now are— you must not despair. Only, for God’s sake, for the sake of this devoted woman, abandon that habit which must bring you—”

“Oh, sir, I have,” he exclaimed, interrupting me. “In my heart of hearts I have,” he replied, with emotion. “Never, so long as I am spared, will I ever taste or touch.”

“May God help and strengthen you, James,” said his wife with emotion. “Alone, you would be powerless— with His help you can do anything. Oh, go to Him, and dare not to trust to yourself.”

“Are you here alone, Lucy?” Andrews inquired, looking around the room.

“All alone— until now I have been alone in the world,” and her utterance failed her as she spoke, but the father understood it all.

“And Julia?” he said, in a hoarse voice, hardly above a whisper.

Mrs. Andrews shook her head, sadly, but could not reply.

“And this has been my work. Oh! that I had died before I ever saw you, Lucy.”

“Not so, James; we have had our trials— the reward is now to come.

“Now, Andrews,” I said, “I am going to leave you for the present. For the sake of Lucy, here, who will tell you why, I will try and do what I can for you. As for your past misfortunes,” (I did not wish to pain her feelings by saying crimes) “they are forgiven, I know.”

“Is that so?” he asked, looking doubtingly at her.

“It is, indeed. Mr. H. knows of your present situation,” I replied.

“Yes, James, and he has sent me money for my necessities,” she hurriedly interrupted, anxious to fix on his mind the certainty that he need not apprehend any trouble from that source.

“God bless him,” said Andrews, a tear starting to his eye.

“Well, I must go,” I said, turning towards the door; but Mrs. Andrews stopped me, and taking my hand, said with a voice scarcely audible from emotion, “you know I thank you, Mr. Starr— I cannot say how much.”

“And I, from the very bottom of my heart,” said Andrews, rising; “may God strengthen me, and enable me to prove worthy of your kindness.”

“Amen,” said his wife, and smiling through her tears, for her heart was surcharged with its happiness, she shook my hand warmly, and I took my leave.

I posted directly to the store of H. & J., where I had the good luck to meet Mr. H., alone, to whom I detailed the occurrences of the past few days, and as I concluded, I said, “Now you must do something for him—he must be encouraged, or he will despair.”

“Poor fellow; he has been severely punished enough, already—and his unoffending wife. But what can I do for him?”

“Can’t you give him some kind of employment?” I asked, going at once to the point.

“No, I can’t myself, but I’ll tell you what I can do. One of our friends just below us wants a porter, and if you think he would—”

“I know he would, gladly,” I said, hurriedly anticipating the question; “and for his wife’s sake, I will vouch for his future honesty. He must have something to do, and it would be of incalculable benefit to him, if it came through you. It would show that he is not entirely an outcast.”

“Well, I will try and secure it for him. But it is a great hazard. However, Williams is a good-hearted man, and I am sure he would not willingly crush the poor fellow. Of course I must tell him—”

“Of course,” he said, interrupting me, “and I will go with you. Now come—let us do it at once.” And after a few faint remonstrances against my haste, we went to the store in question, where we succeeded in securing the place of porter for a man who was once a leading merchant in the same street.

This being arranged, I left for home with a happy heart, and communicated the joyful occurrences of the day to my wife, whose heart beat in warm sympathy for the unfortunate and unhappy Mrs. Andrews.

The next morning early, I proceeded to the house of Andrews, where I was met with a smile of welcome, which evidently came from the hearts of both. Andrews sprang forward, half extending his hand, as if fearful I would not take it, but I grasped and shook it warmly, for I knew that the least intimation of doubt in his present situation, would only tend to dishearten him.

This motion, simple as it was, affected him sensibly, and he turned from me to conceal the tear which glistened in his eye.

As for Mrs. Andrews, her face beamed with hope and happiness. She sprang forward to meet me with a smile like that which she might have worn in happier days.

“Oh, Mr. Starr,” she said, grasping my hand warmly in both her own, “how very, very much I thank you.”

“Come, come, none of this,” I said, “I am glad to see you looking so well and happy.”

“Happy!” she said, with a smile of ineffable sweetness, “and why should I not be happy? has not the Lord heard and answered my prayers, and is not my own dear husband restored to me?”

“I am really glad to see you look, and know that you feel so happy. Well, Andrews, how goes it?” I said, turning to him; “you look better.”

“I am better,” he said, his face lighting up at the sound of a friendly voice, “how could I be otherwise with such an angel as that to cheer me;” and he looked at his wife with his soul in his eyes; “and look here, sir,” he continued, turning around, so that I could have full view of his person, “this is her doing, sir.”

He alluded to his clothes, which were new and comfortable, and which she had purchased with the money sent to her by Mr. H.

“That’s right,” I said. “Now I’ve some good news for you. I have found something for you to do.”

“Have you, indeed?” he said eagerly, advancing towards me; “I am very glad— I feel as if I could do almost anything, now. I would be glad to dig or saw wood, if it was only to prove to Lucy here—”

“Never mind Lucy, now,” said his wife, interrupting him; “hear what your friend Mr. Starr has to say— our friend, I mean,” and she looked her gratitude to me.

“Mr. Williams, in Pearl street, wants a porter, and Mr. H. had persuaded him to take you, that is if you will accept the place.”

“Mr. H.?” said Andrews, his countenance falling; “that can’t be, surely he knows, of course—”

“Of course he does,” I said, hastily; of course he does, and he is the last man in the world who would crush a man when he is trying to rise again. He is friendly to you, and, will rejoice in your prosperity. You are to go down tomorrow morning, but I think you had better go and see Mr. H. first.”

“I will,” he said resolutely; “I will— he must not think that I am ungrateful, or that I cannot appreciate his kindness. Oh, Mr. Starr, how much we owe to you.”

“Never mind that— you will pay it all by being good and happy. Now, how about those boys— have they been home since I was here?”

“No, sir,” said Mrs. Andrews, mournfully, “but now their father has returned, I doubt not we can get on very well with them. I hope your kindness will not be taxed with them also.”

“I hope not, indeed,” I replied. I wished to speak of Julia, but dared not at that time, so I turned the conversation on the future prospects of the reformed husband. He was full of hope and happy anticipations, though not so self-confident as to feel it unnecessary to keep a strict watch on himself, and I felt assured that he would prosper.

But I have already gone too much into minor details in the course of this narrative, and yet I have omitted many things which transpired during the course of my connection with Andrews and his family. Suffice it to say, that Andrews called on Mr. H., by whom he was received with such cordial warmth and sincerity, as brought tears to his eyes, and he entered at once upon his duties as porter to Mr. Williams, with the firm determination to do well.

The boys came back after a few days of absence, and were surprised at finding their father again at home. His authority was soon brought into play, and by a faithful and persevering adherence to one course, they were at length induced to abandon their vicious companions, and they were both bound out to respectable mechanics.

The prayers of the faithful wife had been heard and answered, and ere long, Andrews was brought to the conviction that his restoration was owing to no strength of his own, but that he had been aided and strengthened by a power mightier than that of man. To that power he was brought into humble submission, and his wife had the inexpressible happiness of kneeling with him at the family altar, of worshipping the same God, and with him of ascribing to His mercy all the praise and the gratitude of their hearts.

I was a frequent visitor in the family, and Andrews, with his wife, called occasionally at my house. He prospered, and there was but one thing wanting to complete the happiness of this family, who had passed through so many trials and adversities— that was the restoration of Julia, and how to effect that, was more than I could well conceive.

I had promised Mrs. Andrews that I would endeavor to restore her to her mother’s heart and arms, and I resolved, if it were possible, to accomplish it. I was fully aware that Pearson alone could give me any information concerning her, and to him I resolved to apply, and appeal to his humanity, if indeed he had any. I resolved to call upon him— to detail to him all that Andrews and his wife had suffered through his instrumentality, and to implore him to make the only amends in his power, by enabling them to recover their daughter.

With Andrews I had frequently conversed with reference to his daughter, and he always expressed himself as having this wish alone ungratified to render his happiness complete. Through the grace of God he had been rescued from the drunkard’s grave— he had been saved from a felon’s cell— he had been restored to his devoted, doating wife, and save Julia, his family were once more re-united. He had the entire confidence and respect of his employers. Contented to live on humble means, he was as comfortable as he desired to be, and his only wish now was that Julia might be restored to them— that she might be made to feel the error of her ways, and to withdraw from them, ere it was too late for ever. For her, the prayers of the father and mother

ascended daily, and they were strengthened by the conviction, that in His own good time, the Lord would grant this wish of their hearts.

Chapter XIV.

In pursuance of my resolution, I called in a few days at the boarding-house of Mr. Pearson, at an hour when I thought I should find him in, and was surprised to hear that he had been quite sick, and was confined to his room.

I sent my name up, though I was rather fearful that in his present situation he would refuse to see me; but the servant immediately returned, and desired me to walk up to his room, for he knew me very well; and although I had on more than one occasion interfered with him and had compelled him to do justice to one or two parties whom he had injured, I knew that if he did not *love* me, he feared me to a certain extent, and would go to considerable lengths to oblige me for his own sake.

I found him sitting up in bed, and he appeared very glad to see me.

“Come in, Starr,” he said with an air of cordiality. “Yours is the first face I have seen these two days, except my man’s. The moment a man is sick he seems to be forgotten. How do things go on outside, eh?”

“All well, Mr. Pearson— all well. But what has been the matter with you?”

“Oh, a mere trifle. One of my horses got an unruly fit the other day, and kicked me in the abdomen. The pain was very severe, but I am much better *now*. I expect to be out tomorrow. Hush!— there’s the doctor,” he said, listening, as steps were heard ascending the stairs. “Don’t go; never mind him; I want to ask you a few questions. Wait until he has gone; he won’t stay long when he finds I am getting on so well.”

Sure enough, in a moment Dr. B——, a well known and celebrated physician, entered the room unannounced, and as Pearson rose to a sitting posture on his entrance, he appeared much surprised, as if the improvement manifested in his patient was rather unexpected, or unfavorable in its symptoms.

“Ah, Doctor, I’ve weathered you this time,” he exclaimed gaily. “Here you have been pouring your stuff down me these three days, and I suppose I must give you the credit of curing me; but to tell you the truth, I fell asleep last evening after you went away, and did not wake up in time to take the medicine you left. But it’s all the same, as I’ve got well without it.”

“You feel better, then?” inquired the doctor, advancing to the bed and feeling the pulse of his patient with an expression of anxiety, which I thought exceedingly strange, considering the manifest improvement in his condition.

“Quite smart, I assure you. I can go out tomorrow at the furtherest, eh?”

“How about the pain, Mr. Pearson?” he inquired, avoiding a direct answer to this question.

“Haven’t a particle, he replied, with a tone of levity. “But you don’t surely mean to keep me here any longer.”

“When did the pain leave you, Mr. Pearson?” inquired Dr. B——, his countenance growing more and more serious.

“Why, what a man you are. You surely are not sorry to think that it has gone, are you? Last night about two o’clock, I think— it went all at once.”

“And you are now quite free from it?”

“Entirely so, but most confoundedly weak. Now don’t give me any more stuff, for I have an important engagement tomorrow, which I would not like to break. The ladies, you know, are very strict in their requirements,”— and he smiled meaningly.

“Have you felt no pain at all since two o’clock?” inquired Dr. B——, with increasing earnestness.

“I have already told you, no; and save this confounded weakness, I was never better.”

“Mr. Pearson,” said Dr. B——, dropping the hand of the patient, which he had held all the time of this conversation, “I have known your family for many years, and respect them highly. I believe they all know and respect me, and think me incapable of deceiving them.”

“Why, what are you driving at? Dr. B——,” exclaimed Mr. Pearson, leaning forward with a singular expression of earnestness on his countenance. “Who has ever doubted you?”

“*You* must not now, when I tell you that this absence of, and this entire freedom from pain, is a certain precursor of—” and he hesitated.

“Well, go on, doctor—you mean it is going to return again, and more severely to pay me for not having taken your confounded medicine.”

“*Of death*, Mr. Pearson. It is an unerring symptom of mortification,” replied Dr. B——, without heeding the last remark of his patient “And, sir,” he continued, solemnly and earnestly, “your hours are as surely numbered for this earth as that the sun rises and sets.”

Never can I forget the expression which crossed the countenance of that doomed man, as he heard these solemn words. For myself, I was inexpressibly shocked, and involuntarily half sprang from my chair, from the excitement of the moment; but a single glance at Pearson sent me back again. He sat bolt upright in his bed— he was pale before, but now a sickly, sallow hue came across his countenance, and big drops of sweat started from his pallid forehead. His eyes were actually distended with horror, and he glared at Dr. B—— as though he would read his

very soul. For several moments he remained immovable— a complete and perfect picture of terror.

Dr. B——, of course, noticed his extraordinary emotion; but he could say nothing to palliate it. He had, indeed, spoken the awful truth, that no human aid could now avail. Mortification had supervened, and the hours of Mr. Pearson were numbered for this earth.

For some moments an awful stillness pervaded the apartment, and it was broken at length by a deep but suppressed groan from Pearson, who sank back upon his bed, completely powerless from the dreadful excitement under which he was laboring.

Dr. B——, knowing how worse than wicked it would be to hold out any encouragement to the doomed man, approached him, and taking his hand kindly, said, “Is there anything I can do for you, Mr. Pearson?”

“You were jesting, were you not?” said he, with a sickly attempt at a smile, which rendered his countenance absolutely ghastly.

“On my soul and honor, no. I dare not trifle on such a subject. However sudden may have been the announcement, I feel that I have only performed a duty. I could not see the son of my old friend die without any warning.”

“That will do,” said Pearson, with a deep sigh, turning his head away so as to avoid looking at the doctor—and he lay there motionless.

“Is there anything I can do for you?— any one you wish to see?”

Pearson merely shook his head— he was unable to reply. Already in fancy he saw the shadow of the angel of death hovering over him— he saw the dark grave yawning to receive him— and how unprepared he was.

“Mr. ——,” said Dr. B—— to me, inquiringly, as if to ask my name.

“Starr, sir,” I said. “I have called on a matter of business this morning, and I have been inexpressibly shocked at what I have heard.”

“Of course this is no time for business, sir,” he said, with something of sternness.

“Of course not, though perhaps Mr. Pearson may desire to see me especially. My business is of no common nature.”

“You know best, sir,” he said. “Mr. Pearson, I must go now. I shall call again as I pass along in a few hours. There is nothing you wish me to do?”

Pearson again shook his head, and Dr. B——, repeating his caution to me, took his leave, and I was left alone with the dying man.

For some minutes Pearson lay motionless, his face turned toward the wall; and fearing that the excitement might have proved too much for his frame to bear, and that he was already dead, I arose and cautiously approached the bed, bending over so as to have a view of his face.

One hand was clasped over his eyes, and big tears had forced themselves through his fingers, and had wet his pillow. I could well imagine what must be the nature of his feelings at such an hour, and forbore to intrude upon them, but quietly withdrew, and seated myself in the chair, close by the bed, just vacated by Dr. B——.

In a few moments he seemed to arouse from his stupor, if it could be so called, and dashing his hand across his eyes, turned to the light and saw me sitting there.

“Ah, I am glad you have not gone,” he said, forcing a composure which was indeed terrible to behold; and, rising in bed, he wiped away the cold sweat which bedewed his forehead. “He gave me an awful fright, I must say,” he said with a slight shudder; “but I don’t believe him, after all. He has some spite against me for not taking his confounded medicine; that’s the way with some of these doctors, they will never forgive a man for getting well without their aid.”

“No, Mr. Pearson, Dr. B—— is above that. You must not doubt his solemn assertion,” I said with earnestness.

“Pshaw,” he said, with a sneer, “he only wanted to forgive me, and he did it to his heart’s content. I will remember him for it yet.”

“Oh, do not talk so, Mr. Pearson. Dr. B—— could not have so base a motive. He could not deceive a man in your situation.”

“And you really believe him?”

“Most indubitably.”

“Well, I don’t— but no matter for that;”— and he remained silent a moment, evidently lost in deep thought. I saw that he was striving to convince himself that Dr. B—— was deceiving him; and would not realize that the total cessation from pain, of which he had spoken so cheerily, was the unerring forerunner of his death. “I should like to see— no, I would not. Have you the time,” he said, cutting his own sentence short, “to do something for me.”

“Most certainly— anything. I am entirely at your service. But may I speak now on the matter which brought me here.”

“Say on,” he said, looking at me inquiringly.

“You remember Mr. Andrews?”

“Of course, I do,” he replied, while an expression of pain crossed his features. “I have not seen him or heard of him for a very long time.”

“His daughter, Julia.”

“You need not say any more. I was about to ask you to do something for me in regard to her.”

“You can make her parents very happy if you will. The family has suffered dreadfully. But I won’t speak of that now— what can I do for you?”

“I am very weak— very weak,” he said, and suddenly an ashy paleness crossed him. “He was right,” he half muttered; and for a few moments he sat there motionless, his head buried on his breast. “Will you go to No.— A—— street, and bring Julia with you? Quick, too. She is there— tell her I must see her— don’t take any excuse. Just ring for my man before you go; and Starr, as you go, just stop and bring some minister or magistrate— I want to do one act of justice, at least, before I go for good.”

“Certainly,” I replied; and ringing the bell, his servant entered, and I took my leave. Jumping into the first empty carriage I met, I drove to the house of an alderman, a friend, whom I requested to go to Pearson’s house, and remain until I returned, but not to go into his room. Then I drove over to the house designated by Mr. Pearson, where I inquired for Miss Andrews.

The woman who admitted me seemed to hesitate as to whether she should conduct me to her or not; but I quickly removed her doubts by stating that my business was a matter of the most urgent moment— of life and death, and she immediately led me into the back room, where I found Julia engaged in sewing, and she arose as I entered.

She was the same lovely Julia; but that expression of haughty pride was gone. She was paler, too, than usual, and there was an air of subdued sadness about her, quite foreign to what I had deemed to be her nature.

She recognized me immediately, and the color came to her cheeks as I advanced towards her, and said in a low voice— for I did not wish the woman who had entered the room with me to know my business— “I come from Mr. Pearson, who wishes very much to see you.”

“Mr. Pearson is a villain,” she said, rising, her eyes flashing and her nostrils dilating. “I am surprised that he should dare to add insult to injury, by sending such a message through you.”

“Miss Andrews,” I said earnestly, “Mr. Pearson is dying, and—”

“Dying!” she said, her whole nature changing at once, and not giving me time to finish my sentence. “Dying!” and she trembled so excessively I feared she would fall to the ground.

“He has begged me to urge that you would come at once.”

“I will go with you,” she said, dropping her work. “Dying! so soon— can it be possible?” and she hastily threw on a hat and shawl which were lying on the bed in the room where she was working.

“How is it?” she inquired with trembling accents, as I handed her in the carriage. “You would not dare to deceive me.”

“On my honor, no. He has not a day to live, and he knows it. He wished me to bring you, that he might do one act of justice.”

“Dying,” she murmured, and buried her face in her hands, while the tears forced themselves through her fingers. “I thought I hated him,” she said, half to herself, “but I cannot. Where is my mother?” she inquired suddenly.

“You shall see them both as soon as you choose.”

“Both— is my father—” and she hesitated.

“Your mother and father are both at home, and have only one thing wanting to make them happy. You will see them soon.”

“Will they see *me*?” she said, bitterly. And she relapsed into a silence which remained unbroken until we reached the residence of Mr. Pearson.

Taking Julia’s arm, and followed by the magistrate, we ascended to Pearson’s room, where we found him still alone except his servant.

Julia, on seeing him, forgot for the moment all her wrongs and injuries, and springing forward, threw herself on her knees by his bedside, burying her face in the clothes, while, touched to the heart at this evidence of her devotion, the big tears filled his eyes, and fell upon her head, as he bent over her.

“Julia,” he said, and she raised her head, “they tell me I am dying. I believe it is true, and I have sent to make the only reparation I can to you. Would that I could do the same to all whom I have wronged. Mr. Starr, is *he* here?” and I pointed to my friend the alderman, who had, at a glance, comprehended the nature of the services required of him.

“Julia,” continued Mr. Pearson, having noticed my motion, “I have sent for you to *make you my wife*. It is the only reparation I can make you. You will soon be a widow,” he said, with a strange expression of sadness— “will you consent to be the wife of a dying man?”

“You know how I have loved you, Robert,” she said, taking his clammy hand within her own, “I forgive you all the wrong you have inflicted on me, and *will* be your wife. I can at least wait on and nurse you now,” and her tears fell fast on his hand.

“Quick, then,” he said, with an anxious look, “there is not time to lose. Mr. Starr, your friend there will please do his duty. Come, Julia,” and with an effort, he placed himself upright in bed, his ghastly countenance quivering with emotion.

The ceremony was soon performed, and Julia Andrews was the wife of the dying man, who had so wronged and injured her. Without a word, as soon as the ceremony was concluded she threw aside her hat and shawl and seating herself in a chair, which she drew close to the head of the bed, she buried her face on the pillow, and lay there for some moments. Pearson fell back on his pillow, and for some time neither spoke a word.

“Come, Julia,” he said, at length, and she raised her head, her countenance now of a marble paleness, “I have much to do in a short time. Go, now, Starr— I want to be alone with Julia a little— with my wife”— and he looked at her with an expression which brought the tears to her eyes.

Of course I could not delay after that, and I retired with the alderman, promising, however, in accordance with his request to return during the day.

Chapter XV.

Towards evening I returned as I had promised, and found Mr. Pearson sinking very fast. All the members of his family resided at too great a distance to be informed of his situation in time to render any assistance, or take a last farewell of him on earth, and during the entire period of my absence, he had been left alone with his wife. Two or three of his gambling companions had called, and had left their cards, without even making an inquiry as to his real condition, so that in fact the near approach of his dissolution was unknown out of the house.

Dr. B. had been there before, but could, of course, do nothing. Silently, but most surely, death was doing his work. The mortification was rapidly ascending to the more vital organs, and a few hours would end his career on earth.

What had passed between himself and Julia, I knew not, of course, but when I entered, I found him restless and uneasy; his glassy eye wandered about in vacancy, and his countenance already showed that he was struck with death. With all the energy of despair, he was mentally battling with the grim tyrant, and was striving to banish the thoughts of the near approach of his end.

But it could not be. The dark, cold grave yawned before him— the terrors of the awful eternity were ever present to his mind. The certain reward of his misspent life was soon to be received. The fair and beautiful things of earth, on which his soul had so feasted, to the utter exclusion of every other thought, were passing away like shadows. The cold, damp hand of death was already fastened upon him, and not one thought of God— of repentance— had crossed him. Not a single aspiration for pardon for his unnumbered sins had passed his lips, and he was passing away into that unknown, untried world, without a hope on which to lean.

When I entered, he turned towards the door, with a restless, uneasy movement, and immediately turned away again, as if the sight of myself had caused him pain.

“How do you feel, now, Mr. Pearson,” I said, approaching the bed, and as I spoke, he turned again, and fixed his glassy, sunken eyes upon me with an appealing look, which I could not misinterpret.

“Do you suffer much?” I inquired.

“Here— here,” he said, laying his hand on his heart, and pressing it as if to still its beatings; “Julia,” he said, in a choking voice, “Julia,—” and in an instant she was bending over him, her face as pallid as the pillows on which he rested.

“Raise me up,” and she did as he requested, placing the pillows behind him, so that they supported him in a sitting posture.

“It’s almost over,” he said, faintly, and gazing around wildly, as if taking his last look of earth— “I can’t sit up— down— down,” he said, speaking with a great effort; and the pillows were removed, so as to allow him to recline at length.

For some moments he lay motionless, save that his lips stirred, now and then, as if he was talking to himself. Soon he gave evidence that the last great struggle was at hand. His senses began to wander, and he broke out into the most dreadful cursing and swearing. In imagination, he was at the gambling table, and he was accusing some of his associates of foul play. Then his thoughts wandered to the race course, and he offered his bets freely, almost fiercely. Julia next was before him, and all the vows were breathed into her ear, which she had heard in other days. Julia looked imploringly at me through the tears which nearly blinded her, and I answered her mute appeal in the same manner, for neither dared to disturb the solemnity of that hour by our voices.

Suddenly springing up in bed, his eyes glaring wildly, and his hands convulsively clutching at the air, he screamed, “I won’t die, I tell you— d—n you, I won’t die, to spite you. Oh, keep him off— keep him off!” he said in tones of terror, motioning away some imaginary form from the foot of his bed; “do keep him off— not yet— only a little while— Mr. Andrews, don’t curse me— oh, don’t curse me— I can’t die— oh, must I die. No, I won’t,” he shouted, in tones which I thought it impossible for him to utter. “D—n you all, I won’t die;” and clutching his hands in his hair, he tore out large masses, and fell backwards— a corpse.

And thus passed from earth the guilty soul of Robert W. Pearson. We were alone with the dead, and Julia threw herself upon the bed in a paroxysm of grief and terror, which I felt it useless to attempt to control.

After the funeral of Mr. Pearson, the rights of his widow were put in the hands of a lawyer for proper management; and having obtained the place of residence of her parents from me, she proceeded thither alone, for, at her own urgent request, I had refrained from communicating to them any of the extraordinary occurrences which the past few days had brought forth, as she preferred to make all known to them herself. Of her reception I cannot speak, of my own knowledge, but I *do know* that when I called there, in a few days thereafter, I never met a happier family than the one which greeted me.

Julia's conduct and feelings had undergone an entire change since her meeting and eternal parting with her husband, and she seemed to be entirely overcome by the treatment she received from her parents. The remembrance of her sins was upon her, and any one could see that there was a canker-worm gnawing at her heart, which would not be appeased. True, her parents had forgiven her— true, the family was again united— true, she was now in a position which enabled her to pass her days in comparative comfort, though her husband, of all his property, had enough only left to allow her an annuity of about five hundred dollars— but there was something wanting yet.

And in time she found it. She found it in sincere repentance— in earnest supplication to Him who said to the erring woman of Samaria, "Go and sin no more." She found it in constant approaches to the throne of grace, whence help and comfort is never withheld from those who seek in faith and trust. She found it by throwing all her grief and sorrow on Him who has promised rest to the weary and heavy laden.

Mr. Andrews continued in the employ of the same house to which he was admitted by the influence of Mr. H——. His prospects were as bright as he could desire. He was blessed with one of the most devoted, self-sacrificing of wives. His daughter Julia, now a devoted, affectionate woman, did all within her power to render his home cheerful and happy, while the boys were growing to be useful to themselves and others. He had every reason to be grateful for the bountiful mercies so plentifully showered upon him, and he felt that he was so.

And here I wish that I *could* pause, and bring this narrative to a close, for peace, happiness and contentment now reign in the hearts of the once severed but now united family. And here I *would* pause, did not truth compel me to go on; for that which has been perused thus far is but a simple narrative of actual occurrences, strange, incredible as they may appear, but not less true for that.

But a change was to come over the fair and bright prospect which the alteration in his habits had effected in James Andrews. As he prospered he grew uneasy and discontented. He felt that in the losses of this world's goods, which he had sustained through his addiction to that soul-killing sin of gambling, and in the ruin of his character, he had been abundantly punished, and he murmured within himself that his reward had not been greater for the privation he had experienced, and the reformation he had perfected.

He went back in memory to the time when he was an honored and prosperous merchant, and when he was within one step of that goal of human desires, an abundance of wealth. He saw daily those passing the store, where he was now only a porter, whom he had known as clerks, and without reflecting that they had won their way to competence and prosperity by honorable and honest conduct, he envied them, and could not see why he, too, should not regain the position he had lost.

Some of these very men, too, who, knowing only of his misfortunes, and nothing of his guilt, often addressed him in friendly, familiar terms, and while at times he thought this was intended to encourage him to look for better times, at others he felt as though it was done purposely to remind him of his altered position.

At home, however, he was cheerful and apparently contented, though at heart he was neither, for he could not look upon the wife who had been used to such comforts as had been hers in early days, toiling from day to day, though she never murmured at her changed lot. She was too happy in the consciousness that her husband was restored to her, a reformed man, that her family was once more united and affectionate. She felt and acknowledged the value of these blessings, and was deeply, truly grateful.

One evening in December, 1846, for this narrative is one of recent occurrences, Mr. Andrews was returning from the store with his wages for the month, amounting to forty dollars, in his pocket-book.

In passing through the Bowery, he saw a sign up at one of the numerous shops which infest that neighborhood, signifying that there was a raffle for poultry to be held within, on that evening. Now he had wished to procure a turkey for his Christmas dinner, for this was only two days before Christmas, and without a moment's reflection, he entered, and found himself in a room in company with a dozen or more rough-looking men, who were engaged in raffling for poultry. He was invited to join them, and without hesitation he did so, and won.

Again and again he entered and won, until he had no less than six turkeys on his hands. Of course he had no use for so many, and selling five of them to the landlord, for about half their value, he was about to depart with the one which he had retained for his own use, when he was invited to *go in* for another raffle, which was to come off in a few minutes for an elegant mantle clock, and for which the tickets were only two dollars each.

The money which he had gained by the sale of the poultry he had won, would more than pay for the chance, and he took the only remaining one—the terms being that the winner should *treat* the company.

After waiting for about half an hour, the parties to this raffle had all appeared, and it was commenced. Andrews' turn was the next to the last, and having thrown very high numbers, he was at once offered twenty-five dollars for his chance. After a moment's hesitation, he accepted the offer, and received the money, the party who had purchased his chance becoming the possessor of the clock, as Andrews had the highest throw.

“Now, then,” exclaimed the new owner, “who is to treat?”

“Oh, me, of course,” exclaimed Andrews, elated at the success which had attended him. “Come, step up, all hands,” and the eager crowd clustered around the bar, giving various orders.

“But what do you take?” said two or three in a breath, seeing that Andrews made no move to join them in drinking.

“Oh, never mind me—I'll pay—that's better than if I drank.”

“Not by a long ways,” they replied. “You are a first rate fellow, and we’ll drink to better acquaintance. So, come, what shall it be?”

“I had rather not,” said Andrews, hesitatingly. Oh, that he had dared to say, “I will not.”

“But that won’t do— we don’t allow any tetotalers here— so step up,” and actually ashamed, in such company to be classed among the tetotalers, he ordered some liquor, intending only to taste. He put it to his lips, however, and on the instant, that long smothered passion broke forth with renewed vigor, and his glass was emptied at a draught. The poison flew through his system with the rapidity of lightning— it reached his brain, and in a moment it appeared as if his whole nature was changed. All the evil passions which his association with the vile and vicious had engendered, but which he had forced under his control, regained their sway. In the luck which had attended him at this time, he saw foreshadowed that which would attend him for the future. Fortune had deserted him before, and now had come to woo him.

Scarcely able to restrain the extraordinary excitement which filled his frame, he hastily paid the barkeeper for the liquor which had been drunk and hurried forth, his hand buried in his pocket and clutching his ill-gotten gains.

As he passed hurriedly along, a thousand thoughts and fancies crowded on him, visions of wealth flitted across his disordered brain, and again he saw himself the master of wealth, the sole aim, end and object of his desires.

Suddenly he paused in front of a house, the character which he well knew, for he had been there too often for his own good. A single instant his good genius struggled to save him, but in vain, and turning aside, he passed through a long and dimly-lighted entry, which led to the second floor. In another moment he was in the front room, and throwing the turkey which he had with him under the table which stood by the door, he advanced to the other side of the room where stood the roulette table, behind which was seated the man who owned it, and the bank.

One other person only was playing, and as Andrews advanced, he had just laid his money on one of the colors, and the machine was set in motion.

Taking a dollar from his pocket, Andrews laid it on the opposite color, and he won. With eager hands and glistening eyes he received his winnings, and pulling his hat down over his eyes he seated himself, and tendering ten dollars to the banker, received ivory checks, representing halves and quarters of dollars, for this was only a third class gambling house, and visitors there rarely exceeded a few dollars in their stakes.

Soon he was immersed in the game, to the exclusion of every other thought; others came in and joined, but Andrews paid no heed to them, for he was winning steadily and largely. A pile of checks was lying before him, and his hand was also full of them; and now he began to venture larger stakes— fortune still favored him, and he still increased his stakes.

At length the luck seemed to change a little. First he lost and then he would win, but this only served to increase the fever raging within, and he played on, determined to win all.

“Give the gentleman some brandy and water, Tom,” said the keeper to a black man who had entered the room— and the command was instantly obeyed. Scarcely raising his eyes from the table, Andrews swallowed it at a draught, and held out his tumbler with a motion to have it filled again, which was done, and there he sat drinking and gambling, lost to everything save the terrible excitement of the hour. One by one his checks had disappeared, and others were given for the money which he handed out, scarcely looking at it.

At length his last dollar was reached. The wheel was lying on one color; rapidly the wheel flew round, with the little ball whirling and dancing between the spaces which were marked on it. It stopped at the color on which his all was staked, and instinctively he reached out his hand to grasp his winnings; but no— with a slight spring it moved to the next space, and he had lost.

Bewildered— excited beyond anything he had ever experienced— his brain on fire with the liquor he had poured down, and he arose from the table, and wiping the sweat from his forehead, pushed his chair back.

“No more, tonight?” said the keeper blandly.

“No,” muttered Andrews, clenching his teeth.

“Happy to see you at any time, sir, and give you a chance. Luck can’t always go one way, you know.”

Without replying, Andrews replaced his hat, and advancing to the table on which stood the glasses and decanters, poured out a tumbler half full and swallowed it at a draught; then, without turning his head, he left the room, forgetting the turkey which lay under the table.

As he reached the street, he was surprised to see how quiet it was. The stores were all shut up, and not a human being was to be seen. Could it be so late, he wondered, and at the instant the clock sounded the hour of *three*. Yes, he had passed seven hours in that den without knowing it, so terrible, so overpowering had been the excitement by which he was carried away. He had violated all his solemn pledges. He had drank and gambled, and had lost every cent he had in the world. How should he tell his wife— how would he dare to face her. He could not— he had not the moral courage to go and throw himself at her feet, and beg her to pray for him— and he was lost.

Chapter the last.

I dare not attempt to depict the feelings of the loving and anxious wife on that awful night, as hour after hour passed, and brought no tidings of the absent husband. Oh, what horrid fancies tormented her. What dreadful thoughts harrowed up her soul. Every danger seemed to have befallen him, but never did the thought cross her that he proved faithless to her— to himself, to his God. Julia strove to comfort and console her mother, but she was scarcely equal to the task, and her own heart was rent by emotions of a nature as painful as those which harrowed up her mother’s soul.

In tears, anguish and prayers, that dreary night was passed, and the husband and father had not yet returned. The grey dawn appeared in the east, and still he was not there.

“Now, mother, dear,” said Julia, when the hour for breakfast had arrived, “do you get the boys their meal, and I will hurry down to the store— perhaps something has happened to keep him there all night.”

“Oh, no— not there, not there. I feel that he is not there. My poor husband is dead— I know he is. Oh, my God, what will become of us,” and she wrung her hands with all the energy of despair.

“Do try and be composed, mother. I will run down and see— something of that kind might have happened,” and without waiting for any further reply from her mother, she ran into the adjoining room, and hastily throwing on her hat and shawl, started for the store, when she found that it had not yet been opened, for as this was not a busy season of the year, the stores in that part of the city were not opened as early as usual. Trembling, excited, affrighted at the bare possibility that her father might have met with some serious accident, Julia hurried off to the house of Mr. Williams, whom she found at breakfast, but who immediately came to the door on learning that a young female was there in waiting.

Julia had never seen him, but his kind manner gave her confidence, and she asked with much more composure than she really felt, if he had detained her father, Mr. Andrews, last evening.

“Certainly not,” he replied. “We closed rather late— after seven, but I saw him start for home.”

“Thank you, sir,” she said, turning away to conceal the tear which had gathered in her eyes.

“Stop one moment,” he said. “Has he not been at home at all last night?”

“No, sir,” she replied, and without daring to trust herself to words, she hastily drew down her veil, and hurried away.

She proceeded homeward at a pace which left her actually exhausted, and when she entered the room, she threw herself on a chair, unable to utter a word from fatigue and excitement, but weeping and sobbing dreadfully.

Mrs. Andrews needed no further answer to any question which she might have put, and for some time they remained mute and motionless.

But I cannot pursue this subject into further detail. I have already narrated occurrences which seem too improbable for truth, and I do not wish to tax the reader’s patience further. I must, therefore, close by naming briefly the transactions which transpired in bringing to a termination the career of this once happy, but now forlorn and wretched family.

About a month after the extraordinary disappearance of Andrews, and when,, notwithstanding all the efforts made by his family and employers to discover his whereabouts, if alive, or his body, if dead, no traces had been found of him; Mrs. Andrews, who now searched the morning papers daily, in the melancholy hope of learning at least that his body had been recovered, saw a paragraph announcing that a poor, miserable-looking man, who bore the traces of having seen better days, had been brought to the police office in a state of delirium, produced by intemperance, exposure and want, and that he had been recognized by some person as a man who had formerly been a porter in a store down town. Mrs. Andrews turned pale as marble as she read this, and scarcely daring to think that it might be her unfortunate husband, she handed the paper to Julia, and silently pointed to the article.

“We had better go down, mother, and see,” she said, composedly— though even as she spoke a faint sickness came over her, for something seemed to whisper to her the dreadful conviction, that this was her lost and ruined parent.

Accordingly they proceeded at once to the Tombs, in Centre street, where on inquiring for the party to whom that paragraph referred, they requested permission to see him.

The clerk, on turning to his books, found that he had been sent to the Lunatic Asylum at Blackwell’s Island, but that by going there they would find him.

“Do you know his name, sir?” asked Julia, hesitatingly.

“Oh, yes,” he replied. “Starr, the officer, came in just as he was going into the carriage to be sent to the Island, and he knew him at once. His name was Andrews,” and as he spoke, Mrs. Andrews, turning one appealing look to her daughter, whose eyes were now raining tears, sank to the floor with a loud groan.

Every attention was immediately paid to her. She was taken into the back room, and attended by the physician of the prison, who succeeded in restoring animation, but reason had forsaken her throne, and Mrs. Andrews was a hopeless, helpless lunatic.

I had started to their house early n the same morning as that on which they came to the office, having, as the clerk had said, seen Andrews by chance, as he was being put in the carriage to be sent to the Island, and had recognized him. I had gone to their house to communicate the dreadful intelligence to his sorrowing wife, for I had already been informed of his disappearance, and had conjectured the true cause. But I had missed them, and returned to the office just as Julia was leading her mother down the steps to go home.

A few words from Julia explained all to me, and I accompanied them home in a carriage. In less than three months Mrs. Andrews was laid in her grave. The boys, freed from all parental restraint, resorted again to the companionship of the vicious, and the eldest is now an inmate of the penitentiary on the same Island on which his father is confined as a lunatic, while the younger is hopelessly vicious in all his habits, and unless some extraordinary change takes place, bids fair to be soon in the same place.

Poor Julia is alone in the world, but she does not live for the world. Her soul has been tried by many sorrows and troubles. She had fallen and repented. She had gone to the fountain head for peace and strength, and neither were denied to her. She lives peacefully, and to a certain extent contentedly. The income derived from her miserable husband's estate is abundant for all her wants, and striving to discharge faithfully all her duties, she looks forward to a better, brighter and happier hereafter.

And such, reader, is the end of his career, who yielded to the tempter, and in an evil hour gave loose to his evil passions. If the narrative here presented shall prove a warning beacon to one single person, some good will have been accomplished, and the author will feel abundantly compensated for his labors.

Finis.

The Gambler; or The Policeman's Story by Charles Burdett, NY: Baker and Scribner, 1848.