

own history ; which was, in substance, that she was found by some fishermen miles off the coast from Monterey, California, lashed to a spar and kept above water by a man with a life-preserver. The latter was almost exhausted and lived but a few hours. He was speechless, but when they asked him if the child was his he shook his head in the negative, and did the same when asked if he knew whose it was. On the little girl's clothing were the initials "G. G." She seemed to be about two years old, and was taken care of by a fishermen's family until six ; then adopted—or at least taken—by a childless couple named Irving, who came to Australia some three years since. They are not wealthy—Irving is a good fellow but no financier. Imogene—as the Irvings named her—is tall, has a good figure—favors yourself in this I think—and is a decided blonde, with a real or imaginary, resemblance to the picture you once showed me of your wife. She was rescued the same year that the *Storm Bird* went down.

Now I know no more ; but am strongly impressed with the fact that Imogene Irving and the lost baby, Grace Gettwood, are identical. I pray heaven that it may be so at least. Come and see for yourself is my advice.

Your Friend,

JOHN HEATH.

No wonder the man, who for fifteen years had mourned as one having no hope in this world, caught at the ray held out to him in this letter as a drowning man catches at a straw. He had had business in Japan and taken his wife and baby girl with him. Before his business was completed there, word came to them of the sickness and threatened death of Mrs. Gettwood's father in Denver, Colorado. The lady embarked on the first homeward bound vessel, which chanced to be the *Storm Bird*—the same one on which Tom Veeder was expected—in the company of two lady missionaries, coming home for rest. As we know the vessel went down with its living freight. Before the *Storm Bird* had been out a week, Prof. Gettwood was taken violently ill. At the time, he was on his way toward the interior in search of botanical specimens—the search for which had been the main object of his voyage—and among strangers, chiefly natives. Several months elapsed before he reached San Francisco. From there he telegraphed to Denver, wildly hoping that the news of the *Storm Bird's* loss might be false ; but in vain. They had never had one word in response to the messages sent to Japan ; and did not know that the young wife had undertaken the homeward voyage. All the information that he could glean was that the vessel had gone down with all on board. Broken-hearted he roamed aimlessly about for years before he could again take up the thread of life, and resume the duties of his profession. Perhaps in all this time no friend had seemed more dear to him than his old college chum, John Heath. Twice he had spent a season with him and his charming family in Melbourne ; and so attractive had been the flora of the island to the botanical professor, that he had promised another visit in the near future. But the receipt of John Heath's

letter had determined him to resign his position in an eastern university and go at once.

Imogene Irving turned from her mirror with a smile of satisfaction.

"I hope this new father of mine will be pleased with me," she said aloud. "Oh dear, I hope he really is my father, and rich as Croesus. I am tired of this pinched way of living, every look and act of one's life a pretence, just for the sake of keeping up appearances. How different my life and Alma Heath's. She don't know what it is to turn and scrimp, and has never endured the agony of wearing cotton lace and slippers, and don't have to make two silk dresses do for ten. I don't believe that I was born poor, my tastes are so expensive, and I like nice things so well. Yes, I am tired of poverty and hope this unexpected luck is good luck. The Heaths say that he is wealthy and travels a good deal, and that would just suit me. To be sure I shall rather hate parting with Father and Mother Irving ; but one can not have all the good things of life at once."

Some one called her from the hall below. "I'll bet that's him," she exclaimed inelegantly, turning to once more survey herself in the glass. Complacently she patted the butterfly bow at her throat and descended.

Prof. George Gettwood, standing by a window of the small, flashily furnished Irving parlor, pressed his hand to his heart in the vain hope of stilling its wild throbbings. A movement outside and he started nervously. What would the opening of that door reveal ? Would it confirm his hopes or dash them to the earth forever ?

Imogene, with her hand on the knob, felt a sudden choking in her own throat. Would she, a moment later, be standing face to face with one of her own flesh and blood ?

It was a supreme moment in both their lives. Softly the door swung back, and they stood revealed to each other's anxious gaze. There was a brief silence, and the Professor reeled and groped for a chair.

"Mother!" Imogene cried.

"There, I am better now, thanks ! only a slight dizziness," he said as mother and daughter hurried to his side.

With evident reluctance Mrs. Irving repeated to him the story his friend had already given him, but could add little to it. Vainly he questioned the girl, but her recollections were confined to a faint memory of a pale, pretty woman in the midst of a terrible storm, crying and calling for somebody to save her baby. Bowing his head on his hands the proud man wept bitter, scalding tears.