

be unkind, I mean this for your good. As I said she was never your wife, you never bent proudly above her as she cradled your babe on her breast. Oh, I tell you sir! a lover's love may be wide, deep and sincere, but 'tis nothing when compared with a husband's love. On memory's wall you have the picture of a sweet young girl; you lost her when hope beat high in your heart, and you expected one day to call her by that most sacred of all names, 'wife.' I see the picture of a fair, frail being, holding in her arms her miniature counterpart; and she was my wife, and the little one was our child. Oh, Lawrence! I can not explain the difference, but it exists. I honor you for your constancy, while I feel that you are wronging yourself. This early love of yours did not wreck her life because the man of her choice died—as she supposed. She married and has doubtless lived a happy life. Let me advise you to see the reality of your ideal, and then I believe you will permit yourself to care for some other good woman. 'It is not good for man to be alone' you know. In my case, I could never think of forming new ties while my darling's fate was shrouded in mystery. I should feel very differently could I have closed the sweet blue eyes and smoothed back the curls of golden hair. Terrible as it would have been, it would have been a sad privilege, but one I crave, to have stood by and listed the clods on her coffin. Instead of that she sank alone to a watery grave, and then—" completely overcome, he paused here and began to nervously pace the deck.

"You may be right," said Lawrence, pityingly, and at the same moment Imogene's face rose before him.

The party landed at San Francisco, taking apartments at the Palace hotel. Together they visited the many noted places of resort, but the favorite for all was the Golden Gate itself. Days they spent here exploring the jagged cliffs, driving on the beautiful beach, reveling in the artistic grandeur of Sutro Heights or lounging on the balcony of the Cliff House, watching the sea lions crawling by the hundreds on the rocks far below. Of course, the Professor visited the principal educational institutions, sometimes in company with the others of the party, but more often alone, as neither Lawrence nor Imogene were interested in scientific pursuits or the workings of the common school system. On one of these occasions, when the Professor had consented to give an afternoon lecture on botany to a class in the high school, Lawrence and Imogene repaired to the Golden Gate park.

"Now tell me about some of your adventures," she ordered prettily, "while I finish this scent sachet for Mother Irving. Only think I have been a whole week embroidering this bunch of pausies on it, ain't I lazy?"

He had thrown himself on the grass at her feet as she sat on a low rustic bench, the soft gray of her dress

relieved by the pile of bright-hued silks in her lap. As she spoke he looked up in her face with an expression she had never seen before.

"I think you are just right," he said.

She blushed, but paled the next moment as she noted the shadow that chased the brightness from his face, and the far away, pained look that crept into his expressive eyes. He bit his lip impatiently at his own folly. He must not imagine that this fair young heiress was for him, even if he could ever love any woman. No, he would be careful, he only cared for her as a friend, any way he was almost as old as her father.

Neither spoke for a little time, and then he began to speak of impersonal matters. She watched him awhile and then there came into her eyes a hard, determined glitter, and she set her lips in a firm but unbecoming way. Nature had denied her a pretty mouth, and she knew it, but just now she was not thinking of her mouth at all. Mechanically she shook out the floss, and smoothing out the bit of newspaper in which it was rolled. It was a bit of the *Oregonian*, and, without realizing what she was doing, she began to read a part of a list of obituaries, when suddenly her attention was arrested by the last name—Max Browning—the rest was torn off. "Then he is dead, and she is free," she said to herself, with an involuntary shudder. "He must not know yet," she mentally added, looking once more at the man at her feet. Hastily, but stealthily, she crushed the bit of paper in her hand and thrust it into her pocket. Tom talked on, but she did not seem to hear him, and when he asked some question, she made no answer until he looked inquiringly at her.

"What is the matter, Gene, you look quite pale?" (He had called her "Gene" from the first, and she liked to hear him.)

"I am not—not feeling well," she stammered, "please take me home."

He arose at once. Her hands trembled, and with gentle authority he gathered up the bright bits and folded her light wrap about her. "Come, we will go at once," he said.

His very tenderness maddened her; but she only kept saying over to herself: "He must not know."

Weeks formed into months, and still the little party lingered in compliance with Imogene's request. She would never tire of San Francisco, she averred; but at last they were enroute for Portland, where they purposed to remain while they advertised for the whereabouts of Mrs. Max Browning.

A drizzling rain was falling as Pet Browning, enveloped in a rubber cloak and hood, hurried homeward after giving a music lesson one morning early in De-