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[Original.]  
Jessie Walton—An Autobiography.

BY ZALDER.

Oh! the memory bells! the memory bells! how they ring this morning. Sometimes softly and sweetly, as if calling the worshippers of God to His holy temple; sometimes loudly and joyfully, as if pealing for a merry bridal; sometimes slowly and solemnly, as if sounding the knell of a departed spirit. Years of my childhood, gone forever, never to be recalled, buried in the tomb of the past, how inexpressibly dear you were to me; how the recollection of your joys and sorrows brings tears of love and sadness to my eyes and causes my heart to throb, almost to bursting. The angel of memory has stirred the depths of my spirit and awakened haunting visions of those halcyon days when the sun beamed with such unclouded splendor upon my humble home; when the deep cerulean hue of my life's sky remained ever the same; when no rolling thunder-clouds nor lurid lightning-flashes appalled my soul and overshadowed my heart. All was tranquil then and I dreamed not of the fierce waves of sorrow, the wild blasts of adversity. Earth was to me a paradise—men and women, angels of goodness and purity. I was a guileless, unsuspecting child, loving and beloved, joyous and free as the wild bird of the forest or the bright gazelle of the mountain. Of life's stern realities I did not even dream—the future was vague and undefined—I lived and glorified in the present. Ring on, ye blessed memory bells! I love your mellow chime. Ring on! and bear my spirit back to those sweet days and let me dream I am again a child.

At my earliest recollection I was an inmate of my uncle's humble but happy home. It was a little brown cottage situated in a grove of elms with a broad open space in front and a grand old forest stretching for miles behind. Not far distant was the little village where we attended church, procured our household goods, and sold the various articles which, as is generally the case, farmers even though small ones, raise in great abundance. Of my parents I know comparatively nothing save that they died during my infancy. My uncle was a grave but generous and noble-hearted man, and was to me, the kindest of fathers. My aunt was a fair, fragile woman who had well supplied a mother's place to the penniless orphan committed to her care. She had shown me all the tender love that a parent bestows upon her offspring and in her heart, I held a place second only to my uncle's, for of her numerous children, none had lived long enough even to lip her name. There were five little mounds in the village graveyard and five little spotless doves resting in Jesus' bosom. My gentle aunt, how often have I seen her weep such tears, as only a bereaved mother can weep, who has seen the precious darlings of her longing heart laid under the damp sod, and hidden forever from her mortal view. Oh! ye careless ones, ye can never know the height nor depth nor length nor breadth of a mother's love. Ye can never comprehend the wild agony that sweeps in such terrific billows over her soul when death snatches from her embrace the tiny form so closely clasped. Ye can never dream how long it takes the bruised and bleeding heart, quivering in every fibre, to heal, if indeed it ever does. Deal gently then with sorrowing mothers and point the finger upwards to that blest heaven where their babes have gone. My aunt's grief was quiet and unobtrusive, what she suffered no one could know, for her demeanor was mild and gentle always. But the pictures of those dead children hung forever upon the wall of her memory and their names were traced indelibly upon the red leaves of her heart. The hope of being speedily reunited to them was a balm of consolation to her spirit. "Passing away" was written upon every lineament of her face and she knew that her stay upon earth must be brief. As for me, I dreamed not that such sorrow was in store for me.

My uncle endeavored to give me an education. For several years I attended the village school and there I first met Paul Herbert, whose society I soon infinitely preferred to that of any boy or girl of my acquaintance. He was the son of a widow lady of reduced circumstances, who resided in the village, and was the youngest

son of a noble but impoverished family. Paul was a brave and generous boy—like Nathaniel of old, in him there was no guile. His dark brown eyes had in them the sweetest, saddest expression I ever saw and a kind of mournful dignity characterized his every look and word and act. I loved him even then, child as I was, and enthroned him upon the loftiest pedestal of my heart. He was my champion in all my childish difficulties, my companion in all my childish sports and being much farther advanced in his studies than I, kindly and cheerfully assisted me in mine and strove all in his power to lighten my burdens for me.

Paul Herbert, when I look back through the pearly mists of years, I know that that wert the noblest and truest, the best and bravest of God's created beings. Thy name and nature were without stain and to-day thou art wearing a crown in heaven and sweeping the thrilling chords of some triumphant harp to the praise of Him, who reigns forever and forever.

At the age of fourteen I was separated from Paul. He was sent to college in one part of the State and I, to another considerably distant. A short time after our departure from home, the gentle spirit of my aunt forsook its frail, parishing tenement and winged its upward way through fields of ether, to the mansions prepared for the best. Six months afterwards, Mrs. Herbert died. My grief at the great loss had sustained was violent at first, but the coronal of youth was on my brow and the elasticity of youth in my heart and time soon healed the wound. My teachers were kind and considerate and my two roommates, affectionate and sympathizing to a great degree. Dear Clara and Ella, I little dreamed that the threads of their bright young lives would so soon be clipped by the relentless shears of fate. One lived only long enough to wear the orange-wreath and bridal paraphernalia for three brief weeks, and then exchanged them for theypress and the white vestments of the grave. The other started with her parents on a voyage across the Atlantic to visit friends in England, but she was never destined to behold the white cliffs of Albion's beautiful island or to return to the lovely land of her nativity. The stately ship went down in the vast encircling waters and my schoolmate found a home among coral-reefs and pearly-caves. Sad fate for one so young and beautiful!

Two years after the death of my aunt, my uncle's loneliness and desolation prompted him to marry again but his second wife proved a perfect Xantippe in his once peaceful home. She extended no cordial welcomes to me when I returned to visit my uncle during my brief vacations and I noticed that his brow, once so placid, was nearly always overcast, and that he seemed ever to dread some outbreak of her temper, which the servants declared to be uncontrollable. My good uncle had discovered after it was too late, that there was no congeniality between them, but as much as lay in his power, he concealed his grief with all the heroic firmness of the Spartan boy.

When Paul Herbert was twenty-two and I, eighteen, we graduated, he, with the highest honors of his class. We had corresponded regularly during our college days. There was no actual betrothal between us but there existed a tacit understanding that after he had established a reputation for himself, he would bear me away to be, as he termed it, the light of his heartstone and blessing of his home. He had decided to become a pupil of Escalpius, his tastes lay in that direction, so he purposed going to the West to study under a learned and experienced physician—the once valued friend of his deceased father. The day that he bade me farewell was one of the saddest of my life. It seemed to me that the sun had suddenly been stricken from the sky and that a night of the most impalpable gloom had closed around me. But my misfortunes were not to end there. My uncle died suddenly and left me alone, friendless and destitute. All his little possessions passed into the hands of his widow and she soon gave me to understand that I was unwelcome and an intruder in her household. I was like a storm-tossed mariner on an angry sea, with a sky of jolky blackness overhead and wild and roaring billows threatening to engulf me all around. A mariner with neither compass nor polar star. I was like a weary wanderer in a desert land, bowing before the blasting simoons; no green oasis in view where I might rest my weary limbs and lave my burning brow. Twice doubly orphaned. Once in helpless infancy and then again just as I entered upon the threshold of womanhood, when perhaps, of all other times, a girl most needs a father's guidance. My grief was so poignant for a time that all my faculties were benumbed and I knew not what to do, but gradually many plans suggested themselves to my mind and finally I resolved, with the spirit of a heroine, to act for myself. Paul was

a stranger in a strange land and wholly unable to assist me so I determined to conceal my situation from him until it became more agreeable. One afternoon I went to visit a neighbor in the village and by mere accident picked up a Richmond paper containing an advertisement for a governess. With a lightened heart I returned home and applied for the situation. In a short time a favorable reply was received. My preparations were soon made and a fortnight afterwards I was slowly driven up the avenue leading to my new home.

Beuna Vista, the beautifully embellished residence of Mrs. Howard, a widow lady of immense wealth, was situated in one of the most picturesque portions of the Old Dominion. The mansion was large and irregular in shape but of the most graceful proportions. Both nature and art had been bountiful in their gifts. The exquisite beauty of everything I beheld, enraptured me beyond measure and I felt almost as if I could glow and rhapsodize as I had done in days gone by. It seemed to me a scene of enchantment. I could scarcely persuade myself to believe that anything short of Aladdin's magical lamp could have transformed a piece of ground into such a fairy grotto. Flowers of every variety adorned the yard; evergreens of every description were grouped hither and thither, adding greatly to the attraction of the place; canaries and mocking-birds, singing in cages, made me dream of the sweet-voiced nightingale; fountains played merrily and gold and silver fish leaped joyously in marble basins. The house was situated on an eminence at the foot of which gurgled a silver river, fringed with willows and water-lilies. The slope was covered with fragrant clover, and summer-houses and frames covered with clinging vines, dotted the ground in the earth, from the house to the river and at the bottom lay a small pleasure-boat, secured by a chair to a large willow. The scene was as beautiful as a poet's dream of heaven. I fell into a pleasant reverie which was soon interrupted by the stopping of the carriage and the sound of voices. The lady of the mansion advanced to meet me as I descended the steps and instinctively I felt a chill creep over me. She was the proudest, most regal-looking woman I had ever beheld; her words were brief and cold and I knew then that I would be considered nothing more than a servant in her house. I was shown to my apartment and bade to prepare for tea. At the table I was introduced to a haughty, dark-browed gentleman of thirty years who, in my imagination, bore a striking resemblance to Lord Byron's Lara. He was Philip Howard, the son and heir. Next, I was presented to Miss Leslie, a beautiful and gently girl of twenty-two; her wondrous likeness to my dead father, whose miniature, together with that of my mother, I had always worn around my neck, astonished and startled me exceedingly, and I did not remove my gaze from her countenance until a supercilious elevation of her eyebrows reminded me that I was impertinent. Last in order, came my little pupil, Rosa, a golden-haired, blue eyed child, like myself, an orphan. She was the grand daughter of Mrs. Howard and I subsequently found her to be an affectionate and docile little girl, easily managed and prompt to learn. Rosa was disposed to be communicative and ere I had been many days installed as governess, told me that Miss Josephine Leslie had been her grand father's ward, that after his death she continued to reside with his widow, also that she was her uncle Philip's fiancée. Mrs. Howard paid me very little attention. I discharged my duties faithfully and she had no grounds for complaint. Miss Leslie scarcely ever deigned to notice me. Mr. Howard was always polite but always formal. Occasionally he addressed a remark to me or asked me a question, but it was very seldom and I rejoiced that it was, for he was so learned and polished that I stood in the most profound awe of him and trembled and blushed whenever he spoke to me. As time passed however, I became conscious that he observed me closely, and frequently the crimson tinge would suffuse my cheeks even when I had not seen his gaze. I felt, though, that his dark, insufferable eyes were upon me—were closely scanning my countenance and striving to read my character and my confusion must have been very evident. Days glided away. Balm of June, "bejeweled as a Hindoo queen, came gayly dancing o'er the plain." One lovely afternoon Rosa and I sat in a vine-covered arbor, alternately reading and watching the fleecy clouds floating across the blue sky like argosies sailing on a Summer sea. As the child twined a wreath of white flowers around my brow, a step was heard and Philip Howard passed before us. As his eyes encountered mine, he smiled, a peculiarly sweet and winning smile. "Lifted his hat gracefully and said, "Queen of the Roses!" He would have passed on but Rosa cried out,

"Oh, Uncle Philip, come and hear Miss Walton read Scott's 'Lady of the Lake' and tell me if you don't think she resembles Ellen Douglas, herself."

Mr. Howard complied and seated himself between Rosa and myself. "Read on, Miss Walton," he said gently, "do not let me interrupt you; you read admirably."

I looked up inquiringly. He smiled and continued,

"I have frequently heard you reading to Rosa when you did not imagine I was near. You have that most excellent thing in woman, soft speech. When I hear your voice I dream of the witching music of the Eolian harp."

This compliment sent a strange thrill to my heart and I trembled perceptibly. Mr. Howard looked up, observed my embarrassment, quietly drew the book from my clasp and read himself. I hated and envied and the hour that followed was one of the most delightful of my life. Sometimes after this, Mr. Howard joined Rosa and myself in our walks; his manner to me was always as deferential as if I had been a crowned and sceptered queen.

The Summer and autumn sped away unheeded only by frequent letters from Paul who was battling bravely with the vicissitudes of life. He was devoted to his studies and hoped to spend the coming winter at a Medical College in the city where his friend, the good physician, resided.

One day early in December, Rosa and I took advantage of the warm sunshine and went down to the river for a sail. We enjoyed ourselves greatly and continued to glide over the smooth, glassy surface of the water, which reflected the blue sky above us, until the lengthening shadows warned us that night was approaching. We steered the little boat to the shore—Rosa sprang out, but I, in attempting to follow her, lost my equilibrium and was precipitated into the river. Immediately the willow-boughs were parted, a strong arm was thrown around me and I was drawn safely to the landing. I looked up to meet the tender, loving gaze of him who had rescued me, and then I shivered and would have fallen to the earth but for his sustaining hold. My heart was benumbed, my hands fell nervelessly to my sides, not from cold nor exposure to the water, but because of the startling truth that flashed like lightning across my mind. I felt—I knew—that the heart, which I had thought myself as sacredly guarding for Paul Herbert's sake as the watchful dragon guarded the golden apples in the gardens of the Hesperides, was entirely given to another, and that other, Philip Howard, the overpowered me and I despised myself for turning traitor to one who loved and trusted me to such an infinite degree.

"Rosa," said Mr. Howard, "Miss Walton is completely saturated, run to the house and have a fire lighted in her room."

The child sprang to obey him. He offered me his arm, I gathered up my dripping garments and commenced the ascent of the hill. He spoke but few words during our walk, those few however, were marvelously cold and reserved. Josephine Leslie met us in the portico. A mocking smile wreathed her red lips and was answered by a defiant one from Philip. I hastened to my apartment, exchanged my wet, clinging robes for dry ones and warmed my chilled and trembling body.

The next morning at the breakfast-table, Mr. Howard inquired in the presence of his mother and Miss Leslie, if my immersion, the previous evening had impaired my health, and I replied that it had not.

Josephine Leslie's resemblance to my father's miniature was a source of never-ceasing wonder to me. I frequently caught myself watching her and endeavored with all my power to overcome the habit for I could not fail to perceive that it was extremely annoying to her. That night at the supper-table, however, I forgot my resolve and sat regarding the countenance that reminded me so forcibly of another. She raised her eyes and in a haughty tone demanded,

"Miss Walton, do I resemble your absent lover? I notice that you are constantly studying my physiognomy and I am anxious to ascertain your reason for doing so."

The scarlet blood mounted to my temples but I felt that the time for an explanation had come and I determined to give it.

"Miss Leslie," I answered, "you are indeed the counterpart, not of my absent lover, but of my dead father, and if you will only examine this picture you will be convinced of the fact yourself, and perhaps be induced to pardon my past rudeness."

I unlaced the chain from my neck and placed the miniature before her. She took it carelessly but was petrified by one glance at the face. For at least a minute she held it, her face white as marble, and her form motionless as a statue, then with a cry she fell forward to the floor. I recovered the miniature and knowing that my presence would be unnecessary, escaped from the room in the confusion that followed.

That night as I sat at my chamber-

window, watching the astral lamps that burned in the blue vault above, listening at the distant hoot of the dark night-bird of evil omen, and striving in vain to comprehend the cause of Josephine Leslie's emotion, there came a low but distinct knock at my door. I opened it and beheld the object of my thoughts standing before me, with her disheveled hair floating around her shoulders and her rich crimson dressing-robe sweeping the carpeted floor. She entered and at my invitation seated herself in front of the fire. There was silence for a while and then Josephine Leslie related the story, which she declared to me, she had heard from her mother's lips a short time previous to her death. I will not weary the reader by giving it in detail but will epitomize it to suit myself. Josephine was my elder sister, the child of my father though not of my mother. My parents were Georgians; they had loved each other from childhood and were betrothed, but my paternal grandfather, a man of inordinate ambition, was violently opposed to their engagement and to gratify him, it was dissolved. My father then visited Virginia where he met a lady of great wealth and beauty to whom he was soon after united. He returned unhappy one and at the expiration of a year and a half, a divorce was applied for and obtained. The repudiated wife went back to her friends in Virginia and resumed her maiden name. Subsequently she gave birth to Josephine upon whom she bestowed the same name. My grandfather died. My father renewed his suit to mother and they were married. He lived only long enough to hear my infantine prattle and my mother survived his death but six weeks. Josephine's mother had also been long dead, and in her last moments had committed her young daughter to the care of Mr. and Mrs. Howard. Beyond the death of my parents Josephine knew nothing, and it devolved upon me to acquaint her with my history from the time that I was bequeathed to my maternal uncle who had married and settled in South Carolina. Josephine knew that I bore the surname to which she was also entitled but as such things were of frequent occurrence, her suspicions were not aroused and she never dreamed of the truth until its conviction was forced upon her by the examination of the picture. She then displayed a breast-pin containing a likeness very similar to the one I wore around my neck; it had been given to her mother by my father during the first month of their marriage. My newly-found sister did not evince any joy at the discovery she had made. I believe she was altogether heartless. On rising to depart, she said,

"I will leave this place to-morrow and visit some friends in the city; it is probable that I will not return until I have recovered my equanimity and humbled my pride sufficiently to make the revelation, which I feel constrained to do, in explanation of the scene that occurred last night."

True to her word she left Beuna Vista early the next morning and I never saw her face again. On the afternoon of that day, I sought my favorite retreat, a little arbor in one of the retired portions of the ground. The day was intensely cold but I wrapped my crimson shawl around me and so absorbed was I in my own meditations that I scarcely felt the keenness of the frosty air. Mr. Howard saw me as I passed the library window and followed me. He sat down by my side and said softly,

"Jessie, I have long desired to have an interview with you but you have studiously avoided me of late. You have penetrated my secrets, you know that I love you, that my fate rests in your dear hands, then why shun me so pertinaciously?"

"Mr. Howard," I replied, "you are affianced to Miss Leslie and I cannot listen to words which should be addressed to her."

He smiled, and said, "My mother would have played the part of Naomi but she desisted; I have overheard her conversation with you and I have never met you, we might have married. It is gratifying to my mother, she is so glad to hear that you are engaged to me. I love you and entreat you to be my wife. Will you consent, Jessie?"

He took my hand and kissed it fervently. Just then a shadow darkened the entrance. I raised my head and beheld the familiar figure of Mrs. Howard standing before me. With a smile she said as she turned away, "You are an inopportune actor, Philip; pray proceed, I am desirous of seeing how this little is to end, in which my son and my first governess play such a prominent part."

I had arisen involuntarily. Philip also arose and placing an arm around me as if to shield me from her reviling scorn, answered firmly but respectfully,

"Mother, I love Jessie Walton and have thought her to become my wife since she resembles Ellen Douglas, herself."

Mr. Howard complied and seated himself between Rosa and myself. "Read on, Miss Walton," he said gently, "do not let me interrupt you; you read admirably."

I looked up inquiringly. He smiled and continued, "I have frequently heard you reading to Rosa when you did not imagine I was near. You have that most excellent thing in woman, soft speech. When I hear your voice I dream of the witching music of the Eolian harp."

I am still in doubt as to what her answer will be, but if you can be persuaded to leave us now, I will promise to acquit you with the substance of it, hereafter."

I thought Mrs. Howard would have blasted me with the lightning of her eyes; she said nothing but turned and swept away with all the pride and grandeur of a Catherine de Medici. Philip would have detained me but I fled to the house and buried myself in the solitude of my apartment. That night I did not go down to supper in consequence of a severe headache. Early the next morning I heard footsteps approaching my door, they paused, and a note was slipped under, then they retreated and were soon lost in the distance. The note ran as follows: "Jessie! I leave this morning for the city, to dissolve the engagement which has never been more than a nominal one. My mother will more readily give her consent to our union when she is convinced that a marriage between Josephine and myself is out of the question. I sought her last night and opened my heart to her gaze; she looked into its innermost depths and saw only your image. I extracted from her a promise that she would not seek you in anger, nor speak harshly to you during my absence. If you feel disposed, remain in your room until my return, which will be late this evening; if not, consider yourself at perfect liberty to visit the other portions of the house and do not dread my mother; she will not violate her promise to me. Rosa has given me her word that she will spend the day with you. Be prepared to-night to give me the answer which I so ardently desire and for which I have so earnestly prayed. Affectionately, PHILIP HOWARD."

As I finished the perusal of the note, I heard the tramp of a horse's feet and hastily enveloped my head and shoulders in a shawl, ran to the window to catch what I felt must be the last glimpse I should ever obtain of the man I loved. To my great mortification he looked up as he passed. "I draw back; he lifted his hat with one of his imperial bows and rode rapidly away. With my breakfast, there came a note from Mrs. Howard. She did not break her promise to her son in the letter but she did in the spirit. She neither sought me in anger nor spoke unkindly to me, but she wrote bitter, burning words—words that are engraved upon the tablet of my memory, the characters of flame. I was accused of striving by every art to win her son from his allegiance to Josephine, was told that the carriage would be at the door in a half-hour to convey me to the depot to take the noon train, was peremptorily ordered to leave the house quietly if I did not wish to be forcibly ejected by the servants. Enclosed was the money due me for Rosa's tuition. My little wardrobe was soon packed away and I sent down a request to Mrs. Howard that she would permit me to bid Rosa farewell. It was refused and I left the house without beholding for the last time the sunny face of the sweet-tempered child whom I so fondly loved. Ere many days elapsed I reached my native village and took up my abode in the little inn, determined to remain there as long as my money lasted or until some new way of earning a livelihood presented itself.

On the day after my arrival I sought the little brown house where the days of my childhood had fled by. The people of the village had already informed me that my uncle's widow, shortly after his death, married again and removed with her husband to Texas, leaving the place entirely deserted, save by two servants, a patriarchal old negro man, and his faithful wife. From them I obtained the keys and rumbled over the house, shedding many tears as familiar objects met my view and recalled scenes of the past. What holy associations clustered around that humble spot, what precious memories of years forgotten entombed. I stood for a long time by the window of my little room where, under happier auspices I have often stood before, and watched the old rosebush that grew beneath, clapping my hands in childish glee as a gust of wind would sweep over it and shower its white petals upon the mossy ground below. But the rosebush was dead and partially uprooted, and a strange and saddening gloom pervaded the whole place. On my way back to the village I entered the graveyard and throwing myself on the damp, bare ground between the graves of my uncle and aunt, fervently prayed that God would have mercy upon me and lighten my burden of sorrow. How long I remained there I know not, the opening of the gate disturbed my devotions, I beheld a man rapidly approaching and sprung to my feet to be clasped to the faithful bosom of Paul Herbert. Standing there, engulfed in his arms, with my head resting upon his shoulder, listening to his low-breathed words of fond endearment, I forgot my troubles, forgot everything, and remained in a happy trance, until the creaking of the gate on its hinges warned me that some one was coming. Partially disengaging myself from Paul's embrace, I

turned and my heart ceased to throb as my eyes met those of Philip Howard, which burned into my soul. For a moment he stood rigid and motionless, intently regarding me, then placed his hand in his bosom and drew forth a pistol. Interpreting his design, with the quickness of lightning, I interposed my body between him and his mark and the ball that was intended for the brave, pure heart of my betrothed, entered my arm. I lost consciousness and knew nothing more for hours. My landlady subsequently told me that Paul and Philip had both arrived on the afternoon train and both taken lodgings at the inn. Paul had immediately been told that I had returned to the village and had gone on a visit to the cottage. With all possible haste he had followed and his road leading him by the graveyard, he had there seen and recognized me. Paul had scarcely vanished ere Philip also made enquiries concerning me and was told the same thing. Being unacquainted with the place, he passed a different route to the farm-house and not finding me there, was returning by the graveyard. How great must have been his surprise and grief to behold the woman he loved clasped to the bosom of the man who had been for a brief time his fellow-traveler and of whose errand he so little dreamed. When I recovered consciousness I was lying in my little room at the inn, with Paul sitting by me, the shadow of a deep sorrow resting upon his fine countenance and his dark, mournful eyes fixed upon my face. I suffered my lids to close again and endeavored to collect my scattered senses. I knew that I had grievously wronged Paul and determined to atone for it as far as lay in my power; it was not in my heart to blight the beautiful garland of love he had woven in boyhood and cherished so tenderly in manhood. It did not occur to me that I would be sacrificing myself to marry him; for I loved him, not as I loved the dark, haughty man who had attempted to take his life in the lone garden of the dead, but as one who loved the trees and flowers, the birds, the stars, and the glad blue sky. So when I was able to converse I unveiled my heart to him and when I had finished, begged him to love and to trust me as before. He opened his arms and said,

"This is your home, Jessie. You shall be the doveling of my lone domestic bower and crowning blessing of my life."

Philip Howard, I was told, had lingered around the place until exhibited signs of returning animation, and, having been told by the landlady of my long engagement to Paul, had departed, no one knew whither. Paul had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. His benefactor had died and left him a sum sufficiently large to purchase a small but comfortable house in the suburbs of the city, to furnish it neatly in an ample supply of provisions. He therefore determined to seek me in Virginia and solicit my consent to a speedy union. For that purpose he had started on his journey, delaying only to visit his boyhood's home and his mother's grave. He felt hopeful that a bright career was opening before him and had planned for the next two years, to attend lectures in the winter and teach school in the summer. At the expiration of that time, he would receive his diploma and commence the practice of medicine. When I had recovered from the effects of my wound, Paul and I were quietly married in the village church, and soon after, departed for our western home. For two happy years I was a loved and cherished wife, with scarcely a regret, and I call God and all his holy angels to witness that I returned my husband's love with all the devotion that a true woman should feel for the man, in whose hands she has placed her destiny. Our household was a peaceful one and there was no skeleton in the closet. At the end of that period, Paul was suddenly stricken down by a malignant fever and out of the glory of his manhood. What I suffered on that day I will never know. He died with his head resting upon my bosom, his hand clasped in mine and a smile of ineffable sweetness lighting up his divine countenance.

Two more years passed quietly and sadly away. One evening I sat in my little vine-wreathed portico, watching the crescent moon as she slowly disappeared behind the western hills, yet scarcely conscious that I was doing so, so busy was memory in conjuring up visions of the past. The firm busy tread of a man on the gravelled walk, leading from the gate to the house, frightened me, and I started to my feet with an exclamation of alarm. He came nearer and nearer and stood before me. I put up my hands to shut out the vision, which I thought, must be a phantom. An oppressive silence reigned for a few moments and then Philip Howard said,

"For four weary years I have walked God's earth, a miserable man, striving in vain to banish from my mind the

visions of the past. The firm busy tread of a man on the gravelled walk, leading from the gate to the house, frightened me, and I started to my feet with an exclamation of alarm. He came nearer and nearer and stood before me. I put up my hands to shut out the vision, which I thought, must be a phantom. An oppressive silence reigned for a few moments and then Philip Howard said,

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