

# ARREST, CONFESSION

AND

## SUICIDE

OF ALMIRA CATHCART; WHO HAVING HITHERTO  
ELUDED ALL EFFORTS TO CAPTURE HER, WAS  
ARRESTED LAST WEEK IN CINCINNATI:

*And after Writing her Confession, in which she ac-  
knowledges Inveigling Thirteen Beautiful Young  
Ladies;*

SHE POISONED HERSELF WITH PRUSSIC ACID,  
WHICH SHE HAD CONCEALED IN ONE OF  
HER EAR RINGS.

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THIS NARRATIVE IS A WARNING TO OLD AND YOUNG.

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# ARREST, CONFESSION AND SUICIDE OF ALMIRA CATHCART.

It has been most truly written by philosophers that the best thing upon earth is a good woman and the worst thing on earth is a bad woman. The truth of this saying is amply demonstrated by the following history of the career of Almira Cathcart whose name the reading public are already familiar with in connection with the most appalling crimes which could inflict society.

For a number of years she has been plying the hideous trade of ensnaring beautiful young women into the clutches of bad men who were rich enough to pay her handsomely for the awful service. No purity nor innocence could soften her obdurate heart toward the victim she had selected for destruction. Even the merest children were actually stolen by her for the most frightful purposes. Her confession, made on her dying bed, is, beyond doubt, one of the most terrible, and yet irresistibly fascinating documents that have ever been given to the public.

Before laying it before our readers, however, we print an authentic and thrilling history of the pursuit and final capture of this bad woman by Mrs. Clark, the mother of her last victim, and T. Passmore Hughs, the intended husband of the unfortunate young lady.

Mr. Hughs, who is well known in this city, remarks in his letter accompanying the manuscript:

"I assure you, Sir, that the account I herewith send you is entirely true, without the slightest exaggeration or coloring. Previous to posting it, I submitted it to Mrs. Clark for her inspection. She has read it attentively; and says there is nothing in it that could be altered for the

better; but that is a plain, truthful and unvarnished narrative of the entire exciting affair. She hopes you will give it a large distribution through the whole country, in order that mothers and daughters, and everybody may learn that creatures like the one who has brought her so much sorrow, still exist and endeavor to ply their hellish arts. As most of the manuscript from which I have copied the narrative is in Mrs. Clark's own language, I have used the pronoun I as applying to that lady; making her, as is really the case, tell the story, except here and there where I have inserted details of my own of such parts as seemed to have been overlooked by Mrs. Clark."

### THE PURSUIT.

For several weeks before my daughter disappeared from her home, I had begun to notice a change not only in her manners, but also in her habits, and her personal appearance. Hitherto she had been open and free in her intercourse with myself. All her girlish pleasures and happiness were shared in by me; and I was the loved confidante in whom were reposed all her griefs, though these latter were only the imaginary ones that young women always make themselves. For she was my only child, and I being possessed of the large property left me by her father at his death, I hesitated at no expense which could be the means of making her happy. God knows, perhaps I am to blame for thus petting her; but I loved her so dearly that I would have done even twice as much for her as I really did.

When I look back upon the frightful past it seems only like yesterday that my poor darling, like a pet bird, her head nestling on my bosom, and her soft blue eyes gazing tearfully up into mine, sang:

"None like a mother can charm away pain  
From the sick soul and the world weary brain:  
Slumber's soft calm o'er my heavy lids creep:—  
Rock me to sleep, Mother, rock me to sleep."

For several days previous to that, Julia had been exceedingly melancholy. Something seemed to press down upon her spirits like a dreadful weight. And as she lay thus upon my breast and sang so tenderly, she put her arm up around my neck and drew me close to her as though to shield herself from peril.

"What is the matter with you, my dear?" asked I, after she had finished the ballad. "What is troubling your mind? You do not confide in me like you used to do."

She only nestled closer to me and wept at these words; but did not make any reply. After a pause I asked her:

"My darling Julia, do you think you can have a truer, better friend than your mother?"

"Oh, mother! mother! mother! do not ask me such a question! You know I cannot! and you know how dearly I love you!" she exclaimed in an agony of tears.

"Then, my child, why do you conceal your grief from me?"

"What makes you think I am concealing any grief from you? You know you do everything to make me happy. Why should I be unhappy?"

This equivocating reply convinced me that there was some secret trouble which was eating like a canker worm at her heart; and putting into my tones and manner a harshness I did not and could not feel, I said:

"Now, Julia, I must insist on knowing what this is. There is something wrong. If your love is not sufficiently strong to induce your confiding in me, I must use my power as your mother to compel your obedience to my request."

Julia dried her eyes and, exclaimed almost in despair:

"Oh! mother, don't you turn against me to and cast me off!"

Then she fell upon my neck and cried till I thought her heart would break. I was so agitated and worried as to be nearly beside myself; and I did not know what to do. In about ten minutes Julia had become comparatively calm. Indeed she then suddenly assumed a most unnatural quietness, and said, in a low untremulous voice:

"Mother, could you, do you think, forgive me if I were to do anything wrong? Could you forgive me if I have done anything wicked?"

"Oh, my child!" I exclaimed, "you surely could not do, and have not done anything wicked."

"Mother, that is not it! Will you forgive me?"

She dropped on her knees, and held her supplicating hands up to me while such intense suffering was written upon her features, that I could not resist, and said:

"My darling, whatever you may have done, no matter what, I forgive you, before I know it. There now, come to my heart and tell me all."

"God bless you, dearest mother! Your words take a great load from off my heart; my broken heart! But mother do not ask me to tell you tonight. Tomorrow! tomorrow, you shall know all. Now give me a kiss, mother, kiss me good night."

I kissed her, and with a strange smile she remarked as she left the room:

"No one else shall ever place another kiss on my lips mother. Good night."

There was a lingering of her steps on the threshold and she gazed at me with an earnestness which I could not then account for. But I found

out soon after why the dear girl thus fastened her eyes on me. It was her last fond look upon me, whom she loved so well and whom she knew at the time she would see no more on earth.

All night I laid awake thinking about my daughter, and once or twice I was on the point of rising and going to her room. But I did not do so till early in the morning. The chamber was empty; the bed had not been disturbed, and on the table laid an envelope directed to me. A cold horror seized me; and screaming for Sarah, the girl, I sank down helpless upon the bed. Sarah came instantly to my assistance, and, after a short time, I recovered myself sufficiently to take the letter, open it and read. Its contents were as follows:

My dear, dear Mother:

I have bidden you good night for the last time. I promised you last night no one else should ever kiss my lips where you put the last kind, farewell kiss. And I intend to keep my word. Oh, mother, I am very wicked. I am no longer worthy to be called your child. You will never see me again. I had thought to be able to tell you my dreadful secret; but I cannot do so. I cannot look into your pure, loving face, and repeat to you the story of my own shame. Therefore I must go away, very far away. Yet, if God forgives me, and I think he will, dear mother, for I have sincerely repented, I shall see you again in Heaven, where there is no parting forever more.

"Tell Thadeus to try and forgive me for the way in which I have treated him. I must have been mad to cast away his love for the unworthy one I did. The deed is done, however, and there is naught left me but penitence, suffering and death. And oh, I cannot tell you how welcome is Death.

"Before I close this letter I must ask one favor of you. It is to go and see a woman named Almira Cathcart. You will find her number in Green street upon the enclosed card. She can give you the story about me, that I myself have not the courage to tell you, for she is a wicked, hard-hearted woman. To her I owe all my sorrow. Go see her, mother, and beg her to desist from alluring any more silly, thoughtless girls to their ruin.

Oh, mother, mother dear, I can write no more; for my wretched heart is broken. Oh, if I could only kiss you once again; but I cover this poor letter with kisses for you. Try and think as well of your Julia as you can, for you know I never was naturally bad. But I must go away now, for it is past midnight. So, once more, and forever on this earth, dear, sweet, wronged mother, good night.

Your wicked, unworthy, but loving

JULIA."

I could not weep over the letter for my horror and grief were too great

for that. I wanted to find some clue to my daughter's whereabouts; for I did not think that she would commit suicide, but that she had, in her desperation of mind, gone some long distance away. Not knowing who to confide in, or what to do hardly, I sent a message down to Mr. Hughs, at his office, to come up immediately to the house. Mr. Hughs had a long time been paying attention to Julia, and though no formal proposition of marriage had been made, I as well as our mutual friends had fully concluded that he would soon propose.

The moment he arrived I placed the letter in his hands.

When he had read it, his face became as pale as marble and sitting down he remained silent for several minutes; and then almost leaping up he exclaimed:

"Mrs. Clark, Julia must be crazy! She must be somewhere about! My God! my God! I hope she has not committed suicide!"

I heard no more, if he said anything, for at the dreadful word, suicide, I fainted dead away. When I recovered my consciousness, Thadeus was bending over me applying restoratives.

When I had fully recovered, Mr. Hughs and I consulted as to the most advisable way in which to proceed in the matter. My mind was firmly made up to pursue Julia, search her out though she might go to the ends of the earth and bring her back home again. But I needed assistance and counsel; and I proposed to Mr. Hughs that he should join me in the search. He promptly assented; and within one hour later we were scouring the city in every direction to glean, if possible some information of the lost one.

In the course of the day I went to the house in Green street of the same number as was in the card Julia had enclosed in her letter. But no such person lived there, and the persons then occupying the house had been there for the past two years. This fact made me begin to think that Julia really was insane, and that having left the house as she had, we would yet find her wandering about the streets. We went to the various hospitals, and the police stations, and finally with terrible forebodings we turned our steps toward that dreadful place, the *Morgue*. In the last place there were four unknown bodies one of which was a man, one a boy, and the other two women. But neither of the last was Julia. By means of the telegraph we placed every policeman on the look out. By the same means we also notified every railroad station master for a hundred miles around to watch and stop any person answering Julia's description. Still no trace of the fugitive. On the third morning, however, about eight o'clock the policeman on the beat in which my house was, rang the bell and left word that some fishermen had about six o'clock found a young woman floating in the river, answering the description I had left at the *Morgue*, and that the body was now at the latter place.

Mr. Hughs and I were speedily driving once more to the abode of the

unknown dead. Upon entering the keeper said:

"Madam, excuse me, but I think Mr. Hughs had better see this body first in case it might be your daughter, and then he could tell you and the shock would not be so sudden."

Something in the man's manner impressed me that he had recognized my child, and nerving myself, I replied that I would not be shocked.

"She looks very calm and natural, Madam," said the man, "more so than they generally look. This way, Madam, we have washed the mud and weeds off her pretty well. Now, then Madam, the next slab is hers; she is here; allow me to take your arm, Madam."

During the latter portion of his remarks, the keeper with professional coolness and ease—the result of considerable experience and practice,—had placed himself in such a position as to render me support and assistance in case of my being overcome: at the same instant he stopped the flow of water from off the face of the corpse. Sure enough; there, before me, cold as the marble slab on which they had placed her, lay my darling Julia.

I did not faint, nor cry out; nor even utter a sigh. The iron hand of Fate and intense Grief held mind and physical frame with too stern and heavy a grasp for emotion. I took her wet, cold hand in mine, and smoothed back the long, soaking hair from off her stony forehead. I recalled her last words as she was leaving my room a night or two before: "Mother, no one else shall ever place another kiss on my lips. Good night." and once more, in fancy, I heard her singing:

"Slumber's soft calm, o'er my heavy lids creep;  
Rock me to sleep mother rock me to sleep."

Bending over my Julia, I kissed her cold lips again and again and prayed inwardly that some potent charm might make her arms clasp themselves about my neck once more; only once more as in her life time. But magic, and charms alike forsake the dead clay.

"Has the body been searched for any paper, letter, or anything like that, Sir?" asked I, of the keeper of the Morgue, in tones so forcedly calm that I was astonished at myself.

"Yes, Madam," replied he, "we always search them as soon as we take them in. When we searched her"—throwing a half pitying half professional glance at Julia, while at the same time he was opening a little box used for the purpose of keeping just such articles underneath each marble slab—"we took this letter from under the breast of her dress and this gold locket and chain from her right hand. It was very tight clutched in the fingers. When she came here her arms were so."

The keeper in illustration pressed the hand with the letter hard against his breast and the one with the locket and chain stiffly down his side. Then he handed the letter to me and the chain and locket to Mr. Hughs

with the remark:

"These were all she had about her; no money or pocket book. But the truth is drowned cases don't never have any money on them nine times out of ten."

Upon the envelope there was the dim shadow of a direction, but the water had rendered it illegible. I opened it. Within, and soaked almost to a pulp, was a ten dollar note; and it required much care to detach it from the face of the letter so as to bring the writing to view. This latter was clear enough to be read; and instead of being to me it was really to the keeper of the Morgue. It was as follows:

"To the Gentleman in Charge of The Morgue:

FRIEND: I know they take all drowned persons to the Morgue for identification. I am now going down to the river to drown myself. I have just this ten dollar note. I enclose it for you, with the request that you will have me quickly buried, and not recognized by any one. My mother thinks I have gone on a long journey, and I wish her to live on in the hope that I still live. Because she has been such a dear, kind mother to me that I could not bear to have her know I committed suicide. I would enclose more money, but I have not got any more."

There was no signature. I handed the letter and note to the keeper; who reading the first, said:

"Couldn't take the greenback, Madam. It's against law. But, as you don't want it, we'll slip it into the charity box here. It'll help some unfortunate patient of ours to be buried."

While the keeper was thus speaking, Mr. Hughs had opened the locket—it was one which he had given Julia on the previous Christmas. On one side was my own miniature, whilst upon the other was Mr. Hughs'. Mr. Hughs—who, I may here mention, was engaged to be married to Julia—had until this moment borne up bravely under his grief. But now when he realized how he had been really loved by Julia, he could no longer repress his emotions. Sorrow, however had to give place to rugged reality; and Mr. Hughs and I, having made the requisite arrangements with the keeper of the Morgue we took our departure for home. Here I remained, while Mr. Hughs, representing me, went to the Coroner's office, obtained a permit to remove Julia from the Morgue, and brought her home.

The funeral took place privately, no persons attending it, except Mr. Hughs, myself and one or two relatives.

When my child had been laid in the grave, then my mind began to revolve the idea of going after the wicked woman, to whom Julia had ascribed her fall. There were two motives for this. The first was a desire to know for certain what my daughter's secret was; for I really knew nothing except what I could suspect from her own broken, self accusa-

tions. The other was to either punish Almira Cathcart, or to endeavor to induce her to desist from a calling so horrible and devilish.

Upon my informing Mr. Hughs of my resolution to go on the search, he not only approved of it, but asked the privilege of accompanying me. I was only too glad to accept his proposition, and in less than forty eight hours after we had formed our resolution we commenced our long and exciting pursuit.

### A CLUE FOUND.

Our great trouble was to find some definite trace of the whereabouts of Almira Cathcart. As the reader already knows we had learned nothing of her at the house in Green street. Thinking perhaps there might be some misunderstanding, or some deception on the part of the people residing in that particular house we went there again separately, and still again after this, Mr. Hughs paid them a visit in disguise. This last visit convinced him that there was no deception whatever being practised by the people in the house.

Here, then we were at fault and had apparently lost what little chance we had of ever finding out Almira Cathcart. During a conversation Mr. Hughs and I had over the matter, a thought struck him and he said:

"Mrs. Clark I think we have all along been making a mistake. These people in Green street are all right. There is nothing bad about them, you may depend. Now I have an idea, there is some other street, or lane, or alley, named Green. Let us see in the directory here."

He turned the leaves of the directory, till he got the Street Department, and there, sure enough, he found several Green streets and Alleys.

"Now then," said Mr. Hughs, "we shall find her. We will take a list of these streets and one of them will prove to be the correct one."

This was promptly done, and we once more set out upon our hunt for the woman who had caused my child to take her own life. Four of the list were visited without success; but in the fifth we found the right number.

Knocking at the door we were answered by a woman of about sixty years of age, whose manners upon seeing us were so suspicious that I concluded she was the identical person we were in search of. I left the management of the interview, however, to Mr. Hughs. Said he:

"Does Mrs. or Miss Cathcart live here?"

"Who did you ask for, Sir?" asked the woman, putting her hand up to her ear, and feigning to be deaf.

"Cathcart!" replied Mr. Hughs. "She lives here, and we wish to

see her immediately on business of much importance to her."

"Cathcart, Cathcart?" repeated the woman musingly. "Oh, yes, Sir. She had a room up on the second floor back. But we had to put her out yesterday. She was an awful woman, Sir. Cheated everybody. She owes me three months' rent."

"Do you know, where she has gone to live?" asked Mr. Hughs, eying the old woman keenly.

"No, Sir, that I don't; and what's more, I don't care. I hope the devil will get her, as she deserves!"

"We shall be back to see you, some time today or tomorrow," said Mr. Hughs after a lengthy pause. "I believe you are deceiving us. Now I will tell you candidly we will make it to your interest to tell us something more definite about Almira Cathcart. And we shall find a way to make it exceedingly disagreeable to you if you do not. Good day."

I thought Mr. Hughs was most too hasty in leaving until, in a neighboring store which we entered, he unfolded to me a plan he had formed while standing at the door of the house.

It was this. In about two hours he was to return alone, and drawing from his pocket a paper folded like a warrant he intended to say to the old woman something like this:

"I should be sorry to be obliged to arrest you; but you will be consulting your own happiness of mind, if you tell me now at once where I can find Almira Cathcart. Put me on her track so that I may soon find her, and the moment I do come across her you shall receive fifty dollars at least, and perhaps more. And if you refuse I shall be obliged to do something I would rather not do."

This was a rather dangerous and even desperate proceeding, but, as Mr. Hughs argued, in dealing with the class of people we were dealing with, extraordinary means were necessary to be resorted to.

Undauntedly Mr. Hughs put the plan in operation, and with partially successful results; for though Almira Cathcart was not in the city, as he had suspected, still the old housekeeper of whom she rented apartments was so frightened by Mr. Hughs' manner that she imparted to him all the information she possibly could in regard to the movements of her tenant. From her he learned that Almira had gone two days before to Philadelphia. But she could not tell him where she intended to stop in that city. She told him, however, that she had given her orders to forward to the general postoffice there all letters that might come to New York for her.

"Have you a likeness of Almira Cathcart about the house?" asked Mr. Hughs.

"Yes, Sir," replied the old woman, "I have a *carte de visite* of hers; and a most excellent likeness it is."

"I will give you ten dollars cash down for it;" replied Mr. Hughs,

drawing forth the note.

The old woman quickly went to a closet and brought out several cards, from which, selecting one, she handed it to her visitor, who promptly gave her the promised money; and at once prepared to leave. Before doing so he said to her:

"I am now going to prove what you have been telling me to see if it be true or false. If it be true, you will have no occasion to complain of your reward; and if it be false look out for yourself. After I leave here your house will be so closely watched that no one can either go in or come out without being seen and scrutinized. Don't forget this. Good bye."

"Good bye, Sir," replied the old woman, "and I am satisfied to take all the risk. You will find I have told you the whole truth. I hope you will find her; and when you do I hope you won't forget the money you have promised me, for I am a very poor woman Sir, very poor, indeed."

"No, I will not forget you, if I find you have told me the truth. Good bye."

Mr. Hughs left the house, and coming home, informed me of his success, and showed me the likeness of Almira Cathcart. I studied the handsome, but horribly wicked face before me, and, in spite of all my efforts, I could not repress the great emotions of revengeful anger that boiled up within me, when I thought of my poor, unfortunate child.

### ON HER TRACK AT LAST.

That same night Mr. Hughs and myself left New York for Philadelphia, hoping to be able to overtake Almira Cathcart. If for no other object I most earnestly desired it for the purpose of at least learning the dreadful secret of my daughter's life, or rather of her death.

We had no direction; therefore the only course left open to us was to go to the post office and watch for her there in case she applied for any letters.

On arriving in the city we went to the post office, and inquired if there had been any one there for letters in her name. That the clerk could not inform us, but he told us there were two letters lying in the office directed to her. Mr. Hughs then made an arrangement to watch the delivery window.

Most faithfully for two days, from early morning until night, did Mr. Hughs keep guard, without making any discovery. But towards evening of the third day his perseverance was rewarded; for at that time a young negro woman, or rather girl, applied at the window for letters

directed to Mrs. Almira Cathcart. At first the clerk was not inclined to give them to her. But he was obliged to do so, as she described certain marks, which she told him he would find in the left, upper corner of each envelope. Moreover the letter had not yet been advertised.

Quietly Mr. Hughs followed the girl to a house in Pine street near Tenth, and just after she had shut the door, he stepped up and rang the bell. His summons was answered by the same colored girl.

"I wish to see Mrs. Cathcart," said he.

"There is no one of that name lives here," promptly answered the girl with the utmost coolness and effrontery.

"Yes, but there is," said Mr. Hughs, "for I saw you get letters out of the post office for her not half an hour ago and saw you bring them here."

"You must be mistook, Sir, in the person; for I aint been outside the house this blessed morning."

Mr. Hughs knew the girl was lying in the most outrageous manner; so he rejoined:

"Tell Mrs. Cathcart, if she does not wish to get into further trouble she had better see me. I have something to tell her of great importance to her."

At this moment a female passed from the hall stair way round like as though she were going into the dining room. She halted a moment and then called out:

"What do you mean, Annie? show the gentleman into the parlor. I will come in a few moments, Sir."

As the female thus spoke, Mr. Hughs caught a glimpse of her face, and instantly recognised it as the same woman's of which he had the *carte de visite*. His heart beat with joyful excitement as he entered, and took his seat in the parlor.

There he waited impatiently for five, ten, fifteen, twenty minutes; and still no one came. After about five minutes more, the colored girl made her appearance, and said that Mrs. Cathcart would like him to call again, some other time, when *perhaps*, it would be more convenient for her to see him. But just at present she had gone out for a little walk.

Mr. Hughs was almost beside himself with chagrin and disappointment at being thus deceived; but with strong self control, he said, as he rose to take his departure:

"Tell Mrs. Cathcart, the next time I meet her she will not get away from me so easily."

"Yes, Sir, I'll tell her, you may depend," answered the negro girl with more coolness than before, and grinning maliciously.

Being thus baffled, even at the very moment of apparent success, Mr. Hughs at once went and obtained the services of a celebrated detective who, in the course of the week brought him the information that the

fugitive had gone to Pittsburg. He gave him also a letter of introduction to a detective officer in that city, in case he should go there and need his assistance.

Instantly we set out for Pittsburg, in which city we arrived in due time. I was enabled to be of much assistance to Mr. Hughs here as I was thoroughly acquainted with the streets and various localities of the place. About two days were consumed in efforts to find out, where Mrs. Cathcart had her abode, and when we did find it, she had gone the day previous to Cincinnati, Ohio.

### BROUGHT TO BAY.

We waited for nothing; but, driving to the Rail Road Depot, we took the train for Cincinnati, and were thus not more than twenty four hours behind our fugitive. On our arrival there we searched every hotel from the most aristocratic to the most humble; but all in vain. During this search, however, I chanced to fall in with a lady named Mrs. Krider, who was, as well, as myself in pursuit of Almira Cathcart. From this lady's account it appeared that this same Almira had once been in love with Mr. Krider and wished him to marry her. But he having repulsed her, and married Mrs. Krider, Almira had sworn vengeance. For years she had been lost sight of. Meanwhile Mr. Krider had died, leaving Mrs. Krider with an only child, a lovely little girl. This little girl Almira had stolen away from the mother with the express purpose of bringing her up to lead a life of shame. This was her revenge. And now Fortune brought the anxious mother and myself in company, each of us bent on hunting to earth the vile woman. We narrated to each other our sorrows, and promised mutual assistance in the chase.

By quite accidental means Mrs. Krider herself had ascertained, that a woman, answering the description of Almira had been seen in the northern part of the city. Acting upon this information Mr. Hughs began a strict search in that locality. On the second day of this search he found out the house where she lived. But fearing too hasty an approach might lead to the same disappointment, as he experienced in Philadelphia, he returned to the hotel at which we were stopping, to arrange some plan, which would insure the capture of the fugitive. Mrs. Krider and myself joined in his deliberations and in a short time, it was decided to take out a warrant for Almira and watching a favorable moment, arrest her.

The legal preliminaries being properly attended to, an officer was detailed, and all four of us then went directly to the house, where Almira lived. Our summons being answered by a servant, I asked if Mrs. Cathcart was in.



Almira Cathcart, poisoning herself with prussic acid, which she had concealed in one of her hollow crystal ear rings.

"She's very sick, ma'am," replied the servant, "and has been sick for several days past."

"Well," said Mr. Hughs, who stood beside me on the step, "we must see her on a very important business."

"Very well, Sir," replied the servant, "walk in and take seats in the parlor. I will go up and tell her."

Mr. Hughs, taught by his former experience, said:

"No, I thank you, we will be led directly to her room. We do not wish to wait. Come, officer, let us go in."

The policeman, who had thus far stood on the pavement, close to the wall, so as to be out of sight to the person opening the door, now stepped forward, and much to the astonishment of the servant, we all walked directly into the house.

There the officer said to the servant:

"Now then, lead us directly to her room; we have a warrant for her arrest, and, as she slipped this gentleman once before in Philadelphia, we can't give her a chance to do it here. Go on, now, take us to her room."

The servant nodded his head, but made no other reply as he went before us upstairs to the second landing, where he pointed to a half open chamber door, saying:

"That is her room."

Mrs. Krider and I entered the room first, while Mr. Hughs and the policeman remained outside awaiting our call before making their appearance. We found Almira lying awake in bed. The instant her gaze encountered that of Mrs. Krider, she uttered a kind of choking scream of surprise; and exclaimed:

"Ha! it is all up with me, now! You have me at last; have'n't you?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Krider, "you can no longer escape me. I have had a weary chase of it. But I come not alone. Here is another mother, whose daughter you have ruined, and driven to drown herself. We are both here upon the same errand. This is Mrs. Clark of New York City."

"That is my name," added I as the fugitive turned her eyes and stared at me. "Upraidings are useless. They will not bring my daughter back to life. She has drowned herself. She left me the message that you were the cause of it, and she bade me seek you out, if I wished to hear the story of her fall. She had not the courage to tell me herself. She also begged me to implore you to desist from your vile calling, and not to bring any more ruin to silly, unthinking girls. Whether you tell me her dreadful secret or not, I am determined to prevent you continuing in your course of wickedness. An officer of the law stands outside ready to arrest you."

The sick wretch started violently, and then after a few moments' silence said:

"Bid him come in."

I did so and the policeman entering the room, said:

"I have a warrant for your arrest, Madam. I am exceedingly sorry to be obliged to do such a disagreeable thing, but the law constitutes it my duty to make you a prisoner."

A painful and prolonged silence followed this announcement during which the prisoner covered her face with her hands and was terribly agitated. I recollect how forcibly the thought struck me that a woman so steeped in crime should display so much dread of arrest. The silence was at length broken by Almira. Turning toward Mrs. Krider and myself she said in a low, tremulous voice:

"Ladies, you see I cannot escape; will you ask these men to leave the room for a short time?"

A word from myself induced the policeman and Mr. Hughs to go outside upon the landing. Another long pause ensued, during which the prisoner shifted her position in the bed several times and seemed to commune with herself about something. Finally, and just as I was about to address her she said:

"I feel that I am a very sick woman. I think this will be my last illness. I know that I have lived a wicked life. I cannot make any atonement. I wish to make a confession."

Here she paused again and then resumed as though she had been holding an argument with herself:

"Yes, yes, I must make a confession. It is due to those I have wronged. I will do it. Please get me paper, and pen and ink."

I went to the door, and asked Mr. Hughs to go and obtain the writing materials, which he speedily did, and I gave them to Almira Cathcart, after we had propped her up in the bed with pillows, and placed a port folio on the bed before her to answer the purpose of a desk. Previous to commencing to write, she drank a large glass of wine to strengthen herself.

The policeman and Mr. Hughs still remained outside upon the landing, while Mrs. Krider and myself seated ourselves in chairs, one on each side of the prisoner's bed and awaited events. Almira Cathcart was evidently a woman accustomed to the use of the pen, for she wrote with astonishing facility, never once pausing in her self-imposed task except to dip her pen in the inkstand. Twice more before she finished the narrative, she drank wine that I put to her lips.

Finally she completed the manuscript and gathering up all the pages she placed them in my hands, whilst Mrs. Krider took the ink and pen.

"This should be signed or at least witnessed by Mr. Hughs and the officer," remarked I, "have you any objection to my asking them into

the room again for the purpose.

"No, not now," she replied, "Let them come in."

While I glanced over the first page of the manuscript the prisoner took from her ear a crystal ear ring, and holding it between her finger and thumb, said in tones, I shall never forget:

"Here is the door through which I shall give you the slip."

Quicker than I can tell it, she put the earring into her mouth, crunched it between her teeth, gave a trembling gasp, and sunk back a lifeless corpse upon the pillows.

Both Mrs. Krider and I screamed at the same instant for the men to come in. They bounded into the room; but all was over, the prisoner had died as quickly as though a bullet had passed through her heart, and she now lay before us all an inanimate lump of clay.

Mr. Hughs, with the aid of the policeman took from her mouth a fragment of the ear ring and upon examining it found that it had been hollow and filled with prussic acid, a poison so terrible in its effect, that it kills like lightning.

All was over now, and of course there was naught left for us to do but to ascertain the contents of the confession the dead woman had put into my hands. We therefore, after notifying the people of the house of what had taken place, retired to another room, where Mr. Hughs read to us the whole of the manuscript. It was as follows.

#### THE WRITTEN CONFESSION.

Those whom I have most injured have at last brought me to bay like a wild beast that they have been tracking so long. Well I have been a savage, wild beast, and I do not deny it. But who made me so; but this very woman's husband, Edward Krider? Did I not love him? Did he not spurn this love? and what can make a woman more furious and revengeful than to be spurned by the man she idolizes? From the moment Edward Krider married Agnes Thornton I hated not only him, but all men, not only her but all women. I hate everybody; but most particularly do I hate Agnes Krider.

I do not blame either her or Mrs. Clark for pursuing me. Yet they would not have caught me if it had not been for this awful sickness. I will never go to prison, however. To that my mind is made up. Here I will die by my own hand. But as all bad people are supposed to make a confession before they die, and as I am exceedingly wicked, why I must, of course to be in the fashion, also make a confession. I do not exactly make it for this reason though; but rather that I may make those people more unhappy than they were before. So here it is.

For two weeks after I was cast off by Edward Krider, the only man I ever loved, I was nearly frantic with grief, and several times during that time I was on the point of committing suicide. But all at once the idea struck me, that, instead of making such a fool of myself, it would be much better to revenge myself, and thus be even with mankind.

This suited my temperament. My happiness was destroyed forever, and I resolved to devote the remainder of my days to making other people miserable—especially Edward Krider and his wife. I have adhered well to my determination. And like the Parthian archer, I shall, as I take my flight from earth, shoot into her heart the poisoned arrow that will rankle there and torture her for the rest of her life. I will write it here, that I have put her daughter Katie into Madame Adair's house in Mercer street, New York, where by this time she has already been taught the practical part of her future business. Oh, but revenge is sweet; and this is the sweetest of all. And now for the details of my life since Edward Krider and I parted forever in this world.

About a month subsequent I chanced to be introduced to Major James Welling of the regular U. S. Army. The Major was a splendid man physically and mentally. Over six feet high, fine, broad shoulders, long, black wavy hair and whiskers and the most roguish eyes imaginable. I soon found that he was a married man, but at the same time a dashing and heartless libertine. His style just suited me exactly, and we got along together most admirably, though at the same time I despised him with all my heart. But I had my object to accomplish.

From New York we went in company to Washington, where the Major was overtaken by his wife, who gave him a very severe lecture, and threatened him in such a terrible way that he vowed all sorts of intense virtue for the future. The result of this was that he and I parted rather suddenly. During our acquaintance he had given me numerous introductions to his military and naval friends, and I at once entered upon a career that religious people would call wicked. But what did I care? Not the toss of a nickel. I lived sumptuously, taking care, however, to spend as little of my own fortune as possible. For three years subsequent I lived in this way, courted and yet despised, plunging madly into the giddy, seething whirlpool of dissipation. Just about this time I became known to a celebrated banker, who was dealing largely in Government Securities. I thought I saw a splendid opportunity to make an immense fortune, not only rapidly but surely. I considered myself sharp in business transactions; but my banker friend got the best of me. I entrusted him, with what I considered secure conditions, formally written out and signed, the great bulk of my fortune about thirty thousand dollars.

Within three months after he had received the money, he failed; and notwithstanding all my precautions, I lost every cent of my investment. This nearly crazed my brain; for, beside the dread of ever being shut up

in a prison cell, I had the greatest terror of poverty.

Finding that my grief did not bring my money back, however, I soon made up my mind to adopt some means of livelihood that would pay me well. I had in times past several occasions come across women, whose business it was to keep fashionable bagnios supplied with handsome girls. These women were all rich and a very short consideration of the matter settled my resolution to adopt the same trade as a profession.

### MY FIRST SUBJECT.

No sooner had I formed my determination than I put it into execution. That night I went to Doctor Wiley's church, and there, as I glanced at the females in the congregation, I saw a young woman—a most beautiful girl of about seventeen years of age. She had such an innocent face that I felt sure she would be an easy subject, and enable me to get a large sum of money from some one.

(This woman must have been a human fiend, or hyena! Such words make the blood run cold to read them. *Editor.*)

I kept my eye on her from the time I went into the church until the congregation were dismissed, when I followed her to her home which was a small house down near the Chain Bridge. The next day I went down to the neighborhood and made a number of inquiries about her. Her father had been dead several years while her mother kept a little day school. Her name was Ella Winters, which was also the mother's name.

Having laid my plan I made a call on Mrs. Winters and engaged her to do some fine sewing for me, as she was an elegant needle woman. This she did, and sent Ella to my house with it, which was exactly what I had desired. I paid Ella the money and gave her another lot with the injunction that she should bring it home herself. I had kept out a portion of one of the garments I sent, in order that Ella might be obliged to come back to see about it.

This worked as I had expected; for the next afternoon Ella returned to tell me of what had been left out. I detained her under the pretext of helping me a little till after supper, when I accompanied her home. It makes me almost laugh, even now that I am on the point of taking my own life, to think how I fooled her mother; how I expatiated upon the necessity of young ladies being most carefully guarded by friends of mature age and experience in the wiles of the world.

"I am very strict with Ella, Mrs. Cathcart," said Mrs. Winters to me. "I never allow her to go to parties or balls, nor into gay company of any

description. The only place she ever does go to, is Dr. Wiley's church, and then it is generally in my own company."

"I exceedingly approve of your course, Mrs. Winters," replied I, "one cannot be too strict with their daughters, most especially in this city, where are to be found congregated the worst of the whole country."

"I am so glad, Mrs. Cathcart," said Ella's mother, "that my daughter has fallen in with yourself; for I feel that I can trust her to visit you whenever she may desire. And do you know, she has taken a great liking to you. Your name is continually in her mouth."

Of course I was exceedingly delighted to hear this good news.

"Thank you, my dear Mrs. Winters, thank you for your confidence. And let me assure you that it is not misplaced. I also have taken an intense liking for Ella. Now you must be sure and let her come over to see me as often as you can spare her. I do not go out much; and sometimes I am very lonely; because I keep no company. These fashionable women that you behold thronging this gay Capital of Washington, are so extravagant, and so deceitful, and hollow-hearted, that I cannot bear to associate even with the best of them. Oh! I shall be so much pleased if you will allow Ella to come to see me often. And who knows but that I may of great benefit to her. You must certainly have no easy task of it to get along at all respectably with expenses so heavy as I know they are here."

Before I left, Ella's mother was quite captivated with me, and I felt quite sure, that I would have no fresh difficulty, that I could not readily meet and overcome.

That week Ella was over at my house four times, and of course on each occasion I lost no opportunity of moulding her to my purpose, not only on these visits, but also any time that she came there afterwards.

About this period Congress began its session, and the Hon. J—S\*\*\*\* a member of the House, a particular friend of mine, happening to see Ella with me, took a great fancy to her. I was not long in noting this, and, as he was very rich—for there had hardly been a contract given out by the Government, that he was not mixed up in—I determined to make something handsome out of him. So, one night after I had plied him with wine I made the proposition to him to give me five thousand dollars and I would work things for him, so that he should gain Ella for himself. Five thousand dollars were nothing to him, but much to me as I had now become exceedingly reduced in my circumstances.

"Why, Almira," said he, "if you'll make me and Ella all right, I'll give you ten thousand, cash down."

"She shall be your own darling dove, within thirty days from this date, or I'm a sinner!" replied I. "But you must give me half in advance, you know."

"Very well, Almira. You shall have the first five thousand tomorrow,

and the rest when I am sure of the pretty prize."

This was just twice as much as I had really thought of getting or even asking, and therefore I became doubly zealous in my task. I invited Ella to a select little party that I had made up at my house. Her mother said that Ella had never been allowed to go to anything of the kind before; but being as it was to be given by me, why she would let her come, feeling well assured that I would have the affair conducted strictly. Indeed she would be exceedingly glad to have her daughter with me. So will I, thought I to myself, until I have made my ten thousand, and then I don't care the snap of my finger. Ella came to the party and was introduced to the Hon. Mr. S\*\*\*\*, who, by my advice did not force himself too much upon her attention on this first occasion. Several times during the next week Ella and Mr. S\*\*\*\* were thrown into each other's company, and of course, she got to be more familiarized with him. Matters went along quite smoothly until one evening about two months subsequent to Ella's introduction. She had been quite favorably impressed with the devotion, exhibited by her lover; and I concluded that my friend should be successful in his amour that very night.

So I plied Ella with wine in which I had put a powerful, magic drug, which had a most wonderful effect upon her.

(We have omitted several pages of this frightful woman's narrative of the events of that night as it would be offensive to persons of even the commonest decency.)

The next day, by sun rise, Ella's mother came to my house in great distress, to see what had become of her, as she had not been home all night. She had a lingering hope that because the weather had been rainy I had detained her with me. I had the girl snugly tucked away in bed as insensible as a log of wood. But I told her mother that she had started home much earlier than usual the night previous, that I would have come home with her but for the fact that I had been quite ill.

I put myself in a great way before the mother and told her to go home and I would come down and bring a gentleman with me who was thoroughly acquainted with the city. We would, I also told her, make search immediately for the missing girl, whom I had no doubt we would easily find. Knowing that Ella would sleep soundly for several hours, I got a gentleman who boarded with me to go over to Mrs. Winters with me.

We found her in much distress, crying, and wringing her hands.

Mr. Jones, the gentleman I took over, talked the matter over to her as well as a clergyman could have done. He could quote scripture in plenty to her, for he had originally been educated for the ministry. She finally agreed to wait till we had made search for Ella, for Mr. Jones informed her of a plan that he thought would be successful, provided she herself did not spoil it by making any search of her own.

We left her and went home, where I wrote a little note to her, and signed her daughter's name to it. I said in it that for sometime she had been keeping company with a young man who under promise of marriage had seduced her from the paths of virtue. And now with him she had gone away never more to return. I took good care to put something pious and pathetic in the end of the note, which I then sent to the post office; knowing that as soon as she got this note, Mrs. Winters would come post haste to my house. I had my hands full in the meantime to dispose of Ella, so that there would be no possibility of her and her mother meeting; for, then that would have put the fat in the fire.

So when I got back home, I went up to the room where Ella was still sleeping. Opening her mouth I poured a strong stimulant down her throat, which presently roused her up. Then I at once opened on her with some fierce talk about what she had done in my house, that if it were known, I should die with disgrace. I painted to her in brilliant colors the anger and agony of her mother at her staying out all night, and then informed her that out of pity to her I had concealed what had happened. But I did not know what to do. I kept on in this style, till I believe the girl would have been much obliged to me to kill her. Then I took another tack; and advised her to stay at my house until the next night when Mr. S\*\*\*\* would be there and we would see what was the best course to pursue. She was so thoroughly terrified at the awful fix in which she had placed herself, that she agreed to do anything, I told her to escape from public notice. Her mother she said she could never meet again. She reminded me a good deal in this respect of Julia Clark; but she was not so determined.

She kept close in her room all that day and the next till the succeeding evening, when Mr. S\*\*\*\* called again. Meantime as I had expected, Mrs. Winters came to the house to see me and show me the note she had received from her daughter.

"Oh, Mrs. Cathcart," she sobbed after I had read the note and rubbed my eyes with my handkerchief—an action the mother took for condoling grief on my part—"if an angel had come down out of Heaven and prophesied to me one week ago, that Ella, my darling child would have gone and done such an act of wickedness and ingratitude, I would not have believed it! God knows I would not! Oh, God! what shall I do! what shall I do! My child! my child!"

The mother became so violent and noisy by this time that I was in momentary dread, Ella would hear her voice and in a fit of repentant desperation come rushing down stairs and spoil my nice little arrangement. So I put my arm quite lovingly around her neck and choked her off as well I was able, while I led her to the front parlor. There I begged her to compose herself a little more, and told her I had no doubt but that her daughter had eluded all our search and got away out of the city with her

The body of Miss Julia Clark, the last victim, found at the Morgue by her mother and intended husband.



lover. Finally finding that she lingered by me as the only friend she had, I concluded it would be safest to put on my bonnet and cloak and lead the fond, foolish old creature home. So I did it quickly or dear knows, perhaps she would have spoiled all my plot. I returned immediately; and much to my satisfaction I found, that Ella had heard nothing.

When Mr. S\*\*\*\* came at night to the house, he inquired if Ella had been obstreperous. I soon informed him that, though she had not, it was all through my good management. I also took good care to suggest to him that now it was time I should receive the other half of my reward. The reason I did this was that I had made up my mind, when I first started out in this business to make every cent possible off the men, while their love was hot. For, the moment a man's affection begins to cool, that moment he begins to count the cost.

Mr. S\*\*\*\* gave me the money, and then went up to see Ella. I heard her cry very violently; but of course did not go up, for it was not my place to do so. Indeed, I thought to myself, what an idiot she was for doing so. She became quiet after awhile, and Mr. S\*\*\*\* did not come down for two hours. When he did he told me that he and Ella had been talking matters over, that she had become quite sensible, and intended to stay where she was, till Congress adjourned, and then she was going with him away to the city where he resided. During all the next day Ella was very quiet, and spent her time mostly in reading. At night she went to bed rather early. In the morning when I got up I went to her room and found her gone. She had risen in the night I suppose, and gone out of the house. I was now in dread, least she had made her way home to her mother, and I was quite glad when about three hours later I heard that she had gone deliberately up to the rail road depot, watched her opportunity when a train was leaving the place, flung herself down before the engine, and had been killed instantly.

No letter nor note had been found upon the dead body, of which I approved most sincerely. She was taken home—not to my house, but to her mother's, who made a great lamentation over the corpse. I received an invitation to go to the funeral but I declined to go, as I had some other, and more important business on my hands to be attended to.

#### MY NEXT SUBJECT.

Thinking it would never do to be idle; I, soon after getting rid so easily of Ella Winters, chanced upon another lovely creature, named Bertha Holstein. She was an orphan, the daughter of German parents, who had both died aboard the ship in which they had emigrated to this country. Bertha lived with an old German woman who had taken her

in and raised her. This woman I quickly discovered, was an extremely avaricious person; and, judging from her features, not much troubled with the article, called conscience, where it might militate against her gains.

Old Mrs. Nobele kept a dim little penny store where she sold cakes home made yeast, spruce beer, candy, tapes and a general assortment of such small wares. I soon made her acquaintance, and in a short time became quite friendly with her. She was about the shrewdest old wretch, that I ever came across, for when I first made her the proposition that Bertha should come and live with me, she closed one eye, put her arms a Kimbo, and said:

"Cathcart, you think me fool, eh? I see what you want. Bertha pretty, gentlemen like her, would run after her, make love with her, till they get tired—then somebody else. No! I tell you what. You give me fifty tollars und I let you have Bertha und nich bother mit her more."

"You'll do," said I, "you suit me to a hair. Here's your money, give the girl her band box and bonnet and let her come along with me."

"Ya! dat's goot, geben to me de monish. Ya! das ist goot! Ya! Fifty tollars! Bertha! Bertha kommen to me!"

The old woman's eyes gloated greedily as her bony fingers clutched at the money I had put into her hand. She was fully satisfied, and so was I. Bertha came down stairs, where she had been attending to some domestic work. She was a splendid prize; as beautiful as an houri; her cheeks were like alabaster; her hair pure flaxen, floated like a weavy mass of golden vapor about her finely shaped head; her eyes were lustrous and blue; and her figure was magnificent. Withal she was exceedingly proud, for she knew her own beauty, and she was delighted to go away from the dirty shop of mother Nobele with such a finely-dressed lady as me; especially when I told her that she also should have fine clothes, and not be obliged to work all the time, as she had been hitherto.

In less than half an hour Bertha and I were on our way home, and within three hours more she was a tenant of Ella Winter's room; the most satisfied creature in the world.

My next job, after I had thus secured my prize, was to get a customer to take her at a good heavy price. First I invested over two hundred dollars in handsome clothes for her, and then I took her out with me every day and promenaded her in such thoroughfares that I knew to be the resort of rich men. Mr. S\*\*\*\* had pretty well spread it among his acquaintances that I was a first class selector of handsome girls on sale, and in less than a week I had over twenty propositions from different gentlemen for the smiles of Bertha.

At first I had concluded to sell her, to a certain broker who wanted her badly, and who had offered me a good round sum for her. But on second consideration I changed my mind, as I saw a way, in which I could at least double the amount. There was a certain gentleman in Washington

at that time who knowing, or supposing, that I had wonderful influence with some Congressmen, and wishing to get a claim through, offered me so much money down; with a promise of a large additional sum if the claim was successful. So I concluded to make use of Bertha in this way. Among the applicants for her was a Member. I therefore dropped him a sweet scented billet doux to come and see me; which he did with all haste, of course.

"Now, my dear friend," said I to him, after some preliminary talk, "I will make you a proposition. You engineer this claim through and Bertha shall be your prize for success."

"You won't go back on me now, will you?" inquired he.

"No! Honor bright; as sure as you get that through all right, so sure shall you have the girl."

"Then you will make your money out of the party having this claim?" remarked he after a pause.

"Never you mind about what I will do;" said I, "I have my little game and you have yours. So we may be of mutual benefit to each other."

"It's a bargain!" rejoined he. And so it was.

The claim was put through all correctly, and I got all my money. I sent to my friend and told him it was all right, and he could commence his courtship of Bertha. I gave him the requisite introduction, and he at once began. But neither he nor I had dreamed what a devil lurked in that quiet, simpering smiling German beauty. The moment she had found what was to be done with her, she flew at him like a tigress, broke a bottle of wine over his head, tore his face with her finger nails, and went on like a demon. I made up my mind, however, that she should be conquered; and so, as soon as I heard the row up stairs, I marched up to her.

[We leave out several more pages of the confession here for reasons of modesty. *Editor.*]

On the morning of the succeeding day, Bertha was still too weak from her combat of the previous night to get out of bed. But she was still very fierce, when I went in to talk to her.

She threatened that when she got out she would prosecute me. But I laughed at this, and explained to her how useless that would be, as I had hosts of influential friends and a great deal of money, while she was very poor and had no friends at all.

"Why Bertha," said I, after considerable talking to her, "you have such wrong ideas about things in this country and your own. We don't think anything of it here; for it is an every day occurrence. And you can make ever so much money at it, and live and dress better than a princess could in your own country. Besides, also, you will never have

to work like nasty, ugly girls. Why there are thousands of women, if they only had one half the beauty you've got, would never wear their lives out in drudgery. Take my advice, now, and stick to what you have started at."

In this way I talked her down to a sensible condition of mind, and she finally said, after a long brown study:

"Well, I am undone now, forever; and no decent man would marry me, though he were only a street sweeper. So I might as well take your advice. But, my God! if that villain who has ruined me, has daughters of his own, what must his thoughts be, if he ever thinks of them."

I gave Bertha five hundred dollars for herself and she became as bold a piece as I ever saw. But like a good many others she took to drinking to drown her sorrow as she said, and the last I heard of her, she was an inmate of a sailor's trol house in New York City.

#### THE REST OF MY SUBJECTS.

As I am getting weak, I must hurry this confession along, or perhaps I shall not get through. Since I began business on my own account in this way, I fixed off exactly thirteen beautiful girls, not including Agnes Krider's little brat, Katie. They say thirteen is a lucky number, but I think it must be unlucky, for Julia Clark was my thirteenth, and through her I have been tripped up at last. I am only sorry, I cannot live long enough to take in thirteen more girls, or thirteen hundred for that matter. I always took a delight in it.

(We cannot read such awful, deliberate malignity without shuddering at the doom of a woman's soul so deeply dyed as to utter it.—*Editor*.)

Becoming tired of Washington—for it is a terrible dull place, except when Congress is in session, I next went to Philadelphia, where I got two handsome young women and sold them off to two of my gentlemen friends. One of them was the daughter of a rather prominent clergyman. She was a giddy kind of a piece, and her father being very strict with her. She was one of these dark haired, brilliant eyed girls, sprightly as a sun beam, and possessed of peculiarly well-developed and voluptuous form. Not long after I fell in with her, which was at Fairmount Park, I had thrown such a spell about her that she seemed infatuated with me, so I at once selected her as suitable for subject number three.

Among the first things I did was to take her to the theatre, of which she had often heard, and which she had a most intense desire

to visit. I never saw a human creature so delighted as she was with the theatre. Of course, as I expected, her father heard about her disobedience and gave her such a severe scolding for it, that she cried about it every time I saw her for the next two weeks. I was not idle all this time but kept instilling into Olivia such ideas as I knew would soon lead her into the path I wish her to take.

One day she came to my house in a terrible way. She and her father had had hard words, and he had taken a light cane and given her a thrashing.

"I will run away," she sobbed, "I will not put up with such treatment. It is too bad. What shall I do?"

"That was outrageous indeed!" replied I, with well feigned commiseration. "Your father ought to be ashamed of himself to strike a girl of any age; especially one of your years."

"Oh," said she, "if I only had some place to go to, I would run away from home this very night!"

"Well," said I, with guarded deliberation, I hardly know how to advise you, Olivia. But of one thing rest assured, if at any time you are forced to such a course, my door is always open to you. Your father can surely not love you, to treat you with so much brutality."

"I could learn a trade," said Olivia, half musingly, "and support myself."

"That's well spoken and independent!" I exclaimed, "but you need not think of that now. I will give you a helping hand. In me, my dear girl, you will always have a true friend; for I love you dearly."

Olivia flung her arms around my neck and wept with grateful joy.

Two days after that she came to me and told me that her father and she had had another quarrel, and asked me if she might bring her things along and make her home with me.

I said yes, with my whole soul—of course I did. After I got Olivia living with me, I began to work on her in earnest; and in the course of a few weeks I had succeeded much better, than I could have expected. I finally concluded to "realize" on her investment; and for that purpose I approached several of my gentlemen friends upon the subject. The successful bidder was a man, who had a public office in the State House Row.

At first Olivia was rather restive and disposed to make trouble, but we soon conquered her, and to show what an ungrateful creature she was, some six months after this she ran away from my house and took with her seven hundred dollars in money, that I had laid away in my bureau drawer, together with two hundred dollars worth of jewelry. I set a detective on her track; but he could not find her—so he said—though I had a suspicion, that he had found her and that the pair of them divided

the spoils between themselves. I never saw her afterwards, and do not know what ever became of her.

Tiring of the monotony of Philadelphia, I went to Baltimore, where I came across two more girls, whom I succeeded in making some money off of. The last of these was named Charlotte Clifford, and lived with her uncle on Pratt street. Her uncle, when he found out the affair, got his temper up to an exceedingly awful height, and got the police on my track. But I did not relish being imprisoned as he threatened, and as he would most undoubtedly have done, had he caught me. So I fled.

Being afraid, that I might be followed, I threw my pursuers off the scent by the following trick. Going to the Baltimore and Philadelphia Rail Road Office I purchased a ticket for Philadelphia, taking care at the time I did so, to make so much sensation, that the clerk would be quite likely to recollect me. As I expected, the detectives, making inquiry there, whether such a person had brought a ticket, received a full description of me, which left no doubt upon their minds, that I had gone to Philadelphia; to which place, it was quite certain, they followed me. Meanwhile I quietly got a gentleman friend to get me a ticket for New Orleans, whither I promptly took my departure.

I had a double purpose in thus going to the Crescent City of the Southwest. The first was to get safely away from my incensed pursuer, and the second was that I had always heard it spoken of as a City, where a large number of the women were very beautiful and not particularly noted for their excessive virtue; and as a City, which was the resort of large numbers of wealthy planters from the surrounding country. That will be my paradise, thought I to myself, and I was actually quite restless during my journey, till I got to my destination.

Some three weeks subsequent to my arrival in New Orleans I spent in travelling about the City and its environs, studying both, the place and the people. I had the knack of making friends very fast; and by the time I got through with my little tour of inspection, I was possessed of hosts of friends and acquaintances.

One day as I was out promenading, I met a handsome girl selling flowers on the street. She looked like a Creole; with cheeks like ripe peaches, and a fine shape. A professional inspection assured me, that she would be a likely subject for me to operate on. So I accosted her with:

"What is your name?"

"Leonie Prangler, Madame; "why do you want to know my name?" replied she in some surprise.

"Because," said I, "you do so closely resemble a dear young friend I once knew. But she is dead now."

"Oh," answered the flower girl. Then after a pause she continued;

"Will you buy some of my flowers, Madam? Here is a French tea rose, of a very scarce variety. Look at the delicate tint, and fine shape of the flower. It is only a dollar and a half."

"That was just the plant which first attracted my attention," said I, "it is indeed sweet. Who do you sell these flowers for?"

"My mistress, Madam."

"Who is your mistress, and where do you live?"

The girl gave me the desired information and I then said:

"Could you have me a handsome bouquet made up by this evening?"

"Oh, yes Madam."

"How much will it be?"

"The price will be according to the size, and quality of the flowers."

"Will you bring it home to me yourself?"

"Oh, yes, Madam, I have to do all the errands of that kind. I will bring it. What time shall you want it?"

"Well, let me see, fetch it about half past seven o'clock."

"Very well, Madam, I will make you a handsome bouquet."

With that I walked away. That evening Leonie, with business precision made her appearance at my house with the bouquet.

Of course I detained her, and by the time I let her go, which was at ten o'clock, I was in possession of her whole life history. It was decidedly romantic. I invited Leonie to come and see me often, as I had taken a deep interest in her, and could most likely better her condition in life.

During the next month Leonie several times came to see me, and on each occasion I took good care to leave a favorable impression upon her mind. Finally I told her that if she would come and live with me altogether, and be a companion to me, I would keep her as long as she liked to stay with me, and treat her as I would my own sister.

The girl seemed exceedingly pleased with my proposition, and accepted it very thankfully. I did not yet fully understand her character, and I desired more opportunity to study it, ere I ventured upon making any decided move. Leonie was naturally high strung, proud and self-willed. But her necessities had curbed her in considerably. The first time she came to live with me. I made her a present of some jewelry, and then left the room and took such a position in the adjoining apartment, that I could watch her movements without being seen by her. For a short time she allowed the baubles to lie upon the little table, and then getting up, she put them on herself one after another, and stood viewing herself in the mirror. During this exhibition, when she thought no one was looking at her, I studied and mastered the girl's disposition. From that moment she was mine, as I thought!

Previous experience had taught me caution, and, therefore I did not

push matters so rapidly as I had always been in the habit of doing. Gradually I worked and guided Leonie's mind and disposition to such a condition, that she would accept the position, when I finally sprung it upon her.

There was a planter from Plaquemine Parrish and another from Opelousas, each of whom was exceedingly anxious about Leonie, and each of whom offered a large sum of money, if I would let him have the prize. I kept both hanging on the tenter hooks for sometime, playing one off against the other; and then when all was sure, and I found I could not get any larger offer than I already had, I decided in favor of my friend from Plaquemine as he offered the largest pile, and in advance, money down.

The agreement was closed out and I appointed the same evening for him to come to the house and commence his suit. During the afternoon I approached the subject to Leonie, so as to pave the way for a successful termination. In the course of conversation I said:

"Leonie do know, Mr. Dexter is a great admirer of you. He's positively in love with you."

"Don't you think," replied she, "that Mr. Dexter, being a married man, had better bestow his love on his lawful wife?"

"Well, that is a matter for his taste and judgment to decide. You do not know what a splendid fellow he is; nor how liberal."

"Is he exceedingly liberal with his money?" asked Leonie.

"Oh yes, indeed he is;" answered I.

"Well, Mrs. Cathcart," resumed Leonie; "tell me one thing. How much did he give you for me?"

She laid her hand upon mine, as she spoke the latter part of this sentence, and gazed with her piercing black eyes directly into mine with an intense peculiarity that was actually terrible. It almost threw me off my accustomed guard. But I replied as well and as coolly as possible, that she was mistaken in regard to that matter. She paused a little while and then replied:

"Mrs. Cathcart, I understand why I should be grateful to you for taking me out of my humble, but honest position of a seller of flowers on the street corners. The whole affair is a heartless business operation on your part. You are a procuress. You are walking along the street, and chance to see a handsome but poor girl selling flowers. You say to yourself; 'if I take that girl up, befriend her, dress her up elegantly, it will be a paying investment. I will sell her off to some rich man for his mistress, his toy. She shall fall to the lot of that man, who will give me the most money for her.'

"Now, Mrs. Cathcart, that is all well enough for you. But as I have from my childhood been obliged to drink continually of the bitter cup of poverty, yes even to his bitterest dregs, I long ago came to the determi-

nation that if I ever got the opportunity, I would reverse that disagreeable spell of bad fortune.

"I knew your object within three days after you first spoke to me in the street. I saw that you were studying me; but I had already studied you, and made up my mind to give you your own way till matters came to a climax. Mr. Dexter has given you a certain sum of money—how much I do not know—for me, if you will assist him to be successful in his making love to me, as you call it. And Heaven! such love! But never mind that, let it go for what it is worth. Now your virtuous friend *can* be successful on one condition."

"What is the condition?" asked I, more than suspecting however what it was.

"That I receive for my share one half the amount of money he has given you."

"Well, but——" said I in reply, but she cut me short, saying:

"Do not waste any words in expostulation or explanation. I must have the money or your friend will be unsuccessful."

"Very well, Leonie," replied I, after a long pause, "you shall have your own way. I find you are a sharp, shrewd girl; and I do not blame you for it. I was once soft myself, and got imposed upon by the world; but I am getting square with it as fast as I can."

Leonie got her share of the money, and she became the mistress of Mr. Dexter, who, after awhile took her away with him to Havana, where she was drowned by being thrown overboard by a loose pulley block that fell from a sailor's hand, while the ship was being brought into port.

There was one insurmountable objection I had to New Orleans and that was the Yellow Fever, and as the season was rapidly approaching for its appearance I quickly took my departure for a healthier climate in the North. Going up the Mississippi, I stopped at Memphis and several of the large river towns, but having a great desire to see Chicago I went to that city, with but little delay. I soon left it, however; being disgusted with its pavements, which are nothing more than wooden platforms, raised up on posts out of the mud.

From Chicago I went to Cincinnati, which I must say is a beautiful city. There I remained for over six months; having rented a house in the most aristocratic locality of the place, which became the resort of fast gentlemen who belonged to the elite of society. I made a great deal of money in Cincinnati and now strangely enough, I am doomed to end my days here. The way I came to leave Cincinnati was this.

In the course of my professional meanderings I had noticed a most lovely girl of about eighteen, who attended a young ladies seminary in the Northern part of the city. Upon inquiring about her I found that she was the daughter of a certain Judge who was one of my constant

visitors. Proceeding on the principle of "like father, like child," I soon made myself acquainted with Annie—that was her name—and in a short space of time caused her to become deeply interested in me. After awhile I invited her to come and see me at my house. Meantime, having learned that one of my gentleman visitors, who had an old and bitter grudge in a way that the Judge would feel most deeply, I proposed to him that he should obtain Annie's smiles and favors. He took the bait greedily, and swore he would give me three thousand dollars cash down if I would help him to manage the affair. Of course I at once struck the bargain, and he and I commenced operations in earnest.

He and she were introduced and he made himself so fascinating and agreeable that she quickly fell in love with him. I next contrived to send an anonymous note to the father, who in a rage ordered Annie to cease all intercourse with her lover.

Clandestine meetings were at once indulged in, all of them being held in my house, and Annie's lover made such progress that within one month from the first visit, he had made his revenge upon the Judge complete by the ruin of his daughter. It chanced one night shortly after this that the Judge on the occasion of a visit to my house became drunk with excessive potations of brandy.

He was playing cards at the time with two ladies at a table near a door that led into the hallway; when he heard a voice that struck him as being very familiar. It was Annie, calling down stairs to one of the servants to bring her up something. His face became pale as he asked:

"Who is that, calling, Maggie?"

I had always so managed things that father and daughter should not meet in my house and now I felt terribly awkward, for I feared there would be a row. So I answered him that it was a young lady by the name of Young.

"I thought the voice sounded like my daughter Annie's, I am glad I am mistaken."

At this very instant Annie herself passed the doorway to go into the dining room and her father caught a glimpse of her as she went by. Springing to his feet and dashing down his cards he bounded out into the passage and seized his daughter.

"Good Heavens, Annie, my dear daughter! what are you doing here in this awful house?"

Annie was aware that her father was in the habit of coming to my house; but having arrived before him on that particular night, and not knowing that he had come in afterwards, she had thus brought about an unpleasant meeting.

However, she was a "chip of the old block" as the adage goes, and after her first agitation quieted down, she answered her father's question by another:

"Surely, papa if this house is good enough for you to be in, it is plenty good enough for me, is it not?"

"No! no! no! a thousand times, no!" thundered the now sobered father. "You cannot be in this house one moment without being contaminated. You do not know it most likely; but I do!"

"Keep cool, keep cool, now, papa," replied Anna, with a most provoking smile, and wave of her hand; or I shall be obliged to call my husband down to you!"

"Your husband!" yelled the Judge, white with rage and dreadful suspicion; "Where is he?"

"Come along up stairs with me, papa, and I will give you an introduction," laughed Annie, tripping out of the room and running lightly up stairs, closely followed by her angry father.

Well knowing what would follow, I bounded after the Judge instantly to bring him back. But I was too late; for just as I got to the landing I beheld him and Annie's lover seize each other by the throat and roll on the floor together in a deadly encounter. As soon as possible policemen were called out of the street, who, with great difficulty, separated the combatants. Both were dreadfully injured, for both were powerful and determined men. Indeed it was several days before either of them could leave his bed. As the affair got into the newspapers the two men blamed me for it, as I had called in the policemen. And both of them swearing vengeance on me for the exposure, I promptly took counsel of my reason, and made a hasty flight for New York City, after selling off my establishment.

Until now I had scarcely even given a thought to Agnes Krider; but, with my arrival in New York, I recollected the vow of vengeance I had made years before and I now resolved to perform that vow if I could find the slightest opportunity.

One day while riding upon a river steamer who should I come across but my rival, Agnes. She had with her a little girl which I felt instantly was her own child. I noticed, too, from the change that came over her features when she saw me, that Agnes had a dread of me. I got out of sight immediately by passing into a Cabin. There I got a friend who was with me to watch my enemy not only on the steamer, but also to follow her like her own shadow when she landed, and find out exactly where she lived. She had evidently dreaded my presence, for after she left the steamer she entered several different lines of street cars for fear I or some one else might follow her. But her precautions and extra car fares did her no good, as my friend tracked her straight to her home.

Her residence once ascertained, it did not take me long to find out all about her. She was a widow now, her husband having died suddenly

long before. Among other matters I found that Agnes had a mortal terror of what I would do to her child, Katie. This pleased me exceedingly. I at once made arrangements with a woman on whom I could depend, to take rooms in the neighborhood, and watching her opportunity, steal the child and bring her to me. But the very day my friend moved thither Mrs. Krider moved away to a new and distant quarter of the city. My friend, however, at once made arrangements to follow her informing me of what had occurred.

There was no chance for this, until happily a room was to let in the very house in which Agnes lived. This room my friend instantly took. It was close by that of Mrs. Krider. She played her cards so well that the latter not only never suspected her; but thought a great deal of her. Mrs. Leslie was the name she took. She had not been an inmate of the house long ere the long-wished-for opportunity arrived and one evening, just after supper, Mrs. Leslie coaxed the little girl out into the street and then forced her to go along with her.

Meanwhile to divert suspicion she had left in her room a letter of farewell to the people in the house, stating that she intended to commit suicide. It so happened, however, that some boy had seen her in the hallway with the little girl, and he had told Mrs. Krider of the circumstance. Of course she at once became satisfied of what had become of her daughter, and promptly started in pursuit. Several times she and I had been within a stone's throw of each other; but, though experiencing these narrow escapes, I always managed to clear her cleverly, as she can testify. She knew what I intended to do with her child for I had taken good care to write her all about it.

But enough concerning this; my time is too short to bother any more about it. My revenge is complete by this, and that I know will be a dose of worm wood and gall to Agnes Krider. Here she stands by my bed side, looking directly at me. Oh, how she would tear me if she only saw what I am now writing. Curses on her! she destroyed my happiness here and hereafter. But I have had my revenge, and I die satisfied, for Madam Adair will not spare Katie. I know her too well.

### MY LAST SUBJECT.

After various wanderings during which I lost and made large sums of money, I finally turned my face toward New York again. There is a strange fascination about that great whirlpool of crime, business and misery—New York City. Obedient to this fascination, I went thither,

where, after obtaining a house in Green street, I immediately resumed my regular profession and soon had an excellent run of custom and made money.

It was there where I took in Julia Clark, my last subject. This I suppose will interest this other woman here beside my bed, and this silly-pated lover, who ought to have kept a sharper look out over his intended bride. They shall have the details of the affair, if it is any pleasure to them, and much good may it do them.

One day as I was driving in the Central Park with a young gentleman friend, I noticed Julia sitting on a rustic bench. Her beauty of face and figure instantly attracted my attention, and I resolved to see what could be done with her. So driving to an harbor at a short distance where I saw a girl I knew, I introduced my friend to her, and left them there while I returned to where I had seen Julia. She was still sitting on the bench. I took my place beside her and after a few minutes silence I said:

"Excuse me, Miss, but I think I have seen you before. Is your name not Allison, and did you not live in Brooklyn about one year ago?"

"No, Ma'am," replied Julia. "My name is Julia Clark and I live here in New York."

I excused myself for the intrusion, but found plenty of opportunity to continue the conversation that I had thus begun. Before we parted Julia and I were quite sociable, both mutually pleased, and I had learned all her ways; where she was in the habit of going, and at what times; and how she was petted by her mother and adorned by her lover. I had become quite an adept at questioning people thus, from long practice.

Of course as I was a stranger to her, I could not make any appointment to meet Julia; but, from what I had learned from her I was enabled to throw myself in her way almost at any time I chose. And I took good care that this should be as often as possible. Naturally Julia was a good girl—the best young woman I ever saw, or came in contact with—and I therefore had a most difficult task to sway her at all in the direction I wished. But patience and perseverance will work wonders; and finally I induced Julia to call in and see me. There at my house I introduced her to the son of a well known shipping merchant—a wild fellow who had oceans of greenbacks at his command. He took a tremendous fancy to Julia right away; and offered me a good, round sum if I would make her all right with him.

I promised to do my best, and I did so, though it had to be done very carefully, so as not to startle the girl or else all our plans would have fallen through. Mesh after mesh was wound around Julia, till I had her as secure as a fly in a spider's web, and she became the victim of the young shipping merchant, under the combined influence of heated wine and the solemn love promises of my friend. But I doubt if I had not

fixed the wine whether the aforesaid promises would have accomplished much.

Immediately after Julia found out what she had done, she became exceedingly melancholy; and, from her great determination of character, I was fearful that she would seek to revenge herself upon me or the young shipping merchant. So I always carried a keen dagger in the pocket of my dress, for use in case of necessity. But the necessity never came, of which I was very glad.

One day Julia came to see me. When she was leaving she said:

"Has James been here tonight?"

"No," said I, "why do you ask?"

"Oh, nothing. I merely wanted to say something to him. He and I must part tonight forever. I know and feel what a miserable, guilty creature and awful wretch I am; and I only hope and pray that when I die and stand before the Judge of Heaven, He will forgive me as our Saviour once on earth forgave the Magdalene."

Then she lectured me like a minister; saying:

"Mrs. Cathcart, bad as I am, and I know I am a terrible wretch, I would not change places with you for all the world. You, who can deliberately engage in the calling that you do; who, with cool and devilish wickedness can ensnare and befoul the soul of an unsuspecting and innocent girl, such as I once was, must have a heart the most hellish that the human mind can imagine."

"Come, come, Julia," exclaimed I, "that's rough! Don't come it quite so strong as that!"

She made a bound toward me, and her eyes flashed so wild and awfully, that I pulled out the dagger to defend myself. The moment she saw the blade she tore open her dress, and, sinking on her knees, exclaimed:

"Mrs. Cathcart, for God's sake, if an emotion of pity or remorse can enter your soul, drive that dagger into my heart and I will bless you!"

"I thought you were going to hurt me; that was the reason I pulled the dagger on you," I replied. Then as the girl crept nearer to me on her knees, I continued: "Go away, Julia! I don't want to take your life. Why don't you be sensible like me; and take life as you find it. Be happy and make money."

Suddenly even as I spoke to her she got up and said;

"Tell James, if he comes here tonight that I shall never see him again. Tell him that I forgive him, and hope God will. As for you, I do not think there is any forgiveness for you either on earth or in Heaven. I am now going home to bid my mother good bye forever!"

Then, without another word she left the house, and I never heard of her again, till I was informed that she had gone and drowned herself,



A correct likeness of Almira Cathcart copied photographically from a *carte de visite*.

like a foolish girl. James was dreadfully scared at it, for fear she had written some silly note to him that would be found on her body, and thus be the cause of breaking off his marriage to a rich and aristocratic girl up town whom he was about to wed.

He was highly delighted when I ascertained for him that there was nothing on the body. I watched the Morgue very closely for I half suspected, on the night that Julia said she was going home to see her mother for the last time, that she intended to commit suicide. I did not see the body at the Morgue, for the mother had taken it away as soon as she could get it. But the keeper of the place told me every thing that he had found upon the corpse.

A few days after this I ascertained that Mrs. Clark, Julia's mother and Mr. Hughes, Julia's betrothed husband were after me.

Being fearful that there was something on which they might perhaps trip me up, and, as I have before said, entertaining a strange and peculiar dread of being put into a prison, I at once made hasty preparations for flight. I went to Philadelphia whither I had all my letters forwarded. This was not very wise, as I might have known that my pursuers would watch the post office the first thing.

In Philadelphia I went to the house of a particular friend on Pine street near Tenth. My pursuers traced me to it by following home the colored girl whom I had sent to the post office to get my letters. But both she and I were equal to the occasion. When Hughes had pretty well harried her out, I came to the rescue, told Annie to admit him to the parlor, told him I would be there in a few moments, and left him sitting there as comfortable as he pleased for a long time—at least till he got tired—while I was making my way out of the city as fast as steam could carry me.

I did not originally wish to come to Cincinnati, on account of the trouble I had had here before; but, as I was acquainted here with a friend on whom I could place dependence, I resolved to run the risk; for I felt perfectly certain that Mr. Hughes and Julia's mother wanted to revenge themselves on me on account of Julia's affair.

I do not know how they ever tracked me out of Philadelphia, because I took particular care to leave the city clandestinely in order that my direction might not be discovered by any person. And the only way I can account for it is that they employed a regular pack of detectives.

Upon my arrival in Cincinnati my first care was to obtain a secure retreat here in this very house. I *thought* it was secure, but it seems it is not; for here I am like a trapped rat. There appears to have been an ill fate about me lately. Everything has gone wrong. All the immense sums of money I have made are nearly all lost or squandered. My health, hitherto so good, is suddenly broken down, and the pursuers I used so

easily to baffle and outwit, have run upon me without the slightest apparent trouble.

Julia Clark was my thirteenth subject, and brought me bad luck. So the old saying, that thirteen is a lucky number is a mistake, at least it was a terrible mistake in my case, and has cost me my life.

I am sorry that I have got to do it but it must be done; and when I open the mysterious door and usher myself unbidden into eternity, what will be my fate? Ah! what a silly question to be asking myself! There will be no hope for me here or hereafter. I have lived a fiend and I will die one!

Nothing more that I can say! So here goes! I lay down my pen, gather together all these written pages of my life-history, hand them to Mrs. Clark, take my ear ring from my ear—and now for a leap in the dark!—It is terrible! terrible! but I must! there is no escape! Farewell to earth! Now then for eternity!

Immediately after the written manuscript had been placed in the hands of Mrs. Clark, the wretched prisoner suddenly, and before any one could arrest her hand, took from her ear a hollow crystal ear ring, put it into her mouth, and crunched it between her teeth.

At this very moment the policeman, noticing the strange manauver, rushed forward, and seized the hand of the suicide. But swift as he was, he was too late! The wicked woman was already dead, for the poison—prussic acid—was so powerful and in such quantity, that it had hardly been swallowed, ere it stopped her life so terrible was its effect.

From the pungent and peculiar odor that filled the room, Mr. Hughs instantly recognised the character of the poison, and knowing that no remedy would avail, he proposed to have the dead woman's confession read in the hearing of all present.

This was agreeable to everybody; and Mr. Hughs, taking the manuscript, read it through, amidst momentary exclamations of horror and execration first from one and then another of his companions.

"Well, ladies, and Mr. Hughs," said the policeman, after the reading was completed, "I have been on the police force of this city for the last twenty years. During that time, as you may judge, I have come across some very bad people. But of all the wicked wretches, men or women, that it has ever been my lot to come across or hear of, that woman lying dead on that bed there, beats all. She must have had the devil shed abroad in her heart."

All agreed that the officer's opinion was a perfectly just one. The person most troubled by the contents of the confession was Mrs. Krider. The dead woman had evidently had a most particular spleen against her; a spleen, which nothing seemed to satisfy more, than

the disposition she had made of Mr. Krider's little daughter Katie.

There was a train to leave Cincinnati in half an hour from that time, and, with all a mother's energy and love, Mrs. Krider started Eastward aboard this train, and in due time reached New York City. Calling a carriage she asked the driver if he knew where Madam Adair's establishment was in——street.

"Oh, yes," replied he, with a wink, "I guess I ought to. I've drove many a jolly fare to the Madam's, I have. Get in, Ma'am; I'll put you there in a short time"

Mrs. Krider leaped into the carriage and after twenty minutes drive brought up in front of Madam Adair's establishment, a grand looking house. She held her hands clasped tight on her bosom to still the throbings of her heart as she ascended the brown stone stoops, and was just in the act of ringing the bell, when suddenly she heard a child's voice call:

"Mama! mama!"

Turning quickly she beheld her child Katie running up the street toward her. The little creature had been out to a neighboring store on an errand, and was just returning, as she saw her mother.

The mother was so overcome by her emotions that she was obliged to sit down upon the stoops; and there, crying, hugging and kissing in a wildly happy manner, sat Mrs. Krider and Katie soon attracting a curious crowd. "When her first paroxysm was over, the mother rang the bell, and when the door was opened by a stylish negro waiter, she strode in and said:

"Bring Madam Adair here, instantly!"

The lacquey began to excuse his mistress, saying he did not know whether she was in or out; but he would see.

"Tell her to come here to me instantly, or I will raise the house about your ears!" exclaimed Katie's mother, so fiercely that the servant quickly complied and returned in a moment or two with Madam Adair, a stout, pompous old barridan, who inquired what was wanted.

Mrs. Krider speedily informed her of the object of her visit, which did not seem to worry the Madam in the slightest degree. On the contrary she told Katie's mother that she was very glad to be rid of the child, that she had been left there by Mrs. Cathcart, that no board had been paid for her, and that if she had not come to day, she would have had to go to the alms house for her in the morning, as she was perfectly useless to her, being too little and young!

"Thank God, for that!" exclaimed the mother joyfully, "that tells me that my child is safe from harm. Come, darling, let us be going out of this place!" she continued moving toward the door, with her little daughter's hand clasped tightly in her own.

But Madam Adair demanded the child's board, twenty dollars in all.

Mrs. Krider looked at her first in surprise, and then in anger and replied: "Do not trouble me or I will give you such a lesson that you will not forget it in a hurry. Open that door and let me out!"

There was an appearance of determination about the incensed visitor that caused Madam Adair to order William to open the door; when, without further words, Mrs. Krider passed out with her rescued child free from any further peril, for the only enemy she ever had, was now dead.

The body of Almira Cathcart, the suicide, was taken in charge by the proper persons and buried without any ceremony. Whether she had any money or property has never yet been ascertained; but certain it is that there were scarcely sufficient effects to pay for even such a humble funeral as was given her.

In concluding this narrative the editor cannot forbear adding a few remarks in regard to the great lesson which it indelibly impresses upon the mind and heart. The ancient Prophet exclaimed: "I have seen the wicked flourish like a bay tree!" and again "but let not my end be like theirs." How true is this. For awhile such wicked people as Almira Cathcart may flourish and apparently succeed; apparently be wealthy and happy; but the canker worm implanted in the heart of the flower by the hand of retributive Providence, gnaws, perhaps a little slowly, but with terrible and fatal certainty; and in God's own Good time the viscious plant dies away from off the earth, forever.

We poor, human creatures, may murmur and repine at the Workings of God's inscrutable wisdom; but we forget that as behind the blackest cloud the sun shines as brightly as on the fairest morn, so the hand of Omnipotence, though hidden to our eyes never ceases its onward and just workings. So it has been at work in this very case.

But the culprit by her own hand is now standing at the bar of the Supreme Judge, therefore let us not judge her; but let her history be always a warning to young and old alike.

THE END.