

by a grave. It was that of a tall, slight person, dressed in black, and with a black veil covering the head. The face of the unknown was turned toward him, and in the dim light he could see that it was that of a young woman, of about twenty-four. She was pale and thin, with an expression of extreme sadness in her large dark eyes. She returned his gaze steadily, repeating the same words in the same low, clear voice.

'You should never call back the dead, never call back the dead!'

Mastering his feelings, Mr. Elton asked:

'Who are you? Are you a spirit of a living person?'

'I'm a ghost, of course. Don't you see that I'm a ghost?' she answered complainingly. And pointing to the monument at the head of the grave: 'Don't you see that I am buried here? This is my grave.'

Mr. Elton strained his sight to read by the light of the flickering candles. 'Our beloved daughter, Lillian. Aged 17.'

'I have to wander here now, always, always,' continued the woman. 'My mother called me back, and I came. Oh, I'm so tired of wandering here, while my body lies in the grave. If I could only get back!'

And she covered her face with her hands and wept. Mr. Elton was stupefied. Was this weird experience a reality or was it only a dream?

Approaching footsteps broke the spell. Two men were at hand. He half expected to see the woman vanish in ghost-like fashion, but with a low cry she started to run away. She had not gone far before one of the new comers overtook her and laid a firm hand on her arm.

'Lillian,' he said, not unkindly, 'come home. You know the doctor has forbidden you to come here.' And turning to his companion he added: 'It is all right; I knew I should find her here.'

The young woman, finding resistance useless, walked quietly away with the younger man. Mr. Elton now recognised the elder as Mr. Bolt, the superintendent of the cemetery.

'Isn't it a pity?' queried the latter. 'You observed that she is not right here,' tapping his forehead, 'didn't you?'

'Oh, she is insane, is she?' replied Mr. Elton. 'I was inclined to take her for a ghost.'

'No wonder—meeting her in this place at night. The strange part of it is that she believes herself to be a ghost. Peculiar delusion, isn't it?' Well, she has passed through rather peculiar experiences. Have you ever heard her story?'

'No, I have never seen the girl, nor heard of her before to-night. But tell me her history as we walk down.'

'There on the tombstone is her name, and under it what were supposed to be her remains were buried some seven or eight years ago. She was a very pretty girl, fond of pleasure, and with a passion for the stage. Her father was dead, and she was always besieging her mother with petitions that she might become an actress. The mother, of course, would not hear of such a thing.'

'Lillian went to Chicago to visit a friend and while there seized every chance to attend the theatre. One afternoon, when there was no one ready to accompany her she set out alone for the matinee. It was on that fateful day when the Iroquois Theatre, where she had said she would go, was burned to the ground. The girl never returned to her friend's house, and it was taken for granted that she was amongst those who had perished in the flames. When the news reached her relatives her brother—he who came for her to-night—went to Chicago and brought back what he thought he identified by some pieces of clothing as her remains, to be buried here.'

The mother never recovered from the shock. She lingered a few months, then died of grief. Two days after her burial Lillian returned home. She had not gone to the theatre on the afternoon of her disappearance, but had taken a train to New York with the intention of going on to the stage. She evidently had had no success in her chosen career, for she was careworn and sad and in ill health. Learning of all that had happened and that her mother had grieved herself to death over her supposed fate, she was so deeply affected that she became insane. Now she believes herself to be her own ghost, and whenever she is not watched she comes here to the cemetery.'

'What a tragical and pathetic story!' exclaimed Mr. Elton.

'Tragical, indeed!' replied Mr. Bolt. 'Yet, does it not occur to you that this mother might have saved herself and the daughter she loved so well much misery if she had resigned herself to the will of the Lord in her supposed bereavement?'

'But who could blame her? It is natural that we grieve over the death of our dear ones.'

'That is true. But we should do it in the spirit of a Christian. I see so much grief displayed and so many sad incidents come to my knowledge that I feel strongly the necessity of resignation. God claims His own when He calls one from this world, and the soul goes home to its Maker. No matter how much they may have clung to life, I do not think that any of these silent sleepers who died in the Lord would be willing to come back to continue their existence in this life of struggles. Does it not, therefore, seem like pure selfishness on our part to wish that they should? If the spirits of the deceased can observe us, do you think it will add to their happiness to see us vainly longing, when we should be working out our salvation? Their task is done, ours is yet to be accomplished. All that we can do for them is to give them our prayers. That is the way to show that their memory is sacred.'

They had reached the entrance of the cemetery. Mr. Elton stretched out his hand to give a hearty pressure to that of his companion.

'You have given me something to think of to-night. I thank you, Mr. Bolt. Good night.'

He was deeply impressed by the events of the evening. On his way home he passed the chapel of a monastery, and halted to listen to the office for the dead, which was being chanted by the monks.

'Requiescant in pace,' they sang, and their listener murmured, this time with full resignation: 'May her soul and all the souls of the faithful, departed rest for ever in peace. The Magnificat.'

## ALWAYS GOD

'It is no use,' Madeleine said, 'I cannot see any way out of it. There's one thing,' she added, with a break in her voice, 'that I will not have—I will not let a father or mother blame!'

'I am not blaming anybody,' answered Mark, his face white with pain. 'And I honestly believe, Madeleine, that if you were not inclined to blame them in your heart, you'd not be so fierce in your denunciation.' He tried to laugh—it was no use. It is not easy to laugh when one, young and strong, with shooting pains in one's muscles, is forced to lie on the lounge all day, and with no hope of relief.

Madeleine colored.

'Oh, I wish that we had been made more practical.'

'My dear girl, fathers and mothers can't make children anything they please nowadays. How could father have resisted that I should be laid up with this horrible rheumatism, or that Grace's voice would not be a part of it, but only a little, mezzo-soprano, or that we should all have to earn our living earlier than he expected? I believe that God knows best; we are always saying so, but few of us act as if we believe it.'

'But, it's awfully hopeless!' Madeleine bent her head on the curved arm of the old sofa, and began to cry. Mark turned his face to the wall, and a big lump came into his throat. There was a silence broken only by the November rain against the window panes of their apartment in the Swansmere. The sounds of wheels came faintly up to the tenth story. The city noises seemed to isolate them from the world, and at that moment they both felt terribly alone. Their father and mother, in a very pleasant town of the middle West, had died within a month of each other. There were three children, Mark, just out of a Western Jesuit College; Madeleine, a year younger than her brother, and Grace, who was just twenty-one. They were on the threshold of life, all doors seemed open to them, the enchanted garden of youth lay before them—when suddenly all the gates seemed to close. Mortgages, unpaid notes, and other liabilities, which a man in the prime of life may incur, ate up nearly all their father's life insurance. Mark had intended to begin the study of law. He was clever, serious, strong—the greatest vaulter of his college, and the pride of intercollegiate athletic meets. The three came to Washington. They knew a Senator, who had been their father's friend. Here was 'influence,' it meant a place in the departments for Mark and Madeleine, and Grace's chance to have her voice cultivated. The family and the good nuns had a firm belief in Grace's voice.

The Senator was ill at the Arlington Hotel, too ill to see any one. At the end of three weeks, he passed away. Mark's twinges of rheumatism developed into a kind of paralysis of the legs. He could not walk. The great Herr Teufelsfisch, to whom Grace went, with a letter from Sister Hyacinthe, said that she had a 'sweet contralto drawing-room voice,' but that it would not pay to cultivate it for the concert stage. Madeleine