the other arm was around her. He was looking down into her eyes, that were as deep and calm as the river.

'It has been so always, dear,' he said tenderly; 'I have never lost my love for one day.'

She only pressed closer to him, still looking up, but the tears filled her eyes.

'My sorrow, then, was not equal to yours,' she said.

'Darling, speak no more of sorrow,' he answered: 'it shall be the background of our happiness, making every line the clearer. I only wish to know that you love me as I love you.

Their lips met in a kiss of inexpressible sweetness and unity—in a joy so perfect that the past trembled out of sight and disappeared for ever.

While yet they stood beside the river, they heard a footstep near them. Alice started with alarm, and drew closer to her protector. Next moment Mr Wyville stood beside them, his face strangely lighted up by the moonlight. He was silent a moment. Then Sheridan, in his happiness, stretched out his hand as to a close friend, and the other took it. A moment after, he took Alice's hand, and stood holding both.

'God send happiness to you!' he said, his voice very low and deeply earnest. 'Your past sorrow will bring a golden harvest. Believe me, I am very happy in your happiness.'

They did not answer in words: but the truth of his friendship was clearer to their hearts than the bright moon to their eyes. He joined the hands he held, and without speaking further, left them together by the river.

(To be continued.)

AMONG THE LILIES

There was a low sweet chatter in the sacristy, where girlish forms moved softly to and fro arranging vases and candelabra, for it was the eve of the Immaculate Conception, and the Children of Mary were busy making the high altar of St. Martin's beautiful in honor of their Mother and queen.

Ferns and palms stood in feathery rows awaiting their placing, the tall white tapers had been deftly fitted and trimmed, but the alabaster vases that were the pride of the Sanctuary Society stood empty.

Flowers were at a premium just now for it was the opening of the social season, and the white blooms at the stores were held at fancy prices that the humble votaries of our Lady could not reach.

'Not a lily,' sighed pretty Doris Leigh, the youthful assistant of the sodality, who was acting in the absent prefect's place. 'And Miss Millicent always has the vases full. Everybody will say it is our fault. Renshaw told me Miss Millicent engaged her flowers two weeks beforehand. But she was away at the sanatorium this year and of course we did not know—'

'They brought her back yesterday,' said Lena Vane, looking up from the censer she was polishing, 'and not a bit better, mamma says. The doctor does not think she will live the winter through.'

'Oh, how dreadful—dear, dear Miss Millicent,' murmured Doris sadly.

'Who is taking my name in vain?' asked a cheery voice, and a slender figure muffled in a heavy fur wrap stepped forward into the girlish group.

'Miss Millicent,' went up a dismayed but loving chorus. 'Out this cold winter day!'

'And why not?' asked the newcomer, smiling as she slipped off her fur cloak and sank into the bishop's chair, her silvering hair and delicate features sharply outlined against its crimson velvet. She was a woman of middle age, but the staring brightness of her eyes, the hectic flush in her cheek, perhaps something deeper and more subtle still gave her an almost girlish look of youth and bloom.

'Oh, you are too, too, ill, Miss Millicent,' faltered Doris, anxiously.

'Not at all,' was the bright answer. 'The doctor himself brought me in his car. He agreed that it would be much better than having me worry myself into a "temperature" at home. For I felt I could not trust you children with the altar to-morrow. I really must come and see how you were getting on.'

'Oh, of course it won't look like you always made it look, Miss Millicent, but we are doing our best.'

'I see you are,' said the lady with a practiced glance at the ferns and palms and tapers. 'And doing very well. That branched candlestick needs a little more rubbing, Doris; the chasing always took extra care. But those ferns are all I could ask. You were lucky to get them so full and fresh. They make such a lovely setting for the lilies. But where are your lilies?'

There was a moment's pause, then Doris found sorrowing speech.

'Oh, I hate to tell you, Miss Millicent, but we have no lilies.'

'No lilies!' The speaker caught her fluttering breath sharply, as if in pain. 'No lilies for our Lady's altar on this, her sweetest feast? Oh, my dear, dear children—'

'We tried everywhere,' murmured the eager, apologetic chorus. 'We all put in our pocket money and sent to every florist in town. But all the lilies have been bought up. The Lorimers are to have their first reception to-night since their return from abroad, and it is Lilian's name flower, you know. So she has taken them all—'

'Taken them all,' repeated Miss Millicent. 'Taken all the lilies from our Lady. Little Lilian Lorimer. Oh, she would not, I am sure.'

'Oh, but she has,' said Lena, with a wise little laugh. 'Or her mother has for her, which is about the same. You haven't heard about Lilian, Miss Millicent, and how she turned all the men's heads in London last year. Some great English lord has followed her home, and they say the engagement will be announced to-night. The reception is to be something wonderful, the whole drawing-room banked with lilies and Lilian's dress fit for a queen.'

'Lilian!' repeated Miss Millicent as if in bewilderment—'My little child of Mary. Lilian, who helped me to dress the altar so often for this very feast. My little white-souled Lilian. Oh, she would not keep all the lilies from our Mother if she knew. I am going to tell her.'

'Oh, Miss Millicent, dear Miss Millicent, no, don't go; you are took weak, too ill. And—and—' Doris hesitated—'Lilian has been away two years, you know; everybody says she is so changed, has grown so cold, so proud. Oh, please don't go.'

But Miss Millicent had risen resolutely and drawn her cloak about her.

'It is only around the corner,' she said. 'And I cannot be hurt very much, my dear children, as you know. I have been dressing our Lady's altar for twenty years, before most of you were born. And this,' she hesitated, 'will be the last time. So our Mother must have her lilies if I have to beg them from the little Lilian of long ago, let her be changed as she may.'

Miss Lorimer stood by the broad window of her reception room, looking out into wintry stretch of lawn and garden below. Chill and bare and sere as was the December scene, it seemed to allure her gaze, weary, perhaps, of the warmth and glow and luxury within, where the long rooms were vistas of summer greenery, the fountain plashed over waxen-leaved aquatic plants, the air was filled with the fragrance of the lilies that the florist was putting in place—day lilies, Annunciation lilies, tall, snowy callas, with hearts of gold, her name flowers that were to bank mantles and windows, and rise spotless over all the glitter and gleam of the banquet table to-night.

Her mother, in her pride and triumph, would have it so, little guessing the memories the white flowers woke in the girl's heart, memories that made her turn to the bare garden with tightening lips and shadowed