

“Mammy is the best I ever knew,” said Marie ; “and yet Mammy, now, is selfish — dreadfully selfish ; it’s the fault of the whole race.”

“Selfishness is a dreadful fault,” said St. Clare, gravely.

“Well, now, there’s Mammy,” said Marie, “I think it’s selfish of her to sleep so sound nights ; she knows I need little attentions almost every hour, when my worst turns are on, and yet she’s so hard to wake. I absolutely am worse, this very morning, for the efforts I had to make to wake her last night.”

“Has n’t she sat up with you a good many nights, lately, mamma?” said Eva.

“How should you know that?” said Marie, sharply ; ‘she’s been complaining, I suppose.”

“She did n’t complain ; she only told me what bad nights you’d had — so many in succession.”

“Why don’t you let Jane or Rosa take her place, a night or two,” said St. Clare, “and let her rest?”

“How can you propose it?” said Marie. “St. Clare, you really are inconsiderate. So nervous as I am, the least breath disturbs me ; and a strange hand about me would drive me absolutely frantic. If Mammy felt the interest in me she ought to, she’d wake easier, — of course, she would. I’ve heard of people who had such devoted servants, but it never was *my* luck ;” and Marie sighed.

Miss Ophelia had listened to this conversation with an air of shrewd, observant gravity ; and she still kept her lips tightly compressed, as if determined fully to ascertain her longitude and position, before she committed herself.

‘Now Mammy has a *sort* of goodness,” said Marie;