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“IN THE LAND OF TOMORROW”: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE NEW WOMAN
IN THE PRE-SUFFRAGE ERA

by

Natalie O’Neal

A THESIS

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“IN THE LAND OF TOMORROW”: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE NEW WOMAN
IN THE PRE-SUFFRAGE ERA

Natalie O’Neal, M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2016

Advisor: Amanda Gailey

This digital anthology explores feminism in selected short fiction by women writers from the 1911 run of the popular women’s magazines *Woman’s Home Companion*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, and *The Farmer’s Wife*. This fiction furthered the women’s rights movement by allowing women to imagine a world similar to their own with a heroine who voiced their desires and enacted change. Rather than the more experimental, inaccessible literature of avant garde high modernist writers consumed by the upper class, popular fiction reached a wider, middle class audience and was more effective at producing a progressive zeitgeist following the stilted Victorian era. These stories—by writers such as Zona Gale and Maude Radford Warren—reflect their era, a time characterized by the clashing of progressive gender roles and traditional values. These stories depict the pre-war New Woman—a character who pushes the boundaries of her limited independence—as she engages themes such as pro-suffrage, marriage, and work. “In the Land of Tomorrow” can be found online in its entirety at: www.inthelandoftomorrow.com.

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Introduction: “In the Land of Tomorrow”: Representations of the New Woman in the Pre-Suffrage Era

And some day, away off in a new world, right here on this earth, I think there'll be a wilder joy in being men and women than all the men and women up to now have ever lived, or dared, or dreamed.

—Zona Gale, “Black Hollow”

This anthology of women’s short fiction from women-centric mass publications published during the year 1911 offers a sliver of journalistic and social history of a time when America was loosening the strings of her corset and trying to find a foothold in a post-Victorian era. Sifting through the dusty, brittle pages of many years’ worth of magazines, bound in massive tomes to sit upon forgotten library shelves, I have collected a small representation of the pre-suffrage era New Woman. While she lives within a world of familiar and predictable courtship plotlines, she shifts uncomfortably in place. Women writers writing for mass publications during the second decade of the twentieth century wrote heroines possessing gumption, ambition, and a questioning mind, while they also catered to the crowd by giving the heroine a suitor, a husband, and housework. It is how these writers push the boundaries of traditional female roles that I want to showcase with this collection. The New Woman, while appearing in high modernist fiction and journalism, was a caustic and revolutionary figure during this time. But, thanks to the writers presented here, her trickle down into mass publication was capable of reaching millions of middle-class white women through a comfortable, station-appropriate medium. There is a subtle revolution raging in these pages which I hope to

make available for new readers and scholars of American women writers in order to share their role in the women's rights movement of the pre-suffrage era.

While publishing these stories is an act of preservation, I would like to point out the missing voices, forever lost to history. Women of color, contemporaries of the writers published here, did not have an outlet for which they could reach the female masses. While magazines like *Good Housekeeping* and the three presented here, targeted white, middle-class female audiences, they also excluded women of color both in subject matter, unless relegated to racist stereotypes in minor characters, and as contributors. For African American women, as Maureen Honey points out in her edited collection of post-WWI women's short fiction, ungendered publications such as *The Crisis* founded in 1910 by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were one of the only platforms in which African American women could publish work on modern life. Preceding *The Crisis*, the *Colored American Magazine* (1900-1909) also published short fiction and articles by African American women writers. Rather than pulling for suffrage, these women writers called for more women's clubs and education in order to enact change within their community. Unfortunately, since this is an anthology dedicated to the female voice and audience during the pre-suffrage era, there were no African American female-centric magazines available to select from, due to the dark, racist history of journalistic exclusion.

A Note on Editorial Procedures

Many of these magazines have been either forced into deep storage, their pages and covers cut up and framed by collectors, or simply made difficult to procure due to

their rarity. As a result, these stories are difficult if not impossible to find without perusing the physical copy of the magazine itself. Many of these writers, such as Zona Gale and Josephine Daskam Bacon were well-respected writers of their time, but have since been excluded from the canon and, therefore, republication. Presenting them now, some for the first time in over a century, has not come without some difficult editorial choices. For example, the standard size for the *Woman's Home Companion*, 16 x 11 inches, allows for a myriad of formatting choices including multiple columns, extra advertisements, multiple images, etc. Rather than produce a facsimile transcription—an accurate depiction and placement of every word and image on a page—I have opted for a diplomatic transcription by reformatting the text into a single column and excluding superfluous page information to the story, such as advertisements and margin text. While interesting and, arguably, contextualizing, this extra information is not within the scope of this fiction anthology.

Each of the stories and associated images presented here have been taken from their original monthly issue. For the three serialized stories, I have kept the synopses found at the beginning of each consecutive installment in order to provide a more historic reading experience of the text. I have left the original hyphenations (e.g. to-morrow) and spellings to retain as much of the publication's historical style as possible. I have, however, silently corrected obvious typographical errors such as misspellings and missing punctuation.

The New Woman and Popular Fiction

“She was the Walking Woman. That was it. She had walked off all sense of society-made values,” Mary Austin writes in her 1907 *Atlantic Monthly* story “The Walking Woman” (Austin 71). At the start of the nineteenth century, many writers began grappling with the stultifying culture of the previous era. By the 1910s, women authors like Austin began to resist the traditional devices used by their Victorian predecessors in multiple literary outlets including high culture literary magazines, as well as lowbrow mass appeal periodicals. Challenging cultural and social values meant refusing the traditional ending of neatly tied marital knots as well as imagining new and nontraditional roles for women. For example, Kate Chopin refused the fulfilled wife and mother storyline in 1899 in her novel *The Awakening*, while Edith Wharton eschewed the traditional marriage plot in *The House of Mirth* in 1905. Both authors offered scathing critiques not only of the leisure class society in which they found themselves entrenched, but also of the stark differences between gender roles as American modernism began to shift Victorian ideals towards a less inhibited, yet more self-conscious society.

High modernist women writers like Mina Loy and Gertrude Stein, of whom Chopin and Wharton were precursors and, for Wharton, contemporaries, produced works which broke down traditional literary forms and genres. Janet Lyon considers Loy’s promotion of gender difference, suggesting it was important that “an exploratory (and, ideally, diagnostic) elaboration of sexual difference by women themselves, through the media available to them, including art and literature, but also conversation, performance, correspondence, and fashion,” be produced and perpetuated by her early-twentieth century contemporaries (224). Young stars like Edna St. Vincent Millay took up this

mantel by challenging the older, more traditional, lifestyle and expectations of women in their writings for mass production. Others, such as Stein, began to transform the early twentieth century literary landscape by breaking down the traditional forms of language itself, as in *Three Lives* published in 1909. These high modernists—writers for whom a specific intellectual audience was expected—found a space for themselves in the upper echelons of magazine culture, publishing in “little magazines” like *The Dial* and *Others*. While many canonical writers of this era were also publishing in mass circulated periodicals like *The Atlantic* and *McClure's*, there are many writers not considered high modernist who were publishing stories and poems in these magazines as well. This underrated group of writers, specifically the women writers, are the focus of this anthology since they are the underpinnings and potential springboards of the modernist movement's first rumblings within the household.

Much of the modernist period may be characterized by two different kinds of literary markets: the avant garde, high modernist market of “little magazines” offered radical shifts in literary and thematic genres written by more experimental authors, many of whom expatriated to Europe searching for a lifestyle with fewer social and behavioral restrictions, while American mass market writers were writing within the popular conventional discourse destabilizing traditional ideology from within. Whereas the expatriate salon “represented an unusual intersection of public discourses and intimate interiority,” mass culture magazines and their contributors cultivated a more selective and pruned version of public ideology (Lyon 236). While Stein and Loy were experimenting with fragmentary and relational textual techniques, many authors writing for mass consumption were steering clear of “endlessly mobile relationality” and intellectually

exclusive writing (Lyon 234). During this time, the magazine industry was booming due to low production costs and high demand for entertainment by the changing social landscape of the middle and upper classes. A new type of woman was forming within the pages of the pre-WWI fiction of periodicals—a woman who could never have been realized within the strictures of the Victorian era but who, when looking back from the post-war era, seemed confined, trapped, and unenlightened. Within this cross section of history, I argue, the New Woman found her foothold in the hands of forward-thinking women, namely the progressive housewife.

Around 1900, the Victorian parlor gave way to the living room as the “formality of the [parlor] began to seem inflexible and forbidding as the strict rituals enacted there fell out of fashion” (Ohmann 144). As the traditional rules of calling upon others were retired, many women sought activities and social engagements outside the home. The New Woman of the transitional 1890s and 1900s was nebulously defined, though she may be thought to have embodied one or more of the following characteristics according to cultural historian Richard Ohmann:

belonging to clubs, doing social work, living apart from parents or husband, moving about in public alone, working for a living or on principle, seeking wide and worldly knowledge through formal education or otherwise, thinking for oneself, speaking assertively about public issues in mixed company, giving speeches, taking part in sports (cycling, swimming, golfing), smoking, wearing or agitating for rational dress, seeking equal marriage, disavowing marriage altogether, caring little for love, denying the obligation of motherhood. (Ohmann 267)

In all, Ohmann sums up, the most appropriate label for the New Woman during this period is “independent” (267). Even as early as the 1890s, women were calling for reform in areas such as suffrage, laws concerning marriage and property, and more liberal divorce laws. Feminist activist and author Charlotte Perkins Gilman called for more radical reforms at the time, putting forth “a deeper critique of gender roles, women’s domestic subordination, and even the bourgeois family and the ideal of motherhood” (Ohmann 267). Women’s “inarticulate longings” of these up-till-now unspoken sectors of their lives soon found their way into fiction, and, by the 1890s, American magazine writers had discovered the New Woman (Scanlon 168, Rosenberg).

The cultural experience of the modernist era for women readers was divided into high and lowbrow—or popular—art and fiction, where the former was “sacralized” and “distanced” from its audience, and the latter “presented as commercial entertainment” for the inclusive masses (Ohmann 224). Ohmann claims that “against this dichotomy, the mass magazines were a hybrid” (224). This hybridity drew female readers both for the chance to participate in higher culture—which was once solely considered an upper-class (and male) occupation—as well as to keep up with the more popular stories and trends of the time which related more to their middle-class housewife lifestyle. The females of the “professional-managerial class,” as Ohmann refers to the target audience of mass publications, were just as much molded by the magazines as the magazines were molded by them: he hypothesizes that these publications “helped stake out and survey the cultural ground being settled by the professional-managerial class, even as they made themselves a class” (220). Furthermore in regards to cultural shaping, Jennifer Scanlon argues for

academic study of these magazines and their popular fiction. Invoking Fredric Jameson, she writes:

...capitalist ideology influences both mass culture and high culture—neither is exempt...Popular literature and other aspects of popular culture do promote the most pervasive ideology, but while they do so they also mock it, expose its shortcomings, and criticize it. (Scanlon 140)

In other words, the popular magazines during the early twentieth century can and should be taken as slivers of social and historical significance as they reflected as well as informed the modern female reader. This mocking and criticizing of pervasive ideology that Scanlon refers to appears in women's fiction, primarily women's fiction addressing the New Woman. While the New Woman appears in the fiction of mass periodicals like *The Atlantic* and *Harper's*, she is arguably more effective in reaching her target audience with gender-specific magazines such as the *Woman's Home Companion* and the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

In much of the fiction found within periodicals during the first quarter of the twentieth century, heroines were written as familiar characters to the reader, often highlighting similarities between the fictional character's life and the reader's own. The courtship story, however, was "straining to accommodate the New Woman" and generally "did so by representing her as non-ideological, enchanting because of her emancipated spirit, and a suitable bride for the modern male" (Ohmann 327). Any of her prickly, independent notions were quashed and made palatable under the heavy veil of heteronormativity. As Maureen Honey states in *Breaking the Ties that Bind*, a collection of New Woman short fiction from 1915 to 1930: "The New Woman character predates

World War I, of course, but the prewar stories about her tended to conclude in failure or serious compromise of her desire to live in the world on her own terms” (10). This failure, however, in some of the more progressive short fiction of the time is sometimes so apparent that it almost acts as a social critique similar to Wharton’s discerning cultural commentary in novels such as *The House of Mirth* and *The Glimpses of the Moon*.

Post-World War I New Woman popular short fiction is distinguished from “the genre’s standard narrative” in that “the heroine’s hostility to the patriarchal order is overt and grounded in her desire for self-actualization rather than eros” (Honey 8). But how does the transition from a repressed late-Victorian narrative to a more “overt” female-agency centered plot occur? My study of over a hundred short fiction from popular women’s magazines from the years leading up to the war reveals that such female agency, though not “overt,” is still very present. I argue that the New Woman of the early 1900s popular women’s magazine fiction makes her debut through the heroine’s internal monologues. That is, rather than commit to a plot line with an unpalatable shocking ending as high-Modernist women writers such as Wharton and Chopin do, women writers in these magazines begin subverting the patriarchal order from within the psychology of the heroine herself. Though the heroines of these short stories are all married off in the end, their internal monologues tell of a dissatisfied woman, discontented with the tethering social standards keeping her in her place. The romantic plot, though remaining stable and predictable, is subtly subverted by increased internal monologue of the heroine.

The Magazines: *Woman's Home Companion*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *The Farmer's Wife*

Women writers like Zona Gale and Maude Radford Warren wrote under the guise of the courtship story and transformed housework into valuable work on par with a male's career in order to expose the discontents found within traditional and familiar stories. These stories, masquerading as seemingly innocuous plotlines, had the potential to influence an entire class of society. A "cultural middle ground," as Ohmann refers to them, women's mass publications' survival, Salme Steinberg states, "depended on their ability to conform to the needs of two sets of customers: readers and advertisers" (xii). The readers, generally middle class, turned to the magazines in order to be entertained and kept abreast of current issues, while advertisers relied on appropriate content to promote their wares to their newest pocketed consumers—women. During the early twentieth century, female readers were "receptive to suggestions for those political and social reforms that could soothe their consciences and effect piecemeal changes but would not fundamentally disrupt the pattern of their lives" (Steinberg xiii). It is within this carefully balanced fiction that women writers, and at times editors, strove to insert elements of the New Woman.

The *Woman's Home Companion*, a women's magazine since 1886, quickly rose to prominence as one of the premier women's periodicals of the early twentieth century, largely in part to long-time fiction editor Gertrude Battles Lane. During her tenure as editor-in-chief beginning in 1911, the *Companion's* circulation increased from 700,000 in 1912 to one million in 1916 to just over three and a half million by her death in 1941 (Zuckerman). It was in 1911 that Lane began to include two serials and four or five

stories per issue (Honey). Her emphasis on women's literature was a brilliant marketing move as well as an astute observation of the types of genres women were craving. The heroines which Lane approved balanced traditionalism and progressivism; they "were women of much rough and varied experience in both love and life, hard as nails, and willing to break any rule to obtain whatever pure and noble ideal they were pursuing....It was as close as the magazines could come to approving openly the new freedom for women" a former editor of *WHC* wrote in 1919 (Honey 9).

Similar to *Companion's* fiction output, the *Ladies' Home Journal* published fifty to sixty stories a year, targeting "white, native-born, middle-class women, who lived with the uncertain legacies of the nineteenth-century women's rights movement and who tried to find a comfortable role in the rapidly changing world of the expanding middle class" (Scanlon 2). Unlike the *Companion*, however, the *Journal* of the 1910s published more content and advertisements that focused on women's changing role as consumers—their "ability to earn or control money" (Scanlon 23). Working editor Edward Bok ruled the *Journal's* fiction with patriarchal heavy-handedness: "Believing that the *Journal* was a tool for educating large numbers of American women, he tried to guide their interests to areas he thought would benefit them" (Steinberg 52). This often came to fruition within his relationship to the fiction contributors with whom he consistently edited and advised for content. Bok's adaptation to the balancing act of women's mass publication fiction fell on the side of conservatism. "Any criticism of life," Steinberg reports,

had to be balanced by a suggestion of hope, an offer of remedy...When lessons were to be taught through fiction, Bok often advised writers to

come only to the threshold of disaster, sparing the reader from too great an emotional shock. (53)

The two short stories collected here offer a prescient look into Bok's future 1916 campaign to professionalize housekeeping. His philosophy was to turn housekeeping from acts of drudgery into a "business as big as the affairs of men" (Scanlon 64). Bok no doubt realized that incentivizing women to remain in the home was in direct correlation with the sales of his magazine which thrived off of these homemakers.

Perhaps the most progressive of the three magazines represented here, is *The Farmer's Wife* (1906-1939). Published by the Webb Company of St. Paul, Minnesota, *The Farmer's Wife* (TFW) was the "single magazine devoted exclusively to farm women in the early twentieth century" (Casey 54). Its content consisted of instructional columns on cooking, raising farm animals, and the newest farm products on the market. On average, its fiction was shorter than the *Companion* and the *Journal*, yet, as Janet Casey claims, did not shy away from the "conflicting messages concerning domesticity and agrarianism with which its readers contended" (54). As Casey posits, "TFW merged the business- and policy- related emphasis of the masculinist farm press with the housewifely orientation of mainstream women's magazine, thereby into an underrepresented audience with bourgeois aspirations and highly specialized labor concerns" (54). The stories selected here, showcase the internal conflict of traditional domestic feminine values with the independence and strength, both physical and mental, necessary to run a farm and household.

Rationalizing Pro-Suffrage

Women readers during the early years of the twentieth century were finding themselves in the midst of a movement whether they were willing to take sides or not. “The question of women’s rights had partially crystallized into a popular movement organized around the demand for the vote” and women’s magazines were not shying away from the debate, though editors often included anti-suffrage articles next to a pro-suffrage story in order to balance political values (Lyon 223). High modernist authors tackling the issue of suffrage, such as Djuna Barnes in her stunt journalism piece “How It Feels to Be Forcibly Fed” (1914), were polarizing and incredibly one-sided in their intention to shock readers out of their complacency with their immobility in the political sphere. Pro-suffrage popular fiction writers, however, took a different bent. Rather than immediately aligning her heroine with pro-suffrage, the popular fiction author slowly introduced the idea through the heroine’s internal monologues and external forces at play, such as a friend’s sick child. The heroine of these stories logically worked through her thoughts and preconceived notions on suffrage before she came to the only rational—and necessary—conclusion, to vote.

In her short story “Black Hollow,” Zona Gale employs such a narrative. The narrator, Calliope Marsh, an aging, formally uneducated woman struggling with the shedding of Victorian values is presented with a problem: the black hollow—the town’s putrid dumping ground—is causing her washing woman’s young son to become deathly ill due to their house’s proximity to the unsanitary area. Through her vocal opinions, Letty Ames, a young college graduate, informs Calliope on what exactly the vote would mean for women: “I believe in women voting because we're mothers, an' we can't bring

up our children with men takin' things away from 'em that we know they'd ought to have” (Gale 15). Under the guise of motherhood, Gale sneaks in a pro-suffrage agenda. Calliope and Letty attend a meeting put on by a prominent townswoman where a guest speaker, Mis' Lacy, lectures on pro-suffrage. Gale makes sure that Calliope's stance is firmly stated: “Well, Mis' Lacy she talked, an' she put things real sane an' plain, barrin' I didn't believe any of what she said. An' pretty soon I stopped tryin' to listen” (16). In the end, however, Calliope becomes frustrated that the men are refusing to allocate funds to fill in the black hollow and the meeting ends with a quasi-vote by all parties ending in a more serious consideration of filling in the landfill. Mis' Sykes chimes in at one point after the business of the sick little boy had been resolved, “*I* say that's what we'd ought to hev been doin' instead o' talkin' women votin' (16). Letty is quick to correct her: “Don't you see, Mis' Sykes,” she says, “that is what Mis' Lacy meant?” (16). In this way, Gale rationalizes woman's suffrage through the caring and mothering qualities of a woman—it is a woman's prerogative to take care of *and* have a say in the raising of her children.

Through Calliope's running unspoken commentary of the meeting's proceedings, Gale exposes how women in the story cater to the pleasure of men—agreeing with them, smiling at them, and approving of them. Calliope goes so far as to mark women with a plague of submission when she questions why her friends would change their mind solely for the approval of a man. Narrating her story with an eye dialect accent and unrefined speech, Gale softens even more the strong statements Calliope makes throughout the story. While her observations are clearly articulated, Calliope's sophistication lacks the refinement of middle class readers and is therefore undermined by her difference and distanced from them. Perhaps Gale's most telling lines of the story is Calliope's last

thought: “And some day, away off in a new world, right here on this earth, I think there'll be a wilder joy in being men and women than all the men and women up to now have ever lived, or dared, or dreamed” (91). This imaginary world of a hopeful future for a different relationship between men and women is just vague enough to encapsulate all of the issues contained in the story—rather than just a thinly veiled argument for the vote, Gale also suggests with these lines, in a more refined language than Calliope has previously spoken, that the entirety of male and female relations will be different.

Taking quite a different approach, Josiah Allen's Wife (pennname of Marietta Holley) uses satire and humor as a mask for her pro-suffrage agenda in “Special ‘Lecture in Jonesville.” This, out of all the stories republished in this anthology, is perhaps the boldest when it comes to exposing the differences between the sexes and poking fun at the reigning patriarchal system. Josiah Allen, a town clerk, worries that his wife, Samantha, is “too weak to vote,” yet throughout the two-part story, she continually proves herself both physically and mentally stronger than her husband who is portrayed as emotionally unstable, nearly fainting with worry for his wife's impending vote (November 165). When Samantha asks him to help her lift a bedstead so she can clean the carpet under it, he practically wilts away:

“Samantha,” sez he faintly, “I hain't got the strength, my feelin's about the awful peril and hardship you are facin' makes me weak as a cat. But mabby I can help a little.” And he got up weakly and took holt, but I had to do the heft of the liftin', he wuz tuckered out by his emotions, and I make him lay down whilst I done the rest of the liftin'. (November 165)

Samantha's calm and collected disposition, juxtaposed against her husband's fretfulness provides numerous comedic situations throughout the story by playing off the reversal of gendered stereotypes. Michael Epp theorizes that Holley "engaged humorous stereotypes to promote women's suffrage and earn money" through the popular veins of mass consumerist technologies (95). Holley's particular writing style is a fit for *The Farmer's Wife* in that her main character is relatable for rural audiences due to Samantha's physicality and her steadfast hold on traditional values. These housewives were also more likely to appreciate the heroine's humor; according to Epp, "much dialect humour of the period, is derived from the misspelling and malapropisms that were the stereotyped mode of discourse for down-home characters whose earthy wisdom came hand in hand with ignorance" (100). Similarly to Gale's Calliope in "Black Hollow," Samantha's dialect detracts from her overall effectiveness—in fact, her language is a sign for readers of this era to take the story lightly and with a sense of humor. However, it is through this relatable humor, Epp states, that Holley's "stereotyped characters imply that average people ought to engage with local and national politics, advocating for socially beneficial change without upsetting traditional community (and rural) values" (102). Working from within the traditional values and gendered stereotypes, Holley subverts patriarchal structures through the lightness of humor. It is because of this tactic that, while progressive in its political agenda, the story finds its place in a mass circulated publication and can therefore gently influence thousands of readers.

An Unconventional Conventional Marriage Plot

While keeping with the conventional plotlines of their Victorian predecessors which dared not challenge the patriarchal system by concluding with an unmarried heroine, some women writers rebelled using the form itself. Authors, like those in this collection, wrote *within* the conventions of their chosen genre and topic. By using such familiar and safe elements in their stories, writers were able to mask an secondary (and at times, tertiary) plot trajectory. For example, in her serialized novella *In the Land of Tomorrow*, Maude Radford Warren explores the discrepancies between pursuing a family and having a career. Yet, upon closer examination, this novella, spanning four issues, strategically pairs the two opposing female lifestyles to justify a pro-suffrage narrative. She uses many genre conventions from the courtship novel, such as initial attraction, introducing a suitor's hamartia, and the overcoming of said suitor's hamartia to distract from a pro-suffrage agenda. Conversely, it could also be said that Warren uses a pro-suffrage agenda to explore, in depth, the contemporary assumptions in place associated with the courtship genre's conventions. The difference between Warren's story and her courtship writing predecessors is her use of not one, not two, but three courtship storylines. She also not only explores the sacrifices women must make before marriage, but also what they must sacrifice *after* marriage.

Though all three women are coupled with their respective mates in the end, Warren presents a complicated tale of sacrifice and marriage. Bertha, the first to marry and give up her feminist agenda for her growing family, seems punished by her husband's corporate scandal. While her feminist ideals were consumed by family, Martha and Helen refuse to allow romance to sway their allegiance to their cause until worthy

suitors fully accept them for their values. Through their narratives, Warren advocates not for compromise, but for mutual understanding, “big mutual loving” as one of the suitors puts it (March 19). This idea not only addresses the progressive marriage issues cropping up in the second decade of the twentieth century, but also the fear of an opinionated woman with her own ballot to cast. The fact that Martha and Helen were rewarded with marriage for sticking to their principles sends a subtle message to contemporary readers—don’t settle for someone who does not allow space for a free-thinking and free-acting woman. Inherently, this extends to voting rights and furthering the women’s movement. By penning three very different types of women and three different partners in conventional and familiar stories, Warren is able to explore the intricacies of each marital decision in contrast with each other to show readers the consequences and advantages of different lines of thinking and choice-making when it comes to sacrificing ideals for a wedding ring.

Zona Gale’s serialized novella for the 1911 run of *WHC*, *When Dreams Begin*, explores women’s misgivings before and after marriage towards the marital institution itself. Through the internal monologues and actions of her heroine, Lucia, Gale questions the validity and necessity of traditional marriage vows. *When Dreams Begin* follows the relationship of engaged (and eventually newlywed) couple Lucia and Marshall. Lucia, though in love with Marshall, begins to fret over their impending marriage and worries that she will lose her identity—that she will be always associated with Marshall from here on out. She was “no longer to know her own life, as a life, but only as their life; to be not only herself, but to be Marshall, too” (May 6). Through Lucia’s scruples with the idea of marriage, Gale exposes the underlying issues of the traditional marriage

conventions during this period. Based on her observations of married women, Lucia vows to be a different kind of wife: “I love Marshall—I love him, and I will not take possession of his life and live with him as if some chain bound him and held him—and me...I'm going to find—some better way” (May 1).

Allowing the heroine to take control of her marriage vows and ask for a break when necessary, Gale widens the metaphorical door for women. Suggesting that women could negotiate a different kind of marriage contract, Gale changes the narrative of the happily ever after, if only for this brief moment. While, in the last installment of the series, Lucia returns to her husband and implies that she will never evoke the nontraditional marriage contract again, the notion of the spousal vacation prevails for the entirety of the second episode. Thus, readers are left to wonder at Marshall's submission to his wife's desires as well as imagine a narrative in which husband and wife do not exist together in the traditional sense of marriage. Through Lucia's character, Gale also seems to be suggesting that the notion of the New Woman—in this case, one who may make demands about her independence after marriage—demands a New Man. Rather than find her requirement disturbing and unladylike, Marshall considers Lucia's proposal a mark of naivety. He *complies* with her demands, allowing for Lucia to take her vacation alone and giving her time to eventually conclude that she misses Marshall on her own terms. When she asks him, in the final episode, why he thought she acted in this way, Marshall explains “that I did what most men do: I married a girl who expected life to make her happy...And life didn't do it; and she didn't understand” (August 28). Though on the surface, Marshall appears to be an upstanding and understanding husband, his words are marked with an air of condescension. Lucia's “exaggerated sense” of her idea

of the burden of the wifely role had clouded her ability to judge the situation as it was. In other words, Marshall condemns Lucia's sense of self and explains her complaints about stifled independence as dramatic selfishness. By not assuming the required traditional role of wife, Lucia did not perform her required role. The unfortunate conclusion of the story, played out as Marshall's internal monologue, suggests that married women forsake their individuality—their independence—once they marry; they assume a new name—"the wife."

Mary Castle Allis de Cou's conventional romance story "Cecil Perry's New Year," printed in *The Farmer's Wife*, not only offers a glimpse into the young agrarian woman's lifestyle, but also her deep-seated family and independent values. While ruminating about her situation as a single woman, Allis de Cou offers an alternative lifestyle for Cecil: "For Cecil Perry had her own strong opinions, and she did not believe in a couple binding each other for an indefinite length of time" (229). In fact, "with Cecil there was no feeling that to marry was the sole aim of woman" (229). Granted, the alternative lifestyle only goes so far as to suggest a lifelong existence as a live-in daughter and caretaker, but Cecil is still able to imagine a life without a husband. Before the reader becomes too uncomfortable, however, de Cou makes sure to supply the story with a traditional "happy ending." Yet, as if to make sure readers continue to believe in Cecil's free-will and strength, the suitor falls through the ice of a neighboring pond—seemingly by his own lack of knowledge of the land—forcing Cecil to save him, a reversal of the damsel in distress narrative. Like many writers for *TFW*, Allis de Cou showcases the physical strength of her heroine and even privileges it over that of a man.

In this way de Cou highlights Cecil's physical strength much like Holley does for Samantha in "Special 'Lecture in Jonesville."

Janet Casey views this dichotomy—agrarian woman and housewife—as a major theme running through much of *TFW*'s fiction. In order to combine these two seemingly oppositional selves, storytellers must invent new ways of accommodating both. For Casey, "a close reading of *TFW* also suggests the difficulties inherent in attempting to contain an increasingly fractured set of attitudes about both farming and women within a focused, reassuringly upbeat rhetorical trajectory" (82). This "upbeat trajectory" most commonly plays out in marriage, as in "Cecil Perry's New Year." However, the savior actions of the heroine in the story "highlight the subversive potential of farm women" (Casey 79). Their strength and straight-forward character in such stories, I argue, are both reassuring to the reader and necessary in their particular plot lines while at the same time pushing the boundaries of femininity and traditional gender roles.

Housework is the "Cure"

Out of all of the stories collected here, two stand out as non-courtship narratives. Rather than discuss women's rights through the safety of a traditional narrative, both of Josephine Daskam Bacon's stories, "The Key to the East Gate" and "House of their Rest," do something altogether different. Both stories involve "sick" heroines—bed-ridden or confined due to a general malaise and indifferent attitude towards the traditional feminine role they have been forced to play. A precursor to the career phase of the New Woman, Bacon's stories weave together conflicting ideologies to make the idea of a working woman appear to be a natural progression. By "curing" her heroines through

housework, Bacon pushes the limits of traditional female roles during the pre-war period while also writing conservatively enough for mass publication.

In “The Key to the East Gate,” Bacon follows the escape from an upscale psychological treatment home of an unmarried woman approaching forty years of age. Her family, not sure what to do with her anomalous actions defying category as a single woman, has her committed in order to keep family infamy out of the papers. Because of this, she questions her sanity and escapes from the institution in order to make a life alone, living off of her jewelry. Fortuitously she rents an apartment and, finding herself strapped for cash, takes up employment as hostess. It is through this work, similar to housekeeping, that she blossoms into a co-proprietress and finds happiness. When she is finally discovered by the family doctor, she confides in him that only he knows about her illness—that her friends and customers “think I’m—I’m like anybody else” (Bacon 51). She asks him how it is that she has been “cured” and he replies, “I should say that working for your living did it, Miss Mary!” (51). While this may sound progressive and startling for a pre-war story, Bacon effectively marries housework and a career in order to make the idea of a working woman more palatable to readers. Miss Mary is justified in her work not only because it remains domestic, but also because it is essential to her mental health.

A storyline that more obviously captures the intersections between dissatisfied housewife and work appears in Bacon’s “The House of their Rest.” With elements of a ghost story, “The House of their Rest” chronicles the “curing” of an invalid mother—depressed by her wifely and motherly duties—through housework. Through the women who take care of her, the heroine slowly finds purpose in completing little household

chores and is “cured.” This unique approach is curiously opposite of the “rest cure” prescribed by some doctors of the time, which Gilman critiques in “The Yellow Wallpaper.” Bacon coopts the New Woman allure of career-mindedness and independence while still maintaining a firm rooting in traditional female roles. In this way, she allows her readers to glimpse the modern in their own lives, finding modernity in the solace of an old scenario—housework. Bacon, a renowned writer on women’s rights does not offer this story as an argument for keeping women in the home; rather, the moral of the story aligns with New Woman ideals—traditional female roles are making women sick and in order to cure them, they need to find a purpose, work. The readers of the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, however, would understand this as progressive. Even by changing their attitude toward work as providing something—a purpose—that family could not provide was one step closer to getting women *out* of the house.

Conclusion

Through the stories collected here, readers glimpse a rare moment in time—an in-between-state of colliding values and changing times. Women authors writing about the New Woman in popular magazines, knew just how far to push the boundaries of their fiction to offer women a new reality while still maintaining a tame enough plotline to be publishable for the masses. Though couples Letty and Elbert (“Black Hollow”) and Lucia and Marshall (“When Dreams Begin”) find resolution in the end of their stories through implied traditional marriage roles, there are quite a few subversive actions and conversations that take place leading up to the comfortable and familiar endings. Earlier in the century, Chopin and Wharton chose more radical endings for their heroines

implying that society had yet to make way for the New Woman. Rather than kill her characters, Gale chooses to show that rebellious women could still find a home in society. Ohmann points out that “the story pointedly assigns itself with the New Woman, and yet envisions no lessening of her independence, only the fruition of it, in marriage” (308). It was still impossible for readers to consider a New Woman who could survive well without marriage. Instead, Gale and other popular fiction writers work within the ideology of the time. This, I argue, offers itself as a subversive act by giving women readers the chance to *imagine* these New Women in domestic settings like their own—”they became an integral part of women’s daydreams and, once voiced, collective political consciousness” (Scanlon 168). As Scanlon records, copywriters during the 1920s described the female protagonists of magazine fiction “as having a ‘wrapper’ of goodness which covered characters of tougher and more complicated design”; women’s magazine fiction “allowed readers to view the wrapper but also promoted their exploration of its underside, which was contradictory, bold, and feminist” (138). Both Letty and Lucia reflect women’s designated role in society—the “wrapper”—as well as push against them with no ill effect. With their heroines, these female authors encourage women to voice or at least reconsider their opinions on suffrage and the traditional marriage contract.

By giving readers a strong female character with which they could identify, women’s magazines like the *Woman’s Home Companion*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, and *The Farmer’s Wife* produced a trickle-down effect of high modernist feminism. Popular fiction women writers like Gale, Warren, and others furthered the women’s rights movement by allowing women to imagine a world similar to their own with a heroine who voiced their desires and enacted change. While it may be difficult to find a causal

correlation between these stories and the progression of the women's rights movement, they act as a reflection of their era—a time characterized by the clashing of progressive gender roles and traditional values. Through the dialog and voices of their heroines, these women writers articulate what Scanlon calls women's "inarticulate longings" (168).

Creating a language for which to name these desires, Gale and others offer the whisper of a potential alternate ending embedded within a traditional ending. These stories represent the New Woman as she manifested in popular pre-war fiction—assertive yet submissive, yearning for independence yet consciously dependent, finding herself in need of a purpose yet finding fulfillment through traditional gendered avenues like housekeeping. The contradictions inherent in these stories tell of a new kind of woman, someone who is struggling to find her place and purpose, even going so far as to try redefining her role in society. The pre-suffrage-era New Woman in popular fiction speaks to her readers, gives them a chance to walk in her shoes and to try on new perspectives. Ultimately, these stories helped catalyze a movement that forever changed the landscape of women's rights.

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APPENDIX

Short Fiction Selections from Women's Mass Periodicals in 1911

Cecil Perry's New Year

By Mary Castle Allis de Cou

January 1911, *The Farmer's Wife*

Cecil Perry stood at the window gazing thoughtfully across the fields at a snowy sheet of ice. It held her attention, as one fascinated, this last day of December, calling up to her mind's eye the forms of childself and mates skimming across its surface to the music of merriest laughter.

For, they had to make the most of this last but one of their Christmas holidays, as tomorrow "did not count"—they must then be home for the New Year's feasting.

And as Cecil watched these spectral figures of the past, noting how each year brought a change, she also observed how carefully they avoided the middle of that harmless-appearing sheet of ice, where, as was well known to all, a spring of ever-bubbling water kept the ice unsafe at that point.

The girl's eyes deepened in reminiscence; but she checked a sigh and turned to the surrounding landscape. How she loved it all! And so gloriously beautiful it was looking in this old year's shroud of new-fallen snow, glistening in the sunshine.

"Even Mother Nature must have a clean landscape with which to begin the New Year," murmured Cecil. "And as with her, so will our resolutions melt away into the soiling earth, unless grounded beyond human ken."

Her eyes blinded in sudden, uncontrollable pain; but she gave her head an impatient toss. "This New Year's business makes me tired. I'll have none of it in mine;" she cried out to herself.

For, it was on New Year's Day, a year ago, that Kieth Talbot had gone back to the city. At her brother's urgent request he had spent a month with them, after that notable Thanksgiving time when, hunted by cruel men for a crime he never committed, he had made his first appearance at Holmecroft.

There was no denying that he had looked like a veritable tramp that day; and although she had saved his life, moved by that awful look in the dark eyes, she could not quite forget the "tramp."

When, therefore, the young man—like a new person after his month in the country—had, before leaving, asked Cecil to be his wife, the vision of that "tramp" had risen before her, and she had answered that, she "could not be the wife of one without home or fortune." When he had "proved himself a man of mettle, had made himself a success, then he might come and talk to her."

It had cost her much to do this. Even to this day her heart beat tumultuously at the lovelight in Kieth Talbot's eyes. Her brother had thought her "too hard," and had declared there was "no better fellow living," but she felt herself in the right—her husband must be something more than a "good fellow."

The proud blue eyes grew misty as they gazed unseeingly, out beyond the pond to where, three miles away, lay the railway station to which on New Year's day, Elmer had driven Kieth, gloomy with disappointment because she would not even promise to "wait for him."

For Cecil Perry had her own strong opinions, and she did not believe in a couple binding each other for an indefinite length of time. She did not ask for riches; she was both willing and able to do her share in the home building. But the one who won her promise must have proved himself a man; that he at least had the "ability to make good," sufficiently to support a home and family in simple comfort—she asked no more.

With Cecil there was no feeling that to marry was the sole aim of woman; on the contrary, her mother had early impressed on her, that she had a comfortable home with her parents and their devoted love, which they hoped she would be in no haste to leave.

"And," Cecil mused, "how much truer and unselfish is their love, than that of a husband.

Nevertheless, her heart was experiencing some twinges, and she had decided that one of her "Resolutions" for the New Year should be, "Not to allow herself any retrospective day-dreaming," when the door opened and her brother entered.

"A penny for your thoughts, sis!" was his gay greeting. "It is not often my sufficient-unto-herself sister is so gravely solemn. And this the day before New Years!"

Cecil smiled on her tall, broad-shouldered brother—who since his return home had made so great a change in the old place—and pointed out of the window.

"Elmer, do you see our old skating pond over there? I was wondering if the ice were strong enough to bear us? I do so long for an old-time skating bout such as we used to have when boys and girls together."

"Sure thing! You and I'll have one right after dinner—soon as I finish a piece of work I have on hand. I like to begin the New Year with a clean sheet. No old jobs left over from the old year for me!"

Cecil nodded her head approvingly, but her eyes still dwelt on the old pond.

"Elmer," she said dreamily, "I have been seeing such visions as I looked over there; until it has seemed that I must go and find out if the old pond were still peopled by the merry crowd of the dear but unforgotten days gone by."

Elmer smiled pityingly upon his usually very practical sister. "I say, sis, something on your nerves? It is seldom you are so affected. But there is nothing like the real to do away with the unreal; so we will investigate that spooky crowd, for sure, Cecil"—in his turn, reminiscent, as his eyes still lingered on the old pond—"do you remember how father would never allow any of us to go skating until he had first tested the ice himself, locating and marking all the thin places?"

"Dear father!" murmured Cecil, in tender appreciation. "Did you ever think, Elmer, that after all there is no love like that of father and mother? That was a blessed resolution of your last New Year's, to stay with our ageing father. And Elmer, that is one resolution which has been kept clear and sweet to the end of the year. The place looks so

differently since your young shoulders were put to the wheel; surely you do not regret it?" regarding him in wistful questioning.

For Cecil had at heart that Elmer should remain to help their father, as she was doing for their mother.

Elmer hesitated. "To be honest, Cecil, it did go hard at first. The farm seemed slow after the hurly-burly of city life. But now that I have things more in shape—with the new stock and seed I have bought—and father begins to realize that I am no longer a little boy, but a man with, possibly, as good judgment as his own, I am not only contented but glad to stay. Another thing I will confess, sis, is that we are in a fair way to make quicker and bigger money than I could ever have made in the city with the amount of capital I had. And look at the independence of this life in the country—that is what appeals to me!"

"To me, also;" Cecil replied, slowly, thinking of one who was still struggling with the city problem.

"But, Cecil," said Elmer cheerily, I came to ask if you know Talbot's present address? Just a year since he left us, you know, and I'd like to wire him to come and keep New Year's with us tomorrow. I never forget the debt I owe him. In a city of Shylocks he was the one redeeming human; but he was one, and saved my faith, as he saved me. If people but knew what a word will do!" and Elmer choked with emotion.

Cecil softly laid her cheek to his, then spoke quietly: "I am sorry, Elmer, but I have not heard from Kieth for months. I could not write and encourage what might prove to be false hopes. But, Kieth Talbot knows that when he can come to me showing a fair prospect of success, that I stand ready to give him the wife he asked for last New Year's. That he has not yet come assures me of one of two things—that he no longer cares, or is still tramping."

The girl's voice was steady, and her eyes were cold and hard, although her heart was throbbing in a pain that would not be downed.

"I'm sorry for Kieth," said Elmer regretfully. "As I've told you before, Cecil, I think you were too hard on him. Sometimes a fellow really can't help himself—as was my own case there, for awhile. Give him time and Kieth will come out all right. I am sorry he would not accept more from me when he went away; he'd only take a bare hundred, scarcely enough to bridge over. His blamed pride, I suppose!" frowning to himself.

Cecil's lips curled—although in her secret heart she gloried in this defense of Kieth—but, all unheeding, Elmer went on musingly: "If I only knew where he is. I have written to his old address, but they say he left the city six months ago, without telling any one his destination."

Cecil glanced up in quick surprise, for this was news, indeed. Moreover, it explained why she never received any acknowledgment of the birthday card she had sent Kieth two months before. Her pride had been sorely hurt; but now her eyes were softening marvelously.

After dinner Cecil donned sweater and cap, and slinging her skates over one arm, nodded to Elmer, who at that moment appeared in the back door for a word with his father.

“I am not waiting, Elmer,” said Cecil, “because you seemed to be such an uncertain quantity—no knowing when you'd have your work done. So I am going over to try the ice for you,” laughing slyly. “If it prove safe and sound, you may join me, later.”

Mrs. Perry looked up in swift alarm. “But, my dear, she cried, is there any doubt about the ice? That treacherous spring! I have always dreaded it. Father, is it safe?” turning to her husband who smiled on his headstrong daughter, with eyes crinkling at the corners, in a way they had of expressing kindly understanding.

Cecil caught up her mother and whirled her around merrily. “There, little mother, that ought to keep you quiet for awhile. If you dare to worry about me! Why, mother-mine, I know that old pond to a dot. So you just sit still and think up your New Year's Resolutions. And be sure to head the list: 'No more worrying about that great big baby girl of mine.'”

Saying which, with a loving kiss on each softly faded cheek, Cecil departed on her way rejoicingly, Elmer calling after her, that he would soon be over to race her to a finish.

And—as Cecil stepped off the porch the whistle of a train at the station echoed across the fields.

Arrived at the frozen pond, she strapped on her skates, then stood for a moment breathing deeply, in delighted anticipation of her glide out upon the ice. Happening to glance across the pond she beheld the figure of a man walking over from the other side, picking his way carefully on the slippery surface, his head bent to ward off the wind which, out there, seemed playing its merriest pranks with the light snow.

Cecil watched him a moment indifferently, it being nothing uncommon for people to take this short cut across from the station rather than the long way around by the road. As the man drew nearer, her eyes began to open wonderingly; there seemed something familiar about his figure, although she could not place him as any one of the neighborhood. Then she recalled that train whistle she had heard, and her heart almost stood still.

But—it could not be.

The stranger was now nearing the center of the pond; when Cecil suddenly recollected that treacherous spring—for which the man was heading as straight as if bent on self-destruction.

In terror she gave a quick, “Halloo!” followed by a warning for him to “Go to the right!”

Evidently he did not understand; looking up perceived Cecil standing there, and with a shout of joy made an eager move forward, only, the next moment, to find himself in the icy water.

Guided by instinct, Cecil shrieked for Elmer at the top of her young lungs, and catching up a broken branch lying near, darted out on the ice. Skating swiftly for the open water, where the man was seen struggling to hold himself up by the ice which continued to break at each grasp of his fingers, she beheld him sinking deeper and deeper into the icy depths, and—near enough now to recognize the man—she shouted for him to “keep up courage,” she “would soon have him out.”

But Kieth Talbot, though chilled to the bone, had yet strength to call out for her to “go back!”

“What use for us both to drown?” he cried. “The ice is too thin for you to reach me.”

Cecil swept on with increased speed, calling out energetically: “Kieth Talbot, don't you dare to faint! Break the ice carefully, and work yourself as near as possible, so I can reach you. Hurry!

He did as she directed, but was fast losing consciousness.

His face became so white and set, that Cecil decided to do what she could alone; she dared not wait for Elmer, although she had heard his “halloo” in the distance. Throwing herself face downward she cautiously pushed the branch over the thin ice, and found that, at arm's length, it would just reach Kieth's fingers where they clung to the breaking edge.

His eyes were closing, but she roused him by a sharp command and he reached up and gripped hold of the branch, then his eyes shut again and he sank still deeper into the icy water.

Cecil was desperate. The ice was not strong enough to give her sufficient leverage to pull him out alone. She knew Elmer was near; she could hear him running rapidly across the ice. But Kieth was freezing to death, might let go of the branch any moment; so, driven by impulse she cried out: “Kieth Talbot, I love you—do you hear?” Then, as his eyes flung open: “Hold tight to the branch! Don't you dare go to sleep again—Elmer is almost here.”

The next moment Elmer ran up, caught hold of his sister's feet and bracing himself, pulled her steadily back, while with her came the branch with Kieth clinging to the other end in a grip like death itself.

Cecil thought her arms would be pulled from their sockets; but she gritted her teeth and thanked God for the country life which had given her strength.

And thus Kieth Talbot owed his life again to Cecil Perry. As they covered him with coats and prepared to carry him to the house, he opened his eyes and looked into the blue ones bending over him.

“Sweetheart, this makes two times,” he whispered faintly; then became unconscious.

That night Cecil and Elmer, as was their custom from childhood, were singing the Old Year out and the New Year in, when their father came down from sitting with Kieth up in the spare chamber; having had much ado to keep the young fellow between his hot blankets after the doctor had pronounced him “out of danger; unless complications should set in.”

“A happy New Year! Daddy dear,” Cecil greeted her father's entrance.

“It's after midnight, you know:” giving him a tight squeeze.

“Where is mother?” he asked missing her presence at once.

“Sent her to bed, Daddy. I told her late hours were not good for little folks!” and Cecil laughed, such a ring of happiness in her voice as it had not known for a long while.

Father and son exchanged glances smilingly; then Elmer went off to keep guard for the night over his restored friend.

Mr. Perry turned to his daughter in quizzical tenderness. “It begins to look, girlie, as if we are to lose our baby; is it so?”

Cecil hid her eyes on his shoulder. "It may be—that is, father, if you approve. But not, if you say not," lifting her head from his shoulder to look around into his eyes.

Her father patted her on the back, his other hand pressing the girlish-head back on his shoulder.

"No you don't, little girl," he chuckled. "You'll not shift the burden of your choosing on to your old dad." Then, earnestly; "but I will say this, Cecil—I consider Kieth Talbot a manly fellow; and can see no reason why you should not be happy with him."

Cecil began to shake in a sudden paroxysm of laughter. "Really, this is rich, father! Think how we may be counting chickens before they are hatched—who knows?"

A little sadly, her father returned: "I know, dearie. Kieth Talbot and I had a long talk this evening. He has struck an excellent thing in business; and has come, he says, according to your promise. We will be sorry to lose you, little girl; but it was to be expected some day, I suppose;" sighing deeply.

New Year's morning Cecil was singing happily about the breakfast preparations, when her mother appeared, smiling a "Happy New Year!"

"That is one for you, little mother;" Cecil responded gaily. "But a whole cycle of happy New Years to you, my sweetest and best!" giving her mother a rapturous hug. "Oh, momsie, this is such a glad New Year! I wonder why it seems the happiest ever known?"

But the mother understood, and moved quietly to one side, as a low, rich voice spoke from the doorway: "A happy New Year, Mrs. Perry! and to you also, Miss Cecil!"

Then, as Cecil extended a hand in demure welcome, Kieth Talbot bent and pressed his lips to it lingeringly: "Sweetheart, is it to be a 'glad' New Year for me, also? and looking into her eyes, read his answer, and was content.

"A happy New Year, old fellow!" Elmer greeted him at the breakfast table. "I can wish you nothing better than to have as good an appetite as I, this morning;" looking with hungry eyes at the tempting food before him.

In boyish glee he nodded across at Kieth: "Say, Kieth, got your book of resolutions filled yet? I'll bet a nickel you can't resolute on a New Year's breakfast to beat this: Chicken pie and Kentucky potatoes, muffins and coffee. Sis is a dandy, when it comes to getting up something good to eat—even if I am her brother as says it."

Kieth smiled tenderly on the happy-faced girl at his side; who leaned over and whispered in her father's ear: "Oh, Daddy, isn't this just a glorious New Year's!"

Special 'Lecture in Jonesville:

Josiah Thinks Women Too Weak to Vote

By Josiah Allen's Wife

November 1911, *The Farmer's Wife*

Jabez Young, the Town clerk, made a mistake. He read there wuz to be a meetin' to see whether wimmen wanted to vote. And I spoze it wuz the chivalry of male statesman that made that bill thought on, you know lots is said by Auntys about that Shivelry and the danger of jeopardizin' it. Lovin' wimmen so and so bound to protect 'em, they set the hour for votin' when workin' wimmen couldn't possibly tire themselves out carryin' their ticket to the pole, as it wuz the hour they had to be at work earnin' their livin'. It wuz a real tender hearted bill, and as full of that Shivelry as an egg is of meat.

Jabez wuz a fierce He-Aunty and obstinate, and bein' upsot with rage he put playcards on the school house door, orderin' wimmen to the court house at such a date, and havin' made a mistake he stuck to it.

Lots of Jonesvillians didn't see it disputed, and we that knowed better let it go on, wantin' to see how many wimmen DID want to vote. But it made lots of excitement when it wuz spozed that wimmen wuz goin' to git the franchise, it made Josiah jest about sick. He said he didn't see how men wuz goin' to stand the strain of seein' the wimmen they worshipped runnin' such resks, sez he, wipin' his bald head till the few gray hairs stood up sort o' wild lookin':

"It is makin' a old man of me whilst I am still young." I wuz takin' up our bedroom carpet, tuggin' away to git it from under the bedstead, so I didn't pay much attention till his sithes got as loud as young groans, and straightenin' up a minute to git my breath I hearn 'em and sez:

"What is it, Josiah? Have you got a spell of wind colic comin' on?"

"Wind colic!" sez he bitterly, "No, I hain't, it is this Special 'Lecture, this vortex of danger and hardship that is before you, Samantha, and all your frail delicate sect."

I sez, "I would love to have you help me lift this bedstead so I could git the rest of this carpet out."

"Samantha," sez he faintly, "I hain't got the strength, my feelin's about the awful peril and hardship you are facin' makes me weak as a cat. But mabby I can help a little." And he got up weakly and took holt, but I had to do the heft of the liftin', he wuz tuckered out by his emotions, and I make him lay down whilst I done the rest of the liftin'.

When I went back out of breath with histin' the carpet onto the line and beatin' it with a broom handle, Josiah wuz still layin' in the throws of anxiety (he worships me) and worryin' himself sick I could see. And I sez soothin'ly, "I wouldn't worry so, Josiah, Jabez made a mistake."

"Oh peshaw!" sez he, "you ketch a man makin' a mistake and you'll ketch a weasel asleep. If it wuz a weak minded frivolous woman with half her mind on ruffles

and frizzles, and 'tother half on silly gossip, there might be a mistake, but," sez he, "men never make a mistake."

I knowed better, I knowed way back in Bible times one man made a mistake for I'd read about it that mornin', and I jest opened my mouth to say, "Absolom David made a mistake." And then I see that Josiah wuzn't in a state to stand any more worry, so I didn't argy with him, and pulled up three pails of water to heat to mop the bedroom floor before I put the carpet down agin. It's tuckerin' work to clean house, but Josiah would helped me more if it hand't been for his worryin' so about my votin'. He felt dretful. Sez he:

"You talk about goin' to the pole as if it wuz sunthin' easy but I'd like to know how I'm goin' to git you there safe through the crowds of politicians surroundin' the pole."

"Why, we'll ride down in the democrat jest as we go to meetin'."

"No indeed! you don't ketch me takin' no woman through the streets 'lection day in a open rig, I shall take the hearse."

That wuz a long narrer covered wagon that belonged to Father Allen, the children called it "the hearse," and it did look like one, we hadn't used it for years, and I sez, "Oh nonsense, Josiah."

But he insisted, "I shall take you in the hearse, and you'll wear a thick veil over your face, I'm responsible for your safety and I hain't goin' to see you plunge into the danger of political life without shieldin' you all I can."

"I lost my thick veil last fall on the fair ground, Josiah, you know I wuz judge of hens and geese, and there wuz such a crowd of men and wimmen round me, that my veil wuz tore off by the crowd, and it wuz all I could do to git away with hull limbs."

"Yes," sez he proudly, "it did my soul good to see the crowd surgin' round you and our old prize Plymouth rooster, both on you lookin' so beautiful and noble, and know that in all that vast assemblage there wuzn't one that ever see a more majestic lookin' fowl or a more juster judge."

"I lost my thick veil and shall have to buy another, and braize has riz, Josiah."

"Well, mebby if the curtains are pulled down in the hearse, and you keep your bunnet well over your face, I can git you there safe without a veil."

"I'll chance it," sez I, dry as a chip, "there won't be a man there but what I've knowed from a girl, and went to school with, and meetin', and played wink-em-slyly with, why should they take to cuttin' up now and attacktin' me?"

"You'll find, Samantha, that politics is very different from wink-em-slyly."

"I've thought," sez I, "there wuz considerable winkin'-em-slyly in politics now, judgin' from the papers." I knowed men voters did act queer some times, queer as dogs, and passed laws queerer than any dogs I ever see, but I wuzn't afraid of any Jonesville man, and sez, "I'm goin' to that corkuss, Josiah, if I walk afoot."

"Well," sez he groanin', "I'll try to git you there safe, I'll try to." His axent wuz so melancholy and dubersome, that I asked agin, "why should them good honest men I've knowed from a child turn into dangerous ruffians?"

"Oh, it is the pizen of politics! the awful corrodin' pizen that fills the hull political vortex, and biles over onto voters. No knowin' when that pizen enters into a man what he will do, or what he won't do. Mebby he'll be safe for wimmen to ride through, and mebby he won't."

“Well,” sez I, “wimmen always wants to share the dangers of the men they love, and mebbly her more lovin' and conscientious nater will kinder ameliorate the pizen, act sunthin' like catnip, and sort o' inspirin' and stimulat'in' too, like pepper tea, bracin' but hullsome—wouldn't it be worth tryin' if things are as bad as you say?”



Daily Scene in the City-owned and Police-regulated Markets of Paris

“Oh! but the hardship and danger to the females. That's what makes us strong men weak as a cat, our brains fairly tottle when we think on't!” And he groaned loud, and I steeped some catnip real strong, and gin to him to soothe his nerve, and a little Cayenne pepper to stimulate and work on his liver. Worry is dretful hard on his liver, sometimes I think it is worse than pie or hard work.

Well from that time excitement biled and seethed through Jonesville and its environs. The men folks gathered in nots talkin' it over and said it made 'em sick as death to have their wimmen facin' such hardships and perils as votin'. It made 'em too weak to work much. The wimmen didn't talk it over so much together, bein' cleanin' house time, they wuz so petered out when they got a chance to set down a minute they didn't feel like movin'. They had to work fur harder than common, the men wuz worryin' so about 'em, they had to do the white-washin' and paintin' and paperin' themselves. But when they had a minute to think of gittin' their rights they wuz tickled. That is most on 'em wuz, of course there wuz some She Auntys and they wuz so wrought up and determined to overthrow the female franchise and set on it, they didn't try to clean much.

Betsy Bobbett spent weeks composin' a owed to rehearse at the meetin', and Euphrasia Keeler painted a banner to carry. Them that see it said it wuz a skairful thing, it depicted a deep dark pool called the Political Vortex, and some fierce lookin' wimmen on the brink on't clampin' some chains onto some other wimmen ready to throw 'em down into it. The motto runnin' along the chains wuz “Rights of Women.” And the motto

above it in big red letters wuz “We Wimmen Won't Have No Rights, We're Too Good To Have 'Em.”

I said she'd better been cleanin' house, but wuz told that she drove her husband and boys into the house cleanin' and housework whilst she wuz paintin' the picture, it wuz sights of work, but she always did drive her men-folks round, I've always noticed that wimmen that don't want any rights have a knack of gittin' their own way, and kinder bossin' round, whilst them that want some rights are more sort o' reasonable and willin' to give and take, take their own rights and give the men folks theirs. Queer, hain't it? But I'd like to know what hain't queer in this world—why we're queer ourselves, real queer.

Algernon De Vere Tubbs, aged seventeen, is a He Aunty and said he'd made a exhaustive study of the suffrage question and settle it for once and all, that Wimmen's Suffrage would ruin the country. Besides it would be so wearin' on the delicate constitution of wimmen that it would depopulate the nation in a few years, and all that would be left of a prosperous country would be a few men.

His mother, Rowena Tubbs, wuz surprised that Jonesville didn't bear down the scales of creation so when he made this final and weighty conclusion, that China would tip up. Rowena since her husband's death has took in washin' to support herself and Algernon De Vere. Rowena is a She Aunty, Algernon proselyted her one day while she wuz washin' and converted her and spent so much nerve force on the job she had to git up and build the fires several days afterwards.

Well, he painted a big banner for the He Auntys to carry, it read, in great ornamental letters, “No Votes For Wimmen. Wimmen Are Too Delicate And Lovely to Have Rights. Sweet Fragile Angels! We Strong Men Will Shield Thee With Our Heart's Blood From Havin' 'Em!”

It wuz yaller on a white ground. His mother bought the paint pickin' huckleberries to paint her kitchen floor and had got it partly done and with what Algernon used and wasted it took every spunful, and as she couldn't afford to buy any more she's got to have a broad bass-wood colored streak runnin acrost her kitchen floor forever. She's a good housekeeper and wep' when she told it, wep' but wuz willin'. Yes she's a consistent and ardent She Aunty and devoted to the cause of forcin' all the wimmen in the country to not vote, whether they want to or not.

I told Miss Gowdey, “Men hain't took by the fore top and led to the pole, and wimmen won't be.” Sez I, “Let wimmen that want to sprunt up and vote do it, and let them that want to crumple down and not vote, let 'em crumple.” And she said she felt jest so. But folks are made different, you can't change a leopards spots with Diamond dye; they strike in too deep. And lions and lambs hain't goin' to lay down together till the Millenium 'tennyrate, and I have worried some about the lamb then.



Scene of One of the Many Specialized Potato Farms in the Northwest. Tubers Gathered in Sacks, Ready for Shipment

Sabrina Presley wuz there that mornin' we had this talk. She is agent for soaps and powders, etc., she's had to turn every way to git a livin' since her husband dranked himself to death, but she's smart as a whip, can talk like a minister, and has seen trouble if anybody ever did, and is seein' it now, yes indeed.

Sez she, "I guess every good wife and mother would vote if she had the chance, would try to make the world a safer place for poor tempted humanity to live in. And if she couldn't help the grown ups she could mebbly help the children to come up right, for who has the interest of the children more at heart than the mothers who face agony and death for 'em, and carry 'em in her heart as long as that heart beats?"

"Yes, indeed! Sabrina," sez Miss Gowdey, "nobody can dispute that."

Sez Sabrina, "the law and the man is willin' to let the mother have the hull care of children in infancy, and do everything to ensure their health and comfort and morals. But when she packs their little dinner pails and starts 'em off to school the first time, watches 'em disappear round the turn of the road, through her tears mebbly, she knows they're goin' into dangers she is powerless to guard 'em aginst. She has no power to make that schoolhouse sanitary and healthful. Too often children's eyesight has been ruined by dark dingy school rooms, their health destroyed by over crowded, unventilated rooms, and must see their mind and soul suffer from neglect of overworked, under paid teachers."

"Yes," sez I, "men wouldn't think of lettin' their blooded cattle and pedigreed cows be choked and blinded, and their health endangered by confinement in dark, crowded, unventilated rooms, or trust 'em to the care of overworked inefficient help. But they cheerfully let their children suffer all these evils, partly from lack of thought and partly from bein' accustomed to lettin' the mother have all the care of the children, forgettin' that when they once leave the shelter walls of home the mother's hands are tied by her legal disabilities from givin' em the care she yearns to."

And I continued, "It seems to me that every thoughtful woman would be glad to help enforce the law against child labor, to prevent children from bein' made stupid, stooping old men and wimmen before they enter their teens, toling on in the deadly air of dark dangerous factories, or in the black livin' grave of mines. Shut away in either case from fresh air and sunshine, and the care-free atmosphere children should enjoy. And would be doubly glad to help make laws to prevent giddy thoughtless young girls from selling their honor and their live's happiness before they hardly know the meaning of the words."

"Yes," sez Sabrina bitterly, "young girls can legally sell their purity, and all their live's happiness and welfare before they can legally buy or sell a dime's worth. Men made

laws, made for the gratification of their own evil passions and the ruin of other men's daughters, not their own.”

And she went on, “if a den of snakes lurked in her children's play ground a mother wouldn't rest till she had destroyed 'em. But she has to set by powerless, and see the serpents of Temptation and Evil lurkin' in her children's pathways, evils licensed by the evil men she has no power to help remove from office and replace by good men who would work for the good of the children and humanity instead of graft. What power duz a woman have to close the gaudy saloon that her children have to pass night and morning, a nest of deadly serpents walking and waiting, watching for a chance to strike at her children's life and morals and destroy 'em, licensed by men who must know they will do this work, but as I say don't expect it will be their own children, but some other folkses' children that will be destroyed by 'em?

What power has the woman to close the cheap moving picture shows, many of them that prepare the ground for the seed of temptation to be sowed in and flourish? No she must stay at home with her fears; and her agony after these and other vile agencies have done their work upon the innocent lives she would save with her own. The mother must remain helpless and see vile men put into office to carry out vile laws when as I say they might be replaced by good men if good wimmen had the right to help choose the rulers of herself and children. And if she is a rich woman she will be taxed often exorbitantly and see her money used to perpetuate laws she abominates.”

We knowed she had a reason to talk this way, for her only son died a drunkard in a drunken brawl at eighteen, and one of her girls wuz endurin' a livin' death as the wife of a drunkard and a gambler. And her other girl went to the bad through the open door of the saloon via the moving picture show. All these tragedies begun when they wuz in high school.

Miss Bobbett and I sot demute, and listened to her with patience and pity, for we knowed that talkin' wuz the only vent she had for her indignation and despair. She couldn't do anything to help prevent the evil seed from being sowed broadcast to spring up for other mothers to weep over. Most good wimmen are like Sabrina, their sperits are willin' but their arms, bein' bandaged by their helpless state under the law, they can't reach out and draw their children back from danger, they can't do anything but jest talk, and sithe, and weep and shed tears.

Special 'Lecture in Jonesville:
Josiah Thinks Women Too Weak to Vote

By Josiah Allen's Wife

December 1911, *The Farmer's Wife*



Synopsis of Previous Chapter

Jabez Young, the town clerk, said there was to be a meeting at the Town Hall to see if women wanted to vote. All the women were to attend. It made Josiah Allen so weak to think of the hardship to which the "frail sect" would be exposed by voting, that he had to lie down while Samantha took up a bedroom carpet and beat it on the line. He took her to the Court House, where the question was discussed, in a closed carriage so that she would not be exposed to the gaze of her neighbors.

Chapter II

But to resoom forward. The day Jabez sot wuz beautiful and we got to Jonesville in good season, though I felt like a fool ridin' in the old hearse. I spoze Josiah kep' a sharp lookout for danger, but we didn't see but one man on the road, and he wuz drivin' a sheep and he looked jest as mild and harmless as the sheep.

We got to the Town Hall early and went into the waitin' room, Josiah looked round cautiously and I spoze dreaded to leave me, but the room wuz so cozy and peaceful lookin' he ventered, and I sot down and took out my knittin' work, for I knowed suffrage or no suffrage Josiah had got to have good warm socks for winter.

And pretty soon a lot of other wimmen come, most all on'em believed in wimmen's votes but once in awhile there wuz a He or a She Aunty. Miss Deacon Sypher come and seemed dretful glad to see me, but when I asked her which side she wuz on, she bust out cryin' and said:

“I wanted to vote for votin', but the Deacon made me vote agin votin', and you know I worship the ground he walks on.”

Sez I, “You can do that as well STANDIN' on the ground as LAYIN' on it. I worship Josiah, but I hain't goin' to make a rag carpet of myself for him to walk over; he wouldn't think so much on me if I did, and I don't want my husband to regard me in a rag-carpety light.”

Sez she, “I love to make a soft downy carpet of my life for the Deacon's dear feet to step on.” “Oh well,” sez I, “then keep on doin' it.”

I wuz sorry for her, but she's the only one I ever see so ham-strung by husbands; she's always been layin' round under the Deacon's feet and he tromplin' on her, for he's got to walk round some, and if Drusilly is under his feet he's got to step on her, but I don't spoze there is one in a billion, or half a billion anyway, like her, wimmen won't foller her example, folks would make light on 'em if they did.

Well, they kep' comin' and comin', and I got Josiah's socks along first rate, I can always knit faster when I'm a visitin'. Miss Henshaw a nice sensible elderly woman sot down by me and took out her knittin', she's a strong suffragist. So we sot there calm and contented knittin' away for our men folks, and firm in our principles as two iron clad warships.

Elder White from Lyme come and sot down by us, he wanted to see how the Jonesvillians felt on the subject. He'd brought his wife and two sisters and a uncle's widder and two neighborin' wimmen, all suffragists and nice wimmen too. And as the room filled, arguments begun to fly back and forth like shuttles through the warp in weavin'.

And think, sez I, here we be weavin' our principles into the cloth of life, makin' firm or slazy cloth for future generations to be clad in, and I wuz eppisodin' to myself real eloquent, how the plain hard stripe we wuz weavin' to-day would be embroidered by future fingers in much more beautiful patterns then the creakin' onstiddy looms of the present could turn out, weavin' purer, juster laws, more brotherly and sisterly ways of kindness and love, like snow-white posies into the back ground of Justice and Equal Rights. I wuz jest thinkin' this when I hearn Miss Piper of Shackville say to Miss Gowdey, “I am a firm believer in Woman's Suffrage, as Miss Simeon Blodgett said to me”—

But jest that minute Betsy Bobbett Slimpsey appeared, headin' a band of She Auntys, Euphrasia comin' next, bearin' her banner, and some He Auntys carryin' Algernon De Vere's big flag. Betsy wuz by the side of herself with excitement, her elbows wuz always sharp, and now they ploughed a way through the crowd like spears and one bony hand hit a onoffendin' old man in the eye.

“Oh my misguided sect!” sez she, “keep the sacred place you have in the hearts of the male sect, and rule them and the world by your gentleness and sweetness!” Agin she waved her hand and the old man fired up, “You hit me agin in the eye if you dast!”

“Oh dear man! did I hit you? Forgive me! Not for thousands of worlds like this world would I injure one of your sect, you're too precious in my sight, any womanly woman loves to lean on, and cling to a man.”

“Cling to yourself! Who wants you to cling to 'em?” Sez a rough masculine voice but evidently voicing the sentiments of the crowd for a murmur of applause riz, “Oh

female woman!” Sez Betsy, “cling to your mightiest weepion, and so influence men and rule the nation, keep your gentle retirin' modesty.” Agin she waved her hand and knocked off a youngster's hat.

“Retire yourself, you old fool you!” sez he.

“Oh cruel man!” sez Betsy, “to speak so to the one who so loves and reveres your sect, you are under the influence of hardened unwomanly suffragists, specially them two in the corner.” And there we sot peaceable as two old sheep, knittin' our husband's socks and talkin' quietly to each other.

Sez Miss Piper, “Miss Blodgett sez to me, sez she, Sarah Piper I—.”

I didn't ketch what Miss Blodgett said, for Elder White not hearin' her, and Betsy havin' subsided to look over her verses, sez, “My prayer is that woman may have a chance to do as her heart dictates, her votin' won't make black white, or cure all the evils of the world, but I believe it will have a good influence, in public affairs in the health, education, and morals of the community, as it has had already where women vote. Women who have seen their loved ones goin' to ruin through the doors of licensed evils, will use the ballot to try to save them, and work for laws making safer surroundings for youth in schools, factories, sweat shops, and all places especially where they are thrown into temptation and danger outside the safe guards of home.”

Here a He Aunty spoke up, “More bad wimmen would vote than good ones.”

“I doubt that,” Sez Elder White, “but if so, bad wimmen have husbands and sons and fathers, and no heart is so hard that love can not find an entrance, lions and tigers will fight for their young and wimmen have this instinct with reason added.”

“Yes,” sez I, “and no woman's flesh is so hard it won't feel kickin', and no head of hair is sot in so firm it won't hurt to be drug round by it; I shouldn't think wimmen bad or good would want to vote for what causes them the most misery and want.”

“They want to drink themselves,” Sez the He Aunty, “they would all go for license, and 'tennyrate if woman voted the pole would be a seen of uproar.”

Sez I, “No animal is too savage to fight for its young, and you tie 'em up as wimmen be, so they can't reach their young ones when in danger and you'd find they'd tug on the rope worse than wimmen do, and roar louder.”

Sez Miss Henshaw, “I don't believe there are more bad wimmen than good ones, and all good wimmen would want to help good men to make the world better and safer for them they loved.”

“And I believe they would,” Sez Elder White, “and saner, better moments must come to the blackest lives when they would be glad to be free from the constant temptations surrounding them, glad to break the chains that bind them to sin if they could.” The He Aunty see the arguments wuz goin' agin him and sez, “Why should wimmen want to vote when she can influence her male relatives to vote as she wants 'em to.”

Here Miss Henshaw spoke in a mild reasonable axent that carried conviction, “I've got a husband and five sons and nine grandsons, all good to me in every other way, but for thirty years I've begged and plead with my family, argued, read and prayed, trustin' to git 'em to vote for no-license, but every one has voted for license and will, I spoze as long as they can go, or be carried to 'lection, and I would be glad to have one vote cast by the Henshaw family on the Lord's side.”

“And so have I argued with Josiah,” Sez I, “and allegored and eppisoded and most wore my arms off rollin' out extra short pie crust and cookin' vittles round 'lection time, beggin' and prayin' him to cast the vote on the side of temperance and morality. And he would go to the pole full to the teeth of my good vittles and vote agin me. And I'd think every year I'd never give the rollin' pin another roll in a extra way. But Hope would set up on the buttery shelf and kinder wink at me in a encouragin' way, and I'd hustle into it agin', cookin' stuff fit for Kings and Zars, hopin' this time to win the victory, but for license he would and did vote. Till finally after years and years on't, the only hope I had wuz that he'd eat so much he couldn't move, and there would be one vote less agin' my principles. And I'd cook luxurious meals, hopin' he'd gorge himself helpless, but he'd always stop just this side on't, and go and cast his vote jest as I didn't want it cast, talk about influencin!” Sez I.

“Yes,” Sez Miss Henshaw, “that may go in theory, but we've tried it for years, and know what we're talkin' about.”

The He Auntie looked meachin' and sez, “Votin' would make too much care for wimmen, they hain't got the time to vote or study statesmanship so's to be safe voters.”

Sez Widder Pendergrast from Loontown, “It don't take so long to vote as to go to market, men don't worry about that, and wimmen have plenty of time to play bridge whist, lean over dry goods counters, price peanuts, play golf and tennis, go automobiling and yotin' and dance and flirt. And as for knowledge, I guess they know as much now as some men who reel to the pole and vote as many times as they're paid to. Men vote now that don't know the tariff from a turnip, and no matter how low men are mentally, morally or physically, they are carted to the pole in any important election. And educated, cultured wimmen, professional wimmen of all kinds, college presidents, authors, doctors, lawyers, wimmen whose brains and hearts are yearning for the good of humanity, who want good helpful laws for themselves and children and other wimmen's children, see their ignorant servants, that don't know enough to come in when it rains, who often git rained on, the uncouth, low-minded, dissipated, all who can navigate to the pole go and cast their votes, telling how her tax money shall be spent, make the laws that govern, rule, and condemn her.”

“Yes,” Sez Miss Henshaw, “think of the injustice of being taxed without representation.”

“That's so,” Sez Miss Piper, “I never shall forgit what Miss Blodgett said about that. Miss Simeon Blodgett sez to me one day jest before 'lection, sez she—”

But Widder Pendergrast interrupted agin, “My tax is bigger than any man's in our town, and I've got three boys under age, and a saloon has been built right under my nose, and the town took my money and built a side walk in front on't, so my boys and other boys could git there easier. I wish,” Sez she bitterly, “that that sidewalk wuz stuck in their throats.”

She didn't use logic but felt what she said, there hain't a doubt on't.

Sez Miss Phylena Fee, from Shackville, “My tax is double what any other man's in town is, but I can't have any voice in sayin' what that money shall be used for, and I earnt it dress makin'. I own a hundred acres and another man owns a hundred right by the side of mine, and my valuation is jest twice as big as his, such works I never see, I'll bet if wimmen git the right to vote there will be more equality, and wimmen won't be taxed

twice or three times what other men be for the same.” She also used more sense than grammar.

Elder White sez, “No class was ever at the mercy of another without abuses creepin' in, I know wimmen are often taxed unlawfully and exorbitantly, and taxtion without representation wuz what our old four fathers fought against, and it is just as reasonable and righteous a cause now as it wuz then, and if wimmen win in this battle for their rights it will be called in the future just as honorable and patriotic in them.”

But here like a fog horn hoarse with a cold, Betsy Slimpsey's voice riz as she strammed forward and got up on a chair. As she faced the crowd she showed off plain. She wore a small sky blue turbine over her false curls, and a long yellor duster and lots of ribbins and tossels floated out from her, all on 'em in wrong places. She is a humbly creeter but hain't to blame for that.

Sez she, “Noble He and She Auntys, and misguided led-astray suffragers, I have riz from a bed of fatal sickness, knowin' my sect wuz in such eminent danger and peril, I have writ on that fatal bed and off on it, a short poem of thirty-three verses, writ 'em as you may say in my heart's blood (or ruther my liver, for it wuz the janders that ailed me) my feelings wuz so oncontrolled and terrific. And Oh my misguided sect, led astray by fel ambition and the wicked desire to rise up to the hite of noble manhood's rights, pawse for the sake of your unborn ancestors, hear and take the truth to your innermost recesses.”

Here Euphrasia waved her banner and Betsy begun to elocute her verses.

“Oh who unto the pole would go
 And lay their modest nater low;
 What tender woman e'rr would mix
 In dretful pools of politics.
 I'd ruther be beloved by males
 Like posies bendin' to the gales;
 I would not take a right, oh no
 When males objecteth to 'em so.
 I'd hide behind the strength of man,
 Like gentle milk in noble can.
 The can hath ample power I ween
 To keep it safe and sweet and clean.”

“I guess the gentle milk wouldn't keep sweet very long,” Sez a good but ruther sarcastic old farmeress, “if the can wuzn't clean, it has always been wimmen's work to wash and cleanse that milk can, men never objected to frail wimmen standin' on their heads as you may say bendin' over gigantic cans washin' and cleanin' the inside on 'em, and now they propose to try their scrubbin' brushes on the political can that holds the rights and welfare of them and their children and needs cleanin' worse than any milk can ever did.”

“Yes indeed!” Sez a suffragist, “it needs scrubbin' and scaldin' out bad.” But Betsy riz her voice and went on declaimin' her verses till she wuz brought to a sudden stop by the arrival of a good lookin' young chap with a loud voice who sez:

“The clerk made a mistake, ther won't be any Special 'Lecture and it wuzn't intended to take place anyway till the day before general 'lection.” And bein' a open-

hearted feller and not used to political subterfuges he added, "If the bill passed it wuz meant to be too late for wimmen to register like the rest of U. S. citizens."

Betsy looked deadly disappointed at havin' her poetry broke off, but in spite of her efforts and the other He and She Auntys there wuz three times as many in favor of wimmen's votin' as there wuz agin' it. As we left the hall there wuz lots of folks talkin' all together jest about as they do at fairs and Fourth of Julys and as I passed Miss Piper I hearn her say to another woman:

"Miss Simeon Blodgett told me of her own accord that she—"

But Josiah hurried me on and I don't know to this day what it wuz that Miss Blodgett said, though I wanted to like a dog.

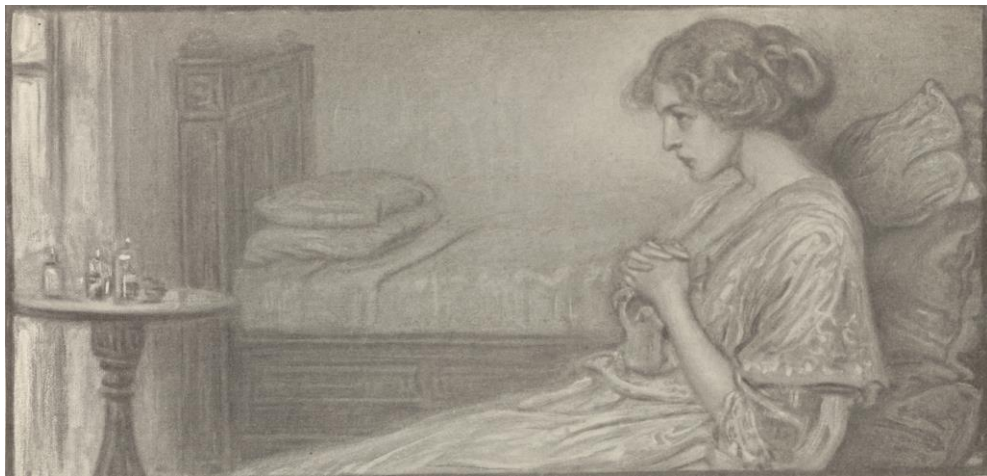
Josiah acted real feeble and mauger goin' home. He said he had been settin' down by the creek on a stun. He thought he couldn't 'tend the meetin', it would wear on his nerve so, thinkin' of wimmen's awful danger if she got the franchise, and of how it wuz goin' to wear on her nerve, and feeble strength.

But I got a good meat supper, and after partakin' of it he felt better. Most always when his anxiety and fore bodin's about my political hardships, has worn on his nerve, a good meat supper will relieve him some. So I hurried to get it, and it wuz quite early when we got through.

So I had time to scrape off the paper on the settin' room ceilin', and wash it with viniger so the paper would stick.

It wuz a tuckerin' job, but Josiah thought I had better go at it so's to get to paperin' early in the mornin', And I thought myself it would be the best way.

The House of Their Rest:
An Incident in the Life of a City Woman
By Josephine Daskam Bacon
Illustrated by Sigismund de Ivanowski
February 1911, *Ladies' Home Journal*



For the first few days of her stay there she thought little enough of the strangeness of the situation. To think of it, to marvel at the neat stillness, the quiet precision of all the domestic arrangements, would have been to let her mind dwell on just what she had to avoid. She was sick to her very soul of all that the words “domestic arrangements” implied; sick with an actual spiritual nausea. It was honestly no exaggeration to say that she would gladly have died rather than take the trouble to arrange the details of living. So every morning she woke when her dreams ended and lay staring idly, through the crossbars of the primitive window-netting, at the swaying, sinking treetops and the floating white above them, so white between the blue and green; and then her breakfast came, fresh and chill and a flaming nasturtium on the snowy linen; and then thought ranged among stray lines of poetry and memories of childhood; and then some one rubbed and kneaded and ironed out her tired muscles and she slept again. Sometimes foaming milk came in a beaded brown pitcher that smelt of dairies; sometimes luscious, quartered fruits, smothered in clotting cream, tempted a palate nearly dulled beyond recall; sometimes rich, salted broth steamed in a dim, blue bowl till she regretted to see the bottom of it.

And just at that time she was lifted into a long basket chair, and, propped in lavendered pillows, looked dreamily into the hills and pastures rolling out in front of her. Cows wandered here and there, birds swooped lazily through the June blue, the faintest

scent of grapevines hung on the wind. But no human figures blotted the landscape; only the faint, musical clash of distant scythes (a sound as natural as the cawing, and lowing, and interminable twittering of the busy animal world all around) spoke of men.

Then one day (it might have been a week's time) she caught herself listening for sounds of household labor. Where was the breaking, the slamming, the whistling, the quarreling, the brushing and the rattling that these thin partitions ought to filter through? Simply, it was not. A little faint, suspicious worry came to her: the house was a tomb, then? Did it have to be? Was she as bad as that?

And when her tray came next—some kind of savory stew, by now, with fresh-picked strawberries on a sea-green grape leaf—she looked directly at the woman who brought it to the bed.

“How still this house is!” she said, and flushed with weakness, for it was her first real sentence, and it occurred to her that only little sighs of fatigue or groans of relief and halting exclamations of “That feels good,” or “No more, thanks,” had passed her lips.

The woman smiled. She wore a straight gown of white and gray, and her eyes were gray.

“We live in a quiet place,” she said, and lifted the pillows higher.

But it seemed that after that—perhaps it was because she listened—she began to hear faint sounds: the clear falling of poured-out water and the tinkling of dish on dish now and then, and later the soft murmur of exchanging women's voices.

Another day she spoke of the freshness of her morning egg, and that afternoon she leaned nearer the casement to catch the cluck of a motherly hen with her brood, and smiled at the scurry of wing and feet as grain was scattered somewhere.

It must have been at that time that the doctor came up to see her, a big brown man, whose beard hid his smile when he chose, but nothing could cover the keen, reading beam of the eye.

“I see you are doing well,” he said.

“It is wonderful,” she answered him, “but I am sure it is not the world.”

“The world is very large,” he said and went away.

“And I never asked about—about anybody,” she murmured, her eyes filling, “but I am sure they are all right, or he would have said!”

She was ashamed afterward to remember for how long she had thought the woman who attended on her a servant. And yet she did think her so until the morning when it suddenly occurred to her that it was not possible any ordinary servant should be so deft and self-contained at once; servants were not so calm—that was it, so calm. Even the best of them were hurried and anxious, and if they were old and valued they got on one's nerves the more; one had to consider them. Of course this was a trained nurse. She had decided suddenly that she felt equal to rising for her bath, and congratulated herself on discerning the nurse in time, for now she could ask for help if she needed it.



“If you will show me the bathroom,” she said, “and will be there to help me over the edge of the tub in case I feel weak——”

“I will be there,” said the woman, “but I must get it ready; the tub is not high.”

And when she stepped into the next room she realized with a little smile how far she was from white porcelain and tiled walls. On the scrubbed deal floor there stood a white deal tub, clean as new milk, round and copper-bound. Towels, and soaps, and sponges were there in plenty, and great metal ewers full of hot and cold water, and nothing else but one chair in all the scrubbed cleanliness.

The woman poured the water over her as she crouched in the fragrant wooden pool, and dried her gently and quickly in towels pressed away in lavender, with the deft, sure movements of one well practiced in her business; but when she lay, just happily tired from the new exertion, among the fragrant sheets, a tiny shadow seemed about to haunt her sleep. She placed the little discomfort with difficulty, but at length expressed it.

“That tub is very heavy now,” she said drowsily; “is there a man to lift it?”

For the first time the woman smiled. Till then she had been hands and feet merely, tireless and tactful, but impersonal; now she smiled, and her face was very sweet.

“I shall empty it,” she said. “I am quite strong.”

Very soon again the doctor came, and at her quiet request gave her news of husband, children and home; all well, it seemed, and smoothly ordered.

Days of absolute stillness had broken the habit of insistent speech, and many things that once would have said themselves before she thought now halted behind her lips and seemed not worth the muscular effort. But one thing she did mention.

“Ought not the nurses here to have more help?” she asked. “Mine lifts out my bath-water every day. Are there not servants enough? I could pay for it——”

“There are no servants here at all,” he said, “and there is nobody you could pay more than you are already paying.”

“Then they are all nurses?”

“There are no trained nurses here, if you mean that,” he said.

“Then who—what is the woman who takes care of me?” she asked vaguely.

“She is one of the daughters of the house,” he said; “she is no more a nurse than her mother is a cook or her sister a laundress. They do what is to be done, that is all. Each can do the others' tasks quite as well as she can do her own.”

She felt in some way corrected, yet it was hard to say in what she had offended. But Doctor Stanchon was an odd man in many ways.

“Then this is a private house,” she began again——“their own home. And I do not even know their names!”

“It is private because it is their own home—just that,” he said; “that is what a home is. It is a simple fact, but one that seems not to have been included in your education.”

“Why, Doctor Stanchon, what can you mean?” she cried. “My mother's hospitality——”

“I mean that I do not consider an art museum a home, no matter how highly the chef is paid,” he said shortly.

”But there is the place on the Hudson——”

“That is a country club, nothing more,” he interrupted. “Your mother dismissed a butler once because, though he offered eight liqueurs to a guest, the guest asked for a ninth and the butler had neglected to order it. I have attended her there for a really painful attack of sciatica when none of her visitors knew that anything ailed her, though she had been away from them for forty- eight hours.”

“But that is Mother's house, not mine,” she protested, “and I do not pretend to keep up——”

“You do not pretend to because you could not do it,” he interrupted again. “Your father is a multimillionaire and your husband is not. But it is your constant ideal, nevertheless, and your failures to realize it, even in the degree to which you have tried, have sapped your vitality to a point which even you can understand now, I should suppose.”

She looked doubtingly at him.

“Do you really mean, Doctor,” she began, “that this dreadful attack——”

“Attack!” he muttered brusquely, “attack! One would imagine I had pulled you through pneumonia or peritonitis! If after constant sapping and mining and starving out the garrison, it gives way and falls defeated, you choose to call the day of surrender a yielding to an 'attack,' then you have had an attack.”

And again he left her abruptly, a prey to creeping, ugly doubts. For she had been very sorry for herself and the fatality that had stranded her on the dreary coast where so many of her friends had met mysterious wreckage.

“Has the doctor sent patients here before?” she asked her attendant the next morning, when she sat, fresh and fragrant in her invalid ruffles, at the window, watching the poultry yard, which somehow she had not noticed before, and the cow browsing beside the brook where the white ducks paddled, gossiping.

“Oh, yes, often,” said the busy sister (she was Hester; the other was Ann); “we are never without some one. So many people are ill in the city. Now I am going to clean your room, and perhaps you will feel like stepping out on the balcony?”

Surprised, for she had not seen any such addition to the simple frame house, she stepped through a window cut down somewhat clumsily, but efficiently enough, and hinged to swing outward, on to a shallow, roofed loggia with vines grown from boxes on the sides, and two long, low chairs faced to the view of the hills. In one of these sat a woman, slender and motionless, whose glistening white wrapper seemed to melt in the strong sun into the white of the painted wooden balustrade that protected the balcony. Flushed with an invalid's quick irritation and resentful of any other occupant, for her raw nerves were not yet healed, she was about to turn back hastily into the room when a second glance assured her that it was only one of her own white wrappers draped along the chair. The face and hands that her vexed irritation must have supplied amazed her, in retrospect, with their distinctness of outline, and she trembled at her weak nerves.

From inside the room came the swishing of water and the sound of scrubbing; soon the strong, clean flavor of soapy boards floated out and the flick of the drops into the pail; from where she sat she could see out of the corner of her eye the fluff of snowy suds that foamed over the shining bucket as Hester rubbed the milky cake of soap with the bristles. Her strong strokes had a definite rhythm and set the time for the stern old hymn tune she crooned. The listener on the balcony obeyed her growing interest and turned her chair to face into the room. The kilted Hester, on her knees, her brow bound with a glistening towel, threw her body forward with the regularity of a rower; her strong-muscled arms shot out in a measured curve; on her little island of dry boards she sang amid her clean, damp sea, high priestess of a lustral service as old as the oldest temple of man, and the odor of her incense, the keen, sweet freshness of her cleansing soap, rose to the Heaven of her hymn.

“You sing as if you liked it,” said the watcher.

“And so I do,” said Hester; “things must be clean, and I like to make them so.”

“Why, you are doing just what we did in the gymnasium the year I went there,” cried the invalid, with the first real interest she had felt in anything outside herself; “we kneeled on the floor and swept our arms out just like that!”

“If there were many of you it must soon have been clean,” said Hester, moving the rug she knelt on deftly.

“Oh, we were not cleaning it,” said the invalid, smiling; “it was only the same motion.”

“Indeed? Then why were you doing it?” Hester asked, turning her flushed face in surprise toward the ruffled whiteness in the window.

She stared at the worker, but even as she stared she frowned uncomfortably.

“Why, for—for exercise—for strength,” she said slowly, and colored under Hester's smile.

Later in the day she moved out again upon the balcony, regretful for the first time that no one of her own world could be there to talk with her. Hester—wiping bed, chair and mirror with the white cloth that never seemed to soil; whipping the braided rag rugs below her on the green with strong, firm strokes that recalled the scheduled blows she had practiced at a swinging leather ball—vexed her, somehow, and she was conscious of a whimsical wish that her delusion of the white wrapper stretched along the reclining chair had proved a reality. The soft gray shadows of early evening covered the little balcony, the chairs were plunged in it, and it was with a cry of apology that she stepped into a gray gown so soft and thin that she had taken it for a deeper shadow merely, and had actually started to seat herself in the long chair where the slender woman lay. Her own body appeared so robust beside this delicate creature's that pity smothered the surprise at her quiet presence there, and the swift feeling that she herself was by no means the frailest of the doctor's patients added to her composure as she begged pardon for her clumsiness.

"I thought I was the only patient here," she explained. "Miss Hester and Miss Ann have a wonderful way of getting quiet and privacy in their little house, haven't they?"

"Is it so little?" the stranger asked.

She felt embarrassed suddenly and tactless, for she had taken it for granted that they were both of the class to which the modest cottage must seem small.

"I only meant," she added hastily, for it seemed that at any cost this gentle, pale creature must not be hurt—"I only meant that to take in strangers in this way and to keep the family life entirely separate requires, usually, much more space."

"But do they keep it separate—the family life?"

("Evidently," she thought, "they have not been able to give her a private room like mine, or perhaps she eats with them.")

"I think that is how they do it," the stranger went on, "by not having any separate life, really. It is all one life with them."

"All one life," the other repeated vaguely, recalling, for some reason, the doctor's words; "but, of course, in a larger establishment that would not be possible. With servants——"

"I suppose that is why they have no servants," said the stranger.

There was a soft assurance in the tone——soft, but undoubtedly there. And yet what assurance should a woman have who did not find this house small? She discovered that she was still a little irritable, for she spoke brusquely.

"People do not employ servants, I imagine, for the very simple reason that they cannot afford to."

"Not always," said the other quietly. "I have known Ann and Hester many years, and there has never been a time when they could not have afforded at the least one servant."

"Tastes differ, I suppose," she answered shortly. "I should have supposed that every woman would take the first opportunity of relieving herself from the strain of household drudgery which any ignorant person can accomplish."

"Have you found so many of them to accomplish it for you?"

She flushed angrily.

“Doctor Stanchon has been talking about me!” she cried, with hot memories of her interminable domestic woes.

“Indeed not,” said the gray lady. “I knew nothing. I only asked if ignorant persons really accomplished their drudgery to any one’s satisfaction nowadays. They used not to when—when I employed them.”

So she had been wrecked beyond repair, this shadowy, large-eyed thing! She spoke as of a day long over. The other woman felt ashamed of her suspicion.

“No, indeed,” she answered wearily; “that was an exaggeration, naturally. But they might if they would take pains. They are paid enough for it, Heaven knows.”

“Ann and Hester are not paid,” said the voice from the dim chair; “perhaps that is why they take pains.”

The woman nodded fretfully.

“That is all very well,” she said, “and sounds very poetic, but it would be rather impractical for us all to do on that account.”

“Impractical? Impractical?”

A hint of gentle laughter from the long chair. “But it seems to me that Ann and Hester are the least impractical of people—are they not? They are surely less harassed than you were?”

“I must have been very sleepy. I don’t remember telling her all about it,” thought the woman, “but she seems to know.”

“Yes,” she said aloud, “I was harassed. Nearly to death, it seems. I am hardly myself yet. I suppose you have been through it all?”

“I have been through a great deal, yes.”

The shadows deepened, and a thin, new moon sank lower and lower. The gray figure grew less and less distinct to her, and before she knew it she slept. When she woke she was alone on the balcony, and the sunlight lay in blue-white pools upon the floor. For the first time in her life she had slept alone under the stars, with no one to settle her into her dreams or to attend on her when she woke from them, and suspicion and displeasure darkened for a moment the freshest awakening she could remember. Had they really forgotten her?

No one seemed to be coming, and after a quarter of an hour’s impatient waiting she left the long, couchlike chair, opened the door of her room and went with quick, determined steps down the narrow hall, down the stairs, straight to the sounds of women’s voices in the distance. They led her through a shining kitchen where a patient old clock presided, through a cool, dim buttery into a primitive laundry or washing-shed, with deal tubs, and big copper cauldrons, and a swept stone floor. But no odor of the keen cleanliness she had learned to connect with Hester’s soap ruled the washhouse this morning: a breeze from Araby the blest blew through the piles of dewy crimson strawberries that heaped themselves in yellow bowls, in silver-tinted pans, in leaf-lined wicker baskets, and brought all the garden of June into the bare stone room. Hester’s quick fingers twisted the delicate hulls from the scarlet scented globes, and near her, measuring mounds of glittering sugar, stood a broader, squarer woman with graying hair, who smiled gravely at her, facing her.

“Here she is now,” said this woman, whom she guessed to be Ann; and Hester, turning to her, added, as one who finishes a sentence merely:

“And I was just getting ready a dish of strawberries for you. Mother has stepped out for your egg; the brown hen has just laid. The rolls are in the oven, and Mother has the chocolate ready. I thought you would be early this morning, you were sleeping so soundly.”

“Early? Early?” she repeated, taken aback by their easy greeting of her. “Why, what do you mean?” And just then the clock struck seven deliberately.

“Why—why, I thought—then you did not forget——” she began uncertainly.

“There is nothing like the open air for sleeping, when one is ready for it,” said Hester. “Did you not notice the cover I threw over you? You must have gone off before it grew quite dark.”

“Oh, no, because I was with——” then she stopped abruptly. For it dawned on her that the other woman must have been a dream, since she perceived that she was unwilling to ask about her, so faintly did that conversation recall itself to her, so uncertain her memory proved as to how that other came and went, or when.

“It was a dream, of course,” she thought, and said, a shade resentful still:

“I never slept—that way—before.”

“It seems to suit you,” said Ann briskly, “for you have never left your room till now.”

Then it dawned on her suddenly.

“Why, I am well!” she said.

“Very nearly, I think,” Hester answered her. “Will you have your breakfast under the tree while Sister picks the berries?”

To this she agreed gladly, and found herself, still wondering at the new strength that filled her, under a pear tree in a pleasant patch of shadow, eating with relish from Hester's morning tray. Ann knelt not far from her in the sun, not too hot at this hour for a hardy worker, and soon her low humming rose like a bee's note from under her broad hat.

“The wash is all ready for you, Sister, on the landing,” she called. “Tell Mother her new towels bleached to a marvel: they are on the currant bushes now. I'll wet them down and iron them off while the syrup is cooking, I think—I know she's anxious to handle them.”

“Are you always busy, Miss Ann?” her guest inquired, for Ann's fingers never stopped even while she looked toward the house door.

“Always in the morning, of course,” she answered directly. “Every one must be if things are to get done.”

“But in the afternoon you are ironing, and Miss Hester tells me you do a great deal in the garden. When do you rest?”

“In my bed,” said Ann briefly.

She was less sweetly grave than her sister, and it was easy to see that her tongue was sharper. She would not have been so soothing to an invalid, but the woman under the pear tree had her nerves better in hand by now, and felt somehow upon her mettle to prove to this broad, curt Ann that there were tasks in the world beyond her sturdy rule-of-thumb.

“But surely every one needs time to think—to consider,” she began gently. “Don’t you find it so?”

“To plan out the day, do you mean?” said Ann, moving to a new patch. “I generally do that at night before I go to sleep.”

“No, no,” she explained, “not the day’s work—that must be done, of course—but the whole Scheme—life, and one’s relation to it.”

“I don’t feel any call to study that out,” said Ann. “I haven’t the headpiece for it.”

“No, but some people have, and so——”

“Have you?” said Ann.

She bit her lip.

“It is surely every woman’s duty to cultivate herself as far as she can,” she began; “nobody denies that nowadays.”

Ann was silent.

“Don’t you agree with me?” the woman persisted. “You surely know what I mean?”

“Oh, yes, I know what you mean well enough,” Ann said at last. “I know you have to cultivate strawberries if you want to get more of ’em—and bigger. The question is, what do you get out of it?”

A flood of explanations pressed to her lips, but just as they brimmed over some quick surmise of Ann’s shrewd replies choked them back. After all, what had she got out of it? What that she could show? She rose slowly and walked back to her room, where the bath, the fresh, uncreased clothes and Hester’s deft ministry waited ready for her. Later she lay again in the balcony chair, not so soothed by her little pile of books as she had looked to be. Beautiful, pellucid thought, deep-flowing philosophies, knife-edged epigrams and measured verse lay to her hand, but they seemed unreal, somehow, and their music echoed like meaningless words shouted for the echo, merely, in empty halls. She drowsed discontentedly, and woke from a dream of the gray lady to see her stretched in the companion chair, herself asleep, it seemed, for it was only after a long, doubtful stare from the other that she opened her great, dark eyes.

“And I almost thought I had dreamed of meeting you before! Wasn’t it absurd? I am only now realizing how ill I have been—things were all so confused.... I find that I can’t even reply to Miss Ann as I ought to be able to, when she scorns the effects of culture!”

“Does Ann scorn culture?” the gray lady asked in mild surprise. “I never knew that.”

“She scorns the leisure that goes to produce it, anyway.”

“Did you give her a concrete instance of any special culture?”

She moved uneasily in her chair.

“Oh—concrete, concrete!” she repeated deprecatingly. “Must I be as concrete with you as with her? Surely culture and all that it implies need not be forced to defend itself with concrete examples?”

“I’m afraid that I agree with Ann,” said the soft voice in the shadow. “I’m afraid that so far as I am concerned culture needs just that defense.”

She tried to smile the superior smile she had mustered for Ann, kneeling in her checked sunbonnet, but this was difficult with a woman so obviously of her own class and kind. Still the woman was clearly unreasonable, and she was able, at least, to speak forcibly as she replied:

“Aren't you rather severe on the enormous majority of us in that case? We can't all be great philosophers or productive artists, you know, and yet between us and Ann's preserved strawberries and Hester's scrubbing there's a wide gulf—you must admit that!”

The stranger rose lightly from her chair and walked, with a swaying motion like a long-stemmed wild flower, toward the home-made window-door. At the sill she paused and fixed her great eyes on the stronger woman—stronger, plainly, for the frail white hand on the china knob supported her while she stood, and she seemed to cling to the woodwork and press against it as she sank into the shadow of the eaves.

“A wide gulf, indeed,” she said slowly, in her soft, breathless voice, with an intonation almost like a foreigner's, her listener decided suddenly; “a gulf so wide that unless you can cross it with some bridge of honest accomplishment it will swallow you all very soon—you women of culture!”

She slipped across the sill, and presently Hester's clear, firm voice was heard in the narrow hall. “Yes, yes, I'm coming!” and the balcony was drowned in the dusk, and the woman on it yielded consciously to the great desire for sleep that possessed her. But before she drifted off, not afraid this time of night under the sky, it occurred to her dimly that Hester's other patient must come through her own room whenever she used the little loggia.

“What is she—an anarchist? a socialist?” she thought. “I must surely ask Hester about her. 'You women of culture,' indeed! What does she call herself, I wonder?”

That next morning as she waited idly for bath and breakfast the stranger possessed her thoughts more and more. Only in such an absolutely unconventional place, she told herself, could a completely unknown woman appear (in her own apartments, really) and discuss with her so nonchalantly such strange questions. In many ways this delicate creature's words seemed to echo Doctor Stanchon's, and this seemed all the more natural now, since she was so obviously still his patient. Hester had said that he sent many there—this one was, perhaps, too frail ever to leave them, and felt so much at home that no one thought to speak of her.

A healthy hunger checked these musings, and more amused than irritated at such unusual desertion she bathed and dressed unaided and went down to the kitchen.

“They will soon see by the way I keep my temper now,” she thought, “and my strength, that I am quite able to go back. I really must see how the children are getting on.”

Following the ways of her last journey through the house she found the kitchen, where an oven door ajar and half a dozen small, fragrant loaves in the opening showed her that, though empty, the room was deserted only for a housewife's rapid moment. She sat down, therefore, beneath the patient old clock and waited. Soon she heard a quick, bustling step unlike Hester's lithe quietness or the heavier stride of Ann, and knew that the little old lady who entered, fresh and tidy as a clean withered apple, was their mother. She had a pan of new-picked peas in one arm and a saucer of milk balanced in the other

hand—plainly the breakfast for the sleek black cat that bounded in beside her. This she set on a flagstone corner before she noticed her visitor, it seemed, and yet she did not appear startled at company, and showed all of the younger women's untroubled ease as she explained that a message from Doctor Stanchon had called them both away suddenly very early.

“It was perhaps some other patient in the house?” the guest suggested curiously, with a vivid memory of the gray lady's frail white hand and breathless voice.

“Perhaps,” said the old lady equably, and tied a checked apron over the white one, the better to attack the peas.

From the shining pan she tossed the fairy green globes into the rich yellow bowl of earthenware at her side, with the quick ease of those veined old hands that outwork the young ones, and her guest watched her in silence for a few minutes, hypnotized almost by the steady pit-pat of the little green balls against the bowl.

“And when do you expect them back?” she asked finally.

“I don't know,” said the old lady; “but they'll be back as soon as the work is over, you may depend—they don't lag, my girls, neither of 'em.”

“I am sure of that,” she assented quickly; “they are the hardest workers I ever saw. I wonder that they never rest, and tell them so.”

“Time enough for resting when all's done,” said the old lady briskly. “That was my mother's word before me, and I've handed it down to Ann and Hester.”

“But then, at that rate, none of us would ever rest, would we?” she protested humorously.

“This side o' green grave?” the old lady shot out. “Maybe so. But podding peas is a kind of rest—after picking 'em!”

“And have you really picked all these—and in the sun too?” she said, surprised. “I trust not for me—I could get along perfectly——”

The old lady jumped briskly after her loaves, tapped the bottoms knowingly, then stood each one on its inverted pan in a fragrant row on the dresser.

“Peas, or beans, or corn—it makes no odds, my dear,” she cried cheerfully; “it's all to be done, one way or another, you see.”

An inspiration came to the idler by the window, and before she had quite caught at the humor of it she spoke.

“Why should you get my breakfast—for I am sure you are going to?” she said. “Why shouldn't I—if you think I could—for I don't like to sit here and have you do it all?”

“Why not, indeed?” the old lady replied, with a shrewd smile at her. “Hester judged you might offer, and left the tray ready set.”

“Hester judged?” she repeated wonderingly. “Why, how could she possibly? How could she know I would come down, even?”

“She judged so,” the mother nodded imperturbably. “The kettle's on the boil now, and I've two of the rusk you relished yesterday on the pantry shelf. Just dip 'em in that bowl of milk in the window and slip 'em in the oven—it makes a tasty crust. She keeps some chocolate grated in a little blue dish in the corner, and the butter's in a crock in the well. The brown hen will show you her own egg, I'll warrant that.”

Amused, she followed all these directions, and poured herself a cup of steaming chocolate, the first meal of her own preparing since childish banquets filched from an indulgent cook. And then, the breakfast over, she would have left the kitchen, empty just then, for the mistress of it had pattered out on one of her endless little errands, had not a sudden thought sent a flush to her forehead, so that she turned abruptly at the threshold, and, walking swiftly to the water spigot, sent a stream into a tiny brass-bound tub she took from the deep window-seat, frothed it with Hester's herb-scented soap, and rinsed, and dipped, and dried each dish and cup of her own using before the old woman returned.

"It is surprising how—how satisfactory it makes one feel, really," she began hastily at the housewife's friendly returning nod, "to deal with this sort of work. One seems to have accomplished something that—that had to be done.... I don't know whether you see what I mean exactly——"

"Bless you, my dear, and why shouldn't I see?" cried the other, scrubbing the coats of a lapful of brown-jacketed potatoes at the spigot. "Every woman knows that feeling, surely?"

"I never did," she said simply. "I thought it was greasy, thankless work, and felt very sorry for those who did it."

"Did they look sad?" asked the old worker.

In a flash of memory they passed before her, those white-aproned, bare-elbowed girls she had watched idly in many countries and at many seasons; from the nurse that bathed and combed her own children, singing, to the laundrymaids whose laughter and ringing talk had waked her from more than one uneasy afternoon sleep.

"Why, no, I can't say that they did," she answered slowly; "but to do it steadily, I should think——"

"It's the steady work that puts the taste into the holiday, my mother used to say," said the old lady shortly; "where's the change, else?"

"But, of course, there are many different forms of work," she began slowly, as though she were once for all making the matter clear to herself, and not at all explaining obvious distinctions to an uneducated old woman; "and brain workers need rest and change as much—yes, more than mere laborers."

"So they tell me," said Hester's mother respectfully, "though, of course, I know next to nothing of it myself. Ann says that's what makes it so dangerous for women folks to worry at their brains too much, for she's taken notice, she says, that mostly they're sickly or cranky that works too much that way. Hard to get on with, she says they are, the best of 'em."

"Indeed!" she cried indignantly. "And I suppose to be 'easy to get on with' is the main business of women, then!"

"Why, Lord above us, child!" answered the old lady briskly, dropping her white potatoes into a brown dish of fresh-drawn water, "if the women are not to be easy got on with who's to be looked to for it, then—the children, or the men?"

She gathered up the brown peelings and bagged them carefully with the peapods.

“For the blacksmith's pig,” she said. “We don't keep one, and he gives us a ham every year.... Not that it's not a different matter with you, of course,” she added politely. “There's some, of course, that's needed by the world for books and music, and the like o' that—I don't need Hester to tell me so. There's never an evening in winter, when all's swept, and the lamp trimmed, and a bowl of apples out, and Ann and I sit with our bit of sewing, that I don't thank God for the books Hester reads out to us. One was written by a woman writer that the doctor sent us here for a long, long time—poor dear, but she was feeble! She worked with the girls at everything they did, that she could, by doctor's orders, and it put a little peace into her, she told me. You've a look in the eyes like her—there were thousands read her books.”

The guest rose abruptly.

“I never wrote a book—or did anything,” she said briefly, and turned to the door.

“You don't tell me!” the old mother stammered. “Why, I made sure by your look—what in the world made ye so mortal tired then, deary?”

“I must find that out,” she said slowly, her hand on the knob. “I—must—find—that—out!”

And on the balcony she paced and thought for an hour, but there was no calmness in her forehead till the afternoon, when alone with Hester's mother—for the daughters did not return all that day—she worked with pressed lips at their tasks, picking Ann's evening salad, sprinkling cool drops over Hester's fresh-dried linen brought in by armfuls from the currant bushes, spreading the supper-table, pressing out the ivory moulded cottage cheese and ringing its dish with grape leaves gathered from the wellhouse.

So intent was she at these tasks that she heard no footsteps along the grass, and only as she put the fifth chair at the white-spread table (for the old mother had been mysteriously firm in her certainty that they should need it) did she turn to look into the keen brown eyes of the wise physician who had left her weeks ago in the bed above them. He gave her a long, piercing look. Then:

“I thought so,” he said quietly. “We will go back tomorrow, you and I—I need your bedroom.”

Through the open door she caught a quick glimpse of Ann and Hester half supporting, half carrying up the stairs a woman heavily veiled in black crape. Hester did not join them till late in the meal and went through the room with a glass of milk afterward. No one spoke further of her presence among them; no one thanked her for her services; all was assumed and she blessed them for it.

The doctor passed the evening with his new patient, and when she mounted the stairs for her last night she found her simple luggage in the room next hers: there was no question of helping her to bed, and she undressed thoughtfully alone. The house was very still.

Her window was a deep dormer, and as she leaned out of it for a breath of the stars she saw Doctor Stanchon stretched in her chair on the balcony, his face white and tired in the moonlight. In the chair near her, so near that she could touch it, lay the frail creature in the gray dress, black now at night.

“It is his old patient!” she thought contentedly, remembering with vexation that she had absolutely forgotten to ask the house-mother about her and why she had not

appeared, and she began to speak, when the other raised her hand warningly, and she saw that Doctor Stanchon slept.

Why she began to whisper she did not know, but she remembered afterward that their conversation, below breath as it was, was the longest they had yet had, though she could recall only the veriest scraps of it. For instance:

“But Mary and Martha?” she had urged. “Surely there is a deep meaning in that too? It was Martha who was reproved——”

“One would imagine that every woman today judged herself a Mary—and that is a dangerous judgment to form, one's self,” the other whispered.

“But to deliberately assume these tasks—simply because they clear my life and keep me balanced—when I have no need to do them seems to me an affectation, absurd!”

“How can a thing be absurd if it brings you ease?”

“But I don't need to do them for myself.”

“For some one else, then?”

It was then that another veil dropped from before her.

“Then is that why, do you think, people devote themselves to those low, common things—great Saints and those that give up their own lives?”

“I think so, yes.”

“It is a real relief to them?”

“Why not?”

She fell asleep on the broad window-seat, her head on her arms, and when she woke and groped for her bed the balcony was empty.

There was no bustle of departure: a grave handshaking from the daughters, a kiss on the mother's withered, rosy cheek.

“Come back again, do,” said the old lady, and the doctor commented upon this as they sat in the train.

“That is a great compliment,” he said. “I never knew her to say that except to a patient of mine that stayed a long time (more's the pity!) with them. 'Come back,' said Mother to her; 'come soon, deary, for the house will miss your gray dress so soft on the floor.' They would have cured her if anybody could.”

“Then you don't consider her cured?” she said with a shock of disappointment. “I am so sorry. But it is surely a wonderful place—one can't talk about it, but I see you know.”

“Oh, yes, I know,” he said briefly. “I saw you would pull through in great shape there. This patient I spoke of used to tell me that the duty of her life, here and through eternity, ought by rights to be the preaching the gospel she learned there. Well—maybe it is for all we know. If I could have cured her she would have been a great—a really great novelist, I think.”

“If you could have!” she gasped, seizing his arm. “You mean——”

“I mean that I couldn't,” he answered simply. “She passed away there. I dreamed of her last night.”

The Key to the East Gate

By Josephine Daskam Bacon

Illustrated by J. Duncan Gleason

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The young doctor stamped vehemently, to warm his feet, up the marble steps, and once in the warm, flower-scented halls let a little shiver escape him. The butler was new—he was always new, the doctor thought—and actually didn't know him.

“Mrs. Allen is at bridge, sir, with a party; she asks to be excused,” he began mechanically.

“That's good!” Verrian felt tempted to say, “and I hope the girls are out too!” But all he said was: “I am the doctor. I called to see Miss Mary.”

“Oh!” Even this new butler assumed a look of burdened intelligence; he leaned toward the visitor, and, “Oh, yes, sir—Miss Mary. I understood that it wouldn't be possible for Miss Mary to see anybody, sir—but, I suppose, the doctor——”

“Certainly,” said Verrian curtly, “please send word to her nurse that I am here.”

“Yes, sir;” but the man hesitated even as he took the hat held out to him; “yes, sir, but—but—it isn't Doctor Jarvyse, is it, sir?”

A slow, dark red spread over Verrian's forehead.

(“So they've sent for Jarvyse! Well, I might have known. Nice, tactful crowd, aren't they?”)

He scowled slightly and set his jaw.

“No, I'm Doctor Verrian,” he said; “Doctor Jarvyse is coming later, I suppose. Kindly let Miss Jessop know that I am here, will you? I haven't much time.”

The man sped swiftly down the hall, after depositing his hatless charge in a blue satin reception-room, and Verrian stared, unseeing, at the old Chinese panels and ivory figures that dotted its walls and tables. The strong odor of freesias and narcissus hung heavy in the room; the roar of the great, dirty, cold city was utterly shut away, and a scented silence, costly and blue and drowsy, held everything.

Presently the nurse stood before him, smiling, and he saw that her usual modish house-dress was changed for the regulation white duck and peaked cap of her profession.

“What's all this?” he asked, and she shrugged her broad shoulders.

“She told me to put it on today. 'You're really a nurse, you know, Miss Jessop,' she said, 'and if I require one it might as well be known.' Of course I had it here, so I got it right out. Poor Miss Mary!”

“I see they've sent for Jarvyse?”

She nodded uncomfortably.

“Then it's all over but the shouting, I suppose?”

Again she shrugged. The fatalism of her training spoke in that shrug, and the necessity for taking everything as it comes—since everything is bound to come!

“How is she?” he asked abruptly.

“Oh, very much the same, Doctor. I can't see much difference.”

“But you see a little?”

She moved uncomfortably.

“I don't say that—it's nothing she says or does—but—sometimes I think she's a little more—a little less——”

“A little less normal?”

She rested, relieved.

“Yes, just that.”

Across the broad halls came a wave of sudden sound; a movement of drapery, faint clashes of metallic substances and glass, broken feminine cries, and light, breathy laughter. A difference in the air became noticeable, new perfumes floated into the little blue room, perfumes and the odor of expensive warm fur.

“You don't mean to say that you discard from a strong suit—always?”

“My dear, I had nothing but that Queen—nothing!”

Evidently a door had been opened somewhere.

The door closed instantly and again they stood alone in the heavy silence; it was as if a curtain had been lifted swiftly on some bustling, high-lighted scene, and dropped as swiftly.

“Well, am I to see Miss Mary?” he said.

“I don't know why not, Doctor,” she answered. “She always likes to see you. And I suppose you'll consult with Doctor Jarvyse, won't you?”

“I suppose so,” he agreed. “Though, of course, nobody's asked me. Is she going out in this weather?”

“No; I wish she would. She says it tires her too much. It's a pity she hates the South so.”

They walked to the tiny tapestried lift beyond the curve of the great stairs, and she pressed the ivory button that sent the car up. At the fourth floor the car settled lightly, and they stepped out.

“She's not speaking much,” the nurse warned him, “but, of course, she may for you. Very gloomy for two days she's been.”

She knocked lightly at a door and entered without waiting.

The room was very light, with bowls of cut flowers everywhere, and a pair of green love-birds billing eternally on a brass standard; they chirped softly now and then. A miniature grand piano filled one corner, and the light fell richly on the tooled leather of low bookcases and slipped into reflected pools of violet, green and blood red on the polished floor. A great tigerskin stretched in front of a massive, claw-legged davenport, and in the corner of it, away from the cheerful, crackling fire, a black-haired woman sat, tense and silent, her eyes fixed in a brooding stare. She was all in delicate, cunningly mingled tints of mauve, violet and lavender; near her neck tiny diamond points winked; magnificent emeralds, edged with diamonds, lay like green stains on her long, white hands. In her dark immobility, among the rich, clear objects scattered so artfully about the sunlit chamber she had a marvelous effect of being the chief figure in some modern French artist's impressionistic "interior." She gave a distinct sense of having been bathed and dried, scented and curled, dressed—and abandoned there between the love-birds and the polished piano; a large gold frame about the room would have supplied the one note lacking.

"Well, Miss Mary, and how goes it?" Doctor Verrian said, sitting beside her and taking her hand easily, since she failed to notice his own outstretched.

She lifted her eyes slightly to his, moved her lips, then sighed a little and dropped her lids. She might have been a young-looking woman of forty, or a girl of twenty-five who had been long ill or distressed.

"Come now, Miss Mary, I hear you've given me up—wasn't I high priced enough for you? Because I can always accommodate, you know, in that direction," Verrian went on persuasively.

Again she raised her eyes, swallowed, appeared to overcome an almost unconquerable lethargy of spirit, and spoke.

"It's no use. Doctor, all that. I've given up. It's all one to me now. Don't bother about me."

Verrian looked genuinely concerned. He had worked hard over this case, and it cut his pride to have the great specialist, with his monotonous, inflexible system, summoned against his express wish. That meant they were all tired, disgusted, sick of the whole business. They were determined to be rid of her.

"I wish you wouldn't look at it that way, Miss Mary," he said gently. "I don't believe you need give up—if you'll only make an effort. But it's fatal to give way; I've always told you that."

"Yes. You always told me that. You were always open and fair," she said wearily. "But now you see it is fatal, for I have given way. Please go," she added nervously; "I feel more like crying. Ask him to go, Miss Jessop——"

Her voice grew peevish and uncontrolled, and he bowed slightly and left her. It was too bad, but there was nothing to do. Once or twice in his brilliant career he had felt that same heavy hopelessness, realized to his disgust that the patient's dull misery was creeping over him, too, and that he had no power to help.

"Oh, well, you can't win out all the time," he said to himself philosophically, "and it isn't as if she wouldn't have every comfort. Old Jarvyse looks after them well; I'll say that for him."

The new butler met him as the lift reached the drawing-room floor.

“Mr. Edmund would like to see you a moment, sir,” he murmured; “he's—he's in the dining-room, Doctor.”

Verrian turned abruptly and plunged into the great, dim, leather-hung apartment. Edmund looked sulkier and more futile than usual, even, and the cigarette that dropped from his trimmed and polished hand had a positively insolent angle.

“Oh! How do!” he said discontentedly. “Been upstairs, I hear?”

“Yes,” Verrian answered briefly.

“Well—how about it?”

“I'm sorry to say your aunt is a little worse today; it may be, probably is, nothing but a passing phase——”

“Ah, go on!” Edmund burst out, “phase nothing! She's as dippy as they make 'em, Verrian, and I'm through with it!”

The older man looked his disgust, but Edmund scowled and went on:

“Oh, Miss Jessop knows. Upsetting a whole luncheon, and one the girls had worked over, too, I can tell you! Why, they had three reporters on their knees to hear about that luncheon!”

“Really?” Verrian inquired politely.

“Yes. I had Jarvyse called in and he's going to make his final decision today. Of course if he wants to consult we'll be glad——”

“Doctor Jarvyse and I will settle all that, thanks,” Verrian interrupted coldly. “I regret that your sisters should have been annoyed, but, as I explained to your mother, inconveniences of this sort would be bound to occur, and the only question was——”

“The only question is,” Edmund blustered, “are we to be queered in New York for good by a woman who ought to have been shut up long ago? It's up to me now, as the man of the house, and I say no!”



He dabbed his cigarette viciously into a wet ring on the silver tray beside him and filled a tiny glass from a decanter; his hand shook.

Verrian's mounting wrath subsided. The boy became pathetic to him; behind his dapper morning clothes, his intricate studs and fobs and rings, his reedy self-confidence,

the physician saw the faint, grisly shadow of a sickly middle age, a warped and wasted maturity.

“I’m sorry for you all,” he said kindly; “don’t think I don’t appreciate the strain—your mother has tried her best, I’m sure. And—and go slow on those cigarettes, Allen, why don’t you? They won’t help that cough, you know. And you told me you’d cut out the Scotch.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” Edmund assured him; “I was seasoned in the cradle, Doc! Remember the old man’s cigars?”

Verrian put on his gloves.

“Your father was a very strong man,” he said quietly, “and a hard worker. And I’ve already reminded you that he didn’t inhale. And for more years than you’ve lived, Allen, he worked outdoors. I don’t want to nag at you, but just give it a thought now and then. And let me know if I can do anything for you ever. My regards to your sisters.”

As he paused at the curb a short man in heavy motoring furs stumbled out of a luxurious landaulet and would have gone down on the treacherous pavement but for the aid of Verrian’s quick arm.

“All right, Doctor, all right”—he smiled as he braced himself for the little man’s weight—“glad I was here. I’ve just left Miss Mary—she’s getting a little unmanageable, I hear.”

“Yes, yes,” the little man panted, “she’ll do better out of the family. Yes, yes. They often do, you know; position’s perfectly anomalous here, you know—constant friction.”

“I see,” said Verrian; “let me walk up to the door with you—I’ve practiced on the steps once today. You make it——”

“Oh, clear paranoia,” Jarvyse finished the sentence promptly. “They go right along, you know. Perfectly typical. Good days—yes; of course. Everybody encouraged. Come to a ladies’ luncheon—fat in the fire directly. No keeping servants, you know. All that sort of thing. Ever show you my card catalog of women between thirty-eight and thirty-nine? No? Ask me some day.”

The younger man pressed the electric button and turned the bronze knob of the outer door, wrought and decorated like some great public tomb.

“Thanks, I’d be interested,” he said.

“You knew the brother, didn’t you?” Jarvyse went on, breathing easier in the warmth of the vestibule; “nothing out of the way there?”

“Absolutely not. He had the constitution of a bull. But I fear he’s not handed it on to his son.”

“Ugh, no! Nasty little cub. Those families don’t last. Daughters always stronger. I give him fifteen—eighteen years,” the alienist said placidly.

The inner door opened and Verrian turned to go.

“Come up and see the patient,” Jarvyse suggested over his shoulder, one glove already off. “Pleased to have you, and so would she, of course. You’ll find her much happier.”

But Miss Mary was not happier. Freed of the contemptuous brusquerie of Edmund, the thinly veiled dislike of the girls, the conscience-stricken attempts of her sister-in-law, she had felt for a time the relief of a strain abandoned, the comfort of a definite position. They had come to see her, too, and their timid overtures of interest, their obvious surprise at the ease with which this great change had been effected, their frank amazement at the luxury and silken routine in which they found her, had almost established relations long since fallen out of use.

But the novelty had faded, the visits grew fewer and shorter, the very telephone messages languished; and as she sat brooding alone in the few unoccupied half-hours that the omniscient System left her, a slow, sure conviction dropped like an acid on the clouded surface of her mind: she was alone. She was no longer a part of life as it was ordinarily lived. She and the others who shared that rich, tended seclusion were apart from the usages and responsibilities of the world that was counterfeited there. They were unreal. Through all the exercise and repose, the baths and manipulations, the music and the silences, the courtesies and the deprecations, the flowers and the birds that brought an artificial summer within the thick walls, one idea clanged like a bell through her weary mind: *This is not real!*

To Doctor Verrian, who came in the intervals allowed by his work, she seemed sadly changed. It was not that her face looked heavier and more fretfully lined; not that her voice grew more monotonous; not that she seemed sunk in the selfish stupor that her type of suffering invariably produces. He had seen all this in others, and seen it change for a better state. No; in Miss Mary the settled pessimism of a deep conviction had an almost uncanny power of communicating itself to those about her.

"She's in bad, that one," one of the gardeners said to him on a windy March day when he had hunted for her over half a dozen guarded acres, and found her sitting, in one of her heavy silences, under a sunny ledge of rock.

"She's quiet and easy, but she's one of the worst of 'em, in my opinion."

And when she turned to him a moment later and said quietly:

"Tell me once for all, Doctor Verrian, do you consider me insane?" his voice expressed all the simple sincerity of his eyes.

"Miss Mary, I tell you the truth—I don't know."

"But you know they'll never let me out?"

He braced himself.

"How can they, Miss Mary, when you won't promise——"

"Why should I promise anything if I'm not insane? Would you promise never to state your opinion in your own house?"

He shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

"You see!" he said gently.

Beyond them the gardener struggled with a refractory horse that refused to draw his load of brush and dead leaves. She stared at the group dully; six months ago she would have flinched at the great, clambering hoofs and the man's danger.

"And even if I did give up and promise everything do you believe I'd get out, Doctor?"

"I see no reason——"

“You don't need to lie to me,” she interrupted. “When I signed that paper they fooled me; it was for good. It said six months—but it was for good.”

He felt a great sympathy for her. It was hard, very hard. And yet, what they had been through with her!

“You know I'm your friend,” he said simply.

Her whole face changed. An almost disconcerting brightness flashed over it.

“I know you are,” she murmured confidingly, “and I'll tell you something because you are.”

“What is it, Miss Mary?” he said, but he sighed as he said it.

“Do you see how I'm dressed?” she half whispered.

He looked, uncomprehending, at the long, light ulster she wore.

“Underneath I'm in black,” she said softly, “a whole suit. I have a little bag packed, right under this rock, and I have ninety dollars in my bag—here,” and she tapped her waist, where a small shopping-bag dangled. “And I have an umbrella. I always sit near this gate.”

“Why do you do such things, dear Miss Mary?” he said sadly. “It does you no good—please try to believe me!”

“I never did until I had the dream,” she answered calmly. “This is the third night I've had it. I dreamed I was near some gate, and I looked down and right before me on the path I saw a key—a great, brown key! So I started to pick it up, and then I realized that I wasn't prepared, that I had no money, and that I'd just be caught and brought back. Then I woke. But I dreamed it over again the next night, so I packed the bag and got it out here under this steamer-rug, and asked for some money to buy presents when that embroidery woman came from Lakewood. And I got it, of course. I tell you because you're my friend. And you would never have put me here.”

Verrian bit his lip. A sudden disgust of everything seized him.

“No, I wouldn't have put you here—once,” he said slowly, then rose abruptly.

“Hi, there, hold him! Hold him, you fool!” he shouted. “Sit on his head!”

The gardener's horse, beyond all control, was rolling furiously, neighing and snapping. The man clung to the reins, keeping his distance, but as the animal gained his feet with a lurch his finger slipped, and he too rolled over and over down the little slope to the graveled path. Verrian was after the horse before the attendant had picked himself up, and was calling him angrily.

“Don't be alarmed, Miss,” the man panted, “the Doctor and I can settle him!” and staggering to his feet made off to the rescue. As he ran something clinked and rattled about his boots and a bunch of keys lay quiet on the gravel.

Miss Mary rose instantly, walked to them and put her foot over them; but the man was several yards away, and Verrian and the horse were struggling toward the wagon. Miss Mary stooped down and lifted the keys; all had metal tags and the one in her hand read: “East Gate, by Shrubbery.” She stepped to the ledge, drew out a fair-sized black handbag, tucked her umbrella under her arm and looked about her. The nearest gate, set in dense shrubbery, lay in a direct line with the ledge, and as she slipped behind it the two men and the horse were wiped out of her vision. With her usual quiet, long step she

reached the gate, fitted the key, turned it and opened the gate. She closed it behind her, considered a moment, then tossed the keys back among the thick, glossy rhododendrons.

“Just as I dreamed,” she muttered, “but where is the carriage?”

She stood on the edge of a road she had never seen, a quarter of a mile from the great, wrought-iron entrance that had closed behind her half a year ago, and looked vaguely about her, at the mercy of Fate. And Fate, that quaint old lady who holds you and me and Miss Mary in the hollow of her hand, smiled and gave a tiny pat and a push to the shiny little electric runabout of Miss Winifred Jarvyse, a handsome young Diana, who had never seen the inside of the great, walled estate next her father's private grounds, so that she waved her hand cordially, stopped out of pure good feeling for the absent-minded stranger in the beautiful coat, and asked if she could drop her at the station!

“Why, yes, thank you,” said Miss Mary, still vaguely.”

It's going to rain and I've no cover on,” said Winifred; “it's a pity about your coat.”

“I can turn it,” said Miss Mary, and standing up for a moment she slipped the sleeves of the ulster, shook herself slightly and sat down a totally different woman. So that when, twenty minutes later (such was the perfection of the System) a quick call to the ticket office set the agent searching for a tall woman in a light tan coat, alone, without luggage, he replied very truly that no such person had entered his station. Only a friend of Miss Jarvyse had come to the 2:15, a lady in a dark plaid ulster, with bag and umbrella, in Miss Jarvyse's car.

“I hope you found your friends—er—doing well?” said Miss Jarvyse delicately.

“Thank you, they were very well,” said Miss Mary gravely. And she took the 2:15 for New York.

Nothing further than the immediate moment was in her mind. To her thought, long confused and fleeting, the dreamlike character of this sudden change seemed natural and simple. She had no plan of campaign, no route of escape, no future. Her mind, relaxed from the quick decision that had cleared its mists in the moment of action, began to dull and settle and fall into its old rut of mechanical despair, when suddenly the voices of two women in the seat behind her rose above the jar of the train.

“She thought the dye would have to wear off gradually, but there's a place on West Twenty-eighth Street—near Sixth Avenue, I think—where a Frenchwoman guarantees to remove any dye, perfectly harmlessly, in two hours. So she had it done, and he was delighted. My dear, she was fifty, and the gray hair really was more becoming to her. Everybody thinks so. But nobody knew her—I never saw such a change at first. If you know anybody who wants it done just send them there. Some French name.”

And just as Miss Mary was drifting off to that dull world of grievances in which she dwelt habitually a new idea, as strong and definite as that which took her through the gate, caught and held her, and she wrote in a little leather book in her bag: “Twenty-eighth Street, West, near Sixth.” Some primitive instinct of caution directed her to a street car in preference to a hansom or taxicab, and she found the Frenchwoman's small, musty establishment with an ease that surprised her. Her coat, obviously imported, the elegance of her bag and umbrella, the air of custom with which she submitted to others' ministrations, brought her quick service; and in less than the guaranteed two hours she

left Madame, whose very considerable fee she paid with gloved hands, thus through sheer inadvertence concealing the one trace of her identity—her massive and beautiful rings. For no one of Doctor Jarvyse's detectives could be expected to look at an iron-gray woman in black when searching for a black-haired woman in a light tan coat. And none of them, nor the great Jarvyse, nor her maid even, knew that Miss Mary had dyed her hair for ten years!

She had eaten very lightly at luncheon, for food was tasteless to her of late, and she had been so followed, tended and directed in all the operations of life that she actually failed to recognize her sensations as those of hunger. But her unwonted exertions, the strain on her flagging brain, the stimulus of this unprecedented day, all combined to flush her cheek feverishly, and she felt strangely weak. For the first time it flashed over her cleared faculties that she must go somewhere and at once. New York was too dangerous for her; she must leave it.

A very panic of terror seized her and she half expected to hear Doctor Jarvyse's soft voice at her shoulder. She started from the shop like one pursued, and hurried foolishly on and on, in an ecstasy of flight. The streets were now dark, and Miss Mary, who had begun life in New York with her own private hansom, felt singularly out of place in the jostling crowd.

She stopped at the foot of an elevated railway station, and, more because she was pushed up the steps by the hurrying mass of humanity that scurried like ants up and down than for any other reason, climbed wearily up. As she sat, pressed against a dirty man with a bundle, a sudden inconsequent thought struck her and she removed her gloves in a leisurely way, took off her rings, dropped them into a roll of chamois-skin in the large bag, added to them a diamond cross and pendant from the lace at her neck, and put on her gloves again. The dirty man stared at her.

Then she lifted her eyes to a large sign above the car windows, and the sign read:

Avoid the Biting March Winds. You Will Find Quiet, an Even
Temperature and Perfect Seclusion Among the Pines at Restful
Lakewood. Take the Ferry at Twenty-third Street.

So that when the guard announced Twenty-third Street Miss Mary got up, went down the stairs, tumbled with surprising facility upon a crosstown car and made for the ferry. And the dirty man went down the stairs with her.

Fate put Miss Mary on just the right boat for a Lakewood special, and hunger cleared her mind to the extent of throwing her cardcase over the rail on the way across. Her umbrella and ulster she had left behind on the elevated train, not being accustomed to carry such things, and they were found by a thrifty old lady in the secondhand clothing line, who annexed them silently and forever. So that when she arrived at the Lakewood station and fell among the cabbies and hotel touts she was the perfect type of the no-longer-young spinster, unaccompanied, awkward and light of luggage, presumably light of purse. The cabbies left her unchallenged, therefore, to a lad as shy and awkward as herself, who mumbled something about "quiet, reasonable rooms," and received her yielded bag with a surprise as great as her own.

Miss Mary was by now almost light-headed from hunger and excitement. At the slightest pressure she would have told her story to the first interested stranger and thus ended her adventure most surely. But Fate led her to the door of one too full of her own trouble to heed Miss Mary's. To Mrs. Meeker she was a lodger certainly, a boarder possibly—in any event, a source of income. So long had she been waiting for Miss Mary that she fairly snatched her bag from her, and pushed her up the faded, decent stairs into the faded, decent bedroom with the cracked china toilet-set. Any one would have been welcome to Mrs. Meeker, and Miss Mary's quiet elegance and handsome traveling-bag were far beyond her hopes.

“A real lady,” she whispered to her nephew. “Ask if she'd like a little something on a tray, Georgie—I could poach that egg, and there's tea. I won't say anything about a week in advance. She looks tired to death.”

Miss Mary's famishing senses cried out loudly at sight of the meager tray, and as the egg and tea passed her lips a strange, eager sensation was hers, a delicious, gratified climax of emotion: Miss Mary was glad she was alive! She savored each morsel of the pitiful meal; she could have wished it doubled; the cheap tea filled her nostrils with a balmy odor—she was hungry.

And hardly had the food satisfied her when her eyelids fell, her head drooped forward. Approaching oblivion drugged her ere it reached her and she dozed in her chair. But some instinct forced her to her feet as the landlady appeared, and fumbling in her bag for her cardcase and pocketbook she held herself awake.

“I'd like to pay,” she murmured, “and then I'll—I'll go to bed. Will you send some one, please?”

She meant some one to undress her, but Mrs. Meeker did not know this.

“It's—it's twelve a week, with board,” she said, her eyes lighting at the yellow bills in her lodger's hand; “and—oh, dear, yes, two weeks is ample, Miss—Miss——”

“My cards are lost,” said Miss Mary fretfully; “I can't think where I left them. The man or somebody will know. Ask——”

She had started to say, “Ask the doctor,” for her memory was swallowed nearly by sleepiness, and a curious woman would have had her secret in a twinkle. But Mrs. Meeker was too thankful to be curious.

“Certainly, Miss—Miss——”

“Miss Mary,” said the other, yawning, and the landlady repeated: “Yes, Miss Merry. Can't I help you, you being so tired and all?”

“And she stuck out her feet for her shoes just like a baby,” she confided to Georgie later. “She went off before I got her undressed, really; her folks ought to have sent some one with her, worn out as she was! You go around the first thing in the morning and tell the agent I've got a fine boarder, and more expected. I feel real encouraged.”

And all that night and all the next day Miss Mary slept dreamlessly for the first time in years without a drug to help her.

It did not seem unusual that Mrs. Meeker should have unpacked her few things and laid them in the drawer of the battered bureau; some one always unpacked her things.

And when, strangely weak and relaxed, she lay for three days more and ate dutifully from the tray, dozing betweenwhiles, nobody questioned her.

On the fourth day she woke into a gray, despondent world again. The old, angry, purposeless tears beset her and she felt that terrible dumbness settling over her. She had long ceased to fight it now; she only wondered what Mrs. Meeker would do with her. But she never knew what Mrs. Meeker would have done, for when the tired, drudging little woman brought her breakfast-tray she held it in dingily gloved hands; she was dressed for a journey.

“My brother's down with a stroke,” she said abruptly—“Georgie's father, and wants to see me. I'll have to nurse him, prob'ly, and I s'pose his sending means he's friendly again. It may just be I won't need to come back, and I'm glad, of course, for I'm worth my keep to him any day, and he'd ought to have took Georgie long ago. I'll soon know, and I'll write you; and what I wanted to ask was, would you be willin' to wait till I find out? It might be only temp'ry, and then I'd be sorry to lose a boarder. Will you stay till you hear anyway?”

Miss Mary nodded dumbly. She could not speak and she was ashamed that she could not; she had never been ashamed before.

“That's good,” said Mrs. Meeker quickly, “and the lady next door'll give you meals. I'll settle with her—Mrs. Palmer. Her board's good, and I'll only charge you five for the room. That makes a month you've paid for. D'you see?”

Again Miss Mary nodded.

“Then I'll get right off. It's Philadelphia I'm going to, and I'll write you as soon's I know. But I count on you to stay.”

“Yes, I'll stay.”

Miss Mary forced the words harshly and it seemed that they would tear her lips, so hard they came. But they came, and they sufficed for Mrs. Meeker, who went out of her solitary lodger's life as quickly as she had come into it, for Miss Mary never saw her again.

On that day she dressed herself slowly, and, with a certain clumsiness, took her little shopping-bag, and bought, with economy and taste, a very fair outfit of simple clothing for the fifty dollars she had gained on the strength of the pedler of embroideries; she passed the pedler's very shop on her way. Underwear, a black dress, rubber overshoes and a plain umbrella—nothing was forgotten.

“When my money is all gone I will begin to sell the jewelry,” she thought, for she knew that she could live comfortably for the rest of her life on less than the value of the emeralds and diamonds.

In the bustle of going to the strange dining-room for luncheon, whither she was summoned by a slatternly waitress, she forgot completely that on this day she had sworn to stay alone in her room, to conceal from strangers her malady of melancholy dumbness.

“But I'm not that way—I'm not!” she whispered to herself in amazement; “why, I talked to the clerks all the morning!” And so she had, and none of the dozen at Mrs. Palmer's table that noon remarked anything further than that Miss Merry seemed a quiet, shy sort of person with a tendency to vagueness and little idea of passing the butter-dish.

She sorted and arranged her purchases all the afternoon; the little roll of chamois-skin she kept carefully in the wrist-bag, which never left her arm.

At dinner Mrs. Palmer took her aside, and with the touch on her arm Miss Mary's blood turned to water. "She knows about me!" she thought, and nearly fell to the ground from weakness.

"I'm sorry I startled you," said Mrs. Palmer; "Mrs. Meeker said you weren't any too strong, I remember. I only wanted to say that I've sent three more roomers over to your house—she'll be only too glad, I know. You don't mind, Miss Merry?"

"No, I don't mind," she answered, and her heart gave a great pump of relief.

"It'll be more comfortable at night, too," said Mrs. Palmer. "That makes the four rooms full now, and I'll see that your room gets done up every day with the others. I presume we'll hear from her soon."

The next day she approached Miss Mary with an open letter in her hand.

"Mrs. Meeker's to live with her brother, now he's paralyzed," she announced. "She's sent me a check for the rent, and you've paid twenty-four dollars, I see. I'm going over to pack up her stuff, and she'll sell me the rest reasonable enough. I'm going to take her house too. There's a new roomer come today. I think I'll put him in her old room. Or if you"—with a shrewd glance at Miss Mary—"wanted to economize at all I'd rent you hers for four dollars and give this gentleman yours. And I'm usually paid in advance, so if you could make it convenient——"

"I'll attend to it," said Miss Mary, "but I'll keep the room, I think. I don't like change."

She went up to her room, and Doctor Jarvyse would have been amazed at the easy quickness of her gait. She had it all planned now—the diamonds should go first, and then she would buy some fruit and a plant for her room. She liked her room very much; she did as she pleased in it and no one spied on her or suggested ways of passing the time. Was it some faint memory of her room as a girl, before her brother made his great fortune, that found this dull, half-worn chamber so homelike and soothing? Every afternoon she dusted it, as the chambermaid suggested most ladies expected to, and once she had turned the mattress and made the bed when the girl felt ill. It gave her a sense of competence and executive ability.

Now she went to the little chamois-skin roll, unpicked the tight knots carefully, opened it—and dropped on her knees. The roll was empty. On the compartment where the diamond cross had fitted stretched a soiled, streaked thumb-mark; mechanically she sniffed at it—it smelled of tar. The dirty fellow with the bundle who had followed her down the elevated steps had smelled of tar, too, had Miss Mary but remembered it.

Well, it was over. She never had a moment's doubt. She had no means, she could not starve, nobody would keep her, and she must go back to Doctor Jarvyse. She groaned in anguish as she looked about her dear, safe room and thought of the horrible luxury of that guarded prison, the birds and the flowers, and the cruel kindness of those strangers who knew every corner of her bureau, every word of her letters. Still it must be. The Allens would never take her back, and after this she would be watched as never before. It must be.

She met Mrs. Palmer on the threshold of what she had begun to call her home. Mrs. Palmer looked worried and spoke sharply to the untidy cleaning-woman behind her.

“Now I do hope I can trust you,” she said, “for I can't stay here to watch. Three new gentlemen for meals and I have no table for them! And this whole house to be cleaned! And not a girl to be hired in the town! I wish I had another room—I could rent it this afternoon.”

“You can have mine,” said Miss Mary quietly; “I have no money and I must go.” Mrs. Palmer looked shrewdly at her.

“What made you think you had before?” she asked.

“I had some valuable jewelry; I expected to sell it. It must have been stolen before I got here. I have nothing here to pay with, but I can send it back to you from New York.”

“Folks rich?” asked Mrs. Palmer.

Miss Mary nodded carelessly. That people should be rich was nothing to her, and the practiced landlady saw this in a twinkling; no protestations could have proved so much.

“But you don't get on well, I s'pose,” she suggested.

“No. We don't get on well,” Miss Mary repeated dully.

“I guess it's often so,” said the other.

Her placid acceptance of these facts was very comforting to Miss Mary. She did not realize how different she herself was from the vague, scared woman of a week ago; nor how her quiet, well-dressed taciturnity impressed Mrs. Palmer.

“You find this agrees with you here, don't you?” the landlady asked, tapping her teeth with a key thoughtfully.

“Oh, yes, I like it here. I would have liked to stay.”

“Well, Miss Merry, how'd you like to stay and help me?” said the landlady. “To tell the truth, I've bit off more than I can chew, as they say. I never had such a run of boarders, and it's all the girl can do to look after the other house. What keeps my people is the cooking, you see, and that I do mostly myself. I'm not fit to talk to the ladies and gentlemen, with my hair all stringy, and smelling of cooking. I know it well enough. I had some thought of asking Mrs. Meeker to go in with me, and to look after this house and take the head of the table and keep the books. But you could do it if you wanted, and you'd look more—more—not that Mrs. Meeker wasn't a lady, of course, but—well, some people look the part better than others.”

Miss Mary's brain whirled. The head of the table! The books! It was impossible. Why, the woman didn't realize that she was talking to a—a—Patient, then! (They were never called anything but “patients” at Doctor Jarvyse's.)

“I—I'm afraid I haven't the experience,” she began tremulously; “I—sometimes my head—I can't always talk to people——”

“Oh, you talk enough,” Mrs. Palmer interrupted kindly. “That's just what it is; some talk too much. Mr. Swartout (that's the literary gentleman in brown—the one with the gray mustache) said you were so quiet and dignified. You know you sat at the end today at breakfast, and he said to me it would be pleasant if you kept that place. That's what put it into my head, really. And I guess you've had experience enough. Miss Jenny,

who went with you through the store when you bought those clothes (I know her, you see) said she'd never seen fifty dollars used with more judgment nor made to go further. I noticed what she said." She nodded shrewdly, as one who knew her world. "Well, I don't want to urge; but will you, or won't you? I'd give board and lodging and—say—twenty-five a month, until I could do better. The Palmer House has just got to the point where there'll have to be a change, or it'll get to be second class."

"Very well, I will try," said Miss Mary huskily, and in a moment she was alone, for Mrs. Palmer was half across the side yard.

"Just boss that woman, then, and see if she can get the house clean by evening," she called over her shoulder. "I leave her to you, Miss Merry, and it's a weight off me, I can tell you!"

If Miss Mary had paused to think she would have collapsed into tears and sent for the doctor; but she could not stop, for the cleaning woman addressed her briskly:

"I suppose everything better come right out and get a good beating?" she said, shouldering her mop, and Miss Mary controlled her quivering lips, pressed her hands to her head, which must not—could not—fail her now, and agreed.

Late in the afternoon Mrs. Palmer dashed over, her hair flying, her dress untidy.

"Well, how'd you get along?" she began, but paused in the doorway of the fresh, aired house, taking in at one eagle glance the white curtains behind shining panes, the polished woodwork, the rearranged furniture.

"I guess that cleaning-woman met her match," she announced dryly. "You must be nearly dead, Miss Merry! And all ready for dinner too! I've had a clean tablecloth put on, and what do you think that Delia said? 'I'll just rub out me apron an' press it off,' she said; 'for if she's to head the table I can see she'll be particular!'"

Nothing could have kept Miss Mary up but the fact that her own room was yet uncleaned. The lust of soap and water had entered into her, and she ate and answered and passed the butter-dish like one in a dream, looking forward with the last of her strength to sleeping in an immaculate chamber. And at half-past one in the morning she did so. The warm bath in the painted tin tub was a luxury she had never imagined; as the sheets received her tired body, aching in every joint, she tasted, for the one moment before sleep blotted out consciousness, the ecstasy of earned rest after steady, worried toil, and it was very sweet. Privilege of the clumsiest hod-carrier, it was utterly new to Miss Mary, and she in her innocence thought it was the prospect of "board and lodging and—say—twenty-five dollars a month!"

She did not know that during the afternoon she had hummed unconsciously a song of her early girlhood; nor that the blood, long stagnant, that had raced through every vein as she stooped and beat and lifted and cleansed, was driving the crawling vapors that had so long plagued and confused her from that mysterious gray tissue in her skull.

Nor did she know that the flowers on the table, the fresh chintz covers for the worn lodging-house furniture, so recklessly provided by her, the quick neatness of an apotheosized Delia, and the gentle, reserved welcome of the new housekeeper herself, were lifting the commonplace boarding-house to a higher and still higher level. She only knew that she worked harder and harder, and never wept, nor shuddered, nor looked out

of black apathy into a cruel, tantalizing world whose inhabitants had evil thoughts of her and wished and worked her ill.

“It's just as I always say,” Mrs. Palmer observed one afternoon in May, as, resting in frank gingham and enveloping apron, she permitted herself the luxury of a cup of tea in Miss Mary's own room, “what is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. I had a gift for cooking since I was ten, and there's little I'll thank a French chef to tell me, Miss Merry. But I can't impress the boarders. I never could. And I can't get the work out of servant girls without screaming at 'em—never could. And look at you! Every man of 'em—that we wanted—coming up two dollars a week like gentlemen. And all for the privilege of having this house 'bachelor.' I thought they would. And every man Jack of 'em booked for November first again. I tell you what, Miss Merry, we'll paint both houses this autumn, and I wouldn't wonder, what with this spring being so backward and the season so long, if we could paint and paper inside right through, would you?”

“No,” said the housekeeper, rocking gently, luxuriating in the half-hour rest after a hard day on her feet with one servant gone. “No, I wouldn't. That would be nice. I have something saved. You can take that.”

“Look at you!” cried Mrs. Palmer, “saving on thirty a month! We'll pretty near go halves, Miss Merry, from next November. What's bred in the bone, as I said—you were born for the business!”

And the sister of Hiram Z. Allen, late captain of finance, blushed with pleasure.

It was in March of the next year, as she sat at her neat desk in the little room they had made into an office when they created a sun-parlor out of the side veranda, that Delia, now responsible head of three maids, ushered a gentleman in to her.

“The doctor, Miss Merry, that came yesterday about the rooms for his patient in the cottage,” said Delia softly; “I can't seem to get the name, ma'am.”

“Very well,” said Miss Mary, and rose, plumper by eight or ten pounds than she had been, dignified in black broadcloth, only enough of reserve and weighing of her words about her to mark her off slightly from the most of her sex and business.

“Miss Merry? I am Doctor Verrian. I have been recommended most strongly—”

She swayed before him, then sank into her chair, grasping the arms. He looked courteously alarmed, stared, stared again, then snatched her hand.

“It's not—it can't be—why, Miss Mary!”

She gasped and trembled. The year dropped off from her like a loosened cloak.

“Oh, Doctor Verrian, don't, don't tell him!” she moaned.

“Him? Him?” he repeated. “Why, Miss Mary, were you here all the time? And your hair—you were ill?”

“It used to be colored—you never knew,” she murmured. “I mean Doctor—Doctor Jarvyse.”

“But are you the one Swartout described to me—the one he's in love with? Miss Mary, it was wrong of you—I looked for months. It was cruel. And when they found the emeralds and the cross——”

“Did they find them?”

“Why, certainly—the stones were all listed, you know. Didn't you read it in the papers?”

“I never see them,” she said quietly. She had gathered herself together for what must be the struggle of her life.

“Will you tell him? I can't go back. I'd die first!” she cried.

“But why should you go back?” he asked in amazement. “Surely you'll let them know? They gave up hope long ago. You needn't go back to them if you're happy here, of course; and, indeed, I wouldn't, Miss Mary——”

“I don't mean go back there,” she interrupted gently. “I mean to the—to— Doctor——”

He stared.

“You know, of course, what's the matter,” she said quietly, “but nobody here does. They think I'm—I'm like anybody else. I don't mind any more, since I've been so busy. I haven't had time to worry over it. But still I know it. And so I told Mr. Swartout it would be impossible. It wouldn't be right.”

Verrian seized both her hands.

“For Heaven's sake, Miss Mary, what do you think's the matter with you?” he cried, his voice breaking in spite of himself.

“Isn't it so?” she queried wistfully. “Do you really mean it? But who cured me then?”

“If you are the wonderful person I've been hearing about all this time from Swartout,” Verrian said, trying to speak lightly, his gray eyes firm on her anxious brown ones, “I should say that working for your living did it, Miss Mary!”

And it may be he was right—as a diagnostician he has been widely commended.

Black Hollow

By Zona Gale

Illustrated by Lucius Walcott Hitchcock

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I hope, Calliope," says Postmaster Silas Sykes to me, "that you ain't in favor of women suffrage."

"No, Silas," says I, "I ain't." An' I felt all over me a kind of a nice, wild joy at sayin' a thing that I knew a male creature would approve of.

Silas, that keeps the post-office store, was deliverin' the groceries himself that day, an' acceptin' of a glass of milk in my kitchen doorway. An' on my kitchen stoop Letty Ames was a-settin', stitchin' away on a violet muslin breakfast-cap.

"At school," she says, "everybody was for it."

"I know it," says Silas, gloomy. "The schools is goin' to the dogs, hot-foot. Women suffrage, cleanin' pupils' teeth, cremation—I dunno what all they're holdin' out for. In my day they stuck to 'rithmetic, an' toed the crack."

"That ain't up-to-date," says Letty, to get Silas riled. It done it. He waved his left arm angular.

"Bein' up-to-date is bein' up to the devil!" he begun, raspish, when I cut in, hasty an' peaceful.

"By the way, Silas," I says, "speakin' o' dates, it ain't more'n a year past the time you aldermen was goin' to clear out Black Hollow, is it? Ain't you goin' to get it done this spring?"

"Oh, dum it, no," Silas says. "They're all after us now to get us to pavin' that new street."

"That street off there in the marsh? I know they are," I says, innocent. "Your cousin's makin' the blocks, ain't he, Silas?"

Just then, in from the shed where she was doin' my washin', come Emerel Daniel—a poor little thing that looked like nothin' but breath with the skin drawn over it—an' she was cryin'.

"Oh, Miss Marsh," she says, "I guess you'll have to leave me go home. I left Otie so sick—I hadn't ought to 'a' left him, only I did want the fifty cents."

"Otie!" I says, "I thought Otie was gettin' better?"

"I've kep' sayin' so because I was ashamed to let folks know," Emerel says, "an' me leavin' him alone. But I had to have the money—"

"Land!" I says, "of course you did. Go on home. Silas'll take you in the delivery wagon, won't you, Silas? You're goin' right that way, ain't you?"

“I wasn't,” says Silas, “but I can go round that way to oblige.” That's just exactly how Silas is.

“Emerel,” I says, “when you go by the Hollow, you tell Silas what you was tellin' me—about the smells from there into your house. Silas,” I says, “that hole could be filled up with sand-bar sand dirt cheap, now while the river's low, an' you know it.”

“Woman—” Silas begins, excitable.

“Of course you can't,” I saved him the trouble, “not while the council is runnin' pavement half-way acrost the swamp to graft off'n the wooden-block folks. That's all, Silas. I know you, head an' heart,” I says, some direct.

“You don't understand city dealin's no more'n— Who—a!” Silas yells, pretendin' his delivery horse needed him, an' lit down the walk, Emerel followin'. Silas reminds me of the place in the atmosphere where a citizen ought to be, an' ain't.

Emerel had left the clothes in the bluin' water, so I stood an' talked with Letty a minute, stitchin' away on her muslin breakfast-cap.

“I'd be for women votin' just because Silas isn't,” she says, feminine.

“In them words,” I says to her, “is some of why women shouldn't do it. The most of 'em reason,” I says, “like rabbits.”

Letty sort o' straightened up, an' looked at me gentle. She just graduated from the Moundville school, an', spite of yourself, you notice what she says. “You're mistaken, Miss Marsh,” says she, “I believe in women voting because we're mothers, an' we can't bring up our children with men takin' things away from 'em that we know they'd ought to have. I want to bring up my children by my votes as well as by my prayers,” says she.

“Your children!” says I, startled some at her words.

I donno if you've ever noticed that look come in a girl's face when she speaks of her children that are goin' to be some time! Up to that minute I'd 'a' thought Letty's words was brazen. But when I see how she looked when she said it, I sort o' turned my eyes away, kind of half-reverent. We didn't speak so when I was a girl. The most we ever heard mentioned like that was when our mothers showed us our first baby dress, an' told us that was for our baby—an' then we always looked away, squeamish.

“That's kind o' nice,” I says, slow, “your ownin' up, out loud that way, that maybe you might possible have—have one, some time.”

“My mother has talked to me about it since I began to know—everything,” Letty said.

That struck awful near home.

“I always wisht,” I says, “I'd talked with my mother like that. I always wisht I'd had her tell me about the night I was born. I think everybody ought to know about that. But I remember when she begun to speak about it, I always kind o' shied off. I should think it would of hurt her. But then,” I says, “I never had any of my own. So it don't matter.”

“Oh, yes, you have, Miss Marsh,” says Letty.

“What?” says I, defensive.

“Every child that's born belongs to you,” Letty says to me, solemn.

“Go on!” says I. “I wouldn't own most of the little jackanapeses.”

“But you do,” says Letty, “an' so do I. So does every woman, mother or not.”

She set the little violet muslin cap on her head to try it, an' swept up an' made me a little bow. Pretty as a picture she looked, an' ready for lovin'. I always wonder if things ain't sometimes arranged to happen in patterns, same as crystals. For why else should it be that at this instant minute young Elbert Sykes, Silas's son, come up to my door with a note from his mother, an' see Letty in the violet cap, bowin' like a rose?



“Would you be just as wonderful in public life as you would be in your own home—your very own home?”
he says”

While they was a-talkin' easy, like young folks knows how to do now'days, I read the note; an' it was about what had started Silas to talkin' suffrage. Mis' Sykes had opened her house to a suffrage meetin' that evenin', an' Mis' Martin Lacy from the city was a-goin' to talk, an' would I go over?

“Land, yes,” I says to Elbert, “tell her I'll come, just for somethin' to do. I wonder if I can bring Letty too?”

“Mother'd be proud, I know,” says Elbert, lookin' at her like words, an' them words a-praisin'. They had used to play together when they was little, but school had come in an' kind o' made 'em over.

“So,” says he to Letty, banterin', “you're in favor of women votin', are you?”
She broke off her thread an' looked up at him.

“Of course I am,” says she, givin' a cunnin' little kitten nod that run all down her shoulders.

“So you think,” says Elbert, “that you're just as strong as I am—to carry things along? Mind you, I don't say as clever. You're easily that. But put it at just strong.”

She done the little nod again, nicer than the first time.

“You talk like folks voted with their muscles,” says she. “Well, I guess some men do, judging by the results.”

He laughed, but he went on.

“And you think,” he says, “that you would be just as wonderful in public life as you would be in your home—your very own home?”

Letty put the last stitch in her little muslin cap, an' she set it on her head—all cloudy an' rosebudded—an' land! she was lovely when she looked up.

“Surely,” she says from under the ruffle, with a little one-cornered smile.

He laughed right into her eyes. “I don't believe you think so!” he says, triumphant. An' all of a sudden there come a-stickin' up its head in his face the regular man look—I can't rightly name it, but every woman in the world knows it when she sees it—a kind of an *I'm-the-one-of-us-two-but-don't-let's-stop-pretending-it's-you* look.

When she see it; what do you s'pose Letty done? First she looked down. Then she blushed. Then she shrugged up one shoulder, an' laughed, sort o' little an' low an' soft. *An' she kep' still.* She was about as much like the dignified woman that had just been talkin' to me about women's duty as a bow of pink ribbon is like my work apron. An' plain as the blue on the sky, I see that *she liked the minute when she let Elbert beat her—liked it*, with a sort of a glow an' a quiver.

He laughed again, an', “You stay just the way you are,” he says, an' he contrived to make them common words sort o' flow all over her, like pettin'.

That evenin', when we marched into the Sykes's house to the meetin', he spoke to her like that again. The men was invited to the meetin' too, but Mis' Sykes let it be known that they needn't to come till the coffee an' sandwiches, thus escapin' the speech. Mis' Sykes ain't in favor of suffrage, but she does love a new thing in town, an' Mis' Martin Lacy was so well dressed, an' so soft-spoken, that Mis' Sykes would 'a' let her preach feet-bindin' in her parlor if she'd wanted. Mis' Sykes is like that. Letty was about the youngest there, an' she was about the prettiest I 'most ever saw; an' when he'd got 'em all seated, young Elbert Sykes, that was the only man there, just naturally gravitated over an' set down by her, like the Lord meant. I love to see them little things happen, an' I never smile at 'em, same as some. Because it's like I got a peek in behind the curtain an' see the Eternal Purpose workin' away, quiet an' still.

Well, Mis' Lacy she talked, an' she put things real sane an' plain, barrin' I didn't believe any of what she said. An' pretty soon I stopped tryin' to listen, an' I begun thinkin' about Emerel Daniel. I'd been down to see her just before supper, an' I hadn't had her out o' my head much o' the time since. Emerel's Cottage wa'n't half a block from the Black Hollow, that was a great low place beyond the river road that half the town used as a dump-ground. It was full of things without names, an' take it on a hot day, with the wind just right, or even without much wind, and Emerel had to have her windows shut to keep the smells out of her house, and even that didn't do it. Water was standin' in the Hollow

all the whole time. Flies and mosquitoes come from it by the flock and the herd. And when I'd held my nose an' scud past it that afternoon to get to Emerel's, I'd almost run into Doctor Heron, just comin' away from seeing Otie, an' I burst right out with my thoughts all over him, and asked him if the Black Hollow wasn't what was the matter with Otie, and if it wasn't all that was the matter with him.

“Unquestionably,” says Doctor Heron. “I told Mrs. Daniel six months ago that she must move at once.”

“Well,” says I, “not havin' any of her other country homes open this year, Emerel has had to stay where she was. An' Otie with her. But what did you say to the council about fillin' in the hole?”

“The council,” says Doctor Heron, “is pavin' the county swamp. There's a good crop of wooden blocks this year,” he says, smilin'.

“True enough,” says I, grim, “an' Otie is a-payin' for it.”

“That was just exactly how the matter stood. An' all the while Mis' Lacy was a talkin' her women suffrage, I set there grievin' for Emerel, an' wonderin' how it was that Silas Sykes, an' Timothy Toplady, an' Jimmy Sturgis, an' even Eppleby Holcomb, that belonged to the common council, could set by an' see Otie die, an' more or less of the rest of us in the same kind o' danger.

Next I knew, Mis' Lacy, that was all silky movements and a sweet voice, had got through her own talk, an' was askin' us ladies to express ourselves. Everybody felt kind o' delicate at first, an' then Libbie Liberty starts up an' spoke her mind:

“I believe all you've been a-sayin',” she says, “an' hev for twenty years. I never kill a hen without I realize how good the women can do the men's work if they're put to it.”

“I allus think of that too,” says Mis' Threat Hubbelthwait, quick, “about the hotel—” She kind o' stopped, but we all knew what she meant. Threat is seldom, if ever, sober, especially on election-day; but he votes, an' she only runs the hotel, an' keeps 'em both out o' the poorhouse.

“Well, look at me,” says Abigail Arnold, that has the home bakery, “doin' man's work to oven an' to counter, an' can't get my nose near nothin' public but my taxes.”

“Of course,” says Mis' Uppers, rocking, “I've almost been the mayor of Friendship Village, bein' the mayor's wife so. An' I must say he never done a thing I didn't think I could do. Or less it was the junketin' trips. I'd 'a' been down with one o' my sick headaches on every one o' them.”

“Men know more,” admitted Mis' Fire-Chief Merriman, “but I donno as they can do any more than us. When the Fire-Chief was alive, an' holdin' office, an' entertainin' politicians, I use' often to think o' that, when I had their hot dinner to get.”

“I s'pose men do know more than we do,” says Mis' Holcomb-that-was-Mame-Bliss, reflective. “I know Eppleby is lightnin' at figures, an' he can tell about time-tables, an' he sees sense to fine print parts o' the newspapers that looks like so many doctors' prescriptions to me. An' yet honestly, when it comes to some questions o' sense, I've known Eppleby not to have any.”

“Jimmy either,” says Mis' Sturgis, confidential. “I donno. I've thought about that a good deal. It seems as if, if we got the chance, us women might not vote brilliant at first,

but we would vote with our sense. The sense that can pick out a pattern an' split a recipe, an' dress the children out o' the house money. I bet there's a lot o' that kind o' sense among women that don't get used up, by a long shot."

Mis' Timothy Toplady drew her shawl up her back, like she does.

"Well-a," she says, "Timothy's an awful good husband, but when I see some o' the things he buys for the house, an' the way he gets took in on real estate, I often wonder if he's such a good citizen as he lets on."

I kep' a wonderin' why Letty didn't say somethin', an' by-an'-by I nudged her.

"Go on speak up," I intimated.

An', same time, I heard Elbert Sykes, on the other side, say somethin' to her, low. "I could tell 'em," he says to her, "that to look like you do is better than bein' elected!"

An' Letty—what do you s'pose?—she just glanced up at him, an' made a little kind of a commentin' wrinkle with her nose, an' looked down, an' kep' her silence. Just like he'd set there with a little fine chain to her wrist.

We talked some more, an' ask some questions, an' heard Mis' Lacy read some, an' then it was time for the men. They come in together—six or so of 'em, all members of the common council, as it happened. An' when Mis' Sykes had set 'em down on the edge of the room, an' before anybody had thought of any remark to pass, Mis' Lacy she spoke up an' ask' the men to join in the discussion, an' called on Mis' Sykes, that hadn't said nothin' yet, to start the ball a-rollin'.

"Well," says Mis' Sykes, with her little society pucker, "I must say, the home, an' bringin' up my children, seems far, far more womanly to me than the tobacco smoke an' whiskey of public life."

She glanced over to the men, kind of with a way of archin' her neck; an' they all give her sort of a little ripple, approvin'. An' with that Mis' Toplady kind o' tossed her head up.

"Oh, well, I don't want the responsibility," she says. "Land, if I was a votin' woman I should feel as if I'd got bread in the pan an' cake in the oven and clothes in the bluin' water, all the whole time."

"He, he, he!" says Timothy, her lawful lord. An' Silas, an' Jimmy Sturgis, an' the rest joined in, tuneful.

Then Mis' Holcomb-that-was-Mame-Bliss, she vied in, an' done a small, careless laugh. "Oh, well, me too," she says. "I declare, as I get older, an' wake up some mornin's, I feel like life was one big breakfast to get an' me the hired girl. If I had to vote besides, I donno what I would do."

"An'," says Mis' Hubbelthwait, "I always feel as if a politician was a disgrace to be, same as an actor, unless you got to be a big one. An' how can us women ever be big ones, even if we want? Which I'm sure I don't want," she says, sidlin' a look towards the men's row.

"Oh, not only that," says Abigail Arnold, "but you'd feel so kind o' sheepish votin' for the President, away off there in Washington. I always feel terrible sheepish even prayin' for him, let alone votin'—an' like it couldn't make no real difference!

"Oh, an' ladies!" says Mis' Mayor Uppers, "really, it's bad enough to have been the wife of a mayor. If I had to vote, an' was in danger of comin' down with a nomination for somethin' myself, I couldn't get to sleep nights."

“Mercy,” said Mrs. Fire-Chief Merriman, “a mayor is nothin' but a baby in public life compared to a fire-chief. A mayor gets his night's rest. Could a woman ever chase to fires at three o'clock in the mornin'? An' if she votes, what's to prevent her bein' elected to some such job by main strength?”

“Or like enough get put on a jury settin' on a murderer, an' hev to look at dug-up bones an' orgins,” says Mis' Sturgis—her that's an invalid, an' gloomy by complexion.

An' one an' all, as they spoke they looked sidewise to the men for their approval. An' they got it.

“That's the ticket!” says Timothy Toplady, slappin' his knee. “I tell you, gentlemen, we got a nice set o' womenfolks here in this town. They don't prostitute their brains to no fool notions.”

There was a little hush, owin' to that word that Timothy had used kind of uncalled for, an' then a little quick buzz of talk to try to cover it. An' in the buzz I heard Elbert sayin' to Letty:

“You know you think of yourself in a home—afterward—and not around at polls and things, Letty.”

“You don't have to board at the polls because you vote there, you know,” Letty says; but she says it with a way, with a way. She said it like a pretty woman talkin' to a man that's lookin' in her eyes an' thinkin' how pretty she is, an' she knows he's thinkin' so. An' you can't never get much real arguin' done that way.

It always kind o' scares me to see myself showed up—an' now it was like I had ripped a veil off the whole sex, an' off me too. I see us face to face. Why was it that before them men had come in, the women had all talked kind o' doubtful an' suffrage-leanin', an' then had veered like the wind the minute the men had come on the scene? Mis' Toplady had defied Timothy time after time, both public an' private; Mis' Hubbelthwait bosses her husband not only drunk but sober; Mis' Sturgis don't do a thing Jimmy wants without she happens to want it too—an' so on. Yet, at the mention of this one thing, these women that had been talkin' intelligent an' wonderin' open-minded, had all stopped bein' the way they was, an' had begun to say things sole to please the men. Even Libbie Liberty had kep' still—her that has a regular tongue in her head. An' Letty, that believed in it all, an' had talked to me so womanly that mornin', she was listenin' an' blushin' for Elbert, an' holdin' her peace. An' then I remembered, like a piece o' guilt, sensin' that nice wild feelin' I myself had felt that mornin' a-denyin' women suffrage in the presence of Postmaster Silas Sykes. What in creation ailed us all?

What in creation! Them words sort o' steadied me. It looked to me like it was creation itself that ailed us yet. Creation is a thing that it takes most folks a good while to recover from.

I remembered seein' Silas's delivery boy go whistlin' along the street one night, an' pass a cat. The cat wasn't doin' nothin' active. It was merely idle. But the boy brought up a big shingle he was carryin' an' swished it through the air, an' says “Z-t-t-t” to the cat's heels, to see the cat take to 'em—which it done, like the cat immemorial has done for immemorial boys, delivery and other. An' once, at dusk, a big strange man with a gun on his shoulder passed me on Daphne Street, an', when he done so, he says to me “Z-t-t-t,” under his breath, just like the boy to the cat, an' just like the untamed man immemorial

has said when he got the chance. It seemed to me like men was created with, so to say, a whistle, an' a shingle, an' a gun for the huntin'. An' just as there is the lure an' the tug to be at the huntin', so there is a palpitatin' delight in bein' hunted an' flattered by bein' caught an' by bein' bound, hand an' foot an' mind.

“We like it—why, I tell you, we like it,” I says to myself, “an' us here in Mis' Sykes's parlor are burnin' with the old, original, left-over fire, breathed at creation into women's breasts.”

An' it seemed like I kind o' touched hands with all the women that used to be. An' I looked over to that row of grinnin', tired men, not so very much dressed-up, an' I thought:

“Why, you're the men o' this world, an' we're the women, an' there ain't no more thrillin' fact in this universe. An' why don't we all reco'nize it an' shut up?”

That was what I was thinkin' over in my mind while Mis' Martin Lacy said her good-night to us, an' rushed off to catch her train for the city, believin' she had made us see light. That was what I was still goin' over when Mis' Sykes called me to help with the refreshments. An' then, just as I started out to the kitchen, the outside door, that was part open, was pushed in, an' somebody come in the room. It was Emerel Daniel, in calico an' no hat. An' as soon as we see her face, everybody stopped talkin' an' stared. She was white as the tablecloth, an' shakin'.

“Oh, ladies,” she says, “won't one o' you come down to the house? Otie's worse—I donno what it is. I donno what to do to take care of him.”

She broke down, poor, nervous little thing, an' sort o' swallowed her whole throat. An' Mis' Toplady, an' we all rushed right over to her.

“Why, Emerel,” Mis' Toplady says, “I thought Otie was gettin' ever so much better. Is it the real typhoid, do you s'pose?” she ask' her.

Emerel looked over to me. “Isn't it?” she says. An' then I spoke right up, with all there is to me.

“Yes, sir,” I says, “it is the real typhoid. An' if you want to know what's givin' it to him, ladies an' gentlemen, ask the common council that's settin' over there by the wall. Doctor Heron says that the Black Hollow, that's a sink for the whole town, give it to him, an' that nothin' else did—piled full o' diseases right in back of Emerel's house. An' if you want to know who's responsible for his dyin', if he dies,” I says right out, “look over in the same direction to the men that wouldn't vote to fill in the Black Hollow with sand because they needed the money so bad for pavin' up half the county swamp.”

It was most as still in the room as when Timothy had said “prostitute.” All but me. I went right on—nothin' could 'a' kep' me still then.

“Us ladies,” I says, “has tried for two years to get the council to fill in that hole. We've said an' said what would happen to some of us, what with our pumps so near the place, an' what with the flies from it visitin' our dinner-table dishes, sociable and continual. What did you say to us? You said women hadn't no idee of town finances. Mebbe we ain't—mebbe we ain't. But we hev got some idee of town humanity, if I do say it, that share in it. An' this poor little boy has gone to work an' proved it.”

With that, Emerel, who had been holdin' in—her that's afraid even to ask for the starch if you forget to give it to her—she broke right down, an' leaned her head on her arm on the clock-shelf:

“Oh,” she says, “all the years I been givin' him his victuals an' his bath, an' sewin' his clothes up, I never meant it to come to this—for no reason. If Otie dies, I guess he needn't of—that's the worst: he needn't of.”

Mis' Toplady put her arm right round Emerel, an' kind o' poored her shoulder in that big, mother way she's got—an' it was her that went with her, like it's always Mis' Toplady that does everything. An' us ladies turned around an' all begun to talk to once.

“Let's plan out right here about takin' things in for Emerel,” says Mis' Holcomb-that-was-Mame-Bliss. “I've got some fresh bread out o' the oven. I'll carry her a couple o' loaves, an' another couple next bakin' or two.”

“I'll take her in a hen,” says Libbie Liberty, “so be she'll kill it herself.”

Somebody else said a ham, an' somebody some butter, an' Libbie threw in some fresh eggs, if she got any. Mis' Hubbelthwait didn't hev much to do with, but she said she would take turns settin' up with Otie. Mis' Sykes give a quarter—she don't like to bake for folks, but she's real generous with money. An' Silas pipes in:

“Emerel can hev credit to the store till Otie begins to get better,” he said; “I ain't been lettin' her have it. She's looked so peaked, I been afraid she wa'n't a-goin' to be able to work, an' I didn't want she should be all stacked up with debts.”

But me, I set there a-thinkin'. An' all of a sudden I says out what I thought. “Ladies,” I says, “an' all of you. What to Emerel is hens an' hams an' credit? They ain't,” I says, “nothin' but patches an' poultices on what's the trouble up to her house.”

Eppleby Holcomb, that hadn't been sayin' much, spoke up:

“I know,” he says, “I know. You mean what good do they do to the boy.”

“I mean just that,” I says, “What good is all that to Otie that's livin' by the Black Hollow, an' breathin' in all that filth?”

“Well,” says Silas eager, “let's get out the zinc wagon you ladies bought, an' let's go to collectin' the garbage again, so that it won't all be dumped in the Black Hollow. An' leave the ladies keep on payin' for it. It's real ladies' work, I think, bein' as it's no more'n a general scrapin' up of ladies' kitchens.”

Then Letty Ames, that hadn't been sayin' anything, spoke up:

“Otie's a dear little soul,” she said.

“Ain't he?” says Mame Holcomb. “Eppleby 'most always has a nut or somethin' in his pocket to give him when he goes by. He takes it like a little squirrel an' like a little gentleman.”

“He's awful nice when he comes in the store,” said Abigail. “He looks at the penny-apiece kind, and then buys the two-for-a-cent, so's to give his mother one.”

“He knows how to behave in a store,” Silas admitted. “I 'most always give him a coffee-berry, just to see him thank me.”

An' at that I plumps out with what I had said that morning to Silas:

“Why don't you fill up the Black Hollow with sand-bar sand out of the river, now it's so low?” I ask 'em.

Them half a dozen men of the common council set still a minute, lookin' down at Mis' Sykes's pa'lor ingrain. Then Eppleby Holcomb says, simple: “Well, why don't we?”

An' when one of 'em got that far, I knew that the day was most probably carried by Otie, swamp pavin' or not. An' when pretty soon Silas himself proposed a special meetin' to bring it up in, I listened like a light had come in the room. An' I sort o' bubbled up, an' spilled over at the way we was wantin' to do.

“Land, land.” I says, “ain't it splendid to think what we right here can do for Otie, an' for all the other Friendship Village folks too?”

Mis' Sykes spoke up, icy.

“Well, ladies,” she says, “I guess we've got our eyes open now. I say that's what we'd ought to hev been doin' instead o' talkin' women votin',” she says, triumphant.

Then somebody spoke again, in a soft, new, not-used-to-it little voice, an' from her chair over beside Elbert there stood up Letty Ames, an' her eyes was like the sunny places in water.

“Don't you see, Mis' Sykes,” she says, “that is what Mis' Lacy meant?”

“How so?” says Mis' Sykes, short.

I'll never forget how kind o' sweet an' shy an' unexpected an' young Letty looked, but she answered her as brave as brave:

“Otie Daniel is sick,” Letty said, “and all us women can do is to carry him in broth and bread, and nurse him. It's only the men that can bring about the things to make him well. And they haven't done it, till now. It's been the women who have been urging it, and not getting it done. Isn't it our work, too?”

I see Elbert lookin' at her—like he just couldn't bear to have her speak so—like most men can't. An' I guess he spoke out in answer before he meant to:

“But let them do it womanly, Letty,” he said “like your mother an' my mother did.”

Letty turned, and looked Elbert Sykes straight in the face.

“Womanly!” she said; “what is there womanly about my bathing and feeding a child inside four clean walls if dirt and bad food and neglect are everywhere outside for him? Will you tell me if there is anything more womanly than my right to help make the world as decent for my children as I would make my own home?”

I looked at Letty, an' looked; an' I see with a thrill I can't tell you about how Letty seemed. For she seemed the way she had that mornin' on my kitchen stoop, when she spoke of her children, an' when I felt like I'd ought to turn away—the way I'd used to when my mother showed me my baby dress, an' told me who it would be for. Only now—only now, somehow, I didn't want to turn away. Someway I wanted to keep right on lookin' at Letty, like Elbert was lookin'. An' all of a sudden I see what he see: how Letty was what she'd said that mornin' that she was, and that I was, and that we all was—a mother, right then and there, whether she ever had any children or not. And she was next door to owning up to it right there before them all, an' before Elbert. We didn't speak so when I was a girl. We didn't own up, out loud, that we ever thought anything about what we was for.

Now, when I heard Letty do it, all to once I looked into a window in the world. An', instead of touchin' hands, like I had, with the women that used to be, I 'most touched hands with other women comin' towards me, that was bein' mothers to the whole world, inside their four walls an' out, an' burnin' with a fire that wasn't no old, original, left-over

blaze, but was a new fire let down from somewheres high, an' like a new creation. An' I looked across to that row of tired men, not so very much dressed-up, an' I thought:

“You're the men of this world, and we're the women. An' there ain't no more thrillin' fact in the universe save one, save one. And that's that over there by the Black Hollow one of our children is dyin' from somethin' that was your job and ours to do, an' we didn't get together an' do it!”

“Oh, Letty,” I says out, “an' Elbert, an' all of you! Let's pretend, just for a minute, that we was all citizens an' equal. An' let's figger out some o' these things for Otie an' for everybody—just like we all had the right!”

Elbert walked home with Letty an' me, an', when we got there, I went to see if the blinds was fastened, so's to give them a minute without me. An' I heard him say to her, sort o' banterin':

“So you do think, Letty, that you're just as strong to carry things along as I am?”

“You've got more strength,” she said to him, “and more brains. But it isn't much the strength or the brains in women that is going to help when the time comes, it's the—mother in them.”

Elbert answered, after a minute:

“You may be right, and you may be wrong,” he said, “but Letty—Letty, what a woman you are!”

I was just coming round the corner of the house, and Letty stood facin' me. An' I see her look up at him, all of a sudden, just as she had looked at him that morning—just for a minute, and then dip down the brim of her big hat. I donno what she answered him. I didn't care. For what I see was the old, wild joy of a woman bein' approved of by a male creature. An' I knew then, an' I know now, that that won't never die, no matter what.

Elbert put out his hand.

“Good-night, Letty,” he said.

She gave him hers, and he closed lightly over it his other hand.

“May I see you to-morrow?” he asked.

“Oh, I don't know,” said Letty. “Come and see if I'll see you—will you?”

He laughed a little, looking in her eyes.

“At about eight,” he promised. “Good-night.”

And I got the key out from under the mat to a tune inside me. Because I'd heard—and I knew that Letty had heard—that tone in Elbert's voice that is the man tone—I can't rightly name it, but every woman in the world knows it when she hears it; a tone that says: I-want-you! And-if-I-have-my-way-you-and-I-are-going-to-live-out-our-lives-together.

And I knew then, and I know now, that that tone won't ever die, either. And some day, away off in a new world, right here on this earth, I think there'll be a wilder joy in being men and women than all the men and women up to now have ever lived, or dared, or dreamed.

When Dreams Begin:

The First Chapter of a Four-Part Story

By Zona Gale

Illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens

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“She slipped down his chair and knelt beside him 'Truly,' she said wonderingly, 'will you trust me like that?’“

Lucia looked up at Marshall, at the face so near her own, with a sudden amazement at the finality of the moment. So it was to be Marshall!

Only a little while before he had been standing by the fireplace talking about the pleasant merits of dull green tiling. He had said that a driftwood fire with its elusive lights should have about it a green or a blue tiling, like a mat. Then she had crossed the room and opened the brass box to see it there were more wood to throw on the waning blaze. And on the hearth-rug Marshall had gathered her in his arms as if she had always belonged there. Now she had let him know something of how much she cared. And at once it was as if her own future had entered the room from just without, where it had been waiting.

So it was to be Marshall! There was to be for her no longer any of the romance and mystery of life's unfolding. From among all men he was suddenly emerged to be the center of the rest of life. They would go everywhere together, never be considered separately, in all probability one would be with the other when he died. It would be that way forever and ever.

“So it is to be you!” she said.

“It always has been you,” he answered simply.

She turned this in her mind. With her it had by no means always been Marshall. Not that it had ever been, definitely, anyone else, but it had simply not been Marshall. It had been somebody dark or somebody from far away—but not Marshall. And now, it appeared, it would be he forever.

Marshall was going happily on about her. “To think,” he said raptly, “to think it's now. I wonder if you can possibly know how many times I've imagined this—just this. I mean holding you in my arms and telling you—things.”

“What things?” she asked.

“Little old things that I've known a long time and that you haven't,” he answered soberly,

“Like what?” she wondered.

“Like—oh, like about the first time, the first minute I knew it would be you if I could make you love me.”

So the joyous talk went on. And all the time Lucia was looking at Marshall in the same faint amazement. So it would be he, now—forever and ever and ever.

The long room was mellow with shadow and ripe with firelight, as if its mere beginning of furniture and angles suddenly brought to a fine maturity by night. It was a full room, a room full in the fashion in which occidentals are content to pile up warm fabrics and picturesque woods, with repoussé and marble to bring in new values of light, and palms to lend new lines to corners. Not an artistic room, but a luxurious, livable, self-centered room, concerned with what it thought about folk and not with what folk thought about it. Lucia, in dull blue that glinted with gold and broke into soft-colored borders, was curiously like the room. If that room could have had a future, it would have dreamed of it as concerning chiefly itself alone, much as Lucia had dreamed of hers.

And now, she was saying to herself, in the curve of Marshall's arm, her dreaming was done. All the mystery and possible adventure of her life were past. She would never again enter upon so much as an evening's pleasure with any sense of imminent romance. She was giving all this up to Marshall.

Marshall was saying: “... the utter sense of contentment that I have when I am with you. My dear, it's as if all the other times are the middle of a sentence and you are the period, the long rest.”

She drew away from him, turned to face him, pushed him a little from her, her hand lying on his arm. “Marshall,” she said, “I want to talk to you seriously.”

He was looking down at her hand on his arm. “Lucia!” he exclaimed, “you leave it there, bless you, as if it belonged there.”

“Seriously, Marshall,” she repeated, taking away her hand.

“Go on, if you like,” he said gravely. “But how can I be serious? I'm getting used to seeing your hair—there, where it waves. To seeing it close by, you know, Lucia.”

But this she hardly heeded. "Dear," she said, "are you sure? And sure that you're sure? And sure of that—and of all the sures—" She laughed a little at herself. "Oh, are you sure you want to be with me always?" she said wistfully.

His eyes came swiftly to hers. "That means," he said soberly, "that you wonder if you want to be always with me."

She caught his hand in quick compunction, and held it against her cheek. "I like your hand to be there," she said. "I like to be with you. I'm glad when I'm with you, and I want you all the time you're away. Only—"

He would not let her go on. "Sweetheart," he said, "it's what two always wonder—a little—when they love each other. Well, not always, perhaps, but—I understand. We'll forget it all presently. And see how much besides we have to talk about."

There was this and that happy high light of the future to plan: The vacations, the journeys, the work, the furnishings, the time for friends. There were gay accusations, happy confessions, reminiscences fragrant with half secrets from each other. There was the adventure of talking together like this, in the sheer unwontedness of any sudden paradise. But, all the time, there was for Lucia that amazed, withholding consciousness of surprise that something somehow had ended; that it was inevitably, irrevocably to be, from now on—Marshall.

Yet when he had gone then was no denying the tenderness that folded him, followed him, left the room empty and the hours empty until he should come again. In that moment Lucia said to herself that it was only the unwontedness that troubled her, that the new bondage would in time be sweeter than the old expectant freedom, that she had done well not to finish telling Marshall all that she had meant.

She screened the dying coals and switched off the electric light. Immediately the room became like another place. It was that goblin time of year when the open fire and the open window are like mere doors leading from opposite but wholly compatible wonders. In that late April leaves, almost full-spread, made shadows on the open casement. And straying in from the jonquils and tulips of the window-boxes came little guests of fragrance. Abruptly the big, indolent, beautiful room seemed to slip from its wonted body and to show itself like some dreaming spirit of a place, silent and living.

"Lucia!"

The little figure in the doorway, saying Lucia's name, seemed to flower from the faint light of the room. But the voice was positive enough and vibrating with some joyous message.

"Clare dear!" Lucia said in surprise, "don't you ever go to bed? Why aren't you asleep?"

The little cousin who lived with Lucia and her mother—called little for loving," Lucia said, since Clare's twenty years had made her the taller and stronger of the two—took Lucia in warm arms. "Oh, honey dear," Clare said impetuously, "I don't believe I shall ever sleep again. I don't indeed. I can't sleep. I heard Marshall go—Lucia, I am so happy I shall die if I don't tell somebody. And I'm so miserable you've got to tell me what to do!"

They stood at the window—somehow it was this aperture to wonder and not the fireplace that Clare wanted. Lucia, laughing a little, but tenderly, could see the girl's face in the pale light, and its youth and radiance told their story.

“Lucia,” Clare said, “if you loved somebody very much, could you bear not to be engaged to them?”

“To them?” said Lucia. “To how many? And, my dear child, do 'they' love you? And who are 'they'—”

“Oh,” Clare said, “I don't care anything about that and I hoped you wouldn't. At least—of course, he loves me. Of course, he does. But oh, Lucia, you know mother says I'm too young to be engaged. But I can't be with him and love him and not be engaged to him. And I've got to be with him, Lucia.”

“See, dear,” said Lucia soothingly, “this, then, will all be about Howard, I suppose?”

“Why, yes,” Clare replied in surprise. “Who else is there?”

“Nobody,” Lucia assured her gravely, “nobody on earth, Clare. But oughtn't you to wait a little, as mother wanted?”

“I have waited,” Clare said passionately. “I'm not engaged, so far as saying it goes—I never, never will be, without mother. But what difference does saying it make, Lucia, when all of me but just saying it is engaged to him? I can't help knowing it. Neither can he. I—I love him so, Lucia—I don't suppose you can possibly imagine. Why, the other night when he was here—”

She leaned above the jonquils of the boxes, so that Lucia could not see her face, and told this and that trivial happening, which pulsed with immemorial meaning.

“—and you know, dear,” she ended, “it isn't as if Howard were somebody else. I can see just how mother might feel then. But he's so splendid—he's going to be a great lawyer some day, and fight wrong things and help little children—oh, he talks to me about it and I can help, too. Think what it will make of my life, what I can do for other people—”

“Dear child,” Lucia thought yearningly and bent to her. “Clare,” she said, “you don't mean that you want to be married now?”

“Now?” Clare repeated, startled. “No, of course not. Why, I don't think we ought to marry for years. Not till Howard's through school and has a practice and can support me all himself.”

“Ah, well,” Lucia exclaimed, “then why all this troubling? Go your way and see what time brings! If you don't think you ought to marry yet—”

“But don't you understand, Lucia?” Clare cried. “I can't bear it—this going about with everybody and their not knowing that Howard and I care.”

Lucia stared. “But you're just out,” she said. “I should think you would want a little time when the rest didn't know!”

Clare shook her head. “I don't want to be silly and twosy, of course,” she said. “I'll go with everybody I like—but I want them all to know. Why, Lucia, what fun is there, what real fun, in that kind of thing, when you love somebody else?”

Lucia stood up in the moonlight. And when Clare looked up in her face, Lucia was merely looking down at her wonderingly.

“Clare, dear,” she said, “that is charming—but you know, dear, you are young—aren't you, now? I'm ten years older than you are. And I don't know but I'm young, too! So don't do what I say. Talk it over with mother again and do what she says. But oh, my dear little girl, how can you be so sure?”

Clare, closing the window, let her hand lie for a moment on Lucia's hand. “When you love somebody, Lucia,” Clare said simply, “you'll know—you'll know!”

In her bed, Lucia, lingering tenderly and tolerantly on Clare (“Bless her, how young, how young she is!” she thought, inexpressibly touched, and nothing more), let her thoughts come back at last to Marshall, with a sense of sinking into cherishing arms. But at once the old-new consciousness harassed her.

Yes, in that moment in which she had promised herself to Marshall it was as if her own future had entered the room from without, where it had been waiting. She saw herself down the years:

At the altar with Marshall. In the carriage with Marshall. On a journey with Marshall. Selecting a home, furnishing it, occupying it with Marshall. Living all the homely details of householdry, of work-time—still with Marshall. In spite of herself the prospect thrilled her, possessed her, filled her with the sense of his dearness and nearness. These things, with Marshall, would mean her happiness. But what of the times that had been peculiarly her own? There would be no longer excursions with Marshall from choice, but as a part of routine. Cotillions, the theater, rides on spring mornings—no longer with Marshall as a luxury, but with Marshall as a necessity! To have every invitation come addressed to her and Marshall. To have every letter, every little philanthropy, every little investment subject to Marshall, forever and ever and ever. Oh, was this what it meant to love somebody? To have not only the joy of possession, of companionship, but the bondage of virtual espionage. No longer to know her own life, as a life, but only as their life; to be not only herself, but to be Marshall, too. Marshall the beloved, to be sure—but, oh, Marshall the ubiquitous! And how should she stay the beloved of him when his being with her was no longer eager choice, sought in anxious, tender haste, but a necessity now laid upon them both?

Lucia sat up among her pillows, in her little familiar room. After her marriage her mother would be living alone with Clare. Undoubtedly Marshall and she, Lucia, would for a time, until their own plans took shape, live here in this house. This very room, which was to her a retreat and to Marshall a shrine, would take on to them both the commonplaceness of a hall, a stair. And it was here that she had dreamed, had wondered, had prophesied her life delicately; and to each new experience she had then gone questioning, to see if it would verify her prophecy. But this, then, was the end of dreaming, since all prophecy lay fulfilled at last in Marshall.

She went through it all quite simply, through this which is to one woman but a dissolving thought and sigh, to another a shadow, to another, as to Lucia, a restraining hand, laid on the heart that has always beaten chiefly to the joy of living and not with its deeper pulse. And all the time the little room, that was both retreat and shrine, slept about her, curiously undisturbed at the prospect, as if it had been somehow rather better disciplined by life than are the living.

“It is impossible,” she said it to herself at last, “it is simply impossible to me. I love Marshall—I love him, and I will not take possession of his life and live with him as

if some chain bound him and held him—and me. Other women do this and chafe under it all their lives—I've seen them chafe—I know them! It's because they're young when they do it—like Clare, or else they don't think ahead. But I know—and I do think ahead. And I'm going to find—some better way.”

II.

Three times Lucia tried to share her doubting with Marshall and each time it was like laying some little puzzle before a calm dawn and expecting it to take account.

Once they were in the street—a long avenue of the town, set with comfortable gray and white and brown homes, interrupting smooth lengths of green lawn spread on either roadside. Lucia looked at the homes, at the red painted chair-swings, the willow porch-rockers, the empty milk-bottles wait, the few “pieces” washed out and flapping on the line. And she turned quite suddenly and impetuously to Marshall.

“Marshall!” she said, “suppose, when we are married, you come home to dinner some night, and I tell you that the chair-swing will have to be mended, and that the line has broken and let the clean clothes down in the dirt, and the milkman only left me two bottles instead of three. How will you like to know about these fascinating instances? And you know you'll have to listen—I'll be your wife and you'll have to.”

Marshall showed to fine advantage on the street. He swung along, his face somewhat lifted, his eyes alive and intent as if the moment were a thing in itself and not merely a means to a destination. He was a man one could be proud of. At her words he broke into sudden laughter, compelled her look back to his, mocked her.

“Good heavens,” he said, “Lucia, how could I love you if the line broke? Or the swing squeaked? Or the milkman came a cropper? You don't think for a moment that my love could get through those?”

“But it won't be once,” she insisted, “it will be lots of days. And lots of calamities—horrid little domestic ones. Or, rather, it will be the same old calamities, infinitely repeated.”

“Hideous,” said Marshall promptly. “That's what you want me to say, isn't it? Hideous. Wouldn't you think the people in these homes would tear each other's out?”

“Laugh if you like, Mr. Blessed,” said Lucia, “but think of having to share a lot of horrid commonplaces with somebody who only sees you at your best—now. Think, Marshall—all these people in all these homes never do anything that each other doesn't know about. Or, at least we think they oughtn't to. Will you tell me how our homes ever got built on such a basis? Why didn't the commonplaces in the lives of husbands and wives stay decently separate and they not have to worry each other with the things neither cares a rap about?”

“Miss Lucia My-wife-in-a-minute,” said Marshall serenely, “I love you. If a clothes-line that concerns you should break, I'd like knowing about it. You can't bother me too much.”

“Oh, no, Marshall,” Lucia cried, “I'd love to be married to you. But I hate to think of being married to the million little housekeeping things that we both have to know about and talk over together, as if—as if—oh, Marshall, I want a home with you. But I don't

want just a place full of all the tools and machinery of living, always getting out of order—”

“If you say another word about a home with me,” Marshall said, “I shall kiss you. On the street. And if you say another word about not wanting to live in the house with me I shall sue you for breach of promise. There remains, therefore, only one thing for you to talk about. Do you love me more, or less, than on the night you said you would marry me?”

“More, Marshall,” said Lucia.

“Oh, my dearest,” he said, “don't you see that that is all we need to know?”

She was silenced, vaguely humbled; but nevertheless beset by her wistfulness somehow to keep their love free of that which should mark it by the commonplace. And when, on another day, they were leaving a service of music at a church and lingered, with the last notes of the organ, to watch the shadows slip, purpling, down the dome, all the troubled wistfulness came back to her in something that Marshall said.

“Can't you see us, Lucia,” he asked her, “coming down this aisle, or another, twenty, thirty years from now—God willing? We shall look like two somebody elses, sha'n't we? But we'll be we, all the same, and together!”

“Don't, Marshall!” she said.

“I will,” he challenged her, happily. “I say I will. It's a true game, dearest.”

“Ugh,” Lucia said, “think of it! You'll know every little narrowness of belief in my head—and every little scrap of serious thinking I've done will have come out, bit by bit, just as fast as I've done it. I sha'n't even get to know more about God, Marshall, but that you'll know just what I've felt and how much I've grown in understanding—or narrowed in belief. Oh, boy, it's horrible! It will be bad enough then to have you know just how much my gowns cost a yard—what mystery or lure is there left in a woman's clothes when a man knows, to a cent, how much they cost? But what companionship is there in a soul whose every little limitation you see and have watched and know all about?”

Marshall laughed. “You talk as if a knowledge of souls were no more precarious than information about the cost of clothes a yard,” he said.

“Why, but Marshall,” she cried, “I'm a sort of mystery to you now—soul and clothes and ideas. You don't know it, but that's partly why you love me. Twenty years from now I'll be like an old diary. I don't want to be an old diary to you! Oh, Marshall, I'm not joking! I'm afraid to risk it.”

He faced her, suddenly and gravely.

“Are you afraid of ever getting to know too much about God and life for your own enjoyment?” he asked her.

“Marshall!” she exclaimed shocked.

In the dim, empty chancel he stooped and kissed her.

“As you get to know more about love, you'll get to know more about—those other things,” he said simply. “Don't be afraid, Lucia.”

And still she thought that he did not know what she meant. Men, she reflected, never think these things through. Neither do women, but women know them through. Men, she told herself, live in the present so long as it is happy; they don't dread time enough, time and change and the worrying details that wear a woman out, make of her

someone else than the one whom a man first cared for. Then at last they understand, and it is too late to do anything but to go on without love.

So she tried a third time to make Marshall know, when one day they came in for tea and found Clare before the library fire, cuddling a little boy and feeding him with pieces of currant-cake from the tea-tray.

"It's Molly's little boy," Clare said in answer to their question. "She brought him this afternoon to see us."

The child was none too clean and was verging on raggedness, and "Molly" was problematical.

"Our old house-maid, Molly, you know," Clare explained. "The one that married the delivery boy. It's she who's going out in the country to put the house in shape for us. Becky's going, too—aren't you, Becky?"

The child looked up solemnly.

"They ain't wunst when I bit, I didn't bit a currant in my cake," he imparted.

Marshall laughed and swung the child to his knee.

"What's your name? Becky's no true name. What's your name?" he demanded.

The child, whose face was utterly, almost extravagantly, without expression, simply chewed and said not a word.

"Well, then, have it Becky," Marshall conceded generously. "But Becky what?"

The child chewed on, dumbly.

Lucia laughed out. "Do put him down," she begged, "I loathe seeing people chew. It's ignominious enough to have to do it without watching it done."

Marshall cuddled the child in his arm.

Oh, I don't know," he said, "let him help himself. I rather like stuffing him full of cake, do you know. Like to be stuffed, Becky?"

The child, chewing silently for a moment, bit generously and spoke with his mouth full and his face still expressionless.

"They ain't wunst when I bit, I didn't bit a currant in my cake," he repeated stolidly.

"I never was so appreciated in my life," Clare said; "I and my cake. Good-by, people. Send Becky out in the kitchen when you want him to go."

When they were alone Lucia stood on the hearth-rug before Marshall and the child.

Marshall," she said in a breath, "I've thought of it before—often before. Suppose—suppose there should be for us some time a little child that would be like this—stupid, silent, a boor from the cradle! Oh, it happens—I've seen it, with nice women, fine men—I tell you it happens. And they have to keep on and bring up the child, and consult and plan together over its future. Marshall, dear—I'm not the kind of woman you think I am. I dread all these possibilities that could make life ridiculous—I want to have it and our love big, and full, and free, and fine. I'm afraid—I'm afraid of a marriage that binds us, helpless, to anything the future may mean, and forces us to share each other's futures, whatever either may be, and to face them together, and to try to keep on loving each other through all the hopeless, horrid times that come—or, if we don't love

each other, that forces us to keep together anyway. All women fear it, Marshall—I believe all women fear it. Do you know how many and many are wretched not with big things, but with all the thousand gnawing, crowding little things? Do you think at all, dear heart, of the risk we run of losing all that we think we have?”

Marshall looked up at her, over the child's head.

“What do you propose?” he asked quietly.

“Do you really want me to tell you?” she asked.

He nodded. “Men and women,” he said, “have been trying to fix up some better way, now, for quite a time. Some of them have thought that they have succeeded—for a while. What's your way, dearest?”

She went back of his chair, stooped to him, laid her hand on his cheek.

“Promise not to hate me?” she exacted.

“Not immediately,” said Marshall agreeably. Then he threw back his head and gazed up at her. “Look here,” he said, “this—this new way of yours—tell me about it before you tell it to me. It doesn't mean that you've concluded not to marry me?”

“No, Marshall.”

“It means you will marry me—and that then we'll try this blessed new way of yours together?”

Yes, dear—that's what I mean.”

He laughed ringingly, confidently. “All right,” he said, “I'm not afraid. So long as you'll marry me, I'm not afraid. And I want you to tell me your way, say, along about the day we're married. Not before.”

She slipped down by his chair and knelt beside him.

“Truly,” she said wonderingly, “will you trust me like that?”

“I'll trust you like anything,” he said, and brushed her hair with his lips. “And I'll try anything you like—so long as we are together and each other's.”

The wonder in her look gave to her eyes a depth that thrilled the man, as if she meant more deeply than she knew that she could mean. For a moment he was filled with longing that she were the woman now whom that look seemed dimly to promise him, and he was impatient for the time when that woman, as he dreamed her, should stand before him, a woman beside whom this Lucia was but another child. He bent to her, slipped his free arm about her, cherished her as the child he knew her to be.

“Trust me, dear,” he said, “or trust life, if you can't trust me. Be sure life will let us love each other, if we only will!” He looked down at the little boy and smiled. “See,” he said, “this little old man has gone to sleep.”

The child's head had drooped and his long lashes lay on flushing cheeks.

“Marshall,” Lucia said, “he's not bad looking—when he doesn't chew!”

Marshall nodded. “He isn't so bad,” he said. “Look at him, Lucia. If you were his mother,” he laughed out like a boy, “I bet you'd love him to distraction even if he did chew! Lucia—kiss me!”

He looked at her, brooding over her. “On our wedding day,” he said, “you 'fess up your patent new way of life that all the world's a-seeking—and we'll try it together. Now would you mind giving me some tea? And holding the saucer permanently, so that we needn't disturb this sleeping faun?”

She looked at him, searching his heart through his mesh of light words. And her look fell before the comprehending tenderness of his eyes.

When Dreams Begin:

A Four-Part Story

By Zona Gale

Illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapter

Lucia, a thoughtful, introspective woman, is engaged to marry Marshall, and her young cousin, Clare, who is troubled by no misgivings as to the ultimate happiness of married life, is engaged to Howard, a young lawyer. Clare is eighteen years old and makes her home with Lucia and her mother. Lucia's wedding preparations proceed, the joy of them dampened by a certain fear of Lucia's that she tries to express to Marshall, but he waves her uncertainty aside and tells her they will talk it all over on their wedding-day.

Part Two

Therefore on her wedding-day, when they had dressed her, Lucia amazed them all by asking them to send Marshall to the little up-stairs sewing-room.

"Lucia," Clare cried, "you are never going to let Marshall see you before the ceremony?"

"The day you marry Howard," Lucia returned, "you two are certain to be sitting together on the veranda when the guests begin arriving. Go get Marshall, dear." "How—dandy!" Clare observed.

The room where Lucia waited was still littered with odds and ends of the preparation, and she chanced to be standing by the uncovered sewing-machine when Marshall came in. He liked to remember her so, in all her youth and wedding splendor, by the little ugly machine, with the tools of toil about her.

"Dear," she said, "I wanted to tell you now—I wanted to tell you before we're married. You made me wait till to-day, but somehow I like it better to tell you first. And look—look here!"

She drew him to the window, and they stepped through on the little upper porch which crimson and white ramblers were walling and covering as if they had sprung there for the uses of the moment. The lawn sloped to a little, idle river. All the world was shut away, veiled from them as if it were a kind of future. It was there, with his arms about her and his look beyond the future, that Lucia told him what she had meant. And when she had done, Marshall observed in the utmost surprise:

"Lucia, my darling, in this light your eyes are more brown than violet."

“Marshall!” she protested, “did you hear what I was telling you?”

“I did,” he assured her, looking at her mouth.

“Say it over to me then, Marshall—seriously.”

“You said,” he repeated obediently, “that if the time comes when either of us feels the need insistent to get away, to be free of the burden of each other's everlasting, never-failing presence, that then either of us is to be free to go away—out in the world—for as long as he needs and wants. 'To get hold of one's own life again,' I think you put it. Wasn't that it?”

Yes, that was it. That was the window, these were the wings that Lucia had made for herself. Imminent freedom, absence from each other, with no criticism, no bonds even of letters, for so long as the need called, whenever the stress and press of the mere tiresome round of daily living, the inevitability of being with each other, bade fair to make of their life the bondage that she feared.

“You don't mind, Marshall?” she said wistfully. “You do understand—that I'm trying to save for us—everything we can?”

Marshall said, “I've never seen your eyes so wonderful. Mind? Beloved, no! Because you-don't-know-what-you're talking-about!”

“Are you so sure I love you?” she asked, wondering.

“I'm sure of you,” he said. “And I love you on this porch full of roses, dear heart. But—come back inside! I want to see you, just a minute again—the way you looked there by the sewing-machine. Out here you look like my bride. In there you look like my wife.

Chapter III

That little upper porch of roses came sometimes to Lucia's mind as she sat with Mrs. Grace Maltrevors on her balcony, which that lady said made her home look as if it had a nosegay up to its face and were sniffing at it. They had been sitting so one summer morning, and Mrs. Maltrevors had been holding forth prettily on this and that.

“It's all very well,” she said at length, setting tiny tucks in a tiny skirt with extraordinary skill, “for you, who have been married two years to tell me, who have been married twenty, that I'm no idealist. Dear child, it has taken me twenty years to recognize an ideal when I see it. Up to then I'd always employed dreams instead. How many people are you asking for to-morrow night?”

Lucia, idle in a swinging porch chair, followed agilely from dreams to the little supper-party which she and Marshall were giving the next evening.

“Twelve,” she said, “besides Clare and Howard and Marshall and me. Clare comes this afternoon, and Howard in time for dinner to-night. They'll have to dine alone, bless them—Marshall and I are dining at the Hopes'—but far be it from those children to mind that.”

“Far be it!” assented Mrs. Maltrevors. “I shall love to come to-morrow night,” she added. “You and Marshall entertain like angels from heaven. Everybody else is just as keen about it, too. Lucia—don't go. Stay for luncheon. It's going to be a good luncheon, and I'm all alone.”

Lucia hesitated. The balcony was cool, both inviting and promising; and the day was bright and hot. "Ah, but I can't," she recollected, "Marshall is coming home for luncheon to-day. Besides, I've an errand or two to do for him."

"The hotter the day," Mrs. Maltrevors observed, "the more hot errands I have, in hot shops, on hot streets. Housekeeping is a dog's life—but I like dogs."

"Shouldn't you rather see than be one?" Lucia quoted absently.

"One has to be something," Mrs. Maltrevors said; "why not a doggy?"

To Lucia's surprise, when she reached home, Marshall was already there, he had up the cover of the library window-seat and was ineffectually turning over the stored piles of loose papers.

"Lucia!" he said in relief. "I've wanted you like anything. Do you know where on earth that account-book is I showed you the other night?"

"Why, it's there," she said; "I saw it afterward."

"Well, won't you just find it?" he asked abstractedly, "I tried to get you on the wire to have you send down the book and my bag, but you weren't at home. And then will you put some things in the bag, Lucia? I've got to make a train at one."

You won't be here for luncheon?" she asked.

"No—I must be in town this afternoon. I'm likely to be there for two or three days, I'm afraid," he added. "It's that Wortley matter again, you know."

"Why, Marshall," said Lucia, "but to-morrow night is our supper-party."

"The deuce," Marshall said, "I'd forgotten all about it. Well, I can't help it, dear. I'm sorry, but I can't. Nothing's ready yet, is there? Can't you postpone it?"

"Clare and Howard were to be here—" Lucia began.

"They won't care," he said. "Postpone it. That'll be the best way. Ah, that's the book. Thank you. Now the bag, dear. I've barely time, have I?"

When he had rushed away, Lucia, restoring the scattered papers to the window-seat, considered running back to Mrs. Maltrevor's for luncheon, and finally lunched alone.

So she was to postpone the supper-party. That was always an awkward thing to do. The Crews, for example, had stayed over one day to come to it. The Fearings had a guest for that day whom they had asked to bring. The Hopes were sure not to understand— Her thought broke off abruptly. The Hopes! But Marshall and she were to have dined with them that night.

She turned the circumstance in her mind. The dinner engagement was of a week's standing. It would be a party of eight to meet a distinguished man of letters who was briefly in the town, and the Hopes were delightful new-comers. She had looked forward to this evening with a sense of escape from the treadmill of little social affairs which repeated one another infinitely, in kind and in degree. If she had known the Hopes better, she might have explained. In another mood she might even have asked Mrs. Hope if she might appear alone. But what she did was to telephone to break the engagement. "We are unexpectedly prevented," she told her, "by my husband being hastily summoned to town."

It occurred to Lucia as she left the telephone that her whole house wore a pleasant look of expectation. The little drawing-room expected a guest, the dining-room a dinner, the hall a trunk. This, of course, would be because Clare was coming; even the little

garden looked expectant—of a lover, perhaps. Lucia, wandering toward the thatched summer-house, found a workman disentangling the vines from the lattice. And when, because the little corner would have been so perfect lantern-lit on the night of the party, she expostulated, the man replied that her husband had ordered the arbor to be painted that day. He had, Lucia knew, forgotten all about the party when he gave the order. And what, after all, did it matter, if the party were to be postponed? But she had not yet telephoned the postponement, and she put that aside and sank into the prospect of seeing Clare as into a place of rest.

She was on the shady north veranda when Clare's cab stopped at the door, and, rather like something bright blown by a smart wind, Clare swept up the walk and the steps and had Lucia in her arms. At twenty Clare was as lovely as a woman, yet wearing all the graces and arts of a child.

“Lucia!” she cried, “I've left my umbrella in the coach. And I think the cabman gave me the wrong change. Can anybody hear us? Oh, Lucia, isn't it wonderful that Howard and I are really, truly engaged out loud?”

To the unfolding of this news, which had come to Lucia only a few days before with the announcement of Clare's visit, Lucia listened through the next hour: the summer-house by the river at the foot of their lawn, some commonplace work which she and Howard were doing together, and then a moment when life brimmed the cup of the universe and the two had marched straight to Lucia's mother, preserving raspberries in the kitchen, and had got her consent.

“And oh, Lucia,” Clare ended, “now I feel as if I'd got the whole world to begin over again and to do differently.”

“You have, Clare,” said Lucia soberly. “Begin by putting on your prettiest gown before Howard gets here,” she added lightly, “and we will have an engagement dinner—of three.”

In her own room Lucia laid out her gown—a cloudy black over something that gave out stars. And then she stood long at her window, staring into the gathering dark.

The low, rose candles and the rosiness of Clare's gown and Clare's cheeks, the young lord lover whom Howard had become, the intimacy of the little table, the sympathy of Lucia—the whole “engagement dinner” was, Howard said, no mere mode of nourishment, but a kind of millennium. Moreover, Howard said many other things, looking the while at Clare as if she were a special glory superimposed on the general glory of being alive. Howard was filled with details about the little house which they were to build, “as big as a strawberry box,” in a lot already selected for the sake of four apple-blossom trees.

“Real apple-blossom trees,” Clare supplemented.

“How about apples?” Lucia asked gravely.

“We haven't been engaged as long as apples,” Howard explained.

Lucia listened. They were talking of their life together as if it were all made of new freedoms, she thought, instead of the perpetual and eternal adjustments. Each looked upon the other as a new avenue of escape into new ways of being. But what, she thought wistfully, what of the new-locked doors of the future?



“Oh, Marshall,” she said, “am I horrid—or am I only honest?”

“Oh, Lucia,” Clare was saying happily, “these first days, when everybody knows about us, are wonderful. To-night—and to-morrow night! Think of it, Howard! To-morrow night Lucia's party will be our really, truly engagement supper.”

With a start Lucia remembered her supper-party. Her delay in making the postponement had been followed by Clare's coming, and in Clare's rapturous account of more radiant things the half intent had been forgotten and no word had yet been sent to the guests who had been bidden. Well, why should she disappoint Clare? Why should she disappoint herself? It was not so important to have foregone luncheon with Mrs. Maltreavors, or dining that night with the Hopes, or giving up this pleasant plan for the morrow. But was there any real reason why she should give up all three?

Lucia thought for a moment, looking a little wistfully at Clare and Howard across the candles, absorbed in happy plans which they were to carry out together, always and always, all their lives! Then she leaned forward.

“Our supper-party to-morrow night will be fun, won't it?” she said. “And now if you can please forget each other temporarily, I will tell you who our guests are going to be.”

Chapter IV.

The low candles had multiplied, the little table had opened out like a huge white flower, the dining-room with its stirring curtains and flickering wax-lights and gathering guests had become a new setting. It was as if Lucia's little dinner-party of the night before

had, in the natural course of events, grown up and become more important and vastly more lovely.

Lucia, in white, mixed a salad and listened to the Fearings, who had just come in and were explaining, now antiphonally and now in concert, what had detained them.

“It was Fred,” asserted little Mrs. Fearing. “Ten years ago, when we were just married, I should have said that it was the cab, or a telegram, or something—for it was all those things, a little. But now I own the truth that mostly it was Fred. He's so mortally slow.”

“It was Edith,” observed Mr. Fearing imperturbable. “Ten years ago I should have said that it was Edith, and it's Edith still. I feel better for the confession.”

“How we love to confess one another's faults and be forgiven ourselves!” cried little Mrs. Maltrevors.

She was sitting in Marshall's chair, looking as if, instead of being near to forty, she had brought forty near to some youth of her own.

“What is the difference,” she propounded now, “between our excuses for each other when we are first married and our excuses after ten years? Is truth the truth, or isn't it?”

Lucia laughed. “One must let well enough alone,” she protested. “No man likes to go to a party. He is always taken there. I often tremble to think of the coercion used to get some of my guests to arrive at all.”

“No, no,” Mrs. Maltrevors persisted, “it isn't all that. At first men go because we want them to. Then they go because we make them. After a while they won't go at all. We begin with the ideal—we work through a necessity—we end with a man's mood!”

This was met with their denial and applause, but Mrs. Maltrevors' voice rose again above the rest:

“I said so yesterday—I say so again to-day! In the beginning I thought I had an ideal for a married life. Twenty years later I found I had been working at a dream instead. Then I threw away my dream and looked about for a real ideal and—well, one result is that Harry Maltrevors is asleep on the library couch, this minute, too worn out to be here to-night—”

At this they burst into a little clamor of laughter, purposely mistaking her meaning.

“Laugh if you like,” she said stoutly, “but twenty years ago I should have wept because he didn't come with me. But now I've put off impossible dreams and put on an ideal—a real ideal—of a comfortable, married existence. And I'm not crying!”

In the breath of silence that chanced to fall, Clare looked up from the far end of the table. She was in the same pink gown that she had worn the evening before, and her cheeks flushed rosier as she spoke.

“But Mrs. Maltrevors,” she said, “I believe I'd rather keep the dream, if I did cry now and then.”

They laughed again, and somehow in the next moment no one found anything perfectly fitting to say. The talk drifted from the general to discussion by twos and threes, and there it was lingering, in a pleasant murmur, when half an hour later the door was abruptly opened and Marshall came in.

He was in business clothes and a little worn by travel. Just momentarily, as he appeared, he was a good deal astonished at sight of the company.

"Marshall," Lucia said mechanically, "how good of you to have contrived to be back."

"Not good; only clever," he replied lightly. "Where do I sit? What do I eat? Why don't I have some now?"

"You could do better than take the time to eat," Fearing warned him. "Come with me instead, and put your back against the wall, and fight for a perfectly good set of rights. There aren't any, any more, it seems. Dreams are dead—ideals are real—Mrs. Maltrevors can't cry now—things are in a frightful mess—"

"Whose dreams are dead?" Marshall asked. "No—it has a mawkish sound. Don't answer it. Why can't Mrs. Maltrevors cry!" Shall I make her?"

"Give him our conclusions in a nutshell, Lucia," Mrs. Maltrevors begged. "You are the one to break it to him. Tell him what we think."

"Tell him it was all Edith's fault!"

"Tell him how mortally slow Fred Fearing is."

"Tell him how Mrs. Maltrevors has lapsed into rationalism—or was it notionalism?"

"And how Harry Maltrevors in consequence is asleep on the library couch, too worn out to be here."

Lucia spoke above the gay tumult.

"We were having a debate, Marshall," she said. "The question was—wasn't it, everybody? 'Resolved, that I'd rather keep a dream if I did cry now and then.' Clare and Howard are affirmatives. Mrs. Maltrevors is negative. And the rest of us are—not positive."

She met Marshall's eyes with her level look, direct, a little challenging. Just for a moment his eyes held hers, but his were only amused and frankly questioning; and then hers dropped very tenderly to Clare. "Clare," she said, "tell all these people about the house you're going to have, and about the four apple-blossom trees."

Somehow, after all the raillery and the badinage, it was on this note of Clare's that the party presently ended. The night was warm and white with moonlight, and, as they stepped out in the still glory, it was Mrs. Maltrevors who voiced the time, with, "I give up. On my honor I don't know whether this out here is a dream or an ideal. Who knows? Maybe it is real!"

Clare and Howard were lingering on the veranda. "Look, Lucia," Clare begged, "don't they all look like lovers, going through the garden?"

"They do," Lucia admitted soberly, "at this distance."

Marshall spoke a little sharply. "Children," he said, "you may have fifteen minutes with the moon. Then, if you don't mind, we'll lock up."

On this he drew Lucia's arm through his and took her back to the drawing-room. And there he faced her, looking at her with puzzled eyes.

"Lucia," he said, "I'm glad you had your supper-party without me, you know. But—would you mind telling me how you came to do it?"

She looked up at him. And abruptly all that she had been meaning, without full consciousness that she had meant or felt it, came crowding to her reply.

“I did it, Marshall,” she said, “because I am tired unto death of living your life instead of my own.”

“Living my life?” Marshall repeated slowly.

She had had no idea of being so soon in the midst of this moment, but now she went on swiftly.

“The big ways,” she said, “the ways that matter to your happiness, or your comfort, I don't mind—of course, I don't mind those. No woman does. I mean—oh, entertaining your friends who don't happen to interest me, ordering the things you like to eat and that I don't like, conforming to your prejudices in a dozen ways, keeping still about all our real differences—don't think I mean any of those things, Marshall. I don't. All women can adapt themselves to the things that matter. But I mean the things that don't matter. I mean the thousand little prying, insisting, pervading ways that I have to be you instead of being me!”

What she said came so suddenly and so fragmentarily and with so real a rush of feeling, pent-up and now bursting bounds, one would have said that to take it as Marshall took it, the moment must have been almost an expected one. He watched her closely, gravely. “Like what, Lucia?” he asked.

“Like—ah, well, take yesterday, Marshall,” she answered. “It was no different from dozens of days. It is because it was like dozens of days that I do take it. Mrs. Maltreavors wanted me to lunch with her. I came home instead, because you were going to be at home. You had found that you could not lunch at home, and I lunched alone. You were a bit aggrieved, you remember, Marshall, because I hadn't been here to find that book when you telephoned, and to send your bag down. Then you were leaving town, unexpectedly and, of course, of necessity. We had a dinner engagement last night—a dinner that I had been looking forward to, to meet a man I wanted to meet—”

“By Jove!” said Marshall, “At the Hopes', wasn't it? Did you go?”

“I made our excuses,” Lucia said, “and stayed at home with Clare and Howard, who didn't want me. That made two things yesterday I should have liked to do—and both I had to give up, not for your happiness or for your comfort, but just simply because day by day it is your life I am living and not my own. I could go over day after day, and it would be always the same, always the same. That was why I went on with the supper-party to-night—why I gave my supper-party and not your excuses. Well, why should I not? Why should not some few things of our life, Marshall, be conditioned by me and not all by you? After all, our life together is your life and my life, is it not? Yet when do I live my life? In the mere scraps and edges of time which you do not happen to want!”

Marshall was silent, and she went on, absorbed in her gathering evidence.

“It isn't as if we were not congenial,” she said, “hadn't the same tastes, the same dislikes. When that is so, a woman learns to carve out little secret corners of time for herself, hours where she may go and be alone and live—something that corresponds to her own life. It isn't as if we didn't love each other—when that is so, a woman simply shuts her heart up and lives in there alone, all the time, or fills it with other things. But we do love each other—we are fairly congenial, and the result is—you take me for granted, Marshall. I am here, with you, where you want me, my days stamped with the stamp of your days, as wax is stamped with the iron. Even a thing so small as the vines on my little arbor are yours to arrange and mine to look at. And it isn't only that I'm tired—it's that

I'm smothered. I want to accept my own invitations if I like and not if you like, I want to live in my home because it is my home, too, and not because it is your home, and mine to fit in. It isn't right not to tell you! Marshall, it's the way I thought, the way I feared. Maybe some time I'll understand, but I never shall understand while it stays this way. You know that I feared it, that I told you so. I love you; that is no different with me. But, oh, Marshall dear, to keep on loving you and liking our life together, I must do as we said to do. I've got to go away!"

He nodded briefly and looked beyond her where the window, like a great green and white picture of an alien world, opened on the night. "As soon as this, Lucia," he said only—and it was hardly like a question.

She caught his hand and held it against her cheek. "Oh, Marshall," she said, "am I horrid—or am I only honest?"

He looked down at her, smiling. Then he looked at the hands that were binding his own. "What blessed, married looking little hands you have, Lucia," he said. "This left one—with our wedding-ring, and no engagement and no other ring at all—look at that hand. It looks like a little wife!"

She snatched the hand away. "You don't care," she cried hotly; "you don't understand what I mean!"

"Care?" he said. "Understand? Why, Lucia!"

"Ah, well then, am I horrid or am I only honest?" she repeated. "We do mix up those two! Tell me, Marshall."

"Neither, dear, I think," he answered gravely. "But in any case you were perfectly right to tell me. And if you wish to get away for a time—you are perfectly right to go. For as long as you shall decide, Lucia."

She drew a long breath. "It will be heaven to have that big thing to decide for myself, Marshall!" she cried childishly.

He felt a quick pang, the pang of the merciful man for any living thing that believes itself snared.

Across the moonlit threshold Clare and Howard came in, and something of the night seemed still upon them, luminous with promise. They came in like something that the hour had been about to say and now first uttered, and they said good-night and went away, and said good-night to each other at the stair's foot. Lucia could hear their murmured voices as she spoke again.

"Then I shall suggest that Clare and I go in town with Howard, when he leaves tomorrow," she said. "You will understand—"

"Perfectly," Marshall said. "It is much better—not to talk it over again. Good-night, Lucia."

Lucia turned to the hallway. Howard was standing below, looking up after Clare.

"Pay attention to your dreams and make them about me!" he was bidding her gaily; and Clare kissed her hand to him.

"Marshall!" Lucia forced herself to call lightly, "come and get these two to leave off saying good-night!"

But to this Marshall made no answer.

When Dreams Begin

By Zona Gale

Illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens

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“The child slipped to his knees and softly and rapidly repeated a little German prayer”

Synopsis of Preceding Chapter

Lucia, a thoughtful, introspective woman, is engaged to marry Marshall, and her young cousin, Clare, who is troubled by no misgivings as to the ultimate happiness of married life, is engaged to Howard, a young lawyer. Lucia's wedding preparations

proceed, the joy of them dampened by a certain fear of Lucia's that she tries to express to Marshall, but he waves her uncertainty aside and tells her they will talk it all over on their wedding-day. What she wishes to say is, should they, after marriage, ever become tired of being constantly together, harassed by the multitude of petty household cares, that either shall have full liberty to go away for a time without explanation before going, or communication while away. When they have been married about two years, Lucia feels that she must take advantage of this agreement and tells her husband that she is going away.

Part Three—Chapter V.

In the dusk the meadows lay smooth and gray, as if they were waiting for something to be written on them—flowers, perhaps. Down the road the moon had just made appearance, evidently in order that the long, quiet country highway might have something toward which to ramble.

On the wide south porch of the farm-house Lucia was sitting, wondering how she could have found a harbor so wholly suited to her need. Harbors, as a rule, do everything save to suit the need, or at least the mood, of the whom they are designed to receive. The farm, which belonged to her mother, was tenanted by Molly, that former housemaid of her mother's who had married "the delivery-boy," and with them was their child.

"Molly," Lucia had just said to the woman, "don't you love living here?"

Molly, who, with her husband, was just leaving for the station in search of Lucia's reluctant trunk, flicked with the whip at a rose-bush.

"It's a good, comfortable home," she admitted, "if only there was a cellar to it."

"I should like living here, I think," Lucia said, "even without a cellar."

"Well, I donno." Molly considered it. "Prettiness is all right enough, but a body needs cellars and such. Don't you be afraid if we should be late," she added; "they ain't nobody around—that's one trouble with it!"

The wagon was half-way to the gate when Molly's husband drew rein and shouted back, "If the boy cries, don't you pay no attention. He'll go to sleep again."

Now the grayness had crept about Lucia, body and spirit, and she sat inert, her eyes more at rest on the meadows than when her eyes were closed. And she was exactly what she had known that she would be—extravagantly lonely for Marshall.

Indeed, the pull of this loneliness had begun before ever Lucia had left home, and, in any case, she had been perfectly prepared for it. Loneliness, she told herself, was what made many a marriage, and the fear of loneliness was what kept many a marriage from crumbling. She had other things to think about besides being lonely. She had thought about these things all the night before, lying sleepless, looking down a window as down into a well of mystery, open at her feet, between the high posts of her bed. And she had summed all these things up in the old ghost, which not even two years of happiness with Marshall had laid:

Never to be able to do anything without subjection to another person's will or whim or power of quite casual prevention, no matter how dear that person is, is a kind of bondage.

“Any woman would give up her own plans for big reasons,” she thought; “but this other kind of thing has no reason. Yet every woman who marries lives in it. We all know it together. And it was smothering me.”

Smothering was, she thought, the word for the perpetual process, for the multiple days when her simplest plans and pursuits were in Marshall's hand, to shape or to throw away, lord as he was of every moment of her time. Instead of the eager hope and wish to be with her, there was substituted the unthinking right, the unthinking right to enter any hour of her day, and to make that hour his own. It was not only their perpetual thereness to each other, it was his absent-minded right, born of eternal, presence, to absorb her plans, to substitute his own, to take her for granted. The fact that she was too highly organized, too late a product of fine things, to let these moments become focal for petty irritations and objections, presented itself to her merely as her own taste in the matter. There was for her one thing worse than any bondage, and that was to bear a bondage badly. But if only it were a bondage of the lion's net and not of cobwebs!

Abruptly, Lucia became conscious of someone standing on the steps. It was a woman, and at once, without preface, she explained herself:

“Molly ain't here, I guess, is she?” she said. “Well, do you happen to know whether she's got any flaxseed?”

“No.” said Lucia; “I'm sorry. I don't know.”

“Well,” said the woman, “would you mind comin' out in the kitchen with me while I look in her sink-cupboard? That's where she'd keep it if she had any. My baby's got the croup.”

“We'll look, by all means,” Lucia said, “I—do you know flaxseed when you see it?” she added doubtfully. “I don't believe I do.”

“Why, of course I do,” said the woman simply.

Lucia, feeling very humble, followed the neighbor-woman down the passage to the kitchen; and it was the woman who found the matches and touched a wick alight.

“You hold the lamp up high,” she said to Lucia; “I'll look in these baking-powder cans.”

The woman looked and smelled at the cans, at first without coming on what she sought, and her nervousness increased with her disappointment. “I don't know what we'll do,” she kept saying, and at length she turned squarely on Lucia: “Don't you know anything about the croup?” she asked.

“No,” Lucia said, “I have no children. I fancy I'd send for a doctor.”

“Why, we've sent for the doctor,” said the woman, “but he lives nine miles. The baby may choke before he gets here. She fell in a tub o' water, an' they let her play 'round all the afternoon and never told me. Oh,” her face lighted, “here it is. This is it—my, but I'm glad to get a-hold of some! I've brought six of 'em out of all their croups with the flaxseed. Much obliged. Good-night!”

She ran through the house and was out the door before Lucia could follow. As she turned to extinguish the light, Lucia looked up curiously at the shelves of the sink-cupboard. There was a wilderness of cans and jars and bottles, many of them carefully labeled. And to Lucia the accumulation of these stood for a hopeless stretch of time spent in a treadmill of household tasks, and for the living through of numberless occasions—and recipes!—which gave rise to the need of all those vessels and their refilling. The

care, the routine, the endless operation which that one cupboard meant! The mere order and air of domestic commonplace of it all unspeakably oppressed her. And yet, into its midst, had come that mother, seeking a remedy in times of need, and out of that order she had extracted a thing that might be potent with life, and had fled with it to the child.

Moving back to the porch from the kitchen, Lucia found the night closing round all the things that happened within it, as if the night itself were a part of some great routine, even of some tremendous, cosmic commonplace!

And just then, faint as some cord on which to thread the slighter sounds of the hour, Lucia heard a little voice.

She listened, and nothing could so have cut off the moment and left it with ragged edges as what she heard; for the voice grew plainer, swelled louder, broke harshly and resolved itself into a child's voice, crying in what was to Lucia the most unmusical and ignominious use for a child's voice or a mother's name. What the child was saying was unmistakably just: "Ma!"

Molly's husband's warning recurred to Lucia; "If the boy cries, don't you pay no attention. He'll go to sleep again." But the boy clearly had no intention of going to sleep again, then or ever, with a watcher or unattended. With a world of determination the voice rose, so that the objectionable syllable became dissolved in a still more objectionable noise. To disregard it was impossible. The night was invaded as effectually as by an army with banners.

Lucia made her way into the dark house and up the stairs. In the moonlight of the child's room the bed was easily discernible. She crossed to it, sat down on its edge and laid her hand on the child.

As soon as she entered the room, he became absolutely quiet, and she hoped that, his mere need for human companionship being satisfied, he would sleep again. Instead, after an instant of quiet, the child spoke curiously:

"Has you got on that best dress?" he inquired.

"Go sleep. Go sleep, dear," Lucia murmured indistinguishably.

"Has you got on that best dress?" he resumed it patiently.

"Yes, yes," Lucia said, "yes, yes," and wondered why, in the domain of childish distractions, "yes, yes" and "there, there" may be supposed to hold such magic. In this case there was merely a pause while the syllable was digested. Then a hand came out of the dark and tentatively stroked her. Then, with uneasy breathings and rootings about, the child's face brushed her arm, and then a howl went up to heaven.

"You—smell—wrong!" said the howl.

Lucia faced the situation. "See, dear," she said, "mother and father will be here in a little while. But I'm going to stay with you till they come. And I'm going to tell you a story. Once there was a little dog—"

The howl did not abate.

"—and he had a little boy—" Lucia went on confusedly.

The howl culminated, broke, and gathered new breath. Lucia fled to her own room for matches.

When light was kindled, she found the child sitting up in bed, really sobbing with fright. The room was stuffy and disorderly, and, to add to her distaste, the tumbled bed had dark, calico covers, and the child's little gown was a figured print. He himself was a

stocky, creasy little fellow, with coarse, stubby, light hair; also, he was one of the children who, when they cry, are extravagantly ugly.

As soon on as the child saw Lucia, he stopped crying, for a moment regarded her silently, and then smiled and looked away.

“I didn't know it was you” he remarked.

“You didn't? Well, who am I, dear?” said Lucia.

But to this he made no answer, and continued merely to stare at her. Her other questions he treated in like fashion, but he cried no more; and presently he said, in exactly the tone in which he had first spoken, “Has you got on your best dress?”

At this insistence of the one phrase, some dim recollection stirred in Lucia's mind, but it was dissipated by the mere discomfort of the moment. The room was very hot, insects buzzed through the unscreened window and swarmed about the lamp, and, at her movement to leave, Lucia knew what the child would do. So, when she had tried with much useless cunning to induce him to sleep again, she rose and held out her hand.

“Come,” she said.

He looked at her mutely.

“To my room,” she told him, “where it's cool.”

Obediently he slipped from the bed's edge. Lucia saw the two plump, bare legs, covered with bruises, and one knee redly skinned. He took her finger in his hot little hand and trotted with her down the hall.

The only thing to do with him, Lucia thought, was to lay him in her bed and to await the return of his mother, or until he slept. From her bag she drew a fresh, soft robe of her own, and then somewhat gingerly unbuttoned his print gown. It fell from his little body, which, save for the bruised legs, was fresh and rosy; and instantly the child stepped free of the gown, slipped to his knees, folded his hands and softly and rapidly repeated a little German prayer:

“I am little,
My heart is clean,
No one is in it
Save Jesus alone.’

“I say that when it's a bath or gettin' all undressed,” he remarked gravely, and rose and stretched out his arms and bent his head for the fresh robe.

When he was ready, Lucia abruptly lifted him to her lap and pressed his head back in her curve of arm.

“Go sleep, dear,” she repeated the familiar injunction.

The child looked stolidly up in her face. He was very freckled, and a temple was scarred, and he kept his lips apart, and he breathed audibly, and he stared up at her. “Has you got on your best dress?” he went over it monotonously.

With his insistence, however, the recollection which had moved Lucia sharpened and took shape.

“Little thing,” she said suddenly, “what is your name?”

“Name Becky,” the child answered unwinkingly.

Then she remembered. It was this child. Molly's child, whom Marshall had held in his arms that afternoon two years ago, in the drawing-room at home. The unvarying voice of that day came back to her:

“There wasn't wunst when I bit that I didn't bit a currant in my cake.”

There came back to her, too, Marshall's eyes. Marshall's words as they had sat with the child, and his merry, “Becky's no true name. Well, have it Becky, then!” What eager-eyed confidence he had had that all would be well; and if they could have looked ahead to this night when she should next be with the child! Ah, but that afternoon she had looked ahead, and she had warned Marshall.

Soothed by the care and the coolness, the child presently fell asleep. She blew out her candle and sat facing the long road, now left wholly to its own devices by the mounting moon.

Like most childless women, Lucia had no sharp understanding of the clear-cut individuality of children. To her a child was a child, and therefore theoretically attractive, or else, by some unhappy chance, repellent; and the death of a child was the death of a child, and therefore a heart-break. But that love is stronger and death deeper because of little stupid habits, gestures even, that do not matter one bit, was a truth about life not yet her own. She sat, unconsciously comforted by the child, companioned by his nearness, and all the while believing that she was going to lay him down in a moment, and thinking how dreadful life would be if one were to be interrupted at every turn by some small creature with stubby hair and creasy neck, who breathed audibly and wriggled even while he slept; who would shriek as this child had shrieked for Molly. It was marvelous to bear and to train children, but the mere rearing of them—how could the woman who must do that give dignity to life, to its impulses, to leisure, to freedom, to mere living, quenched by some eternal presence?

It was an hour later that Molly and her husband drove into the yard. The road which they came traveling was like a stream of something—made not quite of light or of earth, but compact of both, and flowing softly together. The two figures, Lucia thought, as she saw them coming toward her, might have been the first man and the first woman finding out their home—if, to be sure, they had not been coming in a gig! Then she heard their voices and caught the following words:

“...what it needs is a prop. Little more an' the whole thing'll be down in the chips. If I could make a real good strong prop...” said the man.

“The hen-house needs fixin' first, though. I expect every night when somethin'll carry off a hen,” Molly observed.

Lucia listened absently. The beauty of the night, the beauty of the night! she suddenly thought, passionately, and forever tainted with talk about props and hen-houses and their kind—as if when the first man and the first woman set out to find their home, there, indeed, was the end of the dream.

Lucia called to Molly as she hurried up the stairs. She came in the room, her good-natured face tired and anxious and, at the sight of the child, dismayed.

“Forevermore!” Molly said, “I was that worried. Did he yell? Did he bother you?”

She bent over the child. Her hat of tumbled roses was awry, her collar was twisted half-way round, a wisp of hair lay on her shoulder.

“Molly,” Lucia said suddenly, “how do you ever get anything done with a baby around? No matter how nice he is, you know?”

Molly looked at her with momentarily puzzled eyes.

“Why,” she answered simply, “he's what I do.”

And while Lucia mulled over this, Molly added:

“Laws, I near forgot. Here's a telegram that come for you to the depot right while we was loadin' in the trunk.”

Marshall! What had happened to Marshall? Oh, had he telegraphed her to come back? Wild and untamed thing that the heart is, her heart was beating at the impossible idea—as if her heart knew more about life than did she.

Her relief battled with a surprising disappointment as she read the message.

“We are going to be married Tuesday night. Come quick and bring Molly.

“Clare.”

Chapter VI.

For one who had longed for leisure and her own path, Lucia threw herself with exceptional zeal into the swift preparation. In her own home she had left a certain chest of linen and dainty embroidery which had long been growing for Clare. It would be necessary to return for these things, and to gather up odds and ends awaiting finishing stitches. She planned her arrival for the middle of the day, when Marshall would be absent, and she could go in quietly and leave again, without seeing him. Molly would go with her, and she submitted with what grace she could summon to the obvious fact that if Molly went, Molly's child must go too.

They left early the next morning, and Lucia felt all the exaltation of the early start, the fresh enterprise, the joy of a beginning. It was an exaltation which it did not once occur to her to explain by the simple fact that she was going home.

Nor did she understand this as she went up the white steps of her house, having left Molly and the child in town to go directly to Clare and her mother. The white steps had been swept and washed, the rose-pinks in the window-boxes had been watered, everything looked the same and held a welcome. She waited impatiently for Betty to admit her.

The home smell, which comes to a house nobody knows how, and belongs to it as its colors belong, smote Lucia pleasantly as she entered. The drawing-room was cool and deserted: the library had been set in order for the day; the dining-room had that humble, suspended look which dining-rooms take on between meals. Lucia glanced at them all and went up-stairs, through the slanting light from the landing-windows, humming as she went. It was fun to get back and to take home unaware!

She went through into Marshall's room. The bed was made, but floor and table were scattered with belongings, as if Betty had been interrupted at setting the room to rights. Marshall's things were every-where in confusion. His desk, which she herself had been wont to keep in order, was littered with papers, and toward it she moved, and began mechanically sorting bundles and arranging furnishings. At this task she was suddenly arrested by the look of the top of the desk. The place where her photograph had stood was empty.

She looked about the room, the picture was not in sight. With an impulse of tenderness, Lucia wondered if Marshall could have taken it down to the library, where he sat in the evening. She finished arranging the desk, laid aside her wraps and went down-stairs to see. The picture was not in the library, but the morning mail was there. She ran

through her own, still with the puzzle of the missing photograph in her mind. Then it occurred to her that, just possibly, he might have set it on the mantel in the dining-room, and she hurried out to see, with an eagerness of impulse of which she was hardly conscious, in her delighted sense of perhaps taking Marshall unaware. But the photograph was not there, either.

For a moment Lucia stood looking about her home as if she had never seen it before. In the two years of her married life this was the first hour, she thought, when she had stood in her house as its essential mistress, when the home seemed to belong to her, and not she to the home. And nobody was there to lay upon her the need to do this or that, or to whom she would be in any way beholden when, presently, she should wish to step out the front door and to take train for her mother and Clare. What a wonderful thing life was, if only one could uncover it, get down to it, lying bound under its forever imminent routine!

But the photograph—what on earth had Marshall done with her photograph? She went out in the kitchen.

“Betty,” Lucia said, “I suppose my husband doesn't happen to be lunching at home to-day?”

Betty looked at her in surprise.

“Why, no'm,” she said, “he ain't. I don't s'pose he's back yet, is he?”

“Back?” repeated Lucia.

The surprise of the little maid grew.

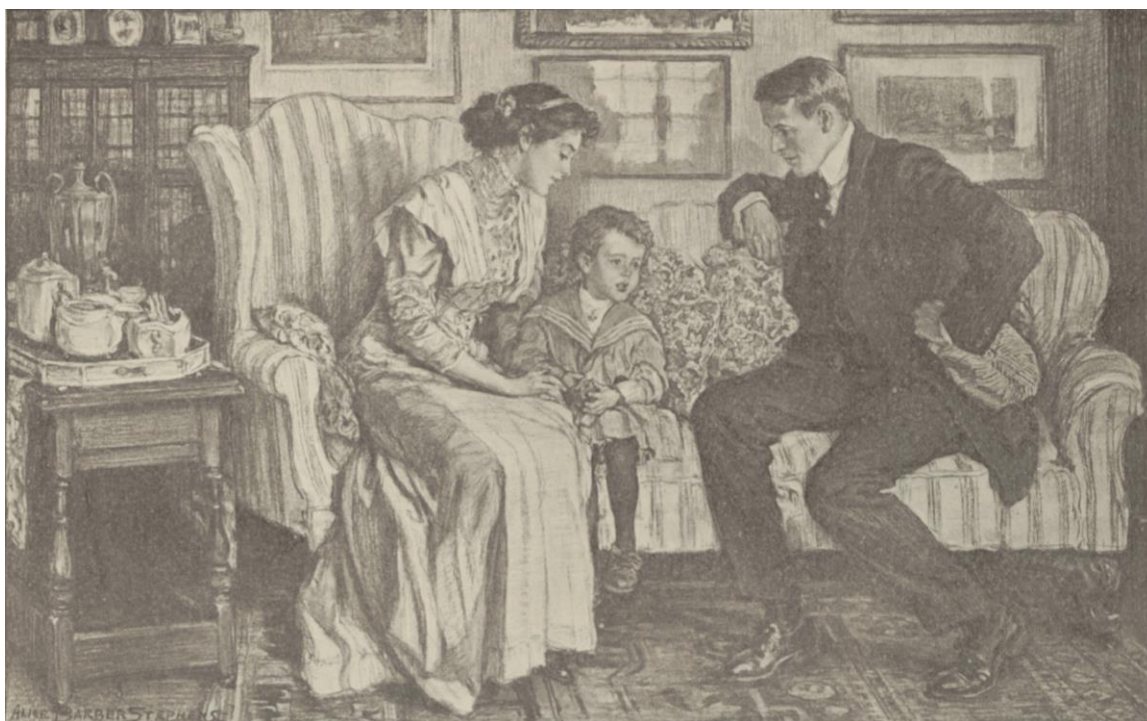
“Why, yes'm,” she said, “he left last night. He said he didn't know when he'd be home again.”

When Dreams Begin

By Zona Gale

Illustrated by Alice Barber Stephens

August 1911, *Woman's Home Companion*



“‘Marshal,’ she said, ‘I’d like tremendously to know just what you think of me!’”

Synopsis of Preceding Chapters

The leading character, Lucia, a thoughtful woman, is engaged to marry Marshall, and her young cousin, Clare, who is troubled by no misgivings as to the happiness of married life, is engaged to Howard, a young lawyer. Lucia's wedding preparations proceed, the joy of them dampened by a certain fear of Lucia's that she tries to express to Marshall, but he waves her uncertainty aside and tells her they will talk it all over on their wedding-day. What she wishes to say is, should they, after marriage, ever become tired of being constantly together, harassed by the multitude of petty household cares, that either shall have full liberty to go away for a time without explanation before going, or communication while away. When they have been married about two years, Lucia feels that she must take advantage of this agreement and tells her husband that she is going away. Accordingly, she goes to Molly, her mother's former house- maid, who lives in the

country, and there she tries to think out her problem. She is just beginning to understand Molly's love for her little boy, "Becky," when she receives a telegram from Clare, asking her to return, as she is to be married hurriedly. She goes back to her house to get some things and discovers that Marshall has left home. The maid does not know when he will return. Also, the picture of herself, usually on Marshall's desk, has vanished.

Part Four—Chapter VII.

For a breath she stood looking blankly at Betty. Then she was conscious of a surface impression momentarily sharper than her own bewilderment—the grotesqueness of the maid's face of stupefaction at her mistress' ignorance of this journey.

"I left the farm very early—I've had no mail," Lucia was able to say quietly. "You may serve luncheon at one, Betty."

Then Lucia went back up-stairs, and to Marshall's room. So the confusion there was the confusion of hurried preparation. Marshall had been packing. He had not packed alone since their marriage—what a lot of things, it occurred to her whimsically, he must have left behind. His bed, then, was not freshly made up, but had not been slept in. She had thought of Marshall as in the library alone, on the evening before, and certainly missing her. He had not been there, very likely he had not been missing her at all. He had doubtless not dined alone, and she had particularly wished him to dine alone, there in their home, without her—as he had not once done since their marriage, though often and often she had sat down there to a solitary dinner. She had wanted him to wake in the house alone, to breakfast alone, to set off for town without her ministry. In fine, she had wanted Marshall to see that she was not only his wife, as he thought, but his automaton, who, without his knowing it, had been to him extra hands and feet and supplemental head; and that it was the automaton part that she could no longer bear.

But why had he gone? Beneath the sense of fresh grievance this, all the time, was, of course, what was gripping her. "He said he didn't know when he'd be home again." Suppose he had really been wanting to take some sort of vacation trip without her? Suppose, as much as she, he had been wanting to get away? Her mind went back to the night when she had proposed her own going. He had said almost nothing. Certainly, he had not only offered no objection, which, as things stood, was impossible, but he had made no comment. Suppose, secretly, he, too, had been tired, glad of her going, eager to go himself? And yet why, Lucia wondered, should he wish to go? Every day he did every day he had his hours to himself, his business, in which to express himself, and, on his return, there was his home and her own ways to direct and control. There was life; there was self-expression. Marshall was living as if he were a person. He was not only himself; he was Lucia, too. And she was in no sense herself alone, but she was mostly Marshall! Oh, she had done quite right to go; but why should he have wanted to get away? He had already been free but she had wanted a little time of freedom and self-living; and now she had it—she was free.

Suddenly, in her freedom, a glad certainty came to her. The picture, her photograph, it was gone simply because Marshall had taken it with him. And, if he had taken her picture with him, nothing could have been so very wrong. Doubtless, it was a business trip; doubtless, he could not tell just when he would return; doubtless— Still,

after all, when she went, she, too, had taken away his picture; so his having taken hers proved nothing. And, in short, why had he gone?

Quite mechanically she set his room in order; but the towel, knotted over the bar in the bath-room, she left as it was, and the pile of worn towels she arranged where on his return he should find them. Suppose, it occurred to her while she worked, that a month or two away, when she should come back to begin over again, Marshall should not be there; suppose, she should not know where he was; suppose, he should never come back.

She threw herself into her task for Clare. She had always liked her little sewing-room, curtained off from the upper hallway. Shut in there, with her machine flying beneath her hands, or setting her needle delicately, she had sometimes momentarily fancied herself near to the feeling of those ancient, exquisite women who, in ballad towers, wrought in needlework on scarlet sleeves. As she sat there now, with Clare's soft finery about her, a swift sense which she had known once or twice smote her again, of the joy of being a woman, able to touch and lift and fashion the delicate fabrics, to shape them to her will, to train them to be garments for bodies. She felt a kind of happy, special pride in having done the things; and she felt, too, a swift pang as she remembered how she had always intended, before she sent the things away, to bring Marshall in the room and show him what she had done. He had always liked to see her sewing. "In there you look like my wife," he had said to her on their wedding-morning, outside the sewing-room at home. Then she fell to remembering how the last time she had planned to have a whole morning to sew and had risen early for it, Marshall had observed casually, "Oh, Lucia, I meant to bring up some papers for you to sign last night, and I forgot them. I'm afraid you'll have to come in town with me this morning." That couldn't happen today. It couldn't happen for days to come. Marshall would not be coming home. Where would he be? Why had he gone away?

An hour before luncheon she finished her work and packed it. Before the afternoon train there would be three hours or more in which to read and rest and to enjoy this wonderful sense of detachment in her own home; the home which for the first time laid on her no burden, exacted nothing, awaited nothing from her. How horrible it was, she thought, that a woman's sense of home should be forever obscured by the multitude of little housekeepery things about that home.

She went back down-stairs and through the rooms; and, as quietly as if everything roused itself and came to meet her, the whole house, where Marshall was not, seemed to speak to her.

There was the rug that Marshall had said they must change—she had meant to go with him when they did that. There was a package on the hall rack—those must be the garden books that he had got for her. In the library was Marshall's high-backed chair; the clock that he wound on Wednesdays and Saturdays; the couch-pillow that he always turned over because he didn't like the cover; the etching that he thought was hung too high; the gray table-blotter that he had taken such pains to find; apples that he always wanted before he went to bed; the Persian runner that he said was as beautiful as a picture; the curtains that he never liked to have drawn; on the waste-basket, the pile of newspapers whose disturbance was the only thing that ever seemed to make him really angry. Coming abruptly into the still room, and entering in idleness, one, and another,

and another, of these things all but stood up in its place and called to her, not so much of Marshall himself as of their life together—their wonted life together.

The phenomenon was as old as human relationship, as old as home, as old as the mere fellowship of living creatures. As unheralded as certain storms, certain light, there had simply come upon her flesh its ancient habit of crying out after the thing that leaves it. In no human emotion is human dependence more clearly defined than in the simple, surprising misery of missing someone from the place where he has been wont to be. But to Lucia this was as new as other forms of life.

In an instant a certain heaviness was upon her, flowing in her veins, weighting her feet, filling her throat, sweeping her with a great and almost aggrieved astonishment. What was the matter with her? she wondered. Surely she was not lonely—she had never been lonely in her life. Surely it was not that she wanted Marshall—she had definitely and sincerely wanted to get away from him. It was not that she was homesick—here she was at home. But what on earth then, she asked herself indignantly, was the matter with her?

A habit of her little girlhood came back upon her. Lucia almost never cried, and, as a little girl, when she had done so, she had always hidden herself and covered her face. She did not cry now, but she slipped in at the head of the couch and hid her face in its afghan; and, like another touch upon her face, the soft wool was faint with the odor of Marshall's clothes and of his hair. Here was a certain comfort. She sat motionless, not thinking, not wondering at herself, but simply in that peculiar misery which takes a human being unto itself as if it were some unrecognized, cherishing mother, the mother-fire, perhaps, of the creation, still forever blowing about the world and creating anew.

Then came a wonder, at first indeterminate: Had Marshall felt like this when she went away? If he had—if he had!

When the luncheon-bell rang, she obeyed its summons, striving to lay upon herself the hand which had so seldom failed of its control. But the table, which next to the hearth itself is center and heart of a house, had become a kind of mausoleum of the happy, casual hours they had spent there: casual habits, casual tastes, casual gestures even, rose from their forgotten places and took on the significance of great, lost experiences. The hour had its infinite dignity, because back of it lay the simple human need for being with somebody, for preserving roots already struck deep, for clinging, at all costs, to the real things which lie close. And, because these things had gone, the whole house became hateful to her. From a place of unwonted leisures and liberties, such as it had seemed when that morning she had entered it, it had become a place of unforeseen bondage.

An hour before the train-time she was on her way to the station, in her need of some release, if only of change and motion.

All the little streets of houses! As they flowed by in their quite familiar dress, for the first time they spoke to Lucia. They were filled with folk who lived with other folk in a perpetual thereness, in the usual perpetual adjustment to each other's tastes and whims and wills and ways, in things that didn't matter a bit, or in things that did, and who didn't seem to mind.

Never to be able to do anything without submitting to another person's will or whim or power of quite casual prevention, no matter how dear that person is, is a kind of bondage.

That was what she had told herself; but if that were true, then life itself was bondage. For this was how everybody lived. This was how they built up the little casual and commonplace things that make memory and bonds. Molly had known. "He's what I do," she had said of her baby. Long ago Clare had understood. "When you love somebody, Lucia, you'll know," she had told her. Even then Clare had seen that essential romance and dream lay for her henceforth in whom she loved, and not in adventure or in the whole gauge of chance; and that the dream, the long Day of Life, began with that knowledge.

Chapter VIII.

An unexpected appointment for Howard, which, with the attendant spirit of an amended salary, was to take effect at once, had made possible his and Clare's immediate marriage; and the pleasant fury of wedding preparation was at its height when Lucia arrived at home.

She found Clare in the sewing-room in a kind of cocoon of muslin, which she was skilfully fashioning herself.

"Lucia," Clare said solemnly, "I don't see how death-heaven can be any more wonderful than life-heaven!"

Lucia caught her by the shoulders. "Little girl," she said, "are you perfectly, absolutely happy?"

"Absolutely," Clare answered, clear-eyed.

"You aren't afraid?" Lucia asked her, with a curious wistfulness.

"With Howard?" said Clare incredulously.

"Well, with life," Lucia answered.

"Lucia," said Clare, "will you measure how far this hem ought to be turned up all around the bottom?"

"I will," said Lucia humbly, and knelt at her feet.

Clare sat at her task of basting the hem, looking marvelously the housewife in the attitude; and Lucia stepped out on the little balcony, where, as two years ago, roses were rioting. It was here that she had told Marshall her plan. Her plan, which was to make clear for them what all the centuries had solved in another way. Millions of women! All of them secretly a little "smothered," as she had been, by being eyes and hands and brains for other people who were perpetually there, and yet finding that smothering but a kind of planting, a putting forth of roots, of which, until that day, she had not known, and of flowers which she could only guess, and of fruits which she might not yet even vision. Did Marshall know—did Marshall know? And, if he did, what on earth must he think of her? And was it because he thought it, whatever it was, that he had gone away? And where had he gone?

When she turned indoors, Howard had come in. He was bending over Clare, where she sat at the little old-fashioned sewing-machine, plying the wheel. They made Lucia remember again what Marshall had said on that wedding-morning: "Come inside.

Out here you look like my bride; in there you look like my wife.” Had she not tried to stay the bride, forever on a balcony of roses? And somehow Clare had always known enough to stay inside and be the wife.

In the next few days Lucia wondered at herself, at how wise she had grown with no other teacher than the ache that pulsed continually in her body and seemed to flow in her veins. It was the eternal irony that she should be just then among those who made glad Clare's wedding-feast, and should be hourly stabbed not only by the girl's happiness but by the girl's youthful vision, which knew so much because it loved so much.

By Monday, which was the day before the wedding, she excused herself from the festivity which was to crown the half-week's informal merrymaking. And, left alone, she faced, as she was now facing through most of every night, the problem of what she should do after Clare's wedding.

When, at five o'clock, she rang for her tea and Molly answered with Becky clinging to her skirt, Lucia fell upon the child and kept him with her in the library. He chanced to be much occupied in some affair of a brush-broom whose straws pulled out, and he could hardly be persuaded, save by a bribe of cake and loaf sugar. But in the prospect of these he climbed on a chair and surveyed Lucia with meditative eyes.

“Is you got a kitty?” he propounded; “and is you kitty home?”

“I haven't a kitty,” Lucia confessed; “I haven't much of anything, Becky.”

He reflected on this. “Is you got a kitty?” he said, in exactly the same tone; “and is you kitty home?”

When Molly had left the tea, he had his cake and sat in silence. Two years ago! How everything, Lucia thought, was haunting her. Two years ago, when he bit his cake, and each time triumphantly bit a currant—if she had only known! Known a thing so simple that the world of men share it, because death or distance, or absence more cruel than either, creeps into every life as inevitably as the days die. But from the world of men and women who cry out for somebody who is not there, Lucia felt herself irreparably separate. For she had deliberately put out her hand and had drawn her own loneliness to her.

She stretched out her hands to the child.

“Becky,” she said, “do you like me a little?”

He chewed on solemnly, with a funny twist of the lower jaw, which made the action peculiarly unpleasant.

“Say something!” she demanded, almost roughly.

Still Becky chewed on; and suddenly Lucia caught him in her arms and covered his face with kisses.

“You little savage,” she said, “kiss me back!”

The child wriggled in her arms, turned his head slightly and bit his cake.

“Is you got a kitty?” he inquired, with his mouth full; “and is you kitty home?”

But Lucia did not let him go.

“If I hold him,” said a voice at her elbow, “will you give me some tea?”

For an instant Lucia dared not look, lest she should be, somehow, tricked. But it was Marshall who, as she lifted her startled face, was sitting down beside her and holding out his hand.

She gave him her hand quietly, which was simple, because she found herself wholly unable to speak at all. Why, he had come—and in her misery she had not planned what to say to him!

“Come here, Buster,” Marshall was saying pleasantly to the child. “Why, Lucia,” he added, “isn't this the kiddie we fed currant cakes to the day—one day—”

“Yes,” Lucia answered, “that day.”

She was hoping that he would not see how her hands were trembling as she made his tea.

“How jolly not to have to explain about my half-slice of lemon and no sugar,” he said lazily, as he took his cup.

“How did you know about Clare?”

“I telephoned Betty this morning,” he answered, “about—well, about one of the little 'housekeep' things you hate to talk about. She told me. Of course I—wanted to be here.”

“You were—not far away?” she could not help asking.

“Oh, no. I'd just gone up in town,” he answered. “Everything was going well with you?”

She was terrified to feel her mouth trembling. To hide it, she bent toward the child, standing between Marshall's knees.

“Is your name truly Becky?” she asked.

To her surprise, Becky flowered in speech.

“When—when—when you kissed me just now,” he said, “you kissed me hard, like my mama kisses me. I wan—I want another cake. You can kiss me if I have another cake—but not so hard.”

Lucia laughed and kissed him. Marshall looked at her. “You didn't use to like the way Becky chewed,” he said. “I remember you said—”

“I said a lot of things,” said Lucia lightly. “Besides,” she suddenly discovered, “I've grown fond of Becky.”

Marshall finished his tea deliberately and set down his cup. “I suppose Clare is gloriously excited?” he said.

“Gloriously,” Lucia said. “She sits all day long up in the sewing-room, as busy as if she were married already. I never saw anybody as happy as she and Howard are.”

“Oh, yes, you did,” Marshall said serenely; “I was just as happy when I was going to be married to you.”

“When I was going to be married to you.” The phrase, with its elusive accent of the hope of the past, was like a wound.

“And—since?” she said.

“Well, you've made me happy, Lucia,” he said, “and always very comfortable. I wish—I could say as much of myself to you. Buster, my dear boy, if you eat any more cake—”

Lucia turned and looked at him. “Marshall,” she said, “I'd like tremendously to know just what you think of me.”

“Do you honestly want me to tell you?” he said unexpectedly.

She nodded mutely, wondering with a pang if now, indeed, the time had come when he would say the irreparable thing and she would know the end.

“I think,” he said deliberately, “that I did what most men do: I married a girl who expected life to make her happy. Incidentally, she expected me to do the same thing—and she had the right to expect it of me. If I had done it, she would have come to expect of life something bigger and better than her own happiness. But I didn't do it; and so she went on expecting life to make her happy. And life didn't do it; and she didn't understand.”

“She didn't understand—anything,” Lucia said.

“And so, now,” he went on, “she is merely asking life to make her happy on its own hook, without any help from me. That's the situation, isn't it?”

“No,” said Lucia tranquilly, “it isn't the situation a bit.”

“What is it, then?” he asked, smiling.

He wondered what was in her thought now. He understood perfectly, and yearningly, that Lucia had somehow missed from marriage that which many women win; that there never yet had come to her any perception of herself as a pattern, a household pattern, a civic pattern, a cosmic pattern; but always there had persisted the exaggerated sense of the individual little bit that she herself was being. In the drama of her married life Lucia had always cast herself as Lucia, instead of quite another character: the wife.

She did not look at him; she was looking down in Becky's face. How, indeed, she was wondering, does a woman ever tell a man, when she has entered some inner court of her own life and wants him to come, too?

Suddenly she slipped her hand past the child and laid it on his knee.

“I nearly died,” she said, “in that house without you. Marshall, did it feel like that when I went away?”

He swept Becky aside.

“Yes!” he said. “It did feel like that! I went up in town and sizzled in a hot hotel just to get away from it. Lucia, do you know how it felt? Do you know—”

He tried to make her look at him, but she shut her eyes and shook her head.

“If you knew,” she said, “how that afghan in the library smells like you.”

At that he laughed out joyously, ringingly, like a boy.

“You know—you do know!” he cried.

From beside the tea-tray Becky was trying unavailingly to ask them some question concerning a kitty and its probable whereabouts. He was still patiently saying it over and over when the door opened, and Clare and Howard were on the threshold.

There was a moment's silence.

“Howard,” Clare asked then, “can you kindly tell me whether we are going to be the bride and bridegroom, or those two over there? Because it strikes me that they think it's to be they themselves.”

[THE END]

In the Land of Tomorrow:

A Story in Four Parts

By Maude Radford Warren

Illustrated by W. B. King

January 1911, *Woman's Home Companion*



“Helen, you're not—sending me away!”

It was Commencement week at Revelstoke College. The green hills and hollows of the campus, the dark red brick buildings had many times been the background for tender battalions of young girls going out from their class-rooms to meet that friend and enemy, the world, and at first glance this occasion might have seemed a mere reduplication of twenty other such seasons the college had known. As far as forms went, it was, but above the forms were differences in spirit, subtle and obvious, both.

Higher education for women, in this college at least, had ceased to be isolated and comparatively undemocratic; it had related itself definitely to that larger movement of women which embraced all classes and all occupations, to the end that it might be useful in that broad general human movement which has been the goal of so many different

creeds and ideals and parties. The senior class of Revelstoke had unanimously declared itself in favor of woman suffrage.

Physically, it was like any other class. The clear-browed, wide-eyed, athletic type predominated: girls who could swim and golf and think all the better for their exercise, and who meant to marry or teach or write or practise medicine and law, and to keep up their exercise and thinking. There were a few who studied too hard, anemic, nervous girls who would go out in the world and foster a prejudice against higher education. There were some, pretty, light-headed, who had gone to college because their friends had gone and who had barely won through the course. They had accepted suffrage as a lark; they would go out into the world and take everything else lightly, except perhaps the comfort of themselves and their nearest, and they would undoubtedly make many people happy.

It was due largely to the three leaders of the senior class that Revelstoke had declared for suffrage. Even the casual spectators of Commencement week, mildly interested cousins and aunts, had marked out these three without knowing who they were. On Float Day, when the class crews drew their boats in shore, and the spectators, under soft-boughed trees hung with colored lights, listened to the singing, the center of all eyes was the senior captain, handsome Martha Broomer, with her plain heavy braids of blond hair. Brunhilda, the other two leaders called her, because she was built on such an elemental Teutonic plan. She walked like an empress, yet she was one of the disinherited.

Those of Revelstoke who were romantic found her a precious stimulation, for she had been born in the slum districts of Chicago, had been educated largely on the streets and had entered a factory at the age of eleven. Later, she had studied in night school and then had been helped through college by the headworker of a settlement. Now, Martha was going back to her own sort of people to do what she could for them. The "Proud Proletariate" her two friends called her.

Bertha Larrabee and Helen Crane were less conspicuous physically. Helen had a face of the old fashion, with grave quiet eyes and hair that fell parted like the wings of a bird. She suggested chimney-corner thoughts and soft garden backgrounds, and yet Helen was the most intellectual of the three. Some gentle hearth-keeping grandmother had given her her face, but some other ancestor, some seeking, determined soul, had given to her mind and heart. She was full of surprises. The day her class gave "As You Like It," she had played Rosalind with unsuspected power and sweetness; yet she read law far into the night and had a passion for facts that made her lawyer father sigh because she was only a woman. Although, as he told her whimsically, in these days of the rebellion of woman, it would not do to hint that you would want them to be anything but what they were; the time had gone by when a man could assume, even inside the family circle, that his own sex was superior.

Bertha Larrabee was a brilliant dark little creature, gay, versatile, adaptable, the adored president of the class. She it was who insisted that Martha and Helen should not show their contempt for sentimental Tree Day, since anything that pleased anybody ought to have recognition. It may be that a small part of Bertha's popularity was due to the fact that she belonged to a very exclusive New York family. But it was more on account of her own personality that she was the center of all the receptions, the chief guest at all the sorority doings and the loveliest of all of them on the day of the garden party.

There was a reason for the soft brightness of her eyes, the tremulous tenderness of her mouth. Among the many Harvard and Yale men who were coming down for the afternoon was Wynne Harley, and he had written a letter which said—Bertha tried not to let herself think too much of what that letter said, because the sweetness of it hurt; but it had decreed that the day of the garden party should hold the primrose hour for two.

At four o'clock guests were already gathering on the campus and the three friends walked down-stairs together. Bertha wore the faintest of pink with a hat of pink roses and lace. The delicate color brought out all the delicate color of her face. Bertha had been trained from babyhood to think of her clothes, and she knew that her emphatic brunette beauty was at its best in subtle colors. Martha and Helen wore white, Helen a soft lacy gown. Martha a plain tailor-made linen.

“And you had better look your last on it,” she told her friends. “It's me for dark clothes after this; washing costs too much in dirty Chicago.” Her voice was deep and a little abrupt; no education could ever give her the controlled high-bred accents of Bertha and Helen.

Helen was gazing across the campus.

“What squads of relatives,” she said.

“I guess I'm the only graduate that won't have some friend or relative here,” remarked Martha.

“You can share all ours,” said Bertha affectionately.

“I see myself with some of yours,” laughed Martha. “We'd get on together like milk and lemons.”

The three reached the animated groups under the elm trees. Slim, pretty girls in white fluttered about from group to group introducing friends and relatives, while tall young men, stout fathers and dowager ladies made a more stately background. The sunshine fell in mellow shafts and patches, striking diamond lights from the cut-glass lemonade-bowls; a warm breeze stirred stray curls and rustled the young leaves on the trees.

Coralie Leighton was serving the lemonade. She was a tall dark girl, beautiful in a still dignified way and with inordinate determination. The three friends were especially proud of Coralie, for she had been slow to yield to the cause of suffrage, and now in her quiet way she had put it first of her interests.



“Slim, pretty girls in white fluttered about from group to group introducing friends and relatives, while tall young men, stout fathers and dowager ladies made a more stately background”

She meant somehow to campaign her whole state of North Carolina, to win converts, and she was no whit discouraged by the deep-seated prejudices she would have to battle against.

“Look at Mary Carter arranging groups,” said Martha. “We're lucky that she's for instead of against us. Indiana will hear of Mary Carter and her organizations or I'll miss my guess.”

Her eyes were fixed on a rapid bee-like girl who darted from spot to spot taking care of the unattached. Management was her forte, palpably, but what she did was so competently done that her obviousness was forgiven her.

“I count on Grace Hearn,” remarked Helen, glancing at a plump girl, slow of speech and movement, who was the center of a group of young people. “We were so lucky to have a Californian in the college. Not that I expect that one girl in one State will bring us the millennium.”

“Rather not, and especially not that one,” said Martha skeptically. “Just let her get engaged to some handsome, positive man who will tell her that suffrage isn't feminine, and you'll see the rapid retrogression of Gracie.”

Bertha was no longer listening. She was looking about her at the broad campus mellow under the suffused sunshine, with the gently rolling hills beyond, and at one side the blue vista of the lake.

“It's pretty,” she murmured, “oh, it's pretty.”

But in her heart she knew that if the rain had been pouring it would still have been a beautiful day to her. She had seen Wynne Harley arriving with a group of Harvard men.

Bertha's direct unconscious glance did not falter, and her voice was perfectly controlled. She did not even blush when he approached, though her heart was throbbing violently; nor did Harley show his gladness at seeing her. She presented him to her friends, who regarded him with especial interest, for they divined that this was the writer of the triweekly letter, to get which Bertha was always late to gymnasium. Harley was a stout, fair, pleasant-looking young man, with an eye steady almost to hardness and of slow, accurate speech. He had something of the open-air quality about him which Bertha found so attractive in Martha.

"Capitalist type," said Martha to Helen as others joined the group and Bertha and Harley drifted away.

"Dear old Martha, you must always pigeonhole people," murmured Helen.

Harley and Bertha took a boat and went on the lake. As he rowed she talked to him in her even lifting tones about the events of the week and the partings and plans of the girls. But all the time she was watching the steady play of his muscles, and he was watching the dimples come and go in her soft olive cheek.

"So your college has gone for suffrage, and you have helped bring it off," he said when she spoke of the Commencement oration to be delivered on the morrow by a woman legislator from Colorado.

Bertha nodded gaily. "Of course; I'm tremendously in earnest."

"Of course you are; you always did take sport seriously," he told her.

Bertha laughed. "Oh, what would Helen and Martha say if they could hear you?"

"I'll tell you why you are a suffragist," Harley said. "It's because you've so much vitality. That's why you went to college. Just a mere round of fun and food and flirtation wasn't enough for you. You had to have something to—"

"To bite on, Martha says," Bertha assisted.

"Perhaps you thought suffrage would give you something to do afterwards," went on Harley. "Your aunt's pet league will put you on no end of committees. I hear your cousin, the duchess, is sending over some British pointers. It's a great fad in New York; lots of people are climbing up by it. You'll meet all sorts of muckers; but you do that here, I suppose."

Bertha laughed and said with apparent irrelevance, "When Helen and Martha were politely concealing their interest in you I hope you didn't think they felt it just because you're Wynne Harley."

He shrugged under the thrust. "They know I'm your friend."

"Everybody really is free and equal in Revelstoke," Bertha said. "I'm sure this suffrage has made some difference."

Harley sent the boat swiftly along a little arm of the lake. "Then it's not just a fad with you?" he asked.

"I'm sincere, Wynne."

He pushed the boat up under a willow. "Shall we land?" he asked.

Bertha's cold hand did not tremble as he helped her out. But after she had seated herself on the grassy bank, she looked musingly over the shimmering water. Her world was waiting to open to her with a word, and she knew that this silence of half

understanding had a rareness all its own. Harley felt it, too; he watched her lovely face tenderly, wishing, for all he was so practical, that they could always keep the hour just as it was. She moved her hand and that broke the spell. He caught it and held it tightly.

“So firm, and is it so quiet as it seems, Bertha?”

She looked at him with a wistful little smile.

“Then you do care?” he said.

Tears rose to her dark eyes. “Sometimes I wish I didn't,” she murmured.

He drew her close and for a long time they did not speak.

“But why did you say that?” he asked. “Don't you think I love you enough? Don't you trust me?”

“Yes, Wynne, I do trust you, but I'm not sure I trust life. I've seen so much unhappiness among married people. I'd rather not care too much if I'm to be hurt.”

“But, Bertha, Bertha,” he protested, “that is distrust!”

“Is it? Not really, I think. I'd like to have a full life of my own, so that if I ever lost love—suppose you died—”

He filled in her broken sentences in his own way.

“So many women,” Bertha said, “have to get happiness through compromise. They give up their prejudices and ideals and souls, for peace and love.”

“That's the new woman movement speaking through you,” he said lightly. “That won't be the way with us. I'll invent a new creed for man if you like, and be my own first subscriber, 'Thou shalt live thine own life and have thine own thoughts even as I have my own business. Thou shalt have socialists in the music-room and cooks in the drawing-room. Thou shalt lend the auto to suffragettes and form factory-girl unions.’”

Bertha laughed and then said, “I'm only afraid of being too happy.”

After dinner that night Bertha left Harley for a few minutes and stole into Helen's room. Helen was sitting in her window looking out over the campus, listening to the laughter and talk that floated up. Bertha came close to her and whispered a word of her happiness. For a moment Helen made no reply.

“You're not sorry?” Bertha asked. “You know this will make no difference in our friendship.”

“No, dear, not sorry,” Helen said in a strange tone, “it's just that I understand so well.”

She drew up a thin chain that hung about her neck and in the darkness Bertha felt a ring with a small stone.

“Oh, Helen!” she breathed, “you've never told us.”

“I couldn't,” Helen said softly. “You see I've cared so long; three years, though I've really seen so little of him, for he's so busy. We've corresponded ever since I've been in college—just friendly letters. When he wrote after Christmas to say he cared, it seemed that if I told it to any one, it would all vanish.” Helen spoke with a kind of passion.

“How you care!” Bertha cried. “And how silly Martha will think us. She will tell us that here will end our work for the cause of women. Who is he?”

“His name is Richard Kendrick. He was adopted by old Mr. Kendrick of the firm of Kendrick and Anders, lawyers; big people. Somehow they quarreled when Richard

was twenty-two; he's twenty-nine now. He's worked his way alone ever since; he's brilliant."

"So that's why you've read law in your father's office for two summers and why you take law courses by correspondence."

Helen blushed in the darkness. From outside floated in a soft bit of song:

*"For I, love, thine own love,
Am keeping watch o'er thee."*

"Keeping watch," murmured Helen. "So much of our acquaintance has been through letters, and I wanted to keep in touch with him somehow. Bertha, he's coming to-morrow with father; I just had his telegram."

"Oh, Helen," said Bertha, "isn't it glorious to be young and loved and happy?"

"Life with its shadow.

Life with its tear.

Fades like a dream when I feel you're near."

"I must go," whispered Bertha, "he's waiting for me."

"And to-morrow Richard will be waiting for me," said Helen.

After Bertha left her Helen sat on in semi-darkness looking out of the window with quiet, tender eyes. Down below the soft laughter and talk went on, deep voices and soprano voices, light notes and earnest notes rising intermingled. Dim figures walked up and down the path, sometimes slipping out under a light, sometimes moving into the shadow of a tree. Helen's heart was full. There was something very poignant, very sweet in the moment. The soft clear laughter of Grace Hearn swept up to her, followed by the abrupt and brief tones of Mary Carter. She thought of the two and of Coralie Leighton and of a score of other friends all eager to put life to the test. She felt the significance of all those young lives out there, hopeful, happy, or if not, then expecting happiness; sure, somehow that life was not going to withhold richness of experience and joy and service. Although Helen had been more in libraries than among people, she had observed and thought; she knew the disappointments that would meet some of these young girls. She knew that some would not have the strength to rise above their disappointments. From the excess of her own happiness she wanted to help them, to give to them. In a very sacrament of deep feeling she dedicated herself anew to the service of her race and her sex. She would work for the cause of women and Richard would help her. If such happiness as had come to her could not come to every woman, at least she might do her part toward helping every woman to a larger life, to more freedom in work and in hope, and through her children might win a larger lease of childhood. She and Richard were strong enough and sympathetic enough to give of their superabundance to the helpless of the world.

The door was pushed open and Martha entered, her white dress making a pale shadow in the darkness of the doorway.

"Not lonely, are you?" she asked.

"Not at all; I'm just thinking and looking down at the campus."

Martha sat beside her on the window-seat and said musingly, "I'm not sentimental, as I've told you some thousands of times, but I'm just in a mood for the dark. It's impressive and affecting, all this: and my four years here—I'm sorry to go, Helen, and it means so many eternal partings. I've just seen Bertha, too, walking with that young capitalist of hers: owns a big department-store and has stock in half a dozen big companies, I hear. That's a parting, too."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh. I saw her face: I know she loves him."

Helen told her of the engagement and Martha said, "Of course, I always knew she would marry and I want her to. What's the use of you and me working for the betterment of the next generation if there isn't going to be a generation? But Bertha is infatuated: probably she worships the fellow for graciously deciding to take her the year he graduates instead of looking about a year or two."

"Martha, how can you speak of Bertha like that!"

"Oh, well, I feel that she'll be having a big wedding in a minute, and an enormous house and all sorts of hostess duties, and she'll forget us and the cause soon enough. She'll be in with that exclusive New York suffrage crowd and there her usefulness to any class but her own will end," said Martha of the proletariat.

"You're too hard on her."

"Maybe I'm cross because she didn't tell me she's engaged," Martha said. "She might have known I'd take it all right, I'm not a man-hater."

A song floated over the lake from some freshmen who were not feeling the keenness of parting: "*For he's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny.*"

"That reminds me," Martha said, smiling, "that I got a special-delivery letter just now, which assures me that I, too, will have a friend to watch me take my sheepskin. You'd never guess who it is—Michael Cassidy!"

"Martha, not really?"

Helen knew little enough of the politics of her own city, Chicago; that was to come later, when she was finishing the study of law at home. But the name of Michael Cassidy, boss of the ward in which Martha had been born, was sufficiently familiar to her. He was the old-fashioned type of boss, who made money from street contracts and pleased his people by giving them turkeys at Christmas and carriages for funerals and by getting their heady sons out of the Bridewell. At thirty-five he was as firmly entrenched in his ward as if he had been a hereditary king.

"I know he's a great old scamp," said Martha slowly, "but when I was a little bit of a girl and he a big boy I can remember his giving my mother a hand with the heavy work. He sat up with us all night when father died. He got me my job in the factory, swearing off three years from my age, so I could earn my dollar-sixty a week. Now and then he gave me a dime to go to the theater. I know how he battens off the ward; I'd fight him tooth and nail on any question of public morality, but I've seen him give money to a sick widow with no son or relative who could return him a vote."

"He may be a very pleasant person in his private character," Helen said, "but still—"

"It's the first time he ever wrote me," Martha went on. "We fight like wildcats when we meet, but I'll be glad to see him. However, he's just taking me in by the way;

he's going to New York on some business in which that lost leader and promising scamp, Richard Kendrick, is also concerned."

The blood rushed to Helen's face and her heart throbbed painfully. Martha's words had the tongues of trumpets; they seemed to drown out all those tender sounds of the night borne up on the tide of happy human voices.

"What name did you say?" she asked.

"Richard Kendrick," repeated Martha. "I dare say your father knows him. He started out pretty well as a reformer; now he's a conservative lawyer, or, in other words, the kind of person who shows his love for the common people by advocating education as the cure for all ills, and shows his love for his own pocket by getting the attorneyship for some rich corporation. I understand that just lately he has got the job with the steel mills; that means he'll jockey with and terrorize the poor mangled foreigners until they give the wrong testimony and clear the steel mills of responsibility for damages."

"I think you must be mistaken," Helen said, "father does know him. He's a splendid, high-minded man. He does believe in education for the poor—" Her voice trailed away into silence. She remembered a passage in one of his letters, "I have just received a good appointment as attorney for a corporation; a great deal of work, but a good deal of money. Helen, when will you marry me?" She could not believe what Martha was saying, and yet she was tortured with a desire to hear more evidence, that it might be less convincing.

"I know what I'm talking about," Martha said crisply. "You forget, Helen, that I've mixed all my life in things that are going on. I feel especially bitter against this Kendrick just now, because of poor Mary Kane. Lost her hand in a laundry on account of unprotected machinery and sued for damages. This Kendrick won the case against her. He was the attorney that helped get out that injunction against the ten-hour law for women last month, on the grounds that it was interfering with their freedom not to let them work fifteen hours if they wanted to, with nothing for their overtime but super-money." Martha's voice had grown raucous and loud.

"Don't," murmured Helen.

"Oh, well, I don't see why I should get so excited," Martha said, "I'll meet enough of that sort of thing when I go back to Chicago to work. Listen to that song; can't help liking the sentimental old thing."

*"How can I bear to leave thee,
One parting kiss I'll give thee,
And then whate'er befall me,
I'll go where honor calls me."*

"Yes," said Helen in a low voice, "it's sweet."

Mechanically she listened to and answered Martha's talk, but her mind was in a whirling daze; she felt lost, ignorant, afraid of life, and she lay awake staring at the wall of her quiet little room until the first white light of dawn appeared ghostlike against the window.

Commencement day came to Revelstoke in a glory of still radiance. But the mellow campus was given over to birds and squirrels, for the students and guests had

gone into chapel for the graduating exercises. Helen had hoped that her father and Kendrick would come early, but it was not until she was sitting on the platform between Bertha and Martha that she saw them enter and follow the freshmen ushers to the reserved seats in front. She smiled at them, wondering if she looked as white and strange as she felt. Mr. Crane was a stout man with a kind, plain face tempered by a faintly satiric expression. The young man beside him—how Helen hungered to look again on that full handsome face with its air of distinction, its keen blue eyes and heavy waving brown hair!

Instead, she followed Martha's eyes, which came to rest on a red-haired, stout, prosperous-looking man in the back part of the chapel.

“That must be boss Michael Cassidy,” Helen reflected. He did not look ill at ease in his surroundings; rather, he seemed to be regarding them quizzically with a humorous appreciation at the incongruity of finding himself in a hall full of learned young women. Helen did not think his face unattractive; she could not but admire his look of power. This was a man who had conquered, by a devious route, no doubt, but still he held his world in the hollow of his hand. Among the various New York friends of Bertha, Helen saw Wynne Harley who had gone to New York on a midnight train and routed out a jeweler in the small hours of the morning in order to bring Bertha the splendid jewel she wore now on her slim finger.

The president of Revelstoke introduced the speaker of the day, a beautiful elderly woman beautifully dressed. From girlhood she had worked hard for the cause of women, first as a leading member of a women's club and later as a member of the Colorado state legislature.

She had lost her child, and by her power to vote she tried to save other women's children for them; she had lost her husband, and she tried to help the unprotected. She had passed a long life of struggle and self-sacrifice without ever losing courage or womanliness, and no word of hers could be taken lightly. She had paid a great personal price for her ideals, and as she looked at the young girls before her, she wanted their victories to be less costly. Helen never forgot the words of that address; so many of the thoughts came back to her later in the day and for many years after, as especially adapted to her own need. Bertha and Martha were struck, too; the faces of Coralie Leighton and Mary Carter and Grace Hearn showed their emotion. There was not one indeed in all the one hundred and fifty graduates whose view of humanity, whose creed of service was not broadened by the vision the speaker revealed.

If the moment of taking a sheepskin has a thrill of its own, Bertha and Martha and Helen did not know it. Bertha longed to have done and go to Wynne. Martha, with a queer resurgence of class feeling, wanted to join Cassidy and introduce him to her friends. Helen felt that the strange ache at her heart would cease when she was with her father and Kendrick. And when the president had closed the exercises and the graduates had gone down from the platform, she hurried to her father's arms. Then Kendrick seized her two hands and looked into her face, as if his eyes would never be satisfied.

“Well, little lady,” said her father in humorously complaining tones, “I suppose now you will be coming home and taking all my clients away from me? The firm of Crane and Crane, with the junior partner letting the senior partner keep books.”

“I'll give you fair play if you are a man,” Helen assured him.

“Crane and Kendrick, that's the name of the firm,” amended Richard. “How many centuries before I see you alone?”

The chapel slowly emptied and in the press Helen found herself just behind Martha and Cassidy. Martha turned on her a defiant eye which asked permission to introduce her friend, and Helen nodded. In a moment her fingers were inclosed in those of the big boss and she found herself liking the heartiness of his handshake.

“It's terrified I am entirely, Miss Crane, to be here,” he said. “When I go home, for all I know, I may find some woman controlling my ward.”

“Not this year,” Martha said, “but if the legislature does try that proposal of ten years' experimental suffrage for women, then you'd better look out.”

“I'm sure who my hated rival would be,” Cassidy said. “I know your father, Miss Crane; we came on the same train.”

Helen smiled and turned to answer a question of her father. Martha and Cassidy got out of the chapel and Martha said, “Look here, I'm going to cut this luncheon for your sake, and that's a great favor I want you to know. We'll go off and lunch somewhere in the village. It will be our last chance.”

“Our last chance?” Cassidy asked, smiling across into her eyes, for they were of the same height.

“We'll not see much of each other in Chicago,” said Martha. “I'm going to be good to our old ward in my way, which is diametrically opposed to your way.”

Cassidy looked at her gravely. “Made your plans?” he asked.

She nodded. “I'm to be a general utility person in one of the settlements. I'm endowed, Michael, if you please. I'll go and form a union in one place; I'll go and form a suffrage club in another. Maybe I'll arbitrate a strike somewhere else. Executive work.”

“Sure; that's what you're cut out for,” he said.

“Are you still working against this experimental suffrage for women?” she asked.

“Oh, we'll probably let you try it,” he said indulgently. “It'll be a failure and you'll be glad to simmer down at the end of ten years.”

“I won't try to convince you,” Martha said, “I'll just fight you. That's the restaurant up the street—that pretty villa.”

Cassidy looked at her with renewed gravity. For eight years, ever since she had been sixteen, he had watched her with interest, first because of her beauty, and then because of her courage and ambition. He had not really analyzed his feelings until he had watched her strong, beautiful face on the platform glowing under the words of the speaker, to whom he was not listening. He had wished that he could gently touch those blond braids, could make those steady gray eyes soften for him. Now he compressed his lips and shook his head.

“Never mind, I can wait,” he said.

“Wait?” Martha asked.

“Nothing; see behind us. We are not the only ones who are looking for a quiet place.”

Across the street Martha saw Helen between her father and Richard Kendrick. Helen's sense of elation had died. She felt tired and fearful. After luncheon her father went up to the college to call on the president. She was almost afraid to be alone with Richard, but when they had crossed the campus and gone into the little patch of woods by

the lake where the sun fell softly and the birds sang drowsily and when Richard put his arms about her with loving words, for a moment her joy in him blinded her to all else. She felt a happiness even keener than had been hers in that golden hour of the night before.

Presently her sense of unrest came back, and in a low faltering tone she told him all that Martha had said and waited for his denial. For a few moments he was silent—she hoped from indignation. Then he began, not to deny, but to justify.

It seemed that Richard regarded law as something detached from human feelings. To him winning a case against Mary Kane for the laundry company was merely a legal victory; the girl's suffering did not enter. The burns, the mangled limbs of the steel workers were beside the point. His business was to win his cases. Richard sharply divided his business life from his social life. He could be thoughtful and unselfish where she or his friends were concerned; but when a matter of business entered he had only the zest to win. As he talked, revealing more than he guessed, she wondered how she could have loved him so well without knowing him; how a man with such possibilities for good could have in his soul such arid, numb areas. One thing he said enlightened her somewhat.

“I admit to a more ardent determination to succeed than your father has, for example, but remember, he is well known; he has the background of a distinguished father and grandfather. I was taken from the arms of my widowed mother, of whom I know only the facts of my own name and parentage which she gasped out to my adopted father just before she died. I have to get on; I have to rise above the need of a background.”

Helen's heart had settled into a dull aching, but she went on questioning her lover, scanning his ideals, matching his aims with hers, and all the time into her mind there darted stray phrases from the address of the morning about the shame of compromise, the agony of diverse ideals between two who love, the bitterness of spiritual defeat. Soon her grief flashed into words.

“If I could do it, if I could stifle my conscience, I would, for I love you so, I love you so.”

“Helen!” he cried.

“But don't you see, all this would come up again a hundred times between us all our lives long. You're wrong, cruel—I can't—We mustn't ever.” Her voice broke.

“Helen, you're not—sending me away?”

She could not speak, but her face was determined. She took his hand and pressed it against her cheek, then she pushed it away.

“Never; you and I,” she whispered.

Then she hid her face and wept, while across the water sounded the happy voices of Bertha and Wynne Harley rowing up to the spot yesterday had made so sweet.

In the Land of Tomorrow:
The Second Instalment of a Love Story in Four Chapters, In Which Woman
Suffrage Has Its Part

By Maude Radford Warren

Illustrated by William B. King

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapter

The story opens during Commencement week at Revelstoke College, which has declared itself in favor of woman suffrage. We are introduced to the three leading characters—all about to graduate from Revelstoke. Martha Broomer, a Brunhilda type of girl who was born in the slums of Chicago, has won her way finally to a college education, and Michael Cassidy, a ward boss of Chicago, comes to see her graduate. Bertha Larrabee is a beautiful, rich New Yorker of an old exclusive family, and is in love with Wynne Harley, a young capitalist. During class week they become engaged. The other member of the trio is Helen Crane, daughter of a well-known Chicago lawyer. She is beautiful and very gifted. She has been studying law and is in love with a young lawyer named Kendrick, the adopted son of a well-known man, who comes with her father to attend the graduation. While there she discovers that his interests are all with unscrupulous corporations. She repudiates him and they part. All three girls are enthusiastic suffragists.

Part II.

The junior partner of Crane and Crane, lawyers, was sitting in her private office looking idly at the picture of her little namesake, Helen Harley, Bertha's child. She often longed to hold in her arms this other Helen.

Eleven years had dealt generously with Helen; her hair, falling like the two soft wings of a bird, was as soft and brown as the day she had graduated from Revelstoke. Her brown eyes were as bright, and if some lines had come, they were lines of decision and humor, not of hardness or of fretfulness. She wore a rather smart gown, for she had just come from a luncheon of suffragists, women and men, who had met to discuss the best means of making permanent the ten years of experimental suffrage for women which was now drawing to a close.

“What a change,” she murmured.

She was remembering the quick pointed speeches, the practical suggestions, the shrewd tactics that had been proposed, and contrasting such directness with a time, only a few years back, when she and Martha Broomer used to be in despair because of red tape, of indirection, of precious hours wasted in unnecessary committees, and by women who quoted what their husbands and fathers thought of such matters, instead of putting their minds on the question before the house. If in the old days the women's clubs had trained many women to quick practical thinking, the experimental suffrage had trained more, and all the energies of Helen and her friends were being exerted toward making permanent those temporary rights.

Against them were allied some great manufacturers, some mighty business men and all of the powers of evil of a great city. For though the women had not been able to cope with the present existing machinery of nomination any more than honest men can, and though they had been given few chances for elective offices, still they had made themselves uncomfortably felt. The bosses were less able to put in office the candidates most pleasing to them, and they had less power to dismiss office-holders who had dared to displease them. The women voted a split ticket too often. They insisted on stringent liquor and gambling laws. They were in the way.

The bell at Helen's desk whirred and she picked up the telephone-receiver. “It is long distance, Miss Crane,” she was told from the outer office, “your father is on the wire.”

Time had more and more annihilated space. New York was a friendly neighbor now, Helen reflected, as she waited for connections. The struggle for equal suffrage had been different in each state perhaps, but only as one neighbor's house differs from another. The suffragists were coming to be not merely citizens of one town, but of all the United States.

“Is that you, Helen?” her father asked.

“Yes, father.”

“I suppose you've crossed out my name since I've been gone,” he said in the humorously complaining tone he liked to use toward her. “I'll find myself Oslerized, fit only to sweep out the office of the suffragists, eh?”

Helen laughed indulgently. “We'll not forget all you've done for us,” she said.

“I called you up, my dear,” he said, “about Kendrick.”

“Yes,” she said stiffly.

“His adopted father—you know they quarreled— died here in this hotel this morning, and he gave me a letter and a package to do what I like with. They are about Kendrick's mother. I thought you'd better see them. I'll post them to you to-night. Thought I'd prepare you a bit.”

“Yes,” she told him slowly, longing for some further word from New York.

“That's all, dear; keep well. Good-by.”

Helen hung up the receiver, a flush on her cheeks. In spite of the years that had passed, she could not think of Kendrick, could not hear or see his name without a sudden throbbing of heart.

They met rarely and always by chance, at a reception, in the foyer of some theater, once or twice in court, but they had never exchanged a word since the day they had parted. She could not have helped hearing of him, even if she had wished to, for his rise had been quick and always heralded. Soon after their broken engagement he had given up his attorneyship with the Steel company; Helen wanted to think it was because the work was too distasteful, but he had become the attorney for a number of companies who were keeping back taxes that should have gone to build schools, and who were so well entrenched that only a few helpless reformers knew of the fact. Meanwhile, he had been all along concerned with politics. The inheritors of wealth and power had aided him, and his own personal popularity had grown with the years. An opinion which he had expressed upon some international complication had won the public approval of an idolized ex-president, and had proved the final impetus which propelled him toward the governor's chair. He was now serving his first term and serving it well.

A secretary entered to announce that a lady was waiting to see Miss Crane. “A bird of paradise type,” the girl offered gratuitously, “who gave her name as Mrs. Harley.”

“Oh, show her in at once,” said Helen with sparkling eyes.

In a moment she and Bertha were in each other's arms in true girl fashion.

“You dear,” cried Bertha with a break in her voice. She held Helen at arm's length. “Not changed a bit in five years,” she added, “and I have to have massage every day, an occasional trip to Baden and the most careful of dressmakers.”



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Bertha was still dowered with the wonderful glancing beauty that had made her the pride of the undergraduates at Revelstoke, but she showed her age more than Helen did.

It's the cares of a family,” she told Helen. “You've only got the whole world to look after; that's easier than four children.”

They seated themselves by the window and looked down upon the street below. “I can hardly believe that it's five years, now I'm here,” Bertha said, wistfully.

“It needn't have been,” Helen returned with a hint of reproach.

“It's my bad luck that I've always been away when you were in New York,” Bertha said, “and I really couldn't leave Wynne to come. But you'll see enough of me now. I'm at the Annex until Wynne finishes his business here.”

Helen asked no questions. She had long ago found that Bertha closed her mind to her husband's business affairs, but Helen knew that he had given a large sum to fight the extension of equal suffrage.

“I'm so glad you're here,” Helen said. “I hope we'll see a lot of each other.”

“As much as you'll let me,” Bertha replied. “I must tell you all about everything.”

They talked for an hour, and then Bertha rose. "I must go. Wynne might be back early this afternoon," she said as she opened her little silver purse. She took out a folded check, adding hesitatingly, "Helen, you know, since mother died, I've had—more. I want you to take this check for—for anything you like. It's my own money."

They looked at each other a moment and Bertha's eyes dropped. Then she added, "It's—it's between you and me—and Martha if you like."

The door opened sharply and Martha entered. Her blond braids shining under her businesslike black hat, her gray eyes as alert and sharp as ever. She stared at Bertha.

"Don't you know me, Martha?" Bertha said.

Martha held out her hand. "Couldn't forget you even in eleven years," she said crisply, "but I must say I never expected to see you again."

Bertha flushed. "I've been so busy," she murmured.

"Yes," Martha agreed. "It's a busy world. Aren't you going to sit down again?"

"I was just going," Bertha said, "but I'm coming back. I sha'n't give you a chance to forget me."

Martha made no reply, but nodded good-by, while Helen went with Bertha as far as the elevator. When Helen returned, Martha had taken off her hat and was looking over a package of mail.

"Really, Martha," Helen said, "you needn't have been so unkind to Bertha."

"I meant it when I told her it was a busy world. I've no time for backsliders. When I think of the way Bertha has wasted her money and beauty and influence—she's as bad as Grace Hearn."

Helen winced a little. She had believed in Grace Hearn, the languid, pretty Californian who was going to convert her whole state to suffrage. Grace had married within a year, and now, as Martha contemptuously said, rocked on her front porch and ate chocolates and read French novels and laughed at women who wanted votes.

"Never mind, Helen," said Martha remorsefully, "you were more than right about Mary Carter and Coralie Leighton. Think of the wonders they have accomplished and think of how little defection we've had from our ranks after all; nearly all the girls who graduated with us have either gone on working for the cause or at least have not lost interest. Every one of the organizations we formed is still alive and flourishing, to say nothing of the ones the girls have formed in their various towns."

"We've every reason to be grateful," said Helen, thinking of the yearly class reunion, which proved beyond a doubt the staunch support Revelstoke College gave to the sweeping movement of woman suffrage. "As to Bertha," she went on after a pause, "it is said that a married woman has problems a spinster cannot understand."

"Stuff," said Martha, the direct, "you mean that Bertha was afraid of losing Wynne's love if she opposed his violence against equal suffrage and reform and all decent things. Any woman can help mold a man's opinion and at the same time keep his love, if she's just got the character."

"I once heard a married woman say," remarked Helen, "that if the husband wouldn't agree with the wife, the wife had to agree with the husband."

“I know Bertha adores him; can't bear to let him go off on a business trip alone,” sniffed Martha. “That's my idea of curtailing a man's freedom. I'm cross, Helen; send some one for tea, will you?”

After she had telephoned to the outer office, Helen said, “After all, Martha, there is a good deal we don't understand in the situation of a woman like Bertha. How could she declare herself in favor of an eight-hour day for women, equal wage for equal work, the raising of the age of consent, and all that, when her husband stands on record as a determined fighter against all these things, when in his big department-store he pays less than a living wage to a hundred girls?”

“I know, but she ought to have trained him so he wouldn't do all these things. I suppose he thinks being on hospital boards and establishing a crèche now and then is a sufficient contribution for her to make toward the betterment of things.”

Helen handed Martha the check Bertha had given her. “We're to have that for any purpose we please.”

“Humph,” said Martha. Then she raised her eyebrows as she read the amount. “Well, it's a big sum. She only adds to my perplexities. Poor little Bertha; but I've got to do it.”

“What are you talking about, Martha?” asked Helen.

“Nothing that I can tell you now. Here is the tea. Attribute all I do to a fiendish week; it's been unspeakable.”

Martha was a representative in the State Legislature, one of the very few women who had won office during the temporary suffrage. It was a strenuous life, especially now, when the opposing forces were being drawn up to defeat the bill for permanent equal suffrage. Martha drank eagerly the cup of tea Helen poured for her.

“You look feverish, Martha; why don't you go somewhere for the week-end?” said Helen solicitously.

“Feverish? I ought to; I've had a temperature of a hundred for two days, but I've got to keep up. After election it doesn't matter.”

The telephone buzzed and Helen picked up the receiver. Then she gave a little exclamation and said, “Mr. Cassidy is in the outer office and wants to see us.”

Martha put her hand to her forehead wearily. “Another strain,” she said, “but have him in, Helen.”

The door opened and the boss entered. His splendid red hair was crisped with white, to his advantage, for it took away from his old-time flavor of sleek prosperity and gave him a touch of distinction. His manner had lost none of its good-humored ease.

“Well, ladies,” he said, “you'll forgive me for coming into the enemy's camp, but where else could I meet the enemy? I've been chasing up Martha all day, and only just got on her track.”

“Won't you have some tea, Mr. Cassidy?” Helen asked.

Humorously he accepted. “Sure, if my heelers could see me now,” he said appreciatively, “they could not believe their eyes any more than they did the first time I had on a dress suit. Maybe you'll remember it, Martha?”

“Yes,” said Martha, “it was at the United Firemen's ball. I was fourteen and I had on my first light colored dress and was sitting up in the gallery as a delirious spectator. You gave me the dress as a Christmas present.”

Cassidy's broad face crimsoned. “Well, I'd forgotten that part of it entirely, Martha,” he replied.

“I guess that's right,” Martha said, relapsing into the old ward vernacular as she always did when talking with Cassidy. “You're not the one to throw up past favors.”

Cassidy tried to do away with his embarrassment by asking for a second cup of tea. Martha smiled at him.

“Wrong start you made, Michael, eh?”

He laughed. “Do you want me to get down to business?”

“Oh, please,” said Helen, “wait until he's had his tea.” She had a sense of uneasiness, feeling something tense between those two.

“The tea's only his shield and buckler, Helen,” said Martha bluntly. “Go ahead, Michael.”

Cassidy put down his cup and spoke deliberately. “To be plain, Martha, do you know you'd never have got your place in the legislature if I'd opposed it?”

Martha shook her head. “I'll admit you didn't interfere, but I think I'd have got it, anyway.”

“You wouldn't,” he insisted.

Martha shifted the point. “Granting you could have opposed me, you didn't because you thought I'd do no harm. If you had supposed I could get in your way, you'd have done your best to defeat me.”

He acknowledged the thrust and went on frankly. “You women were allowed a temporary suffrage because public feeling was pretty strong on the point for one thing, and, for another, it was a little thing to give, in comparison with some big things a few people were getting. I'm plain, you see. We were quite sure the ten years would show that suffrage hadn't made good; that the majority of women themselves would be indifferent, and that it would be interfering with—er—politics.”

“All that has not been proved,” Helen said.

Cassidy dropped the jocular tone of good fellowship he had been using toward Martha and addressed Helen with gravity. “The election will prove it, Miss Crane.”

“You see, Helen,” said Martha sharply, “the real facts don't matter if our opponents can only doctor them right.”

“Now,” went on Cassidy gravely, “as I say, you'll lose, but there are some things you could be given. For example, you want to have women on the board of every last one of the state institutions—St. Samuel's, for example. You want women as superintendents of some of them; you want more women for factory inspectors. All that sort of thing you can have—under certain circumstances.”

Helen had been listening attentively. For years she had been working to have a board equally composed of men and women to govern St. Samuel's School for juvenile delinquents, and to have a woman superintendent at the head. But the school had been heavily endowed, and was too rich a plum to be lightly abandoned by a set of parasites with enormous influence, who had held it in their clutches for a number of years.

“Well, Michael,” said Martha impatiently, “the terms?”

“You don't look well. Go away till after election,” said Cassidy abruptly.

Helen stared at Cassidy; for a moment she thought he had abandoned his topic, moved by a sudden concern for this girl whom he had watched grow up. But something in Martha's face caused a doubt.

“How much do you know, Michael?” Martha asked.

He shook his head. “If you'll go away, Martha, you can have all I've promised.”

Martha turned to Helen. “This is something you don't know of. I was going to tell you.” She stopped at a quick gleam in Cassidy's eyes. “You think I've given myself away, Michael,” she added crisply. “I haven't. It only means that what I know I found out since I last saw Miss Crane.”

“I know well enough that your present knowledge won't hurt any one,” he said.

She was quick to seize upon the weak place in his remark. “But you're afraid, Michael?”

He shook his head again. “Not a bit. I only want to save a lot of trouble. You'll lose out in the end. Look at the big men like Harley against you. The governor is against you.”

“Governor Kendrick hasn't declared himself,” said Helen quickly.

“No, because he never likes to show his hand till the last minute, even in a little thing.”

Martha rose and stood with her back to the window eyeing him bitterly.

“How you despise women, Michael,” she said. “You know in your soul that we've done good, that we've helped the helpless—the children and the poor lost women that the police and others were keeping in a living hell. You know that you are condemning hundreds of helpless women and children to a harder lot, just so a few men will be richer. Kendrick has done harsh things in the name of the law, but the smashed-up girls and men he beat out of damages he's never seen. You've lived among the poor; you've seen the righteous forsaken and his seed begging their bread. When I think of your own mother who had it so hard, when I think you were a little street child yourself, I cry shame on you, and I wonder at you, I do indeed.”

Cassidy stared, and his face reddened. Never before had Martha spoken to him in such a way. They two had always treated politics as a game, which she considered he was playing along wrong lines. She had never before accused him in this direct concrete way, and he was cut, not because the truth touched him, but because this girl whom he had never ceased to love was showing him personal scorn. Cassidy had not doubted that time would wear out her efforts. He had been sure that she was in a losing fight and that with her strong common sense she would some day come to see it and give it all up, to take what she could from life. He had never really understood that she could stand so magnificently by a cause from which she could gain nothing for herself. He had supposed somehow that she was working for power and that when she lost her fight his hour would come. Now as he saw her, strong in what he was sure was defeat, he began to know her as she really was.

“And you won't give up,” he asked.

“No, never.”

“You'll lose,” he said, as he rose.

“Then I'll lose trying.”

Cassidy bowed soberly to them both and left the room. As soon as he had gone Martha sat down wearily.

“Somehow,” she said brokenly, “I counted on Cassidy's fine good nature. I supposed his generosity would some day bowl over his opposition. When I thought of the way he had helped me as a little girl to get a job, I couldn't help believing that some day he'd help me again in this big job I'm giving up my life to.”

Helen passed her hand over the bowed head, feeling that there were other issues in Martha's life than those she knew. “You're splendid, Martha,” she said, “the biggest and bravest person—”

Martha sprang to her feet; her lips tightened. “Now, I must go,” she said. “I'll tell you all about it as soon as I can, but I've not time now, for Cassidy will be working against me. I'd hoped for a couple of days' rest, but it's night-and-day work for me now until I get our information, and if I do, Helen, we win!”

She pinned on her hat, gave her shoulders a little shake and walked steadily to the door. Helen put out a staying hand.

“Martha dear, you have fever—”

“It'll have to wait. Good-by.”

The door closed upon her, and Helen sat down, strangely moved. For years she and Martha and the other women who were interested in the vote had been regarding their cause in as practical a manner as possible. They were contented to appear sparingly at conventions, and when there, to confine their activities to questions concerning women and children. They were content to have little enough effect upon the party slates, only insisting on barring from candidacy men of bad moral character; they were willing to let time show their fitness for being candidates themselves. In fact, they were bringing the tact they had always used socially and domestically to bear on public questions.

Nearly all of them were married women without children, or with grown-up children, or else middle-aged spinsters. None of them but put home first. Many a woman who would have been glad to work for suffrage could not, because she had only sufficient strength for her home life. It had been for some time a canon of the cause that while every woman should vote, only a few had the vitality or time or money to go out from their homes and handle the larger work of the world. As Helen reviewed them she could scarcely name half a dozen who were eager for personal place or power. They were merely the inheritors of the club woman's creed, which aimed to work for humanity, to help men, women and children. If the suffragists were specializing on women and children, that was natural enough; so much must be done before their indifferent sisters were whipped into line. For many who could not be stirred by any question of public or civic policy could be moved by an appeal in the name of the wage-earning women and the children.

Yet, as she thought of the two who had just left her office, Helen felt again the old emotional surge that had come to her when she first embraced the cause. Long ago at Revelstoke had she not been tempted to throw away it and her conscience, and cling close

to Richard Kendrick—blind her mind, shut her ears, as Bertha Harley had done. The temptation had passed and she was the stronger. But she could understand Bertha, and now she was beginning to think that perhaps Martha, too, was paying her personal price for her moral victory.

During the next day Helen saw nothing of Martha, though she had from her an enigmatic message to the effect that she and Cassidy were on the war-path, but that Cassidy was a day behind with his tomahawking. The morning after, she had a telephone message that Martha would come up later in the day. Immediately afterward a secretary entered with her mail. Among it was a large envelope in her father's writing. She knew this was the package relating to Kendrick, about which her father had telephoned to her. Eagerly she opened it; a letter in her father's handwriting fell out and a shabby note-book. She picked up the letter.

"Dear Junior," it ran. "To be brief, it was some eighteen years ago that old Kendrick quarreled with his adopted son. From what the poor old fellow told me, he had wanted Richard to come abroad with him and loaf his life away in a warm country as little more than a personal lackey. Richard wanted a life of his own at home. So the old fellow put him out of his house and went to Sicily with a valet.

"I have always understood from Richard that his mother died in a wreck where Kendrick was also one of the passengers. Kendrick adopted him then and there, and led him to believe that he knew nothing of his mother, except that she was pretty and refined and a widow. What he did not tell Richard was that there was another child, a girl, a little younger. This child was taken by an emigrant whose little girl had been killed and whose wife was injured and delirious and crying for her baby. This little sister of Richard looked something like her own child. The emigrant had been in Chicago before; in fact, worked in the stock-yards. Old Kendrick wrote down his name, Henry Shailer, and I think did a little for the family now and then. But he lost interest after a while—I suspect as he grew increasingly attached to Richard. The last he knew of them was something like twenty-five years ago when they were living in Cassidy's ward, and the girl, Annie Shailer, as she was called, was a pretty, long-limbed youngster about factory age.

"Now, dear Junior, I don't know what use you can make of this, if any, but in view of several things, unspoken between us, I thought it better to write you and inclose this book, which seems to be a kind of diary Richard's mother kept. I have only looked into it enough to learn that much. But what a bit of romance in this workaday world; the brother, governor—the sister, what? Wife of a butcher, baker or candlestick-maker, whose husband votes on the other ticket.

"Your poor old superseded,

"Father."

Helen put down the letter with a trembling hand.

"The sister—what?" she repeated. She decided to wait until her father came home and let him tell Richard Kendrick of this sole relative of his—if indeed she still lived. In business affairs Kendrick could separate the legal from the human, but not when it was a matter of his own flesh and blood. She believed that he would seek out his sister, welcome her gladly, do whatever he could for her and hers. It would not matter if she were common and poor; blood would call to blood. Helen could not doubt that. But perhaps the sister was dead or had moved away. Would it not be better to find out

something about her before saying anything to Richard? How much was this her affair or her father's? How much right had she to help Kendrick or to spare him?

She touched the shabby little note-book, his mother's diary. Slowly she passed her hand through the pages; she did not mean to read. The words were for Richard only—a voice he had forgotten. But as the pages slipped under her hand her eyes caught a broken line.

“... the hope that my two little children may be good to each other and that life will be good to them.”

Helen closed the book with a hand that faltered—those two little children that had grown up apart! If Richard should have to learn that his little sister, Annie Shailer, had ever needed her brother!

“I'll do it,” said Helen aloud. “Michael Cassidy will know who the Shailers are and what has become of them. I'll find out something before father speaks to Richard.”

Gently she put away the worn little diary and turned resolutely to her work. But now and then throughout the morning her thoughts wandered to Richard's sister. What was she like? What had been her life? What would be their meeting?

At noon Bertha fluttered in to carry her off to luncheon, for Wynne Harley was away on business and the children were at a little friend's midday party. Afterward the two went back to Helen's office, Bertha standing as a sign that she was going presently, so as not to interrupt Helen's work. While she lingered, some one brushed awkwardly against the door and then Martha entered. They exclaimed at the sight of her face. Her cheeks were crimson with fever; her eyes were glazed and staring, and she trembled. But her voice was steady as she gave a hot hand to each of her friends and said:

“I'm glad to have got here. You'll help me, Helen, to keep my head clear. Telephone to Michael Cassidy to come here.”

“Martha, you're sick,” began Helen.

“Don't waste time,” said Martha shortly. “Can't you see I've no strength to argue.”

Helen went to the telephone, while Bertha put Martha in a chair, unpinned her hat, and running into an inner room, brought back a cold cloth for her head.

“That's good,” said Martha. “Now don't talk to me till Michael comes. I don't think you should be here, Bertie.”

Bertha smiled at the old pet name and settled down beside Martha, who opened her bag and took out a large package of papers which she handed to Helen.

“Keep them,” she said, “till Michael comes.”

Cassidy, fortunately, was easily found, and in a short time he was ushered into Helen's office wearing a sober expression. It deepened into concern when he looked at Martha.

“She's sick,” he said accusingly to Helen.

Helen stood silently by Martha. Bertha retreated to a corner of the room, feeling rather out of place and yet not caring to withdraw while Martha looked so ill.

“My body's sick,” croaked Martha, “but my heart and soul have the best health they've ever had. You're beaten, Michael.” She turned to Helen. “It's this, Helen. You remember when Carson was elected to the Senate last fall that some of his avowed Republican enemies and some of the Democrats voted for him? The reason is that their

votes were bought by big lumber interests. The lumbermen need all the men they can get at Washington to keep Canadian lumber out. Carson is their creature.”

“What's your proof?” asked Cassidy sharply.

Martha passed her hand over her forehead. “It all began with the words of a drunken man, Helen,” she said. “If I hadn't been brought up in the slums and been used to the seamy side of life, I'd never have got this information. You couldn't have waded through what I have.”

“What's your proof?” repeated Cassidy, but gently, for he was touched by her evident illness.

Martha, with an effort, gathered herself together again. “The proof? I've the full confession of two of the men who took the bribes, which is properly attested and sworn to.”

Cassidy considered. “You've not gone too far?” he said.

“What do you mean by that?” asked Martha wonderingly.

“Aren't you ready to trade with me?” he asked. “Won't you drop this matter, if I swing my influence to make your votes permanent?”

Martha uttered a cracked laugh. “Did you think it was that, Michael? That I would trade even? No, that's too much like the old-fashioned ward politics. Besides, even if it wasn't, it would pay me better to get the advertisement of this for our cause. A woman to uncover the bribery, to open to view a corruption that men themselves won't stand for! I've given the scoop to a neutral newspaper on condition that it comes out for suffrage. We didn't put in so many brutal words, but, all the same, it amounts to that. This is a very great boost for suffrage, Michael. Here are the correct copies of the confessions.”

She motioned to Helen, who without hesitation handed Cassidy the papers. As he took them, he said in a low voice to Martha:

“You know I'm not mixed up in this myself, Martha. I'm pretty liberal and these men are my business friends, but bribery's going some too many for me.”

Martha smiled faintly. “I didn't know but that you were behind some fence-pole in it, but I'm awfully glad you're not Michael.”

As Cassidy glanced over the papers Martha turned to Bertha and added wearily, “I was too fuzzy-headed to tell you not to stay, Bertha.”

Bertha rose. “I've been wondering if this wasn't a little out of my line,” she said painfully.

“I'm very sorry,” Martha said. “That's been the worst of it—that you'd be hurt. Of course, your husband's face will be saved. Some of his subordinates were told to get the thing done, and the big heads didn't care to ask how.”

Bertha gazed at her with wide eyes. “Martha, what are you talking about?” she whispered.

“I had to do it,” Martha said. “For all I knew I was throwing down Michael Cassidy, that gave me all the pleasure I had as a child; so I couldn't stop at Wynne Harley.”

Helen put her arms about Bertha. “Martha,” she cried piteously.

“Is—is it the lumber firm Wynne is president of?” Bertha asked.

Martha nodded, and Cassidy, looking up suddenly from the papers, was aware that something poignant was going on among the three.

“My dear, my dear,” cried Helen in a soft voice.

Bertha drew herself up with a wry smile. “I—I'm afraid I've not your moral stamina, Martha,” she said huskily. “I'm going home to tell Wynne, to warn him, to do everything in my power to save his name somehow.”

With a quick little fluttering step she left the room.

Cassidy folded the papers and handed them back to Helen. He rose and stood beside Martha, looking down on her with an inscrutable expression.

“So you thought I might be in with that high-toned crowd that get their head clerks to do their dirty work?”

Martha nodded.

“And you were going to soak me just the same?”

She nodded again and let her head fall on Helen's shoulder. Cassidy looked at her and then said violently:

“She's worked like a dog all her days, all her days.”

He walked up and down the little office, and then once more he paused before Martha.

“Well, my girl,” Cassidy said, “you've got that lumber crowd all right. It's a great coup. It's a big thing for a woman to have done, or any one else, for that matter.”

“I wish I had a drink,” said Martha wearily.

Helen rose and went for a glass of water.

Cassidy sat down and took Martha's hot hand in his. He was silent for a time, and quite oblivious of Helen. Then he said:

“I don't honestly know how great a following the governor and the rest of them can swing against suffrage, and I don't know how much of a crowd I can swing for it. The time that's left is pretty short, but, be gorry, Martha, I'm with you tooth and nail. You can do what you please with the lumber crowd, friends of mine, though they are. Soak it to them all you like. I'm with you. And it's not just for you, Martha. I've had some new thoughts about women and the vote since you talked to me last. I'm doing this thing because it's right.”

Martha smiled at him with misting eyes and said, “I always knew we'd get you, Michael.”

Then she put her head on Helen's shoulder and without any noise quietly slipped into unconsciousness.

In the Land of Tomorrow:

A Love Story in Four Chapters, In Which Woman Suffrage Has Its Part

By Maude Radford Warren

Illustrated by W. B. King

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapter

The story opens during Commencement week at Revelstoke College, which has declared itself in favor of woman suffrage. We are introduced to the three leading characters—all about to graduate from Revelstoke. Martha Broomer, a Brunhilda type of girl who was born in the slums of Chicago, has earned her right finally to a college education, and Michael Cassidy, a ward boss of Chicago, comes to see her graduate. Bertha Larrabee is a beautiful, rich New Yorker of an old, exclusive family, and is in love with and marries Wynne Harley, a young capitalist. The other member of the trio is Helen Crane daughter of a well-known Chicago lawyer. She has been studying law and is in love with a young lawyer named Kendrick, the adopted son of a well-known man, who comes with her father to attend the graduation. While there she discovers that his interests are all with unscrupulous corporations. She repudiates him and they part. All three girls are enthusiastic suffragists. Eleven years now elapse. Martha Broomer is working heroically in her old ward in Chicago for the betterment of women; Helen Crane is a partner in her father's law firm in the same city, and both women are firm friends. Kendrick has become governor of Illinois, and Helen falls into possession, upon the death of his adopted father, of a letter and package belonging to Kendrick's mother, which give proof that the governor has a sister who was adopted by a working-man. Bertha Harley comes on from New York just at the moment when, through Martha's efforts, a big lumber fraud is discovered, the principal transgressor being Bertha's husband, Wynne Harley. Michael Cassidy is still Martha's good friend, though her political opponent. Suffrage has been given a ten years' trial and the women of Illinois are working to make it permanent.

Part III.

The next morning Cassidy went very early to the offices of Crane and Crane. The afternoon before when Martha, her hard struggle over, had fainted, Helen and her secretary had sent him for a taxicab, into which he had helped all three women, and then had been left standing on the pavement, a mere helpless man, his usefulness to them for the present over; he must go about his own affairs when all his heart was following that

dear figure leaning languidly against Helen's shoulder, the blond braids on her splendid head darkened where his awkward hands had dashed water upon them.

During the evening he had telephoned to her flat two or three times, on each occasion receiving the same report, that she was tired, feverish and trying to sleep. He would have persisted in his inquiries just for the sake of feeling nearer her, except for the increasingly amused tone of Martha's housemate who answered his questions. He had waked early with the determination that if he could not see Martha immediately, at least he could serve her by going to Helen's office and talking over with her his part in the suffrage plans.

He had looked at his watch many times since the day before, but unseeingly; the hours had dragged intolerably, and it was with distinct surprise that he had found he had arrived at the Crane offices something before nine, and that Helen, according to her secretary, might not arrive until almost ten. As he hesitated the secretary remarked that he might like to telephone, and showed him into Helen's private office. Cassidy sat down by the telephone; perhaps it was not too early to find out how Martha was. He reflected for a moment as to the way in which he would put his inquiries so that they would not sound too anxious. Then he took down the receiver. It was some time before that receiver fell into place again for at that moment the door opened and Martha entered.

Cassidy stared at her unbelievably. It could not be that the thing he most wanted was really happening; that she stood there, direct gray eyes fixed on his. Martha laughed at his expression.

"Yes, I know I'm in bed with a trained nurse," she said, as she sat down in Helen's chair, "but I could not stay idle, Michael, with so much to be done, so I slipped out when they weren't looking. Have you been thinking over what we must do?"

"Have I been thinking over what we must do?" repeated Cassidy. "I wish you'd take off your hat."

"I was going to, anyway," Martha said indifferently, but her hands trembled a little as she took out the hatpins.

Cassidy went close to her chair and put his hands tenderly on her head.

"The dear hair," he whispered. "Martha, my veins turned to water last night thinking of you, so grand you are, and strong and brave and then to think you worked yourself sick! I don't believe I knew how much I loved you—every little strand of your hair and the way you get work done, and all and all; I didn't know how much it all meant to me till I saw you with your head on Miss Crane's shoulder, unconscious, slipped away from me. I thought then, what if you never came back! It seemed to me then that I had just begun to love you, and yet I knew it had gone on for a long time. To-day it seems as if I had always loved you."

"You've always been good to me, Michael," she murmured

"I don't know that. You've been in my heart a good many years, and I was willing to wait my time, for sure I knew you didn't love me, Martha. Maybe you don't love me now. I always meant to wait till I thought you had begun, but there are times when a man's resolution goes to the wall. Maybe I oughtn't to speak now, just when I've offered to help you. Maybe now or any other time wouldn't be of any use to me. But I'm past being able to calculate. I only know I love you."



“I have never been able to forget you, Helen,' he said”

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Martha had bent her head. He waited for a word from her, but as she did not speak he went on.

“My ideas aren't yours, I know. Our ideas are as different as day and night—” The big “boss” hesitated, and then his Celtic blood spoke. “But, Martha, day and night aren't always separate; the dawn and the twilight join them. There are stars in the night as bright as the day, and shadows in daytime as soft and dark as night. I'm thinking that love may be a bigger thing than any man's ways or any woman's ways; that different ways of looking at things is not so powerful as big mutual loving. Sure, Martha, I want you so much,” faltered Cassidy, “that you could persuade me far.” Martha turned in her chair and looked at him softly. Her clear gray eyes were misty, and her voice trembled.

“Why, Michael Cassidy!” she cried, happily, buoyantly, “I've loved you these five years!

“Five years,” stammered Cassidy, “five years, and you would—”

“I would not have given up my views or my work for you,” said Martha in her keen decisive voice, “but I've loved you enough for five years to make light of the very things that once seemed to me must break off even our friendship.”

“And you've let me wait five years!” cried Cassidy; “Martha, why didn't you—”

“Why didn't I propose for you?” asked Martha happily. “Well, don't you think I've gone pretty far in telling you I've loved you for five years? Do you suppose Helen Crane or Bertha Harley would be as frank as I've been? No, indeed! If Helen had loved any man five years, she would have had to be married to him for five more before she would admit it, and even then she would consider reticence more becoming.”

“I don't know,” said Cassidy philosophically, “Love brings out unexpected things in a person. Come, Martha.”

“Come where?” asked Martha, smiling up at him.

“Out of this office. It is no place for lovers who have lost five years.”

“But there's so much to do,” protested Martha weakly.

“Let it wait—as we have.” Michael put out his hand.

“But not for five years—say an hour.” said Martha rising.

“Acushla macree, dear core of my heart,” whispered Cassidy, as he put his arms about her, “come out with me now, and we'll find a green world of our own, we two.”

Martha let her head rest on his shoulder.

“Oh, Michael, Michael,” she murmured, “there have been times enough when all I was trying to do was dust and ashes, because it was outside the circle of you.”

He held her close; then they moved to the door, quite unaware of the smiling secretary, who had guarded the office zealously for them, glad of a bit of romance, even if it were not a personal romance, in the workaday world of a lawyer's office.

Five minutes later Helen entered with her father. She sat down at once to her desk in a working attitude, but her eyes were fixed on the little drawer in which she had locked the worn diary belonging to Kendrick's mother. She was thinking about his unknown sister, Annie Shailer, and wondering when she would hear from Cassidy, whom she had asked the day before to find out whatever he could about the family.

Crane glanced at his daughter's face, keen but gentle, and then from her to the two or three choice pictures on the walls of her office, vaguely pleased with the feminine touches that differentiated it from his own room, hung with engraved portraits of two or three ugly judges, and his own and his daughter's diplomas. He looked at the portraits of his father and grandfather which hung above Helen's desk, and he gazed down at her with a sense of pride. She was carrying on the tradition of the Cranes; there was still a lawyer in the younger generation of the family. The tradition had not died.

“Harley was on the telephone a minute ago,” he remarked. “He said he was coming over; hung up before I could answer.”

Helen glanced at the open newspaper on her desk. The heavy black headlines announced the Carson bribery case and its connection with the lumber company of which Harley was president.

“He isn't going to offer to retain you!” she exclaimed. “Well, you know we are friends. We came on together from New York yesterday. I dare say he thinks I can't afford to refuse the heavy fee. I rang him up to hint that it wouldn't be worth while to come over but he had already left the office.”

“Here he is now,” Helen said, as a clerk came in with Harley's card.

Crane went into his own office, and when Harley entered he was looking down into the street on two great signboards which read, “Honor your mother; vote for women.” “When you vote for women you vote for the home.”

Harley, shaking hands, followed his eye to the signs.

"I suppose they've got to keep it up and so ruin themselves as the losing side does in the presidential election," he said in his peculiarly slow accurate voice.

"Well, you know, I'm not so sure we'll lose."

"We? Oh, yes, of course. Well, you can't say this hasn't destroyed the chivalry of men. Look at the way they let the women stand in the street-cars in Colorado."

"They always have more or less. But look at the way our women forced in the Hunter Bill which provides for enough cars so that none of us have to stand," said Crane. "As for chivalry, some poor women never knew what it was till they got their vote."

"That Hunter Bill was bad for some people's business," said Harley with the composure of a man who never rides on street-cars. "Women haven't business sense."

"They've better than that," retorted Crane. "You can always frighten us men with the cry, 'Bad for business.' The woman always puts the welfare of human beings before business."

"There's one of them that's mixed up in business a little too much to suit me," Harley said with a forced laugh, "this Miss Martha Broomer that Bertha used to know. Have you seen the papers?"

Crane nodded gravely. "I tried to telephone you after you rang off not to come over, Wynne."

Harley looked at him closely. "You mean you won't?"

"I can't."

Harley's face paled. His hard eye shifted as he said, "I need you, Mr. Crane. I won't deny there's been some unsightly work—"

"Don't tell me anything about it," Crane interrupted.

"It makes me heart-sick to think of Bertha," Harley said with a change of tone. "Since Bertha and Helen are such friends—I tell you Mr. Crane, I need you."

"I know, Wynne," the older man said gently, "but I can't."

"Bertha said you wouldn't," answered Harley unhappily.

He went out slowly and Crane returned to his daughter's office. They were in consultation over the case when the door opened and Martha entered.

"I have to be up," said Martha, seating herself and answering Helen's accusing eye, "because Michael thinks it will do us good if I make some platform speeches."

"A sort of refined vaudeville?" asked Helen.

Martha laughed. "I've been wondering if some manager wouldn't offer me a hundred per to tell how I did it, but I'm going to let the dear public hear me for nothing and throw in some home truths."

As Crane went into his own office, Helen asked, "You've seen the papers?"

"No, I couldn't look at them," said Martha. "I can't see anything but Bertha's face so sad and reproachful. In building up for us, I've torn down for her."

"Whatever has happened," Helen said, "has had its source in Wynne Harley's character. Bertha telephoned me last night that they're going back to-morrow to New York."

"That's better, I suppose," Martha returned. "The headlines in the papers won't be so big there."

“Poor Bertha,” sighed Helen, “she feels terrible. She says, of course, Wynne didn't know about it.”

“Of course,” said Martha scornfully, “what else does he pay a ten-thousand-dollar henchman for but to keep himself ignorant of these painful details? Bertha is just following the tendency of average human nature to sacrifice principle to save one's own personal family. Well, she'll never forgive me.”

“She left you a good-by,” Helen said. “She's not bitter against you.”

Martha was silent. A great wave of pity filled her heart for Bertha's sake. She thought of the old hopeful days at Revelstoke, when they were all so young, so sure of what they wanted to do, so unconscious of the obstacles that confronted them, and that had made some of the graduating class falter, even as Bertha had faltered. She remembered how beautifully Bertha had adapted herself to all the conditions of college life, how unspoiled she had been. She could see her in a dozen situations, always tactful and sweet and self-forgetful. She recalled, too, what intense concentration Bertha had had. She had thrown herself utterly into her love for Wynne Harley, and had not really been able to care for anything else. This great love had destroyed her sense of values. To keep it she had let other precious things go by, when if she had loved less blindly, she might have had all. Martha sighed, shook her broad shoulders and then smiled at Helen.

“Barring Bertha,” she said, “I'm as happy as a queen. I'm going to marry Michael Cassidy.”

Helen dropped her eyes, and then looking up, smiled affectionately. “I don't know whether I was expecting it or not,” she said. “I hope you'll be ever and ever so happy.”

“You know you can't help liking him yourself,” said Martha bluntly.

Helen laughed. “Indeed, I do like him,” she admitted.

“I suppose you're wondering how I could bring myself to do it, when I don't approve of his ways,” Martha said. “The fact is I'm not marrying him as a politician, I'm marrying him as a man.”

Helen was evidently not quick to see the distinction, for Martha went on:

“I think he's been an amazing old grafter. He's got nearly a million, he tells me, and of that he's made about eighty thousand dollars in a legitimate coal business he's had for the last twenty years. We're going to live on the interest of that.”

“I don't think the average woman would live on the interest of that if she had a million,” said Helen. “It seems the law of human nature to need just a little more than every cent you have.”

“I've lived on about twelve hundred a year since I graduated,” said Martha, and Michael's tastes are as simple as mine.”

“You'll do anything you decide to,” Helen said. “Is he going to keep on in politics, Martha?”

“Well, I'm not making any conditions,” Martha replied. “I've merely said that if we get our permanent vote I'll go abroad with him and rest for a year or two. You know, Helen, in a year he'll easily be out of things in the ward. I'm in hopes he'll pick up other interests; maybe in Ireland; he's always wanted to buy an estate near the village he was born in. I'm hoping new resources will come to him.”

“You're hoping,” laughed Helen. “Dear Martha! You're planning. We'll go in and tell father.”

The senior partner of Crane and Crane made the proper wishes and while he was in the midst of them, Cassidy was announced.

"I told him he could come and be congratulated and cautioned," Martha said, as Cassidy, pink and smiling, shook hands.

Helen reflected that the radiant Martha apparently felt no sense of compromise. To be marrying Cassidy as a man and not as a politician evidently solved all her difficulties. Helen wondered a little, thinking how like her case was in some ways to that of Bertha yet the difference was greater; Martha would mold her man. Helen's knowledge of her friend gave her a prophetic insight into what would be the lives of those two. Cassidy would deal no more in corrupt politics. He was still in the height of his power, but Martha was a determined and fearless pilot, and she knew that Cassidy's love for her was bigger than any of his ambitions.

"Well," Cassidy said smiling, "the wedding will be soon, right after election. And don't you think, Miss Crane, that she'll ever leave off working for women. She won't leave them in the lurch."

"No, nor any one else," said Martha with a look that was almost shy.

The door closed on them and Crane turned to his daughter with a smile.

"They're good souls both," he said.

He spoke with a sense of class difference. Then he sighed. Those two who had just gone out had no background indeed but all the future was theirs. Their good health and good brains would go down to their children. He wondered if, after all, the Crane tradition would endure. Would it not all die out with Helen? But at least through Helen it would outlast his own lifetime.

"What are you thinking of, daddy?" Helen asked.

"Votes for women," he said, smiling.

The door opened and Cassidy thrust his head in. "You'll forgive a man for forgetting a few details when he's got an engagement-ring to buy," he said with a broad smile. "Martha has sent me back to say she's put you on as one of the delegation to visit St. Samuel's School next Saturday."

"St. Samuel's School?" asked Crane.

"Yes," explained Cassidy, "the governor's to lead a crowd through who are to be shown that women are not needed on the board or as superintendents. In fact, that only men could handle those little toughs. So Martha wants you to go, and she'll be there, and I'm rung in, too, so that we can bring to light little matters that this conservative crowd won't be likely to see."

"I'll go if I can," Helen said.

"I guess that's all. I mustn't keep Martha waiting. Oh, by the way, you wanted me to find out something about a person named Annie Shailer. I'm on the track of it and I'll have it type-written in a day or two. Now I'm really off."

After Cassidy had gone, Crane went into his own office, and Helen leaned her arms on her desk and covered her eyes with her hand. "A person named Annie Shailer!" How lightly Cassidy had said that and she was Richard's sister. Ah, well, why not? One dare not feel keenly the sorrows of all the world, or living would become impossible. It would be better for herself, Helen said almost fiercely, if she had never heard of Annie Shailer, need care nothing about her.

For this episode had cut away eleven years, had brought back the days of her first youth, when the thought of Richard was so tender, opening up such vistas of joy in the world, that she was almost afraid of the sweetness. She thought she had torn from her heart the real need of him; she thought the nerves of love and longing for him had ached themselves out. She had dwelt on the worldly side of him, had even tried to be unjust to him, so that she could be helped not to care. And now, when she had the power to help him, to make less hard the pain that must come to him, there had arisen in her a renaissance of that feeling she had supposed to be long since stifled.

“It is because Martha is leaving me,” said Helen aloud, “and I’m tired and unstrung.”

Of a sudden Martha's radiant face came back to her. What was suffrage to Martha now? Of course, she would work for it still, but the intense personal love she had put into it would now go to Cassidy. Why not? Martha had done her share for the world; she had a right now to her personal life. Helen thought of Bertha, who had given up everything to grasp her own happiness, and of Grace Hearn, whom Martha always represented as swinging comfortably back and forth in a rocking-chair, glad to be exempt from doing anything for her own sex. Helen smiled a little as she let her mind dwell on vigorous Mary Carter, still organizing, still managing, married to a little bustling socialist who made speeches for her, but always with the reservation that equal suffrage was only one of the many planks in the socialist platform. Mary Carter was so happy that it never struck her that she was as busy as three women, and so busy that she did not have time to realize that few women were as happy as she was.

Then she thought of Coralie Leighton—brave Coralie, who had done such splendid work in North Carolina, and had paid such a heavy price. For Coralie had worked against almost hopeless prejudice, misunderstood, well nigh despised. But slowly through the years her determination had done its work; she was gradually winning her Southern sisters to her standard. But once when Coralie had been visiting Helen and a picture had come of Bertha's babies, Helen had seen the quick eyes cloud with tears and the strong mouth falter. Helen knew that Coralie, like herself, had had to choose; her lover had wanted her to give up all her convictions and contradict her work, and Coralie had not yielded.

“It's not always necessary to choose,” said Helen aloud, “Martha does not have to, really, nor did Mary Carter. Surely the world has progressed far enough for a woman to have her husband, and her own mind, too; surely the real lovers ignore or reconcile difficulties, as Martha and Mr. Cassidy did.”

Then she pushed back her chair and rose abruptly. “I must stop this; I must!” she murmured.

She knelt down before her desk, and took from the locked drawer the little worn book on the pages of which a woman, long dead, had poured out her love for her children. Helen pressed it against her cheek, and the tears came into her eyes. She saw again the green soft campus of Revelstoke and herself and Richard walking along one of the leafy vistas. A primrose path of happiness it should have been, yet it had ended in parting.

Helen locked up the diary and rose with a proud look in her eyes.

“After all,” she said defiantly to herself, “the only disgrace in love is being too small not to sink oneself in its service. We did love each other once, Richard and I, and because of that love I am glad to save him whatever I can in this sorrow of his.”

She glanced at the doorway and for a moment it seemed to her as if Richard stood there—not the old Richard of the Revelstoke days, young, ardent, pleading, but the Richard of to-day with gray in his hair, the Richard of power and success. And yet this Richard had an appealing look on his face as if he were longing to take her help.

Helen gave a little startled cry at the vision.

“This won't do at all,” she said with determined lips, “I must put my mind on Martha's work and see how we can best use it.”

There was no doubt that the cause had been helped by Martha's exposure of the bribery scandal. The suffrage committees began their work with pœans of rejoicing, and were stimulated to new and fiercer endeavors in those last few days of their chance to win for women. Nevertheless the ingenious enemies of the cause found subtle means of dowering Martha with some of the scorn aimed at the bribe givers and takers. Cassidy got his following into line, and he gave reports, the security of which caused Martha great jubilation. She was sure that if only the governor failed to declare himself against suffrage their cause would win, and with his usual caution it was perhaps safe to assume that he would remain neutral to the end.

Toward the middle of the week Helen's father came into the office with an envelope. “Cassidy sent this,” he said.

Helen's hand trembled as she took it.

“I'd look it over if I were you,” her father said. “It won't do to send that and his mother's book to Kendrick without some explanation.”

“No,” she assented, “and I feel as if he should have been told before this.”

“We could not very well hurry Cassidy,” remarked Crane, “but the matter won't wait any longer.”

Helen tapped her fingers nervously on the envelope.

“I'll read it,” she said, “and then tell you, father, how—how to break it to him when you go to tell him.”

“Oh,” said Crane slowly, “then you want me to tell him?”

Helen nodded with lowered eyelids.

“I think a woman handles such things better than a man,” Crane said. “It's a pretty delicate undertaking to put a man in line with such an emotional matter as his own antecedents. From what I know of Kendrick, I judge him to have a good deal of family feeling. To find out of a sudden that he might have had people of his own blood all these years—well, you know better even than I do, Junior, that just work, just success doesn't satisfy anybody, man or woman.” He turned to the window, and stood with his back to her. Then he added, “Even with you, my dear, and all your love and all your care for me, there's not a day of my life that I don't long for your mother. There's not a day that I don't feel pain—amazement, too, at finding myself without her.”

Helen's tears fell, and her father, going over to her, passed his hand across the soft wings of her hair and said, huskily, “There, there, I'm a selfish old fellow, not at all a suitable father for the cleverest girl in the West. Read what's in that envelope now. I must go over to La Salle Street; I've a dozen things to attend to before evening. You might tell

me at dinner what information Cassidy has for you there, and then we'll discuss the best way of breaking it to Kendrick. I hear he's to be in the city to-night."

Crane left the office and Helen opened the envelope and took out Cassidy's type-written pages. She read them once, slowly, and then again and yet again, the words making pictures, the pictures almost turning into living realities. She was not now the Helen of the keen logical mind; she was the Helen of imagination and feeling who had played Rosalind in "As You Like It" long ago at Revelstoke, who could shut her eyes and see the ardent face of her lover, Richard; who could see the present Richard, white and pained, when he learned the meaning of these pages she was holding. Time passed by, uncounted; the office force went away, unheeded, and Helen still sat at her desk, living Kendrick's sorrow.

Her father's hasty entrance roused her.

"I've just a minute, Junior," he said. "I'm called to Washington and have to take the first train. I tried to get Kendrick on the telephone, and couldn't. Can the thing wait over a week till I get back?"

Helen shook her head. "No," she said, dully, "he—he must see the little book before he goes on that—that tour of smug inspection to St. Samuel's School."

"I'm sure it will be better for you to handle it, Helen," Crane said in a tone of relief. "I'd be certain to blunder. My way would be to blurt out the facts first, and do the gentle breaking afterward, when it would be too late. Good-by; be good to my child while I'm gone."

It was ten o'clock before Helen was able to find Kendrick by telephone. She asked his secretary to say to the governor that a member of the firm of Crane and Crane wished to speak to him. Almost immediately his voice came back to her.

"Yes, Mr. Crane?"

Her pulses beat with the sound of that voice, familiar, dear after so many years.

"This is Helen Crane," she said.

"Who? Oh, yes, H—, Miss Crane. Yes, Miss Crane?"

"There's something in father's office for you," she said slowly. "Something you should have at once. It's a package old Mr. Kendrick gave father before he died."

For a few moments there was no answer. Then the governor said in a voice full of feeling, "I wish I could have been with him at the last. I wish he had sent for me. Thank you. Miss Crane. May I send for the package in the morning?"

"I am afraid," faltered Helen, "that you will have to come for it. There are explanations to be made that the mere package would not explain—believe me, I—"

She felt that she was speaking blunderingly. But he answered quickly, "I'd rather come myself, Miss Crane. Would twelve o'clock suit you?"

"Twelve then, good-night."

"Good-night and thank you."

Helen looked forward with dread to the meeting, and yet when twelve o'clock came and Kendrick entered her father's office it did not seem unnatural to be shaking hands with him. His manner was careful, and there was a gentleness about him which she attributed to the fact that he had come for this bequest of his adopted father. During the night she had carefully rehearsed what she would say to him, but it was harder than she had thought, even though at first she told him only that he had had a sister, and that the

little book she was giving him was his mother's diary. Neither of them quite knew how it was he went into her office, walking not quite steadily, his face white and strained. Helen busied herself in her father's office, and for an hour no sound came from the inner room.

During that hour Richard Kendrick's soul grew to the splendid stature of his mind. If his ambition had hardened him, had made him always put his own advantage first, if his sense for what was legal had blinded him to what was human, he had nevertheless a sense of justice, a sense of class loyalty that could be extended, a generosity to his friends that could be broadened to include even the disinherited. And all this the more readily because his ambition had been to a great extent satisfied, and the future showed no obstacles to whatever success he wanted. He was the type which mellows with good fortune, in whom fine attributes lying dormant for years can spring into life.

Helen went to the door at last. "I'm sorry, Mr. Kendrick, but so many are asking for you in the outer office."

"Have you read it, Helen?" he said, unconscious that he was using her Christian name.

"Oh, no," she murmured.

"Of course not, I only meant—she was a lady, a beautiful heart-broken lady; here is a little painting she made of her face."

Helen glanced at the page he held and saw a tender, fair English face, with blue loving eyes, and soft looped hair.

"What she had endured for us—for my sister and me! Her husband's brothers robbed her of her little fortune and she came to this country to earn her own living. Her struggles, a gentlewoman—"

Helen had seen him moved so strongly only once before, on that afternoon when she had broken her engagement, when he had been unable to believe that sheer power of will and feeling would not bear down her reserves.

Suddenly Kendrick turned toward her, his face quivering. "Helen," he said in a low voice, "the years have been lonely for me since you left me. There has never been any one in my life—you know that."

"I—I didn't know," Helen murmured.

"No one but you. I tried to put you out of my life as you had put me out of yours, and I suppose my work played the part in my life that your work played in yours."

Helen wondered, a little bitterly, if any woman in the world can make her work such a cure-all as a man can.

"But after I had put you out of my life," Kendrick went on, "or put you partially out, there was an empty space that no work could fill. Then, when I dared not think of you and would not think of any other woman, I wished that I had a mother and sisters and brothers who would care about what I did, for whom I could care.

His voice broke, and he paused.

"What is the use of my success to me," he went on, "when there is no one to share it with me? When I make a good investment what becomes of the money? It sits idle or goes in entertainment to strangers and to friends who like me chiefly because I have succeeded; it goes in tips to servants or to charities for which I care nothing. When I go home, tired out from work, there is nothing to greet me but my library—and books can be

very unfriendly, Helen, when one longs for a human voice. If I failed, is there any one under God's blue sky who would really believe in me in spite of myself?"

Helen quivered at the passion in his tone, and he continued more gently. "I have never been able to forget you, Helen, and strangely enough, as the years go on, I miss you more. I think you are faded out of my life, and then suddenly I see your name in the paper, or at some of the Art Institute exhibitions. I run across the pictures those artists are always painting of you, or perhaps I see you on the street or at the theater. And then eleven years flash into nothingness, and I know that because I have lost you, I have lost the chief good of everything. Helen, is it too late? Is it too late?"

Helen's heart was beating violently. She closed her eyes, unable to speak. It seemed to her as if all her old world had fallen into pieces, as if life were quite unreal, as if Richard's words, Richard himself, were only dreams. She opened her eyes wide, uncertainly, to see if he were really there, to see if it were all true.

"Helen," he cried, "have you not remembered? Have the years only shown you that you were right to part from me?"

The door of the office was suddenly thrown open, and Martha entered with white face and tightened lips, and holding an afternoon paper. She shook the paper tremblingly toward Kendrick.

"Helen, have you seen this paper?" she exclaimed. "Do you know that the governor has declared himself against suffrage for women?"

In the Land of Tomorrow:

The Last Instalment of a Love Story in Which Woman Suffrage Plays a Part

By Maude Radford Warren

April 1911, *Woman's Home Companion*

Martha stood facing Helen and Kendrick with flashing eyes.

"Do you know," she repeated to Helen, striking harshly the afternoon paper in her hand, "do you know that this says under the governor's own signature that he has declared himself against equal suffrage?"

"Martha," admonished Helen in a low tone.

"Don't Martha me," cried Martha. "I know perfectly well that Governor Kendrick is in this room, but it's no time for polite reserve. If he has declared himself against us, why should I cloak the fact to his presence?"

She faced Kendrick and continued in a blazing tone, "I'm ashamed that any man of power with any glimmering of justice in him could take the stand you have. You know well that in this last ten years the fact that we women had been voting in this state had done a lot for the purification of politics, and more for humanity. Have you, too, joined in that cry, 'Bad for business?' If it is bad for business to save working women and working children, and so improve the race, then you ought to let business go to the dogs."

"Martha, dear," protested Helen.

"I'm amazed," finished Martha, "that any son of a mother, and who, therefore, must know what women have to go through, could make things harder for them. And children— You're going on Saturday to make a complacent survey of those miserable children in St. Samuel's School, and you'll give your approval of the way all the hope and manliness in them is sacrificed for political jobbery. If we lose this fight, Governor Kendrick, it will be your fault, and I'd not like to stand in your shoes when I think of the women and children you will have made suffer for another generation." Her voice broke, and turning on her heel she went into one of the other offices.

Kendrick was white to the lips, from rage Martha had thought, though Helen could have told her better. He turned to Helen with no trace of the feeling he had shown before Martha entered the room.

"I must go now, Helen," he said. "There are several men already waiting for me in your outer offices. There is more you have to tell me—there is more I must know. But my work is insistent; I have several important engagements for the rest of the day and for to-morrow morning. I had forgotten—everything, but for a time now I must put by my own affairs."

Helen pressed her unquiet hands together and tried to put out of her mind all he had said before Martha entered.

"You—you understand," she said falteringly, as Kendrick moved toward the doorway, "that there is more you should know—more about your—your family."

Kendrick paused. "Yes, I know you have only begun to tell me—"

"There are some facts," said Helen, averting her face, "that you haven't given me time to tell you—I mean that there hasn't been time to tell you. Your sister— she died."

Kendrick's face twitched.

"I had been thinking so absolutely of my mother, and then of you—"

"Of me!" cried Helen passionately. "Richard, Richard, of me! All these years I have been working for that—that cause for which you have just shown publicly your lack of sympathy. For years I have had to make it my everything. If you had been thinking of me, would you not have been thinking of my interests—my sole interest!"

"Perhaps I have made the same mistake twice, Helen," said Kendrick in a dull tone. "The fact is that what you were doing has been blotted out by just the thought of you. Some women would forgive that."

They stood looking at each other, forgetful of the world outside, intensely aware of each other, and yet, Helen felt, so far apart.

"I cannot understand," she said sadly. "I have followed your work, have known what you have been doing, have been glad of the good things you have done. I have hoped for you—"

"Can't you see, Helen," he interrupted, "that a big love might be impatient of detail? I tell you I saw your face, your hands! I saw them fostering flowers in the garden, our garden. I saw that dear face bending over some homely bit of sewing. You may think me an egoist for seeing just my home-woman, Helen. It isn't that I would have interfered—"

Helen's heart went out to him, responded to the picture he had drawn, but her keen mind still held control of her.

"Richard, there should be no word of interference," she said. "Sympathy is what people who really care should give each other—sympathy and help." Her voice faltered.

The secretary entered hesitatingly.

"I am very sorry, Miss Crane," she said, "but the gentlemen in the office are asking if the governor is ready yet. They said something about a train—"

"Please say to them that I am coming immediately," Kendrick said.

He looked at Helen intently. "I will telephone you to-morrow," he said, "when I have these state matters off my hands. We can fix a time to-morrow when you will tell me all I have yet to learn about my people."

She nodded, unable to speak. He stood at the door of the office a moment, looking at her. He made as if to put out his hand, but she had turned and did not see the gesture, and he went quickly into the outer room.

For a long time she sat perfectly still, sick with misery. Was it all to be lived over again, the old, old experience of loving and misunderstanding and parting?

"Oh, I cannot," cried Helen. "I was young then, and strong, and believed in time and hope, and—and all sorts of abstract things. Now I am too tired to fight, and if I dared, I should want only Richard."

A few moments longer she sat, crouched and miserable. Then she recollected Martha. She passed her handkerchief across her eyes, summoned a smile and went into her father's office, where Martha sat by the window, still showing signs of strong feeling.

“Don't you say one word to me,” said Martha violently, “about what I told that legal-hearted creature in there, for I'd do it all over.”

“I'm not going to scold,” said Helen gently. She stood looking down on Martha with a curious expression in her eyes.

“It doesn't seem,” she said slowly, “as if all your happiness makes you any the less eager and intense about what you and I were trying to do.”

“Are trying to do,” corrected Martha. “Don't you know, Helen, that love is an amazing spur to work? Just because I've got Michael, I'm stronger than ever to fight. I'm so sorry for other women who haven't got him that I'd like them to have suffrage at least.”

Helen laughed.

“Look at all that Mary Carter has done for the cause since she's been married,” Martha went on. “She's worked, if anything, harder than ever, and is a devoted mother to her two nice babies, besides. Yes, happiness is a great spur if a person does not behave like an arch-pig and forget that other people need things, too.”

Then Martha's tone of animation altered. “But as to the governor's attitude,” she added wearily, “it changes everything. If you could see the tone some of the afternoon papers take! Michael's discouraged, too. He got wind of it last night. Such weather-cocks as people are!”

“Perhaps you take this too seriously,” Helen said.

But talking with Cassidy and her father and several prominent workers convinced Helen that the governor's unfavorable attitude had indeed carried more weight than even the least optimistic suffragist had ever admitted. His prestige and his personal popularity combined weighted his opinion for the indifferent and the wavering, and had given the suffrage cause the aspect of a forlorn hope, indeed.

The morning after he had been in Helen's office he telephoned to ask if he could come there the day following. She had half expected that he would ask to call upon her in her home; it would have seemed more fitting to tell him there about these family facts, so near to him, so remote from the life of Kendrick the governor. But when she answered his formal voice over the telephone, fixing the hour of their appointment, she felt that on the whole she would rather meet him in her office. It would help to measure the distance between them, and for the present that was what she wished to do.

She was standing by her desk when her secretary announced Kendrick, but she sat down before he entered, and it took an effort to raise her head as he pushed open the door. His face showed the two days' strain and his manner was tense. He looked down on her in silence for a moment, and then said abruptly, “Have you ever had the experience of feeling as if things were not real at all?”

“Yes, I know,” she murmured.

He sat down opposite her, saying, “It's all so confused, Helen, as if I'd been born full grown into a world I could not realize. I suppose it's just that the dawn of my emotions, as it were, had been sealed up after I lost you. Then came all this new flood of feeling about my poor sad mother, and you were there, and—all my emotions seemed to sweep down together.”

He looked at her miserably.

“You've been unhappy, I know,” she said unsteadily, “but then it's the lot of everyone at times.”

Immediately she repented her commonplace words. Certainly it was all true; of course, he had to suffer like other people. Martha Broomer would say he deserved more suffering than other people. But he was her old love, and unhappy.

"This room here," he said, "it's not real, nor you and I sitting here. I see us walking together across the campus of Revelstoke College, just young and sure of happiness."

Helen started; so often in the past three or four days she had had the same vision.

"I cannot but think that somehow, somewhere, there should be a new youth for us," he said.

"Ah, how can you expect," said Helen in a low tone, "to throw away these years and what they have meant in my life. How can you expect us to take up things where we laid them down, with you thinking as you do, and I as I am, and no change anywhere?" Her voice faltered, and then she added steadily, "Now I must tell you the rest about them—your people."

She leaned over her desk and picked up Cassidy's memorandum of the Shailer case. She was so unstrung that for a moment she meant to let him read the matter-of-fact account which was as devoid of feeling as one of Richard's own legal opinions. But immediately she decided to put the story as gently as possible in her own words.

"The man who adopted Annie Shailer," she said softly, "was killed at an explosion at the glucose factory, and shortly afterward his wife went insane. Then Annie got work in a factory. Mr. Cassidy said she was never strong enough for it, but she was very pretty, and she soon married a clerk. Several of their children died, then her husband died, leaving her with one boy. She was ill by this time, but she looked able to work, and so the Bureau of Charities helped her only occasionally."

Kendrick put his hand over his eyes, and Helen paused for a moment.

"I've scarcely the courage to ask you about my sister's boy," said Kendrick. "When did he die?"

"The boy!" exclaimed Helen. "But he's not dead."

She spoke with amazement. All the facts about Richard's kin were so deeply familiar now to her that she had almost forgotten that he did not know them fully, and was depending on her to tell him the rest.

"The boy," she said slowly, "Tommy Hardy, or Tough' Hardy, as they call him, is in St. Samuel's School."

"That school!" cried Kendrick, "that school!"

Then Helen's eyes were reproachful.

"I know what you are thinking," said Kendrick, with a half-bitter smile. "You are thinking that I am presently to go through the form of inspecting and approving this reform school in which are housed scores of boys of quite as much human importance as my sister's child."

"Is not the thought just?" she asked.

Kendrick rose without replying. "I'm due there this morning," he said.

"I know. It's almost time for your train now," she returned. Then she added, "a suffrage delegation is going, too. I am of the party."

"Are you?" he returned in a preoccupied tone. He stood looking down on her for a moment. Then he took her hand softly in his.

“Good-by, Helen; I'll make you trust me yet,” he said.

Helen rose, and stood gazing after him for a moment. Then she went into her father's office, where she found Martha and Cassidy waiting for her. Martha, who was manifestly impatient, looked at her suspiciously. Helen saw in her eyes the desire to ask if Governor Kendrick had permanently taken up his abode in the Crane offices. But all Martha said as she rose and moved toward the door was, “It's really important for us not to be late.”

“Sure, there's all the time there is,” said Cassidy, with the easy philosophy of a man too thoroughly in love and too thoroughly happy to feel that other people's affairs need be taken very seriously.

By excessive hurrying they just caught the train. It was a little local of two coaches, and as they jounced across the level prairies, the conductor informed all the passengers in the forward coach that he wished the porter had got round to dusting all the seats, for the governor was in the rear car. Helen was silent during the ride, thinking of what the next hour would bring to Kendrick. Cassidy and Martha, happy in mutual understanding, were silent, too, now and then smiling at each other with that smile that belongs only to the primrose spring of love. Helen knew well that kind of smile; she had worn it herself once; she had seen it on Bertha's face in those long-ago days of her engagement to Wynne Harley. On the rare occasions when Mary Carter could stop from organizing suffrage clubs and managing her baby, she had seen her look at her little socialist husband with just such a smile. Poor Coralie Leighton might have known it, too. Helen looked at Martha and Cassidy with sympathy, with a little pang of envy, and with the wonder if it could be that youth and such smiles might come back.

The little bustling train stopped with a jerk. Helen, Martha, Cassidy and the rest of the suffrage party, half a dozen men and women of various types, got out of the front coach, while from the rear descended the governor's party, a few dignified gentlemen, clad in frock coats as in a uniform. The governor's party and the suffrage party walked across from the station in separate bodies to the bleak high-shouldered buildings surrounded by a bleak wall that were St. Samuel's School. There had been no intention that the parties should coalesce. The suffragists had come uninvited and undesired. But presently it became apparent that the governor was taking it for granted that the two companies would get along happily together.

“Why, what's his scheme!” exclaimed Martha contemptuously to Helen. “He has manoeuvred to get us asked to lunch. Well, we'll accept!”

She hastily spoke to two or three of the older members of the party to whom the invitation would probably be offered, and then turned back to Helen.

“I hate to stay,” she said, “for it just gives those poor kids so much less to eat, because, of course, the superintendent has got up a special luncheon to impress the governor, and equally, of course, there'll only be just about enough food to go 'round.”

Helen scarcely heard her. She was thinking, as they filed through long halls, gloomy school-rooms and plain, chill bedrooms, of what a hard hour it must be for Kendrick. At last they were taken to the gymnasium where the boys were assembled ready to exhibit themselves in a fire drill. Instinctively Kendrick glanced at Helen, and she sent him back a sympathetic look. Presently she found him by her side. Cassidy was close by, elaborately keeping his distance from Martha, who wished their engagement to

remain unknown till after the election. The superintendent, a hard-featured, well-dressed man, of whom it was well known that the study of the human child was the least of his interests, gave the signal to the boys to march past and salute the governor. As they went by the superintendent, he clumsily attempted to pat the heads of several of the younger ones, each of whom ducked, to Cassidy's great amusement.

"Would Your Excellency like to talk to any of the boys?" asked the superintendent.

"I'd like to talk to all of them," said Kendrick, and then he made the speech that was expected of him. The rows of boys stood mechanically attentive; some of them stared with interest at this man who represented to them all the vague unknown power and ease of the world. Others stood with wandering or downcast eyes, much as they did under the orders of their teachers or warders, wishing that the great man might soon finish that they might be the nearer to meal-time.

When he began to speak, Kendrick saw all their faces in a blur; the boys were just a swimming mass of crude gray uniforms topped by rows of pinkish faces which merged into each other. Later, the faces became distinct, and he saw here a lowering jail-bird type, there one that had the pure lines of an idealist. Criminal faces some of them were; bitter and sad others, but many of them were still blank of significant experience, ready to be written upon for good or ill.

Kendrick knew that his words could mean little or nothing to them, but he poured into what he said such feeling that Martha stared at him in surprise, and turned to Cassidy with a questioning glance. Cassidy had his lips pursed in a puzzled way, but the black-coated men of the governor's party nodded and smiled at each other approvingly.

"Humph!" thought Martha fiercely. "They think it is all oratory; they are pleased that their man is making this emotional play. There must be reporters around! But he ought to mean every word of it, and if he had lived in the streets as I have, he would!"

But Kendrick, out of a love for the dead sister he had never seen, and for her boy, standing somewhere unknown before him, was, for the moment at least, passionately in sympathy with the children of the streets, with the disinherited. As he closed his remarks his eyes were searching painfully and nervously the faces before him. Which was her boy, his boy? Which of those drab creatures who stood to rule, and walked and ate and studied to rule, who knew no woman's tenderness and no man's care—which of those luckless boys was hers?

He ended abruptly. The superintendent clapped tremendously, and nodded at the boys who followed his example, some indifferently, some with zest for the delight of making a noise.

"All right, boys; you can play now," said the superintendent genially, and waved them toward the gymnasium apparatus, about which they stood awkwardly, at a loss as to what was expected of them; no one was at hand to remind them of a rule. The superintendent looked impatiently at the door. It was time for the next part of the show—luncheon—and he was intolerant of the delay. A man of few ideas, he filled in the waiting by talking to each of the men of the governor's party of what good food his boys were given, and of how his aim was a benevolent paternalism.

"Where in the world do you suppose he got that phrase?" Martha asked Helen. "They know about as much of benevolent paternalism in this place as they do of

Christian charity or common sense. Every moment I'm here I see more and more that they need women to help in this institution."

Helen made no reply, and Martha turned away and joined Cassidy. Together they went to speak to one or two boys from Cassidy's ward. Helen glanced about to find Kendrick, just released from the superintendent's set speeches, with his eyes fixed helplessly on hers. Instinctively she moved toward him, for she felt that he needed her.

"Helen," he whispered, "which? Do you know? I'm acting like a woman. I'm afraid to ask."

Helen was feeling deeply with him, but, nevertheless, over the surface of her mind there floated an impression of what Martha's sentiments would have been if she could have heard Kendrick say he was acting like a woman.

"I don't know," she said. "I don't know which he is. I was tempted to come and see him, but there was not time. You must ask."

She glanced at the superintendent, who was evidently sending a messenger to the cook. Then her eyes fell on Cassidy talking with Martha to a boy who was standing near a horizontal bar. At that moment Cassidy took the boy by the collar and led him toward her and Kendrick. Helen caught her breath as a quick intuition touched her. She knew what was coming even before Cassidy said to her:

"Here's that chap I gave you the memorandum about, Miss Crane—Tommy Hardy."

Helen and Kendrick looked at the boy with a scrutiny so keen and searching that Helen felt as if everyone in the room must feel it. The child was twelve or thirteen, with hair much like Kendrick's in its irregular wave, and blue eyes which in shape and size might almost have been Kendrick's own. But the eyes were brooding and defiant; the mouth fell in a sulky line, the sallow cheeks drooped lifelessly.

"Oh," cried Helen to herself, "poor little motherless sensitive thing! They've warped him, spoiled him!"

She did not look at Kendrick. She knew how acutely he must be taking the situation. She wondered if he did not feel that even her knowledge of this intensely personal affair of his was an intrusion on his privacy. She felt that he must long to sweep her and the rest of them away, and be alone with this poor child whose spirit was bruised, if not broken.

Neither Kendrick nor Helen spoke, and Cassidy looked curiously at Helen.

"Surely you remember about Tommy Hardy?" he said. "Or have you been working so hard these last few days that you've forgotten?"

"Oh, no," said Helen, "I remember perfectly."

"Well, this is the fellow," said Cassidy, and he gave the boy's collar a playful shake.

"You let go my collar," the child said to Cassidy in a rough treble.

"All right, old man. How are you? Feed you well?"

"Naw."

"Knock you about?"

The superintendent coming up then, heard Cassidy's question. "This young fellow has had to be disciplined," he said. "We only use corporal punishment in extreme cases."

"I guess we're all extreme cases," said the boy bitterly.

“That’s the sort of boy,” said Martha, “who needs the management of a woman.”

The superintendent forced a laugh and ordered Tommy to his room till mid-afternoon drill. The boy’s face grew black, and then he broke into tears.

“I know what that means,” Martha said indignantly to Cassidy. “No luncheon, and I dare say the poor youngster has been living on thoughts of this for a week.”

More than once Kendrick had tried to speak. Now he said stiffly to the superintendent. “I should take it as a favor, as an especial favor, if you would remit this boy’s punishment.”

“Well, of course, Governor,” said the superintendent with an air of great good-nature, “anything you say here to-day goes. You are let off this time, Hardy.”

The boy rubbed his sleeve over his wet eyes and swallowed a sob.

“What do you say?” said the superintendent sternly.

“Thank you.”

“Thank you what?” thundered the superintendent.

“Thank you for letting me eat with the boys.”

“No, no,” said the superintendent testily, “thank the governor for interceding for you, and say ‘sir.’”

“Thank you, sir,” said Tommy, and for the first time he raised his eyes to Kendrick’s face. The blue misty eyes with a smile struggling through caused Kendrick’s own to dim. In a quick flash he contrasted the many, many pleasures his foster-father had given him when he was a child with what this boy had. For him a good meal had been a common habit, not a rarity. For him there had been no strict dormitory life, no harsh warders and jailer teachers, no drab uniform and, above all, no lack of love. And as this child had fared, so had his mother fared. A flame of sharp sorrow struck through Kendrick’s heart. He bent toward the boy uncertainly, and instantly Tommy put forth an uncertain hand.

Kendrick gave a kind of groan. This boy was his own flesh and blood, his sister’s child. He felt almost as if Tommy were his own son. He looked again into the tear-stained face, and then, forgetting Helen, forgetting the staring boys and the superintendent, forgetting his own party who frowned at what they considered a badly calculated display of emotion, forgetting the suffragists who were wondering if this were a gallery play to be substituted for necessary school legislation—forgetting everything except that blood called to blood, he took his sister’s child in his arms. And little “Tough” Hardy felt the call of blood, too, for careless of the possible jeers of his companions, he put his arms around his uncle’s neck and held him in a tight embrace.

More than one of the spectators felt that here was an issue deeper than appeared on the surface. Helen had turned away with quivering face. Martha, half embarrassed, half skeptical, was looking various questions at Cassidy. The superintendent pulled at his mustache nervously, and started with relief when a loud clanging bell announced the luncheon. Kendrick bent over his nephew again and said tenderly, “I’ll take care of you, Tommy. You shall have everything in the world I can give you. You shall be my boy now.”

“All right,” said Tommy, with wondering acceptance.

Kendrick straightened and joined his companions as if nothing whatever had happened, entirely indifferent to the constraint that had developed toward him, feeling

still the touch of his nephew's little body, understanding something of what the joy and poignancy of fatherhood might be.

Helen hardly knew how she got through the luncheon-hour. She saw that Martha, who was sitting within earshot of the governor, was deeply interested in the questions he was asking the superintendent. On the journey home Martha kept saying that she didn't understand what the governor was about; he talked to that superintendent like any reformer: probably some gallery play; but she couldn't see the use of it; she couldn't understand.

She understood next day when the whole city gaped over its coffee at the headlines heralding a statement of the governor. There were few right-minded people who read it without emotion, and for all it was so personal, it had a dignity almost epic. He said frankly that the previous opinion he had given about equal suffrage had been ill-considered, and though at the time he had thought it had represented his attitude, he knew now that it had come only from the top of his mind. During the last week new facts had come to his knowledge about the woman movement, and he felt a new attitude toward it. He had considered it not only with the top of his mind, but with all his mind, and he was not ashamed to say, with all his heart. He gave a number of reasons why the women should take part in government, ending with the hope that the state, for its own good, would allow them to share in that larger housekeeping for which they had proved themselves fit.

The women's party hastened to take advantage of the governor's statement. The last few days before election were spent in unremitting work on their part and on his. And finally victory crowned many years of discouraging effort. A few of the younger ones who had escaped the real burden and heat of the day arranged for torchlight processions, but those who had toiled longest and hardest received their laurels silently. For they knew that they had taken just the first step toward making this world a just mother to all her children. They were fain to create a larger home, but to hope to bring within its gates all who were sick and suffering, needy and sinful and degenerate, all the disinherited—to bring them home meant generations yet of patience and of hope.

When Kendrick came to her, Helen was in her own room sitting by the window as she had sat so long ago at Revelstoke, the night she had dedicated herself anew to the cause of women. She was thinking of poor Bertha, who wrote brave letters from New York, ignoring the illuminating publicity that was being given the Carson bribery scandal. She was thinking, too, of Martha, who had done so much for her own class—of good Martha, already married to her Cassidy and on the high seas. When Kendrick's card was brought her, Helen was musing over Martha's last remark about him.

“Bertha gave up principle for a family reason, and the governor's own personal family affairs brought him to a new principle.”

Helen went down-stairs to find Kendrick standing in the drawing-room before a water-color picture of Revelstoke College which Bertha had made for her.

She began to talk about the election, about her father, about anything; at the first pause she allowed herself, he said, “The boy is living with me—Tommy.”

“Does he—know?”

“Yes. We get on pretty well together. I have a tutor for him now. When he is fit for it I will send him away to school—there's so much to mend.”

“Doubtless,” said Helen, and could not break the silence that fell between them.

“I won't try to say,” he began abruptly, “how wrong I've been—how much of my new notions of things have been due to you, or to my mother's little diary. Words don't mean much.”

“No,” murmured Helen.

He rose and stood looking down on her; then he stooped so that he could take her hand. When he felt it trembling in his, he whispered, “Do we need words—we two?”

Into Helen's eyes had come back the soft miracle of a resurrected happiness.

[THE END]