

You find her propped with pillows; she is looking over a little picture-book bethumbed by the dear boy she has lost. She hides it in her chair; she has pity on you.

—Another day of revival, when the spring sun shines and flowers open out-of-doors; she leans on your arm and strolls into the garden where the first birds are singing. Listen to them with her; what memories are in bird-songs! You need not shudder at her tears; they are tears of thanksgiving. Press the hand that lies light upon your arm, and you, too, thank God, while yet you may!

You are early home, mid-afternoon. Your step is not light; it is heavy, terrible.

They have sent for you.

She is lying down, her eyes half closed, her breathing long and interrupted.

She hears you; her eye opens; you put your hand in hers; yours trembles; hers does not. Her lips move; it is your name.

"Be strong," she says; "God will help you."

She presses harder your hand: "Adieu!"

A long breath—another; you are alone again. No tears now; poor man! You cannot find them!

—Again home early. There is a smell of varnish in your house. A coffin is there; they have clothed the body in decent grave-clothes, and the undertaker is screwing down the lid, slipping round on tiptoe. Does he fear to waken her?

He asks you a simple question about the inscription upon the plate, rubbing it with his coat-cuff. You look him straight in the eye; you motion to the door; you dare not speak.

He takes up his hat and glides out stealthful as a cat.

The man has done his work well for all. It is a nice coffin, a very nice coffin. Pass your hand over it; how smooth!

Some sprigs of mignonette are lying carelessly in a little gilt-edged saucer. She loved mignonette.

It is a good stanch table the coffin rests on; it is your table; you are a housekeeper, a man of family.

Aye, of family; keep down outcry, or the nurse will be in. Look over at the pinched features; is this all that is left of her? And where is your heart now? No, don't thrust your nails into your hands, nor mangle your lip, nor grate your teeth together. If you could only weep!

—Another day. The coffin is gone out. The stupid mourners have wept—what idle tears! She, with your crushed heart, has gone out.

Will you have pleasant evenings at your home now?

Go into your parlor that your prim housekeeper has made comfortable with clean hearth and blaze of sticks.

Sit down in your chair; there is another velvet-cushioned one, over against yours, empty. You press your fingers on your eyeballs, as if you would press out something that hurt the brain; but you cannot. Your head leans upon your hand; your eye rests upon the flashing blaze.

Ashes always come after blaze.

Go now into the room where she was sick—softly, lest the prim housekeeper come after.

They have put new dimity upon her chair; they have hung new curtains over the bed. They have removed from the stand its phials and silver bell; they have put a little vase of flowers in their place; the perfume will not offend the sick sense now. They have half opened the window, that the room so long closed may have air. It will not be too cold.

She is not there.

—Oh God! Thou who dost temper the wind to the shorn lamb, be kind!

The embers were dark; I stirred them; there was no sign of life. My dog was asleep. The clock in my tenant's chamber had struck one.

I dashed a tear or two from my eyes; how they came there I know not. I half ejaculated a prayer of thanks that such desolation had not yet come nigh me, and a prayer of hope that it might never come.

In a half hour more I was sleeping soundly. My Reverie was ended.

WHAT OUR FINGERS TEACH.

Hands are divided into three different kinds—those with round-pointed fingers, those with square tips and those that are spade-shaped, with pods of flesh at each side of the nail. The first type, with round-pointed fingers, belong to characters with perceptions extra sensitive, to very pious people, to contemplative minds, to the impulsive, and to all poets and artists who have ideality as a prominent trait. The second type, those that are square-shaped, belong to scientific people, to sensible, self-contained characters, and to the class of professional men who are neither visionary nor altogether sordid. The third type, those that are spade-shaped, with pods of flesh at the side of the nail, indicate people whose interests and instincts are mostly material—people who have a genius for business, and who have a high appreciation of everything that pertains to bodily use and comfort. Each finger, no matter what kind of a hand it is, has a joint representing each of these types. The division of the finger that is nearest the palm stands for the body, the middle division represents mind, and the highest joint spirit or soul. If the top joint is longer than the others, it denotes a character with too much imagination, great ideality, and of leaning toward the theoretical rather than the practical. When the middle joint of the finger is long, it promises a logical, calculating mind—a very common-sense kind of a person; and when the lowest joint is longest, it indicates a nature that clings more to the luxuries than to the refinements of life—a mind that looks for the utility before beauty. If they are nearly alike, and especially if the length of the fingers equals the length of the palm, it indicates a well balanced mind.

THE rejected lover who swears that his idol is cold-hearted, can get up a neat heartburn for himself by a liberal use of pie and milk.