



“WHO THINKETH HE STANDS.”

A lone rock stood beside a sunlit sea—

Lone, silent, grim and gray;

And every summer evening, bold and free,

The waves ran up to play.

With soft, wet lips they chided and they kissed,

Or leaned a dimpling cheek;

But he stood firm, wrapped in his cold, white mist,

Nor deigned to yield or speak.

But ah! they clasped about him arms of snow,

And pleaded night and day.

Until he listened, trembled, smiled—and so—

They wore his strength away.

Let him who thinketh that he stands take heed,

Nor hear what false lips say;

To listen is the first step toward the deed—

Dear, better run away.

I went to see her on Monday. She came to the door with a silk handkerchief and a bag of hot salt fastened about her face. “Neuralgia,” she began, breathlessly; “Such a night as I spent! Not a wink of sleep, and such pains shooting through my face the whole time. I suppose I look dreadful, but anyone would who had suffered so.” I pitied her, so I remained awhile, and bathed her tortured face. She was very grateful, and wept when she thanked me, begging me to come again soon. I went the following day. She came to meet me, limping, and moaning with pain. It “was the rheumatism, now, and she did believe it had settled in her back permanently. Her poor mother had been such a sufferer, and lately she had had ‘presentiments’—Of course I put a plaster on her back, and soothed her, and went away, promising to come again soon. The next morning her rheumatism had vanished, but she had ‘symptoms of a felon on her thumb; her right hand, too, and what was she to do, with all her work undone and the children uncombed, and she such a sufferer? Such a time as she had, anyway! She never could be well, like other folks, and she never got any sympathy.’ The work was done, and the children were combed, and home looked sweet to me when I finally reached it. The next day I found that the felon had proved to be a false alarm, but she had caught a severe cold, and was ‘just burning with fever one minute and shaking with chills the next, and such a pain in the back of her neck! And she was just sure!’—here she began to cry piteously—‘that she was in for a long siege of la grippe; and what was to become of the house; and the children would likely have it, too; and if she should have it ‘severe’ and—and die, what would the children do without a mother?’” I went into the kitchen and I put some sugar, some spirits frummenti and some hot water in a glass, and gave it her. The hot water—or something—was so strong that she just gave me one look of dumb reproach, and closed her eyes and laid her head on the pillow—and I thought this my chance to go home, and went. Next day, Friday, her cold had settled on her lungs. There “had been weak lungs in her family”—her look was ominous “and her great-aunt had died of consumption. Just caught a simple cold like this, and it settled on her lungs—like this—and she went out like the snuff of a candle. Then, there was Aunt Lucy! The doctors said she died of bronchitis, but she had always thought”—I put a mustard plaster, that I knew would burn, on her chest, and went home. Saturday, she couldn’t walk—“absolutely couldn’t step—for chilblains on her feet. She had frozen her feet six—yes, seven winters ago, and every winter since then, when the weather changed—and she had heard of people losing their feet, too, just from such simple”—When I went home, I joyfully reflected that she had now had a pain everywhere, and must be ashamed to have them all over again. So I felt quite cheerful when I went in Sunday morning. She was sitting by the fire with a shawl over her shoulders, and the bible on her knee. She began to weep immediately. “Such a dream as she had last night! She knew trouble was coming—you needn’t tell her—she felt it. And she had not heard from her mother for a month, and she knew some of ‘em must be sick. And what would become of the house and the children, if her mother was sick, and she had to go to her? Was there ever such an unfortunate person”—Monday I stayed at home.

The frogs have come. That means that there is a scent of violets across the air; great hillsides green with daisies and dandelions; old stumps and

tree roots running suddenly green with moss; little, glad brooks leaping out of unexpected places, whisking around curves, springing over rocks, chattering over pebbled beds, pausing to dally with the willows in shady places, but singing—singing always. And it means, too, that along the river, in the deep, broad rushes, in the low places in the meadows, where the velvet tules climb upward, about every pool and pond, under every doorstep, and under every broad leaf that shadows a handful of water, those little, ugly frogs put up their heads and murmur all the sweet hours away—the voices loud, soft, harsh, musical, rasping, mellow, all blending into one swelling, melodious chorus. Ah! Of a sudden there is a silence among them more vast than the silence of death. Was it a rose leaf fell upon the surface of the pool? Was it a lost soul flitted too near them on its way to another existence? Was it that a restless human foot and a rebellious human heart came too near for a moment? But they, at least, are too glad in their peace and good will to be silent long; and presently one little timid voice calls. Far off, in another pond, a firmer, stronger voice replies; then, another and another; and in a moment, the whole twilight world is one long, thrilling chorus again. Listen! In the golden dawns, in the languid noons, in the scented dusks,—ay, through the lonely nights; with wide, dreamy eyes, with voices growing softer and more lulling with every note, with blown throats—listen! How they chant the spring hours away!

A business man who employs many women says that he pays them salaries equal to those paid men, and that he greatly prefers them to male clerks. Indeed, he praises them highly, seeming to find not one fault in their services. But, alas! In the fairest mind there is always a blot; and in this man’s mind—which in all other respects is so fair—the blot is an abnormally large one. He adds that the only condition of importance that he exacts from his women employes is that those acting as cashiers and handling large sums of money, shall live at home with their own relatives, for the extraordinary reason that women boarding away from home at different places are exposed to too many temptations; the rule is an iron one in his establishment, and never has been broken. A woman may be competent, business-like, desirable in every way, virtuous, and of unblemished reputation, but should she be so unfortunate as to not have a home with relatives, this broad-minded man will have none of her or her services. This is not injustice alone—it is an insult to women. It is usually the homeless woman who has the hardest struggle to earn an honorable livelihood, and here is another barrier reared in her tortuous way. Her hitherto noble character and spotless reputation count for nothing, and a man looks her kindly in the face and refuses her the coveted situation, giving as an only reason one that is an insult to her—intimating that her virtue is merely the result of not having been exposed to temptation. Gentlemen, try to imagine, through some unfortunate turn in fortune’s wheel, your own wife, daughter or sister going out into the working world, and having to face such a bitter barrier as that.

The home of George Bancroft, the historian, was a plain, imitation brown stone, with no ornamentations to relieve its unpicturesqueness; but in early spring snow-drops and crocuses put up their little heads beneath his windows, and, later on, the modest garden plat blossomed with pink, white and purple hyacinths, tulips, pansies, and choice roses. It is said that more varieties of roses were cultivated in his Newport rose gardens than in any private garden in the country.

And now, my dear poet, write no more tender rhymes to the “rustle of your ladye’s gown;” write them, if you must, to her gown maker, for she it is who now fastens, with artful design, a strip of very stiff silk about the lower edge of your “ladye’s” underskirt, especially that she shall “make music wherever she goes.” Fondlest delusions thus, like rose leaves, fade away.

If your little child has wandered away and become lost—no matter whether it be a boy or a girl—and you hear a child’s cry for help out in the darkness, you rush out to rescue it, to save it, to forgive it. So, I think, it is with God. When He hears a despairing cry for help, He reaches out a strong, forgiving hand to bring back the lost one, regardless of sex.

Do not talk about your friends until their backs are turned; it is not fashionable, and besides it is not safe.

When you get into a cavern of echoes, always laugh and never sigh.