

be. Why didn't some one dash the accursed thing out of my hand long, long ago, when I had no liking for it, when I was pure and innocent? It would have saved me now. Oh! my dearest, dearest, best beloved, that it should ever have come to this with us—with us who were so happy. I think I must stop. My head is bursting: I cannot hold the pen.

"Half an hour has passed since I wrote that last sentence. I wonder if any mortal ever suffered so much before in so short a time. A new and awful thought has come to me. Is it possible that Pearl can inherit the sin of her mother? I have heard you say many a time that we cannot escape the inheritance of our fathers. Have I bequeathed the curse to my darling? Great God, do not say that I have been guilty of the damnation of my child, that I have destroyed her hope of the heaven I may never see. But if I dwell on that I shall go mad.

"What I have to tell you, then, is that I am going away. Forgive and pity me. What has happened will not happen again. I will make quite, quite sure of that. So I am going away. I am tempted to take Pearl with me; but that would be increasing my guilt and her danger. I am not fit to have her. Take care of her. Let her forget me—yet not that either, not that. In the grave itself, through all the endless eternity, I should be yearning for one thought of my darling's heart. Train her to be a good woman. Tell her, as my last message, proved in awful bitterness, that at last there is nothing in all the world worth having except goodness, the jewel I have thrown away.

"I go into the darkness alone. I entreat you do not try to find me. I wish to disappear quietly and completely, a poor, worthless wind<sup>1</sup>estraw sucked