

find work for the deserving now and again, and she heard me read absurd compositions before the Friday Club upon the duty of Women to Society; but she must have known that all were mere details in my scheme of life and that I was the most selfish creature that ever breathed."

Rush shrugged his shoulders, although he was watching her with a quickened interest. "Why try to analyse? The gift to inspire devotion — fascination — is as determinate as the gift to write a poem or compose a symphony. It has existed in some of the worst men and women that have ever lived. You are not that — not by a long sight —"

"Oh, no! I am not one of the worst women that have ever lived. Do you know what I am, how I see myself to-night? I am merely a commonplace woman everlastingly anxious to do the 'right thing.' That is the beginning and the end of me, with the exception of a brief aberration — a release under stress of those anti-social instincts that are deep in every mortal and exhibited by every child that ever lived. Oh, I am one of civilisation's proudest products, for I never had the slightest difficulty with those inherited impulses before. Nor will they ever rise again. I've even 'improved' during my long hours of solitude in this room, but it's all of a piece. I've not changed. We none of us do that. I shall live and die a commonplace woman trying to do the 'right thing.'"

"Oh — let us go now. You must rest. You are very tired."

"I was. But it has passed. The shock of Anna's statement and death brought me up standing. I shall sail for Europe to-morrow, if there is a boat. It was