

the windows of the House of the Seven Gables.

I leaned against our iron railing for a minute or two to collect myself before making my appearance, and highly necessary was it for me to do so, because the attitude of the two ladies upon the veranda struck me dumb with amazement, and their conversation completely floored me. That sandy-haired little woman in the low rocker must be my mother, but could that regal figure on the edge of the veranda, with her head in my mother's lap, possibly be my wife? The light from the nursery window showed them to me distinctly, but I kept back in the shadow and listened to the voices.

"My puir lamb! Ye've grat eneugh! Gang awa' tae yer bed; ye're sair forfoughten."

As she stroked the wavy gray hair of the head on her knee, her tone changed.