

**A MAGDALENE.**

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The hard-drawn breath, the hectic glow—  
Consumption's victim showed ; the nurse had said  
Ere many hours had passed her patient  
Would be numbered with the dead.  
So young—scarce twenty—  
Passing away ;  
It makes one's heart ache,  
I heard nurse say.

"Would you like to hear her story, marm ?  
'Tis pitiful : when I see her dying I feel almost glad  
That peace is coming for her ; I hope he'll be forgiven.  
So young, too—a sinner. 'Tis very sad.  
A tale of man's perfidy,  
A broken heart ;  
Of sin, deep—murder even—  
Enough to make one start !"

Slowly the shining eyes opened, looking straight at me ;  
"Don't look at me, lady, I cannot bear your eyes—  
They seem to condemn me ; you're pure, not as I—  
Sin-stained, accursed, a victim of lies.  
Deserted ! forsaken !  
Ruined ! I  
Lay here and pray  
God will let me die."

"It laid beside me—'twas in the ward above—  
Tiny, helpless, a curse 'twas to me ;  
I said in my heart it stamps my degradation—  
I could not bear it—I said it shall not see  
Daylight !—Morning dawned—  
Cold and dead  
Baby lay—by these hands !  
Accidental—the doctor said."