

The face which looked out into the street below was fair, and, on the whole, sweet, though the brow was somewhat clouded, and there was a look in the eyes which told the close observer something about a disappointment bravely borne, which nevertheless shadowed her face at times.

Stuart Holmes, lying on a couch outside of the line of the breeze, yet in a position to command a side view of the face, studied it for a moment, then closed his eyes and drew the faintest possible sigh. He had a gay afghan thrown over him, and drooped his head among the pillows in a way which suggested debility.

Mrs. Holmes had turned but a moment before from a small writing-table, whereon lay at this moment a bulky package sealed and addressed to "Mrs. Chess Gardner." Had you been looking over her shoulder while she wrote, you would have understood the situation better; perhaps the easiest way is to give you a chance to hear something of what she wrote to her old-time friend.

"We are settled at last for the winter," so the letter ran. "We spent only a month at the first stopping-place; the air proved to be too bracing for Stuart, and the boarding accommodations were not pleasant. I was almost glad when it did not suit Stuart, for a more uninviting place, I think, I was never in. There were people enough, young people, too, and I tried to get interested in them;