

land, but the law of the church. I wanted to make her suffer a little as she had made Ruth suffer so much. I wanted her to feel my disgust for her. I tried to look at her with a composure that should show nothing but supreme womanly contempt.

If she understood, she gave no sign. Her dark eyes met mine impassively. Her clear white skin showed no flush. Her lips held their habitual curve of serene reserve and pride. I thought I saw an added self-sufficiency, as of matronly contentment, in her complete and fruitful beauty; and that complacency of stolen happiness turned me cold with abhorrence.

I had known her as a silent girl—religious, and withdrawn from our young circle of boy-and-girl amusements; and when our lives had deepened into the natural interests of youthful love-affairs, she had remained outside that circle too, neither attracting affection nor apparently desiring any. We had passed her, in