

action as you require her to be, and without which inward and outward purity neither of you are fitted for husband or wife, if you love virtue and abhor vice, if you are gentlemanly, forbearing, and not loud talking, exacting, and brutal young man, that woman wants you, that modest, fair, cheerful, right-looking, frank-spoken woman we mean, who fills your idea of maiden and wife—it is she that wants you; marry her when you like, whether you are rich or poor; we'll trust you both on the conditions named without further security.

A SKELETON IN EVERY HOUSE.

When suffering under the pressure of our own distresses, whether they be of regular continuance, or have come upon us of a sudden, we are apt to imagine that no individual in the surrounding world is so unfortunate as we; or perhaps, that we stand altogether by ourselves in calamity; or, at most, belong to a small body of unfortunates, forming an exception from all the rest of mankind. We look to a neighbor, and, seeing that he is not affected by any open or palpable grievance, and make no complaint of any which are hidden from our eyes, we conclude that he is a man entirely fortunate and thoroughly happy, while we are never free from trouble of one kind or another, and, in fact, appear as the very step children of Providence. For every particular evil which besets us, we find a contrast in the exactly opposite circumstances of some other person, and by the pains of envy, perhaps add materially to the real extent of our distresses. Are we condemned to a severe toil for our daily bread?—then we look to him who gains it by some means which appear to us less laborious. Have we little of worldly wealth?—then do we compare ourselves with the affluent man, who not only commands all those necessities of which we can barely obtain a sufficiency, but many luxuries besides, which we only know by name. Are we unblessed with the possession of children?—we pine to see the superabundance which characterizes another family, where they are far less earnestly desired. Are we bereft of a succession of tenderly beloved friends or relatives?—we wonder at the felicity of certain persons under our observation, who never know what it is to wear mourning. In short, no evil falls to our lot, but we are apt to think ourselves its almost sole victims, and we either overlook a great deal of the corresponding vexations of our fellow-creatures, or think, in our anguish, that they are far less than ours.

We remember a story in the course of our reading, which illustrates this fallacy in a very affecting manner. A widow of Naples, named, if we recollect rightly, the Countess Corsini, had but one son remaining to give her an interest in the world; and he was a youth so remarkable for the elegance of his person, and every graceful and amiable quality, that, even if he had not stood in that situation of unusual tenderness towards his mother, she might well have been ex-

cused for beholding him with an extravagant degree of attachment. When this young gentleman grew up, he was sent to pursue his studies at the university of Bologna, where he so well improved his time, that he soon became one of the most distinguished scholars, at the time that he gained the affection of all who knew him, on account of his singularly noble character and pleasing manners. Every vacation, he returned to spend a few months with his mother, who never failed to mark with delight the progress he had made, if not in his literary studies, at least in the cultivation of every personal accomplishment. Her attachment was thus prevented from experiencing any abatement, and she was encouraged to place always more and more reliance upon that hope of his future greatness, which had induced her at first to send him to so distant a university, and had hitherto supported her under his absence. Who can describe the solicitude with which a mother—and “she a widow” (to use the language of Scripture)—regards a last surviving son! His every motion—his every wish—she watches with attentive kindness. He cannot be absent a few minutes longer than his wont, but she becomes uneasy, and whatever be the company in which she sits at the moment, permits her whole soul to become abstracted in a reverie, from which nothing can rouse her but his return. If he come on horseback, she hears the footfall of the animal, while it is yet far beyond the ken of ordinary ears; if he be walking, she knows the sound of his foot upon the threshold, though confounded, to all other listeners, amidst the throng of his companions. Let him come into her room on ordinary occasions never so softly, she distinguishes him by his very breathing—his lightest respiration—and knows it is her son. Her entire being is bound up in his, and the sole gorgon thought at which she dare not look, is the idea of his following the goodly and pleasant company with whom she has already parted for the grave. Such exactly were the feelings of the Neapolitan mother, respecting her noble and beloved—her *only* son.

It chanced, however, that just when he was about to return to Naples, perfected in all the instruction which could be bestowed upon him he was seized suddenly by a dangerous sickness, which, notwithstanding the effects of the best physicians in Bologna, brought him in three days to the brink of the grave. Being assured that he could not survive, his only care, so far as concerned the living world, was for his mother, who, he feared, would suffer very severely from her loss, if not altogether sink under it. It was his most anxious wish that some means should be used to prevent her being overpowered by grief; and an expedient for that purpose at length suggested itself to him. He wrote a letter to his mother, informing her of his illness, but not of its threatening character, and requesting that she would send him a shirt made by the happiest lady in all Naples, or she who appeared most free from the cares and sorrows of this world, for he had taken a fancy for such an