

he was so accustomed, was his companion. So from day to day it was the same story, the only variation, the only change was in his dreams and visions ; hunger could not deprive him of that solace, the cold could not freeze the warm fancies and imaginations. One morning in early spring little Ned awoke from his pleasant dreams and started on his route. Passing numberless people, some stopped to look at him carefully, for his face had such a strange look, his eyes had such a dreamy expression, and at times he smiled to himself as he moved along. But people did not stop long, for who in a large, busy city has time to enquire into the life and means of living of a little match seller. All day long, he trudged his weary way, and towards night-fall he found himself nearer the suburbs than he had ever been before. He passes a house which is brilliantly lighted, and strains of gay music reach his ear. Moving to the window, which was open, he gazes with open-eyed wonder at the scene within. It is evidently a children's party for little fairy forms are flitting about in a merry dance, and all is light, warmth and happiness, while outside with his face pressed close to the window stands little Ned. His flaxen hair is blown by the wind, his blue eyes open to their widest extent as he looks at the gay scene, of which he forms no part. Inside, all is happiness, outside is the gloom of night, and the desolate figure of little Ned. He turns away with a sigh, turns away from the happiness he has never known, into the darkness with which