

because I *felt* that it was my fault I was all the more touchy if anyone seemed to blame me.

It came to this—that after a deal of unpleasantness my husband and I had a regular quarrel, and I threatened that I'd go away to my aunt's, and let him see how he'd get on without me!

He was just walking out at the door when I said that; and he went on and took no notice, and that made me more angry than ever. I said to myself that I would do it really; and then he'd miss me and be sorry.

It was just my old way. I never could think of but one thing at once; and I was so full of my wish to spite him and to show that I meant what I said, that I couldn't think of anything else.

If I'd been in my right senses I might have remembered what kind of man my husband was—very gentle and patient at first, but hard to turn, and never very ready to forget and forgive. I might have thought

as I did after—that if I went away from him he'd most likely never forgive me, or be the same to me again, as long as I lived. I might have thought of my children too, and all the trouble it would bring upon them, and how people would say ill things of me, and cast it up at them that their mother ran away from her home.

But I was thinking of nothing but my own selfish passion and trouble. The children were all away at school and I had the house to myself, and I went up to get my things ready to go to aunt's.

I took my old box that I'd had when I went to service, and turned it upside-down by way of a beginning. Then, when I picked up the things one by one to see if I should want them with me, I came again upon a long, narrow parcel.

I didn't remember in the least what it was, and when I opened it and saw the little withered broom it startled me as if I had seen a ghost.

I hadn't been crying before, for all I'd been in a passion; but, somehow, at the sight of it I found myself sobbing and crying like a naughty child.

'Oh, mother, mother, mother!' I said, just as if I were not a mother myself, and my own long years in her grave.

I felt so desolate, tossed about, and miserable, that at first I did nothing but long for her to come back and comfort me. But by-and-by I began to think what she would say if she *did* come, and then it came over me all at once that I'd been giving way to the very fault she used to warn me of, and that this misery was all my own doing.

I remembered the very words she used to say to me, and how she gave me a text to remember: '*Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord and not unto men.*'

But I hadn't remembered it, and I had done things heartily only just so long as they pleased me. And so I had lost my self-respect and my husband's love, and none of my children would ever feel the better for thinking of me as I did when I thought of *my* mother.

I don't know how long I sat there thinking, but I got up at last and put my things back again in the box, and laid the little broom very carefully where I should see it every time I opened the lid.

And then I went down and got to my work, and cleaned up as I hadn't done for a good while past.

It wasn't easy to get my husband to feel pleasant towards me again, and I had known all along that it wouldn't be. But that only showed what a foolish woman I was, to have ever thought of doing what would have vexed him far worse.

But every place in the house that I got clean, and sweet, and tidy again, put a feeling of satisfaction into my heart that helped me to keep my temper, and in a while things got right once more.

And so I got a kind of feeling over my work that I'd never had before—a feeling as if God had set it me, and was watching to see how I'd do it; and as if mother would know if I minded what she said, and be grieved if I forgot again.

You won't wonder after this if I keep the little broom all my days? Now that I'm