

but never again perhaps with such a cold helplessness. Later he was to learn stoic and callous aids. Yet already, to-day, till he knew the worst he would not weep; but his heart, he felt, was full of tears bubbling in a spring, rising, filling, bursting.

At last, after what seemed a run of half the world, he reached the gate into the yard.

"Mother!" he cried. And there was no reply.

"Sis!" But there was no reply.

"Tom!" But no elder brother answered to his call.

Then he squared his shoulders. He was cold. His heart was fluttering. And in a high, quavering voice with an insinuated hardness, as betokening preparedness for aught:

"Father!"

There was no reply.

He crept terrified indoors and the wag-at-the-wall, ticking in the shadowy kitchen and filling the house with its furtive, fearful, lonely echo, told him that there was no one there. The white-faced clock was but counting out inexorably the brief moments between the departure of the good and the first outcry of the almost lost (for he thought he had heard some rumour of a hint the Book proffered, that even then there would be a frail, final hope) when they should discover that the world was theirs, for a space.

He blubbered once and then gulped down the next sob.

To whom could he go? To whom, left behind, yet possessing a remnant of kindness, might he