

Still more eloquent was a slender plant of the rose geranium, which accompanied me, somewhat more than two years since, on my way to an Older World. It was taken from her quiet bed, in her garden, by my little daughter, as the parting time drew near, with the remark, that "something green might look pleasant to me on the sea." And so it did. But I imagined not then the depth of the communion it would call forth. For the home-spirit was in its heart, and it became to me as a friend. Sometimes when evening closed in over the deep, with those heavy sighs of the wind which often betoken a coming storm, and the ship leaped and plunged amid the billows, as if seeking for a place to escape, or a depth to hide in, I have drawn closer to that weak plant, as if its love might comfort me. Or at waking in the morning, and raising my head from the coffin-like berth where the dark hours had passed in such broken slumbers, as the hoarse lullaby of the surge induces, I have fixed my eyes first upon that solitary plant, and spoken softly to it as to a child. Yet it was evidently in an uncongenial atmosphere, and the delicate branches grew sad, and faded. Numbered its leaves, but almost every day some of them grew sickly and fell, until, at last, only a few were left clustering round a single, graceful stalk.

We had been thirteen days and nights upon the great deep,—and accomplished nearly two thousand miles of our watery journey, when I awoke at the grey hour of dawn. I remembered that,—the first anniversary of the death of my beloved father, and beckoned the solemn imagery to meet me amid the waves. At once every circumstance of that scene gleamed forth as in a picture. His venerable head, resting upon its white pillow, the brightness of his beautiful hair, on which fourscore and seven winters had scattered no snows, his heavy breathing mingling with the slow dropping of the summer shower upon the vine-leaves at his casement, and the steady ticking of the clock through that lonely night, while pending over him, I hoped against hope, that the sudden illness might not be mortal, and that the form, which but the day before, had moved with so vigorous a step, would yet rise up, and lean upon its staff, and come forth to bless me. The rain ceased, a circle of faint brightness foretold the rising of the sun,—those precious lips uttered again the sound of kind words,—the opening eyes told their message of saintly love,—the lids fluttered and closed. There was no more breath.

A wail!—Another,—piercing and protracted,—deeper even than that with which an only child mourns the last parent. It must be the wail of a mother. No other sorrow hath such a voice. Yet, so abruptly it burst forth, amid surrounding silence, that for a moment memory was bewildered, and the things that had been, mingled their confused tissue with things that are.

Among our passengers was a dignified and accomplished lady returning with her husband, an officer, from a residence of several years in Canada, to England, their native land. They had with them three little daughters, and in the course of those conversations, which beguile the tedium of sea-life, she had sometimes spoken of the anxiety with which her aged mother waited to welcome these descendants born in a foreign clime, whom, of course, she had never seen, and so exquisite was their beauty, that it would not have been surprising, had a thrill of pride, heightened the pleasure, with which she painted the joy of such a meeting. The youngest was a babe of less than a year, and we, who often shared its playful wile, fancied that it had grown languid, as if from some inherent disease. Yet, its large black eyes still beamed with strange lustre, so that neither the parents or nurse, would allow that aught affected it, save what arose from the change of habits, incidental to the confinement of the ship. Yet, that night, the mother more uneasy than she was willing to confess in words, decided not to leave its cradle. In the saloon, adjoining our state-room, she took her place, and when we retired, the fair infant lay in troubled sleep. Yet even then, the spoiler was nearer to it than that watchful mother; and ere the morning, he smote it in her arms. We found her clasping it closely to her bosom, as if fain to revivify it with her breath. Masses of glossy black hair, escaping from their confinement, fell over her shoulders, and drooped as a curtain over the marble features of the dead. Mingled with gasps of grief that shook her like a reed, were exclamations of hope, that hope, which clings and cleaves to the wounded heart,—striking its fibre, wherever the blood-drop oozes, and striving like a pitying angel, to staunch, where it may not heal. "Constance! Constance! look at me. Oh, my dear husband, she will live again. She has been sicker than this, once, when you were away. Yes, yes—she will breath again." Long she continued thus assuaging her bitter sorrow, with this vanity of trust, and then we tenderly strove to loosen