

influenza. Let it be considered, also, that he had other creditors to think of, and owed it to them not to let his health be imperilled; all of which explains why he crept back with chattering teeth into bed and dozed an extra hour's sleep, the cost of which he had cause to remember to his dying day.

Meanwhile the hearse had started from Isaac Mosacker's door, unattended and unmourned.

It was a one-horse vehicle, without trappings, plumes, or pall, and the sort of hearse that is used in sixth-class funerals, for Frenchmen can get themselves interred in six different styles, not counting a seventh style for infants. A spindle-legged master of the ceremonies shuffled before in cocked hat and cloak, and high-perched on the box sat an aged coachman, who cut a wretched figure enough with his tall boots and benumbed fingers. These two, and a pair of mutes who had come to help to carry out the coffin but not to follow it to the cemetery, cursed the presumptuous folly of a Jew who had wished to be buried at an earlier hour than the rest of the world; and yet this Jew was not exceeding his privilege. At any hour between six in the morning and six in the evening has a man a right to be buried, nor will any amount of cursing on the part of those who are charged to see him safely laid under earth put him in the wrong.

So the hearse started quite noiselessly and slow. Its wheels turned quietly in the spongy snow, and its horse's footfalls trod on the white carpet with a muffled sound scarce audible. The flakes continued falling, and a capricious wind blew drifts of them into the aged coachman's face. The master of the ceremonies had to keep his hand on his cocked hat to prevent it from flying off, and the wind took advantage of his comparative helplessness to inflate his cloak behind him like a balloon, or to whirl it between his legs at street corners, and in so doing dashed little puffs of snow into his ears and down the nape of his neck, causing him to swear, for he was a man who stood much upon his dignity and did not like to be rendered ridiculous by the elements. All the while there was not a soul in the streets—not a dog, not a cat; nothing but wind and snow playing

their pranks in the darkness of a winter morning, amid thoroughfares so silent that it looked as though the whole city had gone to sleep never to wake again.

And yet no; for at the turning of a street, a window, behind which a light had been burning all night, was opened, and the head of a young girl of twenty peeped out timidly into the darkness, the light in the room forming a golden framework at her back.

She was a sempstress, and had been sewing ever since morning the day before at a ball-dress that was wanted for a great lady that would not wait. On the stroke of six she had finished her last weary stitch, and had been deliberating whether she would not lie down and take a little rest before commencing a new day's labors, when an impulse—what impulse, and how to account for it?—had attracted her to the window to see what kind of weather it was. At sight of the hearse, looming like an apparition, so black and so melancholy in its solitariness, the sempstress gave a slight start, and the coachman fancied he heard mingled with the sighing of the wind an exclamation like "Poor soul!" Then the window closed, and a minute afterwards the young girl issued from the house like a shadow, tripped lightly across the road, and took her stand behind the hearse, to follow to his or her grave this unknown human being who had no friend.

She was of frail build and had no shawl; but the snow as it descended in light pure flakes seemed to wrap her with infinite tenderness in a cloak more dazzling than a wedding garment. And perhaps the white carpet which heaven had laid down was not too cold under her kindly feet, and perhaps the winter wind made itself warm to play about her sweet young face, which two tears of pity had bedewed. Anyhow she walked without appearing to heed snow or blast, but intent only on the deed of charity she was performing towards one whom she had felt to be in kinship with her, since his pauper's hearse proved him to have belonged when alive to the great brotherhood of the poor and miserable.

Still slowly the hearse proceeded, followed by its one young mourner, until at a new turning, where there was a baker's shop, a young journeyman who had been