

And the mother would smile at him with a light of divine compassion in her eyes, feeling at such moments that for such work it were easy to have her son go from her. They had long walks together through the woods, and would come back laden with spoils, mosses and grasses and ferns, and they were happy with each other as a boy and girl in their first love. How I envied him and how I pitied him. Such a love is earth's greatest treasure, the loss of it earth's greatest loss. But the hours of the three days fled with winged feet, as do all happy hours, and we came to that hour of sweet agony we shrink from most and yet would not miss.

Long before the sun we had all been astir, for we had to catch an early train. Breakfast by lamplight is always a ghastly affair. The food is nauseating, the conversation drags wearily, the whole atmosphere is depressing.

Graeme was making a great effort to adopt a matter-of-fact tone with a little tinge of sharpness in it except when he spoke to his mother. The father came down half dressed, as we were rising from an almost untasted meal, to have, according to his invariable custom, a word of prayer. It was always an ideal, that prayer of his.

A man must give up pretenses when he undertakes to address the Almighty. There is no place in prayer