

THE VALLEY OF VISION

to run far. Every street and alley vomited men—all struggling together, fighting, shouting, or shrieking, striking one another down, trampling over the fallen—a hideous *mêlée*. There was an incessant rattling noise in the air, and heavier peals as of thunder shook the houses. Here a wide rent yawned in a wall—there a roof caved in—the windows fell into the street in showers of broken glass.

How I got through this inferno I do not know. Buffeted and blinded, stumbling and scrambling to my feet again, turning this way or that way to avoid the thickest centres of the strife, oppressed and paralyzed by a feeling of impotence that put an iron band around my heart, driven always by the intense longing to reach my wife and child, somehow I had a sense of struggling on. Then I came into a quieter quarter of the town, and ran until I reached the lodging where I had left them.

They were waiting just inside the door, anxious and trembling. But I was amazed to find them so little panic-stricken. The little girl had her doll in her arms.