

and then suddenly broke down into a few discordant notes and ceased. It is like my picture, all very well, but with that which would speak to and move the heart, year after year, when the mere beauty ceased to please, that life or something is wanting. What were his words?—"This picture is but the beautiful corpse of the other," and my life is but a cold marble effigy of a true life. And yet is there any true and better life? If there is nothing better beyond, I have been carried forward too far. Miss Brown thoroughly enjoys champagne and flirtations. Susie Winthrop is happy in her superstition, as any one might be, could they believe what she does. But I have gone past the power of taking up these things, as I have gone past my childhood sports. And now what is there for me? My most dear and cherished hope—a hope that shone above my life like a sun—has been blown away by the breath of my father's clerk (it required no greater power to bring me down to my true level), and I hoped to be a queen among men, high-born, but crowned with the richer coronet of genius. I, who hoped to win so high a place that men would speak of me with honest praise, now and in all future time, must be contented as a mere accomplished woman, deemed worthy perhaps in time to grace some nobleman's halls who in the nice social scale abroad may stand a little higher than myself. I meant to shine and dazzle, to stoop to give in every case; but now I must take what I can get, with an humble 'Thank you,' and she clenched her little powerless hands in impotent revolt at what seemed very cruel destiny.

She appeared at the dinner-table outwardly calm and quiet. Her father did not share in her bitter disappointment, and she saw that he did not, and so felt more alone. He regarded her success as remarkable (as it truly was), having never believed she could copy a picture so exactly as to deceive an ordinarily good observer. When, therefore, old Schwartz and others were unable to distinguish between the pictures, he was more than satisfied. He was sorry that Dennis had spoiled the triumph, but could not blame him. At the same time he recognized in Fleet another and most decided proof of intelligence on questions of Art, for he knew that his criticism was just. He believed that when the true knight that his ambition would choose appeared, with golden spurs and jewelled crest, then her deeper nature would awaken, and she far surpass all previous effort. Moreover, he did not fully under-

stand or enter into her lofty ambition. To see her settled in life, titled, rich, and a recognized leader in the aristocracy of his own land, was his highest aspiration as far as she was concerned.

He commenced, therefore, in a strain of compliment to cheer his daughter and rally her courage, but she shook her head sadly, and said so decidedly, "Father, let us change the subject," that with some surprise at her feelings, he yielded to her wish, thinking that a little time and experience would moderate her ideas and banish the pain of disappointment. It was a quiet meal, each being occupied by their own thoughts. Soon after he was immersed in his cigar and some business papers for the evening.

It was a mild, summer-like night, and a warm, gentle rain was falling. Even in the midst of a great city, the sweet odors of spring found their way to the private parlor where Christine sat by the window, still lost in painful thoughts.

"Nature is full of hope, and the promise of coming life. So ought I to be in this my spring-time. Why am I not? If I am sad and disappointed in my spring, how dreary will be my autumn, when leaf after leaf of beauty, health, and strength drop away."

A muffled figure, seemingly regardless of the rain, passed slowly down the opposite side of the street. Though the person cast but a single quick glance toward her window, and though the twilight was deepening, something in the passer-by suggested Dennis Fleet. For a moment she wished she could speak to him. She felt very lonely. Solitude had done her no good. Her troubles only grew darker and more real as she brooded over them. She instinctively felt that her father could not understand her, and she had never been able to go to him for sympathy. He was not the kind of person that any one would seek for such a purpose. Christine was not inclined to confidence, and there was really no one who knew her deeper feelings, and who could enter into her real hopes for life. She was so proud and cold that few ever thought of giving confidence, much less of asking hers.

Up to the time of her last sickness she had been strong, self-confident, almost assured of success. At times she recognized dimly that something was wrong, as when singing her best she could only secure noisy, transient applause, while she saw another on the same occasion, touch the heart; but she shut her eyes to the unwelcome truth, and determined to succeed. But her sickness and fears at