REST IN THE GRAVE.

Rest in the grave!—but rest is far the weary,
And her night linger where sweet day set for me;
Rest in her lives worn out, deserted dreary,
Which have no brightness left for death to woo.

We years for rest, when power and passion wasted
Have left to memory nothing but regret;—
She sleeps, while life's best pleasures, all untasted,
Had scarce approached her rosy lips as yet.

Her childlike eyes still lacked their crowning
Her form was ripening to more perfect
She died with the pathetic incompleteness
Of beauty's promise on her pallid face.

What undeveloped gifts, what powers unused,
Perhaps with her have passed away from earth—
What germs of thought in that young brain arrested
May never grow and quicken and have birth!

She knew not love who night have loved so truly,
Whose love-dreams stirred her fancy, faint and sweet—
Her soul's celestial wings were budding newly,
Her woman's heart had scarce begun to beat.

We drink the sweets of life, we drink the bitter
And death to us would almost seem a
But why, O Fate, for whom glad life was sister,
Should darkness come ere day had reached its noon?

No answer save the echo of our crowing—
Which from the woodland and the moor is
Where, in the springtime, ruthless storm
Have slain the unborn flower and new-fledged bird.

—*Temple Bar.*

STRONGER THAN DEATH.

(From the Argosy.)

Let me open the windows of a long-closed memory, and cool you with the December freshness of a Minnesota blast on us.

Our Christmas mail had come in. The wood-fire was singing in the immense grate; otherwise, the silence in the room was only broken by the rustling of the paper as we read our letters by the waning light of the afternoon.

My brother passed to me with a smile those bearing my address, dexterously patting uppermost one with a certain hand writing upon it. Justine, his wife, echoed the smile as she looked up. My eyes were filled with joyful emotion, my cheeks brightening. How dear the writer was to me, none could know. The letter concluded thus:

"And when are you coming home, little-woman? I have counted the months on a rosary of tears, and yesterday a decade had slipped through my fingers. *Ten months* since we looked on pale, pathetic, spiritualistic face! *Months? Ay!* I say it seems to me like, rather, ten centuries.

"I am hungry for a sight of you—for a sound of you, Doris. There is a rumour of Hubert's coming down to Washington shortly. Does that mean (Heaven grant it!) that you and Justine travel with him? JASPAR."

Hubert was my brother, as I have said, and Justine was his wife. Dear hearts! what need to tell who Jaspar was? I smoothed the letter tenderly upon my knee, *caressed*, as age pats and smooths the hand of a friend. I had been alone, I should have pressed it to my lips.

"Pale, charming, spiritelle face," indeed! A glance at the glass over the chimney-piece, as I turned to the fire, made me quite laugh at the words. The thin cheeks that I had brought with me from my far-away home had rounded into blooming peaches; the white, waxen complexion had regained its healthy hue; the clear eyes were hollow and shadowy no longer. My ten months in the West had made me a sound woman again, thanks to the care of my brother Hubert and his wife.

Considerably more than a year ago a very serious illness had fallen upon me. It was subdued, and I got better after a fashion; but I could not regain health and strength. The doctors said nothing remained for me but a long and effectual change of air and scene; and I was sent to Hubert and Justine, who had settled here in the West. A good part of Hubert's practice lay around here; though he had to go now and again to the Courts at Washington. A young and rising lawyer, he would be a man of fame some day. Jaspar's practice lay at home; and this enforced separation had been felt by both of us. But it would soon be over now. Hubert was to go south in March, and would take charge of me home.

I stood over the fire reading my other letters. Hubert had gone into the adjoining room, his library, and was seated at the table, opening the packets that the mail had brought. I drew a chair to the fire, and fell into a reverie. Three months, and I should be at home again! It was not that I was not supremely happy with my brother and his wife; but—where the heart is, there does the body yearn to be.

We had hailed the journey over so often. Justine and I! For she was to go down with me on a visit. Both of us were young, and fond of change; both of us were castern; been had grown home-sick for the sight of a certain far-off city. The intense cold up here this winter was strange to us. Catherine of Russia in her palace of ice seemed to claim all our pity. We ourselves grew half angry in the biting, parched air. A sense of imprisonment would seize us amid the blank snow-fields; the giant drifts frighted us when we ventured sleighing, the very tips of our noses muffled in furs. While shrewd, shock the house we lived in, Hubert would read aloud to us from Whittier found so much poetry in so stern a prose. To leave all this, and fly to a more genial clime was a prospect full of delight. But, it was not the snow I wanted to quit, but the dear old home I yearned to see, and my father and mother, and all the rest of the dear ones, and—Jaspar. I was picturing the meeting; then I seemed to be amidst them; the letters lying in my lap, a happy smile on my face.

What was that? Some words had dawned indistinctly on my ear through the open door of the other room, and I turned quickly round. Justine was leaning over her husband's shoulder looking, with him, at one of the letters.

"Yes," he said, repeating the words whose substance I had caught. "You see, my dear, there is no help for it. I cannot wait until March: I must start early in January."

"What do you say, Hubert?" I cried, bounding into the library.

"I am called away sooner than I thought for, Dorothy. Must go in January instead of March."

"*Early* in January you said, Hubert."

"Ay. I ought to be away in less than a week from now."

My heart gave a great throb of pleasure.

"Oh Hubert, it will be delightful! To wait until March did seem long—to me. We can be quite ready in less than a week; in half the time: can't we Justine?"

"All right. But now I let you two young ladies what it is: I am up to my eyes in business, and must trouble you to isolate yourselves out of my room. I will have tea brought to me here, Justine."

I stole up to my own chamber with hope so warm in my heart that it seemed enough to melt the snow on the outer window-sills. All the bleak world grew green and sunny; I could fancy the summer birds were singing in the leafless trees.

Never, never, since I came to them, had I been in such spirits as I was this evening. Justine, on the contrary, was provokingly sober. Her face looked as grave as possible over the tea-table; later, she seemed to have more head for her knitting than for answering me. It was an extra-warm vest she was making for Hubert.

"You are afraid you'll not get that done, Justine. Why, you could finish it in two days if you chose."

"Oh yes, I shall get it done."

"Then why are you so silent—with never a word for me?"

"One of my bad headaches has come on, Doris. Suppose we have a hand at cribbage?"

That night when I lay in bed, the glow of my fire making the chamber pleasant, I fell to thinking, too happy to sleep. How could Justine take it all so coolly, I wondered, and let a miserable headache trouble her, while I was half delirious with the joy and the expectation. It's true she had her home and her husband here; but she had been drill to go amidst her own people, and——

My thoughts were interrupted. Justine herself stood in my chamber in her night wrapper, having pushed the door gently open. By the light of the taper she put on the table, I saw the tears in her eyes.

"Dorie, I can never, never! anything till the morning," she said, "but somehow I cannot go to bed till I have told you."

"What is it?" I asked, with a thrill of fear.

"Hubert left me the task of breaking it to you, Doris. He goes *alone* in January. I overheard a scrap of his talk to them. My eyes to my lips, but I held it in. Oh, the bitter shock of the disappointment!

"Darest Doris," said poor Justine, pityingly. "I feel for you deeply. It is hard enough for me; but I have seen my lot patiently in these western wilds, and I must not complain when things go crossly."

"But these dear home-folk; and—and Jaspar?" I murmured. "O Justine! why can't we go?—why cannot he take us?"

"It is something about the changing of his route. And—and—the cold."

"But I don't care for the cold."

She stooped and kissed me tenderly on the mouth: "God bless you, darling, you have sacrificed yourself. I know it despite have so long. Perhaps we may come Hubert into taking you at all hazards, Doris."

"And leave you behind?"

"You would not wish me to go at the risk of my life, dear?"

I looked at her slight frame and nervous face, and understood her. Travel is that intense cold would be too much for her. How I could understand what had caused her silence in the evening: she was sorrowing for me. I put my arms around her and drew her down to me. "It will be all right," I said, as heavily as I could; "we will work together until the spring."

She kissed me again softly, and went out with her taper. The dreary, cold door left our cheer more in spirit darkness, for the fire had burnt low. Oh, it was a cruel blow! I could not lie still and bear it. Arising, I turned the key in the lock, and on my knees fought out my battle by myself. I was comparatively home-sick. I had gone down in fancy out of my ice-bower into the Paradise of blue skies and pleasant places; and pulled with my fair one out through familiar scenes. And here was I recaptured by the frost-Giants!

I thought my of the little Mentone hut that faces on day and night. Lively and sportive in the summer. That is pleasant enough when winter comes; and hangs suspended from a tree-branch, a torpid, tiny mass. But with the first flowers of the spring, it bursts its death-like sleep, and wings its flight around the garden, a happy thought of joy. Happy bird, I thought to myself that winter night, when will the spring come to me? Happy bird, I thought to myself that winter night, when will the spring come to me?

If the fire had not burned quite out, and the bitter cold attacked me, I think I should have waited there all night. So I had to creep into bed again; and in time I fell asleep, but, even then, a haunting trouble followed me into my dreams. I dreamt that Jaspar was ill; dying. That he held out his pale hands, and cried aloud for me to come to him, and yet to cross a field to reach him, when suddenly a terrible zebra was placed the solid earth between us and—and—Jaspar.

—and I saw my friend, my dear friend, no more. The anguish awoke me.

My breakfast disturbed alone. I had grown pretty well reconciled then, for it was fully decided that arrangements should be made for my departure in the spring. Hubert started on a Friday. It was the 5th of January. I have good reason to remember that date. The night he left us, Justine was ill. She was subject to most violent headaches; the pain of them almost unbearable; and the worry of getting her husband off put the poor lady quite beside herself. I stayed with her all night, and—and—