

doorway, where I sat staring into the darkness, unable to feel any more, but just benumbed. Across my weariness flickered the mournful soliloquy of a poor barn-door fowl—"Yesterday an egg, to-morrow a feather duster! What's the good of anythin', why, nothin'."

Then I, too, heard a sound in the night, and because Billy and the nurse were muttering, I stood up with the candle-light behind me, trying to see into the darkness. Billy said afterward he had moved quickly, to shut the door, but I waved him back just as the shot rang out.

The explosion blinded, deafened, seemed even to scorch me, while the mirror on the wall came crashing down. Stunned, dazzled, horrified, I felt a dull rage at this attempted murder.

A second revolver-shot stirred my hair, and I'm afraid then that I lost my temper. I am not a fish-fag that I should stoop to fighting a creature such as Polly, but I would have died rather than let her see one trace of fear.

Billy rushed past the firing to reach the door and close it, but I ordered him to desist, then grasped the candle and held it out to show a better light.