

lips of her. And when I lost her—ye understand—it was the cry of the hahy new-born that held me. I'd be shamed to think upon it now, young Master. The day's bound to go hy, and I mean to bide it out."

"Who are you lecterin' to? Polly—pretty Polly!" Thus an unfeeling fiend of a boy, who hears poor Jim talking to the empty air. But Jim, if he hears, does not heed him. His mind is far away, thinking of the dreadful day of his return to his wife and her week-old hahy, and his coming to know that his mishap, announced by letter the day before, had been kept from her, and was still to tell. Of the ill-judged attempt to keep it from her yet a while, and let him be beside her in the half-dark. And the fatal sudden light of a fire that hlazed out, and her cry of terror: "Oh, Jim, man, what have you done to your eyes?" . . .

Then of yet one more forlorn hope—the ill-wrought, ill-sustained pretext that this was but a passing cloud, a mere drawback of the hour, a thing that time would remedy—so ill-sustained that even in the few short days before her death Jim's wife had come to know that his eyes, stone-blind beyond a doubt, would never laugh into her face again, would never rest with hers upon the little face she longed to show him was so like his own. And then the end, and a grave in the parish burial-ground he could not see.

Then of a dream of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and of a child's cry that reached him and called him back, even as he longed of his own free choice and will to plunge into its utter darkness. Then of a growth of ease—a sort of working ease to get through life with—and a term of reading, day by day, hour by hour, each tiniest change in the inflection of the hahy's cry, until one day Lizarann, to whom it had occurred to glance round at the Universe she had been pitchforked into, hurst into a not very well executed laugh at its expense, and made poor Jim for the first time fully conscious that he had a daughter.

It would be hard to tell all the struggles he went through before he could reconcile himself to a new position in life, mendicancy under pretence of match-selling. He did it at last, urged by grim necessity and Mrs. Steptoe. Perhaps we should say *stung* by the latter rather than *urged*, for her attitude was that, eyes or no eyes, if her brother wasn't