

week. I wonder if he would dine with us,' said Amy, thoughtfully.

'That would be just the thing; speak to your father about it to-night,' said Mrs. Dean, rising to go. 'Now, dear I'll leave you to work out your plans. Ask wisdom and strength from the strong One, and I know you will succeed; and let me help you whenever I can.'

Half an hour later Huldah was electrified by the appearance of a bright face in the kitchen, and a cheery voice said,

'Huldah, you were right about Thanksgiving. Of course we will keep it just as happily as we can. I know we have a great deal left to be thankful for and I mean to show it, not only that day, but every day, and you must help me, Huldah.'

By evening there had been a transformation in the Cranston home. A bright light streamed from 'mother's room' where a merry little group were waiting for the sound of father's step. Alice had been quick to notice the change of atmosphere, and Amy wisely told her some of her plans, and she was radiantly happy.

'We haven't been so "cumfy" since mamma went away,' she exclaimed, nestling down by Amy. 'Won't papa be glad!'

That was the beginning of better things for the Cranstons. Amy often found her office of mother, daughter, and general sunshine-maker a hard one to fill, and sometimes she felt discouraged enough to give up trying; but she was a genuine Christian and knew where to look for help and little by little the burden grew lighter. Certainly she has never regretted the awakening she had that Thanksgiving time, and the new order of things that was inaugurated then, and you would hardly recognize as the same the beautiful home over which she presides. People who make others happy are the happiest themselves.

A Perpetual Thanksgiving.

(By Harriet Prescott Spofford, in "The Independent.")

It was certainly a dreary house, and never more so than when the autumn sun sent the shadows of the hills across it in the early afternoon, and cast a double gloom throughout the great solitary rooms and the long passages. The servants went and came noiselessly; no foot in it fell more loudly than the autumn leaves; and Mrs. Penn trailed her widow's gowns through its solitudes sometimes feeling as if she were buried alive, and with a listlessness that said she did not greatly care if she were.

On the outskirts of the village neighbors were few, and friends came rarely. There were almost no outside interests. Mrs. Penn read the books that came up from town, and sent the box back and had another, and did some endless embroideries. And every morning she opened her eyes with a dull sense of oppression and regret that the day was to do over again; and she always cried a little at twilight, and said to herself that her husband, who had been very much her senior and had indulged her with every desire of her heart, would have resented her loneliness and want of happiness.

The coming of the one daily mail meant but little to her, for her friends had their own interests and families; and, except in the midsummer, when the mountains were to be climbed, she had so little to offer them by way of entertainment that she had long ceased to ask them under her roof; her few letters were spasmodic and brief; and her sole regular correspondent was her husband's granddaughter by his first marriage, Eva Robson, who resided abroad with her

babies, Mr. Robson having a small consulate and living much too luxuriously, as Mrs. Penn thought, on his wife's inheritance from her grandfather.

'No, Eliza,' said Mrs. Penn to the person who united in herself the functions of friend and lady's maid and housekeeper, and who had come in to see about engaging a certain monstrous bird for dinner six weeks off, the young girl, Sally Bowen, who had reared it, being then in the kitchen. 'No. What should I do with such an affair as that—an overgrown, unnatural, unhealthy fowl! I don't know why we should have a turkey at all, if it comes to that.'

'Because every one else does,' said Eliza, stoutly.

'We have turkeys often enough on other days,' said Mrs. Penn, still looking over her silks for the shade she wished.

'But Thanksgiving Day'—persisted Eliza.

'What is Thanksgiving Day to me?'

'Ma'am!'

'What is Thanksgiving Day to me? What have I to be thankful for?'

'Well, ma'am,' said Eliza, who was on the intimate footing given by having lived with Mrs. Penn since she was born, 'you're alive and you're well—'

'I don't consider that anything to be thankful for,' said Mrs. Penn. 'I'm not at all thankful to be alive—I'd rather be dead. And being alive, I've a right to be well!'

'I suppose Charity Bowen thinks she has a right to be well, too—bedridden for twenty years,' said Eliza, in whom the ways of the household and the habit of years had fostered an easy familiarity. 'And perhaps she would be better for the medicines if they could afford the difference between selling the turkey here and selling it to the middleman.'

'She can have all the medicine she wants, and you know it very well!'

'They're a proud and honest folk, Mrs. Penn.'

'Oh, for goodness' sake, Eliza, buy the turkey, if that's what you want. But you mustn't keep it for any supposititious Thanksgiving Day. You can have it to-morrow.'

'It won't be ready to-morrow. They don't expect to kill it till the last week in November.'

'Well, do as you please. If you're set upon eating turkey by way of expressing any annual pressure of thanks, why, eat it! Only don't expect me to do so. I'm not at all thankful for the privilege of living in a tomb—'

'It looks like a tomb,' said Eliza, gazing round the stately room, with its rich rugs, its old portraits, its china plaques, its glowing fire, its flowers in crystal vases, its books and silken cushions and deep chairs.

'No matter what it looks like; it is a tomb. And I am just as dead in it as if the bells had tolled for me.'

'You'll have to excuse me, ma'am; but if I talked that way you'd say I was tempting Providence!'

'To what?' demanded Mrs. Penn.

'For my part,' said the desperate Eliza, goaded by long series of similar outbursts, 'where the Lord puts me I expect he puts me for something.'

Mrs. Penn looked at her with almost a gleam of amusement in her eyes. 'Oh, I'll excuse you,' said she. 'Anything by way of a diversion. One must have conversation even if it's with an impertinent!'

But Eliza gently closed the door, and the opportunity for further conversation, too, before the word 'servant' should offend her ears.

Mrs. Penn put away her silks; it was too dark to match the shades; and, gathering her threads to put in the fire, walked up and down the room. 'One must do something to change the poles,' she said. And then she paused to look out the window at the man plodding up the avenue with the mail, and then at the gray landscape—the hills already black with shadow, a dull rose in the upper air above the rising mists, where a couple of crows flapped heavily, all fading to dim, melancholy outlines and a promise of coming storm. 'And one night just like another,' she murmured, as she turned and sat down before the fire, lifting her skirt daintily, for all it was no matter, she said, whether it scorched or not. 'I don't know why I care,' she said. 'There isn't anything any matter. And as for me, I'm not as much use as the log on the coals—that is good for something.' And she hid her face in her hands, and began to enjoy her favorite twilight diversion, the summing up of her misfortunes and injuries and miseries, and if she could have had a new one to add to them she would have had a pang of satisfaction. 'My husband dead, my children dead, my people dead, shut up here because on account of my hay-fever I can't live in any other spot on earth, without a friend to talk to superior to a servant, without an object in life, without a soul to love, without a soul to love me—except—maybe—poor Eliza—why shouldn't I call such an existence a living tomb? Why should I give thanks for it? It's unbearable—the solitude, the dreariness. Oh, I'm so lonely; if I only had something I could love!' she exclaimed, the tears trickling through her fingers; 'if I only had a cat to love—and I don't like cats—I'd as lief have snakes round!'

Eliza opened the door, and John brought in the lamps and went out again.

'The mail,' said Eliza, rather loftily, but lingering over a lamp after handing Mrs. Penn the newspaper and a letter with foreign stamps.

'Mercy on us!' cried Mrs. Penn.

'A black border!' It's from Eva; who in the world is she in mourning for?'

'Some one out of the world,' said Eliza, busying herself with the shade.

'And sealed with black wax—dear, dear, I wonder who is dead now!'

'If you opened it,' said the irrepressible Eliza, 'you would find out.'

'Oh, Eliza, how unsympathetic you are! When you know it's bad news!'

'Shall I open it, ma'am?'

'Yes, Eliza, do. I don't know—I'm all of a tremble!'

'There. Here it is. Now you can read it. And you know that whatever happens to Mrs. Robson, you've been in the way of thinking it's not much matter to you.'

'Not much matter to me? Oh, Eliza!' cried Mrs. Penn, whose eyes had been rapidly running over the unfolded sheet. 'Not much matter to me? Just read that, and see if it's no matter to me. They're coming here!'

'My gracious!' said Eliza, taking the chance presented and reading a little more slowly. 'Bag and baggage! The whole kit of them!'

'Every one.'

'Oh, I don't know about that. Isn't it awful? And I never used to children.'

'Eliza! You wouldn't leave me now!'

'Land sakes! Who said anything about leaving?' exclaimed Eliza who, having played dolls and gone to district school with Mrs. Penn, had been her familiar and tyrant ever since. 'How could I leave you—all the same as born and bred together. I wasn't