

Téphany noted these details before she perceived at the further and darker end of the chapel a man sitting upon a rude bench, with his face hidden by his hands. The man sat so silent and motionless that he seemed to have no more life than the figure of the Virgin. Téphany's presence, seemingly, did not excite his interest. This, however, aroused no surprise in her. Some fisherman, doubtless, had wandered into the chapel to pray and meditate. She felt sorry that she had disturbed him. Possibly he had covered his eyes on purpose. Her imagination flared, seeing a fellow creature suffering in spirit, yearning to be alone with his Maker, resenting bitterly, perhaps, the advent of a strange woman. His attitude was one of profound dejection. With a shy, backward glance, Téphany left the chapel.

A few minutes later she was kneeling at her parents' grave.

When she rose, she noticed that the first inscription upon the tombstone had become slightly worn, it was fading. With a shock the reflection followed that the few memories she possessed of her mother had become as the dust within the tomb, as the fading writing on the stone :

In Memory of
MARIE TÉPHANY,
Beloved Wife of Henry Lane,
Born at Vannes ; Died at Nizon.
Aged 27 Years.
R. I. P.

The live Téphany, thinking tenderly of the dead Téphany, tried to recall her mother's face. Henry Lane had made many studies of his wife's head, but these he had destroyed after her death, because—so he told his daughter with passionate emphasis—they were caricatures unworthy to be preserved. Téphany could just remember a pure, delicately cut profile, standing out like a fine cameo against the dark confused years of early childhood.

Underneath the above inscription were a few lines setting forth the date and manner of death of the husband, who lay beside his wife.