

Down the avenue, she could see from her bedroom window, the road lay grey. The trees were laden with the summer haze; it lay on their tops, it was cold among their branches. Beneath the grey mist, in the garden under her window, the flower-beds were as graves. And she wanted to live, desperately she wanted to live, her eyes filled and overflowed with pity for herself. She stood, gazing, and the tears streamed from her eyes, because she wanted so to live, and dared not, and the flower-beds were as graves, dark mounds in the moonlight.

She turned away from the window at length, saying her "good-bye" to the world. Good-bye, to all the world held for her, to fame and love, and all it held in sea and mountain, in sweet spring and splendid storm, and wind-swept skies, good-bye to Nature. With eyes that streamed and trembling hands, she shut the window; she had said good-bye, she shut it all out, and moved away from it, moved stiffly on her frozen feet. She was shivering.

But she got to the medicine-chest, and nothing was steady about her, neither hands nor thought; her teeth chattered.

The champagne had helped her nevertheless, not enough to disguise the taste of the opium, but enough to nerve her to the gulp; the taste lingered, nauseous and sickening. Quickly, very quickly, her brain grew as unsteady as her hands had been. She got to the bed and lay there, flat on her back, for a little time, and terribly frightened. Then slowly a beautiful phrase shaped itself in the darkness, and helped her into calm:

"After life's fitful fever she sleeps well."

Now all she felt was the bitter, horrible taste in her mouth. Everything else was calmed and quieted by the drug, but the taste in her mouth was horrible, nauseating. The horror of what she had done seized her, and convulsive shuddering and a white sweat of terror broke over her.

In another drifting hour heart and mind grew torpid, and she ceased to know or suffer. Then came semi-con-