

For, after all, Nigel Ambrose had married her chiefly to take care of his children; and there were so many, many ways in which, if this barrier could be beaten down between them, she could work for his girl's good. Recently she had been more than usually troubled about Silvia; when life was just opening out to her, when that life should have been so full of unconscious joys and the world should have been such a beautiful place, Silvia Ambrose went through her days a morose, embittered, bad-tempered young creature, seeing good in nothing.

Helen herself was blessed with such buoyancy of spirit, such a ready trick of finding happiness in the most unlikely places, that this sullen denial of the girl to her youth's natural inheritance saddened her. Another woman might have set herself the task of conquering the rebellious antagonism to herself by strong and violent measures; but apart from that sense of justice which had such a wonderful significance to Nigel Ambrose's second wife, she had a longing to get at Silvia by other and simpler means. Not even tonight, when she sat trying to forget Miss Dalywood's straightforward remarks, would she let herself part wholly with the hope that one of these days, somehow, in some unforeseen way, she and this girl would be able to come to a sympathetic understanding. To start with, there were many excuses for Sylvia.

"By rights," Mrs. Ambrose mused now, "she ought to get away from here; there's such a load of things she needs. Oh my! if I only had just a little bit of what I used to get in old times, things might be different all round!"