

On Christmas Day in the Morning

elderly people waking to a lonely holiday.

Mrs. Fernald crept to the door of her room — the injured knee always made walking difficult after a night's quiet. She meant to sit down by the fire which she had lately heard Marietta stirring and feeding into activity, and warm herself at its flame. She remembered with a sad little smile that she and John had hung their stockings there, and looked to see what miracle had been wrought in the night.

"Father!" — Her voice caught in her throat. . . What was all this? . . By some mysterious influence her husband learned that she was calling him, though he had not really heard. He came to the door and looked at her, then at the chimneypiece where the stockings hung — a long row of them, as they had not hung since the children grew up — stockings of quality: one of brown silk, Nan's; a fine