

that quiet that appears to breathe out from a sick house, and saw the doctor's brougham at the door, I became alarmed.

She was ill. Love and pride contended long. Would I break through my vow and visit her? Love triumphed and I called; she was getting better. In fear for her life—her illness was a dangerous nervous fever—I forgot some of my grief, and when she was pronounced out of danger I almost grew light-hearted with joy. One morning a painting that had been long for sale, had been disposed of, and out of the proceeds I bought a bouquet and sent it up to Mary, in the hope, now growing large, I don't know why, that it would re-unite us. Next day I called, fluttering with expectations, and when the servant handed me a note I could not open it for a minute. It swam before my eyes and my brain reeled. Good God, this was all it said, "Miss Draper is surprised at Mr. Hurston's persistency. Is it requisite more than to draw his attention to the fact that his conduct was such as to place a breach between them for ever," and then came the little feminine sting, "No doubt he will seek consolation in another and familiar quarter."

That was all. Hope that I had raised a second time was crushed. I have no recollection of how I left the house, but I was weak, miserably weak. I clung to the railings and crept along to the nearest public house. I felt cold at my heart. I must have brandy. It put life in me. More, more brandy, excitement, forgetfulness, sleep, and then the waking with the renewed coldness at my heart, and maddening depression of spirits, when hell's devils tempt me to murder and suicide, when they stand there beckoning and pointing, till I have to fly from them to the brandy. I can only work under the fiery stimulus, I am writing now with the decanter beside me, and I know it, as well as any of my readers can tell me, that I am digging for myself a drunkard's grave; but who could live with all that's worth living for taken out of life, with hope crushed out of the heart and energy out of the mind, and continuous torture eating, eating, when respite can be obtained? It is killing me; granted, I have moments of torture, mental and physical; but what of that? I have no desire to prolong life, and better the occasional agony than the one life-long aching pain.

They say God knows all things. Did He know the consequence of my meeting with Mary, and yet permit it? It was none of my doing. On what predestined plan has my life been blasted, and earth made a hell, till the devils can devise no more torture? Is this the God of Love, that parsons preach about? Is it not rather all a mistake, and this whole world ruled by chance, or the Devil? Oh, Mother! sainted Mother in heaven! what am I saying? Do you see me now? Oh, no, no, no! Then heaven were no heaven to thee, to see thy son a drunkard—yes, a drunkard!

Oh, sleek people, moralizing in your comfortable chairs; mothers, with your children to love; fathers, with well-filled purses—I know how you condemn and despise me. But what do you know of the pain I suffered, of the empty, hungry weakness, worse than pain; of the brain that refused to work, but kept revolving *her* words and looks tumultuously, until I felt I must become mad unless I obtained some respite? I may be weak—I am weak; but are ye so strong?