

leine Brismantier, was now as poor as that old bedridden neighbor had been all her life . . . *all her life* . . .

Somehow, that had something to do with those sheets which she had had and the other woman had not . . . her mind came back with a mortal sickness to the knowledge that she had now nothing, nothing to depend upon except her own strength and labor—just like a *poor* woman. She *was* a poor woman!

Somebody was weeping and tugging at her skirts. She looked down blindly. It was Raoul, her little son. He was sobbing and saying: "Sylvie said not to come, but I couldn't stand it any more. I'm hungry! I'm hungry, and there isn't a thing left upstairs to eat! I'm hungry! I'm hungry!"

Madeleine put her hand to her head and thought. What had happened? Oh yes, all their money had been stolen, all . . . but Raoul was hungry, the children must have something to eat. "Hush, my darling," she said to the little boy, "go back upstairs and tell Sylvie to come here and look out for the shop while I go out and find something to eat."

She went down the silent, empty street, before the silent empty houses staring at her out of their shattered windows, and found not a soul abroad. At the farm, in the outskirts of town, she saw smoke rising from the chimney and went into the courtyard. The young farmer's wife was there, feeding a little cluster of hens, and weeping like a child. She stared at the