

against the bruised, rough leaves of the weed which she was covering up with sand. "I'd rather not talk any more, Dirk. There's other girls. Some other girl will do."

"I'll have no other girl if I can't have you!" said poor Dirk, turning away. "I never could set such a sight by another girl as I've set by you. If you don't marry, Sip, no more'll I."

Sip smiled, but did not speak.

"Upon my word, I won't!" cried Dirk. "You think I'm one of other folks, I guess. You wait and see. I've loved you true. If ever man loved a girl, I've loved you true. If I can't help you, I'll have nobody!"

But Sip only smiled.

She went into the house after Dirk had gone, weakly. The flushing tremors in her face had set into a dead color, and her hands came together again at the knuckles.

The Irish woman was away, and the house was lonely and still. The kitchen fire was out. She went out into the little shed for kindlings, thinking that she would make a cup of tea directly, she felt so weak.

When she got there, she sat down on the chopping-block, and covered her face, her feet hanging listlessly against the axe. She wished that she need never lift her head nor look about again. She wished that when the Irish woman came home she should just step into the little shed and find her dead. What a close little warm sheltered shed it was! All the world outside of it seemed emptied, swept and garnished. She felt as if her life had just been through a "house-cleaning." It was clean and washed, and proper and right, and as it should be, and drearly in order forever. Now it was time to sit down in it.

Sip had what Mr. Mill calls a "large share of human nature," and she loved Dirk, and she led a lonely life. She was neither a heroine, nor a saint, nor a fanatic, sitting out there in the little wood-shed on the chopping-block.

"I don't see why I couldn't have had *that* leasways," she cried between her hands. "I haven't ever had much else. I don't see why *that* should go too."

But she did see. In about ten minutes she saw clearly enough to get up from the chopping-block, and go in and make her cup of tea.