

of labor: yet Fate, the sure-reaping farmer, was this day mercilessly uprooting tares in the good meadow of life.

Whole fields were flaunting with poppies, too gay for sorrow to pass that way; but a blind girl, led by a little child, made a lane through the red luxuriance, hurrying to the place where vanity, and valor, and the remnant of an unfulfilled manhood, lay beaten to death. Destiny, which is stronger than human love or the soul's fidelity, had overmastered self-sacrifice and the heart of woman. This woman had opened her eyes upon the world again, only to find it all night, all strange; she was captive of a great darkness.

As she broke through the hedge of lilacs by the Curé's house, the crowd of awe-stricken people fell back, opening a path for her to the door. She moved as one unconscious of the troubled life and the vibrating world about her.

The hand of the child let her into the chamber of death; the door closed, and she stood motionless.

The Curé made as if to rise and go towards her, but Madame Chalice, sitting sorrowful and dismayed at the foot of the couch, by a motion of her hand, stopped him.

The girl paused a moment, listening. "Monsieur," she said, leaning forward. It was as if a soul leaned out of the casement of life, calling into the dark, and the silence which may not be comprehended by mortal man.