

growl unrebuked at a little girl who did nothing to disturb him. It was curious, the turn that her day-dreams took; for, while she thought of John as a little man, she did not dream that she could become anything but a little girl.

What a wonder to Jane was the first actual sight of the young imaginary giant that had grown up in her thoughts to man's estate. When she said "He is so small," her mother laughed, not knowing the silently cogitated standard of comparison which Jane had erected in her large heart. "And when will he walk? And when will he talk?" Jane was sadly discomposed at the indefinite answers which implied a great, long while away, before her visions of a brother's usefulness could be realized; and she thought within herself that a *little* brother was no such *great* prize after all! She could not see the use of a *boy* baby. Girls might do, for you could "make believe" that they were living dolls. But a boy—a little boy that could neither throw stones, nor crack a whip, that could not talk or walk, or so much as sit alone! She wondered what anybody could want of such a thing!

However, children's disappointments are soon forgotten, and Jane was quite reconciled to the state of affairs, when she was placed at the cradle-head to drive away the flies, and told that she must be sure and not make a noise. She whispered to her dolly, which she had brought along to see the wonderful sight, that it, too, must be quiet, or the nurse would certainly send it down stairs; and, between the care of her doll and her brother, Jane was soberly elated, and quite built up. And, as days passed she became more and more pleased—but a new surprise now awaited her. She observed that her mother and her father did not share her pleasure. There were long-whispered consultations, which she perceived were not intended for her ear, and, therefore, as a well-disciplined child should do, which she avoided. Still was she very anxious to know why father and mother were so sad, and why the baby was so anxiously watched, and why little things were waved before its eyes, by the mother and the nurse, and why at each trial they still turned sadly away, and shook their heads.

The secret, spared to Jane as long as possible, at last reached her ears. The baby brother was blind!

When Jane heard this, her heart was too full of grief to answer a word. She did not lift up her voice in weeping, but crept silently away to her little chamber, and sat down and shut her eyes, to see how it would seem to be all dark and desolate, while the bright sun was covering the hill sides with shadows, and repeating the trees in the sea of green which stretched away, as far as she could see, beneath her window. And she thought how only that very morning, when she was out alone on the honeysuckle porch, she had watched the humming bees from flower to flower, entangling their busy limbs in the blossoms; and the humming birds poising themselves on their wings while their tiny beaks were buried in the flowers, and not a dewdrop was shaken down. The many, many sights which in her little heart she had hoped would wait for John, or come again when he could be carried out to see, she cared for no more. All the world seemed dark to her now; and when she was frightened, and opened her eyes to look, tears dimmed her sight, and she crept into bed, and buried her head, and sobbed.

One by one she pulled apart and overturned all the castles that her fancy had been building. She destroyed all that her fairy thoughts had constructed, and crept into herself, and doubted if God *was* good, as her mother had told her, or could be; since he had given her a baby brother who could be no happiness and no companion for her—who could enjoy no walks, and take no part in her little pleasures. And so she fell asleep.

And in her sleep one thought was still present. She dreamed that she was blind. The terrible calamity of which she had heard, but never met before, fell upon her, and she thought in her dream the sun shone no more, that the green fields, and the bright light, and the gay colors of the flowers, and the hues of the rainbow, all were dark. She thought that her father and her mother had passed out of her sight forever, and that she could no more recollect how they seemed. She screamed in terror, and she thought an angel hand was laid upon her eyes—and she saw again! "O, touch my brother's eyes, too," she said, "that he may see!"