

me to have you value me for it. Let it go, and give me a little chance for the future." He was indeed eager to escape from all that related to that passage of his life, and Helen learned to believe this. At certain moments, he seemed to be suffering from some strange sort of mental stress which he could not explain, but which they both thought must be the habit of anguish formed in his imprisonment on the atoll. It sometimes woke him from his sleep—the burden, but not the drama, of nightmare—a mere formless horror, which they had to shape and recognise for themselves.

It grew less and less as the time passed, and when his orders came to report for duty at Washington, they had strength for the parting. He supposed that he was to be sent to sea again, but he found that he was to be put in charge for the present of the revenue cutter for provisioning the light-houses on the Rhode Island coast; and when removed from this service, he was appointed to a post in the Narragansett Navy Yard. It is there that Helen still finds her home, in a little house overlooking the bay, on the height behind the vast sheds, in which two frigates of obsolete model, begun in Polk's time, are slowly rotting on the stocks, in a sort of emblematic expression of the present formidable character of the American navy.

In the meantime, Fenton is subject to be ordered away at any moment upon other duty; but till his orders come, he rests with Helen in as much happiness as can fall to the share of people in a world of chance and change. The days of their separation have already faded into the incredible past; and if her experience ever had any peculiar significance to her, it is rapidly losing that meaning. She remains limited in her opinions and motives by the accidents of tradition and circumstance that shape us all; at the end she is neither more nor less than a lady, as she was at the beginning. She has acquired no ideals of woman's work or woman's destiny; she is glad to have solved in the old way the problems that once beset her; and in all