

employment. She called on one lady who required an expert dressmaker, and who gave her a few trifling articles at first and paid her promptly. Then came an order for an elaborate gown. The young girl worked feverishly, hastily, well, glad of any labor that would add to their tiny means. The garment was finished, it had been finished two weeks, but the twelve dollars which she was to be paid for its making was still in the lady's possession. The spectre of poverty haunted their threshold, and with it came a more dreadful evil, her mother's increasing weakness.

Truly, as Laura went down those stairs she was nearly distraught. But a glance at the worn Badge, and the thought of her mother's faith nerved her aching-spirit. In spite of herself the words, "God will provide; God's providence is over us, gave her courage. She needed courage, for she was about to do violence to the strongest trait of her nature, her pride.

Never in her life had she thought of being compelled to seek charity, and the knowledge that she meant to do so now stung her to deepest shame. Her heart was sore as she went along the street in the direction of that church which had been her only heaven in this big and cruel city. Her limbs trembled as she stood at the foot of the steps and looked up at the closed doors of the priest's house. Her fingers were clenched, her eyes a little wild. She had come here—to beg!

No tears rose to the surface now, the emotion that burned within her was too intense for weeping. She paused, and held tightly to the narrow iron rail, breath coming fast. She could not! What would they say to her, a stranger? They would say she was an impostor; so many people tried to impose on them.

"God will provide; God's providence is over us." The words echoed in her brain. With a silent prayer she ascended the steps and rang the bell.

"May I see one of the fathers?" she asked, shrinkingly, as the house-keeper opened the door.

"There is no one at home but Father Denton, and he is engaged," said the woman. "What is it, a sick call?"

"A sick call?" replied Laura. "Oh, no, not a sick call. I—"