

It was not the sharp agony that I felt afterwards ; but it was the agony of a living being shut up in a charnel house, with no hopes of escape ; a certainty of living on a certain time and then dying—no hope—no possibility of rescue !

I reached my poor rooms at last ; but the objects were no longer familiar. The man who left it in the morning and the man who entered it at night were two different individuals. Sketches hung round the walls, the half-finished painting stood on the easel ; but they awakened no interest. One great sense of loss overshadowed every other feeling. My heart ached with the bursting sense of love that forever must be kept shut up : that I might live for a year, or live on for ages, and still it would make no difference ; this loss would always overshadow me. I had nothing to work for ; nothing but a low, bestial gratification of hunger—work to put food in my mouth, or clothes on my back ; but the bright future, where I saw myself greeted with acclamation, and walking proudly, with Mary by my side, while crowds pointed me out as the famous artist, all this was destroyed. Then would come a rush of hope. This could not last. Mary would see, on reflection, how wrong she had been ; she would send for me, and all would be made right. She must send ; for had I not sworn never to enter her doors uninvited.

All that night I paced the scant limits of my room. To and fro—to and fro. If I stopped for a minute, my heart felt like bursting, and my head throbbed and grew dizzy ; my own safety lay in action, though it was the fierce stridings of a mad man or a wild beast. What an eternity lay between evening and the next morning, and were all my nights to be like this, I wondered. The street noises grew fainter and fainter, and the silence oppressed me, and seemed to fill the room like a living being, and pressed upon me till I could hardly breathe. Morning came at last, and the stars grew fainter, and a pale blush of blue rose against the darkness, and night gathered up her diamond-spangled train and fled before the pursuit of the coming day !

I longed for the day, yet what did the light bring ? Nothing for me but sorrow—nothing could all the days in the future bring but sorrow and sorrow. How long would I live with my heart racked and my brain disturbed ? Was I dying now, and were the shivers that crept along my nerves premonitory of the approach of dissolution ? I prayed that it might be so ; that in the darkness of the grave I might purchase a little quiet, even at the price of oblivion—yet was it oblivion ? Perhaps I should be as hungry-hearted there as here, with nothing but a great longing for a love that could never be mine ! If youth be hopeful and sanguine, it is also easily depressed, and the sufferings I went through that day aged me more than five years of ordinary life.

Next morning, with, I suppose, the sort of infatuation that is said to compel a murderer to the scene of his crime, and thus revive his fears and horror, I went to Harlington Square, and passed the house. The blinds were all down ; but as it was yet comparatively early, I did not mind ; but when I passed again in the afternoon, after a weary drifting about the streets, trying in vain to lose even for a moment my thoughts in the general stir, and found the house still wrapped in