

hours. The remorseless hammering of the fatal words against my brain makes the tragedy a hoary ancient fact: she hates me—*lo-oathes* me!

Yes, I got up and dressed as usual, and looked out of the window at the landscape, which showed no trace of last night's cataclysm, nothing but indifference to these mere trifling disturbances which afflict mortal mind through imagination carried to excess. I do not say that my outward placidity equalled that of the landscape when I prepared to face Mrs. Biggles, for there were moments when a glance out of the window intensified the poignant sympathy with my condition so much that I became profoundly affected; but I took my place at the breakfast table with wooden stoicism, and to my relief Mrs. Biggles showed no sign of noticing anything unusual. And, strange to say, my whole soul was momentarily wrapped up in anxiety as to the condition of my egg: never had I felt so much depending on the fact of its being overdone, underdone, or in a state of perfection. When I reached forth to grasp it, my hand trembled; when I placed the knife in position for decapitation, it rattled against the shell as if I had the ague.