

Sorrow, poverty, anything for my price! One heart, one man! Make me responsible. I do not believe that anywhere anyone knows better than I know how to love him!"

A passionate protest rose within her—she would not be disdained! Negation was death. It was degradation to her womanhood any longer to accept this annihilation, treason to her truth, to assume indifference!

A woman's love was after all the greatest gift life could offer a man, let her be real as true. While she was woman she asked no more than her husband's love.

She had brushed out her long hair, and it fell cloak-like to her waist. Her hair was her one beauty, and to-night, spite of her suffering, she desired beauty that through it she might be loved. There was the fact of facts—to be loved. Her self-reliance was gone; that pride of reserve, even the sweetness of self-giving, which had sufficed her no more. For one kiss of his, she would have bartered all she had.

An hour passed, and he did not come. A silvery-toned timepiece on the mantleshelf struck one. Clocks of deeper tone echoed the stroke from different parts of the house. The silence and waiting grew intolerable. She could not sleep till she had heard his voice in kindlier tone than his last word to her. She had been angry and disdainful, but she robbed herself when she robbed him of her love. She would use the wife's prerogative, and go to him and ask him what *was* the wall between their lives? Show him how her love had grown, even in its cold shadow! Win him to revoke this decree of alienation.

She trembled as she went softly along the corridor to her husband's study. The servants were in bed, and the lights turned off in the hall and passages, and in the pale moonlight streaming in through the landing window, Caroline looked in her white dressing-gown and flowing hair like a girl-ghost. A crack of light under the study door proclaimed Howard still there. Receiving no answer to her gentle knock, she stood with beating heart, irresolute;

perhaps he was asleep. The house was wrapped in silence; silence deep as death, which fell on the woman like a cold shadow. Shuddering as at the touch of an unseen hand she tried the door handle, with almost a child's panic to get out of the loneliness to the living comfort of a desired presence. The handle gave.

She understood instantly that Howard was in a deep sleep. His head was resting on his arm, his arm upon his writing-table, and the regular breathing of the bowed figure told that his slumber was profound.

There is something sacred in sleep—a shadow of the deeper sacredness of death; something, too, of death's separateness. The soul—the individuality has gone away on a journey of its own, divorced from flesh, free from bond, free from law. The disputed points between one awake and one asleep are in abeyance.

In spite of her craving, the wife could not invade that silence. But she was jealous of the sleep that cut him off from her yearning and sorrowing. Like death, it mocked, and yet, ah! not for always!—there would be another day!

She bent down over him, her brooding tenderness maternal in its care. Her rippling hair fell upon his shoulders. She might have been his guardian angel, come to him in his distress, but like other sleepers he did not see.

As she lifted her head her eyes fell upon Frank's MS. on the desk. At first, in a semi-trance, she stared at the familiar handwriting without attaching any meaning to it. Then her brain acted, intelligence came to her eyes. Yes; this was her brother's work. Still she had no conscious question—no understanding, her glance wandering over the page was suddenly riveted. A sentence seemed to burn out in livid fire. She read the paragraph through. Then drawing herself up to her full height, as though straightening herself up to receive a blow, she looked at the sleeping man, an indescribable expression of dawning terror in her eyes. The hand she put out to