

quietly, and slip into bed, long before the white-robed figure arises from her knees and noiselessly crossing the room, draws up the blind, and standing well back from the window, resting against the wall, gazes up into the great star-strewn vault of heaven. The night is close, and very still. The golden moon of the harvest is shedding the light of her countenance upon this side of the earth with queenly impartiality and shines down upon the throbbing unrest of this marvellous city (putting its myriad gas jets to ignominious shame), and illuminates amongst other things the wonderful face of my strange companion. It is a *beautiful* face, Jean, pure, deep, strong, full of purpose, full of passion; with straight grave brows, firm lips and searching eyes.

She has an impressive individuality. I feel strangely attracted towards her. I sit up in bed, nursing my knees, and watch her.

"What are you thinking of?" I question, almost unconsciously, overpowered with curiosity.

She does not turn her head in answer, of which I am glad, as it would then have been in shadow, and I could not have seen the beautiful light which crept over her face and curved her grave lips into a smile.

"I was thinking of my destiny," she says, slowly; "ten minutes ago I was wondering why I was so poor—so powerless—so destitute. When you spoke I had just evolved an answer."

"Why must you suffer?"

"Why?" she repeats, suddenly, standing erect, and speaking with rapidity, her slight body quivering with emotion, "*because I have a great work to do.* And to conquer, I must suffer—suffer—suffer. One must starve to sympathise with hunger; one must know agony to sympathise with pain, just as one must be *alone*, spurned, ground-down, trampled in the dust, down-trodden, before one can arise and *crush one's enemy.*"

What a volcano! I am electrified.

"Who is your enemy?" I murmur, half afraid.

"Who?" and her face pales with a fine scorn; "my enemies are legion—injustice—cruelty—vanity—hypocrisy—intemperance—lies. My spirit is in sore conflict."

And then she comes softly and seats herself at the foot of my bed and places her hand on mine, a cool and steady hand, and gazes at me long and earnestly.

"We are comrades," she says; "we are in sympathy; *you are a link in the chain of destiny.* I know you by instinct. 'The wheels of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small.' To-morrow your trial will begin. You will need patience; be strong; be vigilant; be silent."

Jean, this woman is doomed to play a great part in the world. I say doomed, because all *real* women suffer a martyrdom who fight against great wrongs.

After which we indulge in mutual confidences. *She* learns that we are rich—*truly* rich, I mean; not only that a big bit of God's beautiful earth somehow happens to be ours, with its hills and dales and fathomless mines, but that Dad is the splendidest, dearest father; that Jean comes next; and that Kate is great and clever, the wife of a Cabinet Minister and a worker for women; that even our dogs and birds and flowers are more perfect and invaluable than those in the possession of other people!

I learn that Lois Carew is an orphan, the only child of a poor physician and his *spirituelle*, half-French wife, a teacher of drawing; in whose veins coursed the same heroic blood as inspired Jeanne Philipon, the great Madame Roland; that she is penniless, dependent, alone, and yet an inspired and intensely powerful being, a *religieuse*, an enthusiast, a leader of women.

The great clock strikes two before I sleep, and at six a.m. I am ruthlessly recalled from the land of dreams; but my first day on duty is worthy of a whole letter in its honour. So adieu, dear Sister.—Your loving  
PHYLLIS.

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