Democratic Watchman.

Bellefonte, Pa., November 1, 1912.

OUT IN THE FIELD.

The little cares that fretted me
I lost them yesterday
Among the fields above the sea,
Among the winds at play;
Among the lowing of the herds.
The rustling of the trees,
Among the singing of the birds,
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what might hap—
I cast them all away
Among the clover-scented grass,
Among the new-mown hay:
Among the husking of the corn,
Where drowsy poppies nod,
Where ill thoughts die and good are born
Out in the fields with God.

—*Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

THE WOMAN IN THE ROOM.

Baring went up the first flight of stairs—the flight with the Brussels runner—and past Mrs. Wheeler's door with its streaming transom light; and up the second flight—the one with the matting; and the third flight, of bare, brutal boards. And there was his own door waiting for him with its eternal, mocking air of: Really, am I the best you can do for yourself?

He unlocked the door with a jab of the key as if he would make that door say something else, if it was only a lonely welcoming to a place where he did not wish to be. The key was not even a latch key—it was a door key, big and long and bent, a dreary implement to an amateur domesticity, an implement which it somehow inexpressibly mortified Baring to chance on among his pocket stuff. As, night after night, it mortified him to go in that lonely room of his.

Therefore, as he entered, he instantly wrapped himself in his groping, indeterminate sense of the Woman. There was no woman; there never had been a woman who really counted; but life pricked and hurt Baring all over and he slipped away from it into a kind of game which was half pretense, half plan; and he played the game every time he came home. It went somewhat like this:

She did not hear his key. Sometimes he actually inserted it softly so that he might surprise her. She was at work in the next room—though, save in the game, there was no next room but that of another lodger; and she came to the doorway, by some chance of her task, and saw that he had come home. And then she cried some glad, surprised word and ran to him—and ran to him—Baring always prolonged that moment. There was something so—prolongable about her hurrying toward him.

Then they sat by the fire, which in reality meant that Baring turned on the heat and absently patted his hands on the top of the radiator. And they talked. Oh, about things which had happened that day in his absence. He never bothered her with business—anyway, he liked to keep his affairs to himself; but she told hers: A man had been there washing windows; she had been shopping in a taxi and he was to like her hat when it came home because it suited his general taste and her special face and did not suit the *hideous* style; and there was in the new magazine a wonderful article about the stars—or the elements—or immortality; and he never could guess what she had made—*made!*—for dessert.

On that he slipped to the mere restful sense of himself and this not-impossible-but-far, far-woman sitting at table together, a table round and small and blurry white, with dainty dishes. She was chief in consciousness, talking, silent, smiling, pretty—Baring was even banal enough to entertain the usual anticipatory figment of some one in hlue, with abundant hair. And always, as he dreamed it, there was that encompassing sense of her being there, a distinct quality of *thereness*, which was like the emotion of being alive. And the whole game was to get for himself this sense of companionship, to feel himself somehow fellowed by her presence, the presence of the woman in the room. Baring, you see, was horribly lonely, and by other means as well, life hurt him and pursued him instead of letting him be the exultant pursuer of life. And the gadflies were of no special species. They were most men's gadflies of a small salary which, however, was steadily growing as he elongated his hours of work, let his soul flow down his arms to his fingers, and pounded away with his hands; and of the ideals which mocked every reality that he had got for himself; and of living alone with a bent key in his pocket while other men were masters in the house of life.

The shutting of a door brought him back. He knew the door—it had helped him before in his dreary play. It was Miss Beacon's door. And sometimes when he heard the scratch of her match or the creak of her window pulleys, he pretended that he had got home first and that now *She* had come in and was moving about that room; and sometimes when he had found the stairway air faintly sweet with orris, he said to himself that *She* had come home before him. Then it was as if a wick had been turned up somewhere and more of something pleasant, like light, had escaped. All this, Baring thought, helped on the game, because Miss Beacon was somebody alive. And that she was on the same floor, alive, was somehow a pale comfort to him whenever, abruptly in the game, he would lose Her—that *Her* of the game, lose her absolutely. She was suddenly simply not there, and he had to face it. Tonight he lost her so and stood staring out the window at the roofs and lights and the interminable vista of other men's homes. And dinner waited down in the corner restaurant where were artificial palms, and a plush rope for a balustrade, and a menu card on which decently cooked dishes were listed at fifteen and twenty cents.

Baring suddenly closed his eyes and made his shoulders high.

"Great heavens!" he said, "I want the stars and the elements and immortality and the dessert she made—*made!*"

He was messing about the papers on his table when some one knocked at his door. This, he thought that he knew, would be one Gilliland, come to talk over with him the inundating possibility that Miss Emily Earl might be in love with him. Even as he was with Miss Emily Earl.

But when Baring opened the door he saw a white muslin apron, which was to him incredibly cloudy and satisfactory and remote from Gilliland. The maid, palpitating a bit from the stair climbing, was the bearer of a note, from that Mrs. Wheeler of the lower story of Brussels-carpeted stairs and over-transom light.

"Will you come down to dine with a little old lady if she owns up that you are a makeshift?" the note said. "I mean that I was to have had two guests, to come an hour ago, and we were going afterward to the opera. But they haven't come, and the roast is such a big, hot, brown-gravy roast. I have caught Miss Beacon on her way up, and she and her mother will be here. Could you join us—nearly right away?"

Baring scrawled a word of acceptance, dressed, left a direction to Gilliland to pick him up at Mrs. Wheeler's, and ran downstairs "nearly right away." Even if he had not heard Miss Beacon's door shut and if the letters under her door had not been missing now, Baring would have known that she had passed through the hall, because of that sweet, uncertain fragrance.

"It smells like orris or iris or Osiris," he said to himself, "and violets on a thousand hills. And some day I shall miss it."

He entered Mrs. Wheeler's sitting room with the pleasure which he always felt in meeting the little, unconventional, mothering creature. But though, between-curtains, stood the waiting table with its yellow dome, and fire of real hearth-wood quickened the air, Mrs. Wheeler was not there at all. And the White Muslin Apron which had admitted him was handing him another note as if it had not left off handing him the first one.

"To Whoever Arrives First," the note was addressed. And,

"My poor friends," it said, "had been somehow stalled on the marshes and they've wired me from Jersey City to meet them at the Metropolitan lobby. What else to do? I dare say they are there even now. I must go, and you three must lay a cover for my sigh and forgive me and dine without me. That roast is—or was—host enough. Dinner is served!"

It was disappointing, partly as Mrs. Wheeler was always in the most unique difficulties, and told about them delightfully. But she had left as host not only the roast but the open fire, and Baring sat before the hearth and, as one who understands open fires, he sank miles and miles in its light and warmth and friendly advancings. He said to himself that it would be pleasant, this dining with Miss Beacon and her mother. For two years he had passed Miss Beacon on the stair, mechanically noted her presences and absences, vaguely become used to her being there. He was always indefinitely glad when he heard her come in, half aggrieved if she was several days away, in that inevitable and pathetic and half-unrecognized relation of all fellow-lodgers. Then there were those weeks of an illness of his, when she and her mother had brought in jelly and bouillon and had read to him. But he had been too sick then even to pretend. And though he would have missed Miss Beacon if she had moved away, missed her involuntary co-operation in the game, missed that odor of orris, yet when he had thought about her at all, his thought had usually slipped along to something else and had not *caught*. As it slipped along now to the satisfied consciousness that the evening would somehow be very good.

He rose at the touch of the bell and stood before the fire as Anna Beacon came in. Something in her hair was sparkling, and this indeterminately pleased Baring. So did this meeting with her in a domain of evening and leisure and a pretty gown, rather than in one of bare stairs and thick boots and haste. So did her momentary shyness please him. And she was alone.

"Miss Beacon," he said, "do I impress you as any kind of host?"

"You. . . ." said Anne Beacon only; and Baring wondered vaguely whether that meant very-much-Yes or only-a-little-No.

He gave her Mrs. Wheeler's note and watched her while she read it. He was glad that she did not look up, startled, with an exclamation and parted lips and tilted brows. He disliked women who prettily go off like that merely because a situation suggests it. The soft glowing of her face Baring laid to the firelight as she gave him back the note and looked down at the red log.

"I accepted for my mother," she said, "and when I got upstairs I found that she had been called over to New Jersey."

Baring, murmuring something, still watched her. He had sometimes said to Gilliland that the way in which a woman receives an inescapable, unconventional moment is that woman. Anne, through a barely perceptible interval, was still looking at the red log when the White Muslin Apron announced dinner—in the well-trained tone of a short, straight line.

"Shall we go in?" Baring asked quietly.

"I think we may as well," said Anne Beacon.

She was quite perfect, Baring thought; and yet as they sat at table, round and small and a thing of white and of dainty dishes—Baring was conscious of a definite feeling of homesickness. Homesickness, so to say, that she was not some one else. Baring had no idea whom he wanted her to be. He only knew that he wanted the woman, the one with whom he ought to be sitting there *in earnest*, the one whose presence was an outline in his consciousness and never, never had been properly filled in. And for him the moment had suddenly the tragic significance of all moments which seem right and fair and potential, save only that the one who shares them is simply—not the one.

He did not deliberately plan to pretend. Somehow, the pretending began itself. He found himself slipping easily into a make-believe that this moment, which men without number were having in earnest, was his as it was theirs; that this was not a dinner, but *dinner*; that this was home. Momentarily, his consciousness of Anne Beacon's presence merged in that vague, cherished outline, and for one fleet instant the boy knew what that hour might be.

In his silence Anne spoke gravely, yet with a lightness which did not mask her quite attractive embarrassment.

"What kind of day was today to you?" she asked; "has it been behaving?"

"It has not," Baring replied simply. "It has been a sort of brute day. A regular tooth-and-claw day. A day," he added, as if he were dumping it, bound, at her feet, "that has been a-lashing of its tail ever since 9 a. m."

"They do that sometimes," she accepted this. "I think maybe Time just storms now and then on its own account. Why shouldn't there be time-storms just as well as sky-storms?"

"Well, that was the way with today—*my* today," Baring agreed. "What did you do?" he asked, and laughed a little and added: "Did you shop?"

"I believe I did," she admitted.

"In a taxi?" he wanted to know—just for the little joke-with-himself of asking it.

"They don't let taxis in the shops," she told him merrily, "and for that reason I always walk. *Why*—if you don't mind?"

"I rather thought you shopped," Baring explained himself luminously. "What else did you do?"

Ever so briefly her look questioned him, her face glowing a little in the warm light of the dome. And while she answered her look still questioned him.

"I did what ten thousand or so other fourth-floor lodgers did today," she said. "I sat curled up in a cold dining room full of furniture while the woman swept the sitting room. Then I dusted it and tried to change things round, though there is nothing to change and no room to change it in if there were. At noon Mrs. Wheeler let me help her a little. Then I washed some lace, and took back a library book that was overdue, and shopped for something I decided not to buy, and looked in a window for a long time at some orchids, and made a call, and came home tired to death. And now is now."

Baring nodded. "Was it the right kind of call?" he inquired briefly. This was it—this was the way *She* would be telling him of her day.

"The call," Anne went on, "was on a woman in Pearl Street. Yes, Pearl. On the fifth floor. Her husband is a helpless cripple. There are six children. The woman scrubs offices from six o'clock at night until three or so in the morning. By daylight she washes clothes—and carries the water by the pailful up the five flights of stairs. She has lived downtown since she was seven years old and she has never been above Twenty-third Street. Do you see what that means? I mean the little, commonplace things she has never done, and seen: she has never been in a carriage. She has never had a hothouse flower—or smelled fragrance—or seen a jewel—or a woman's beautiful gown—or a wild animal—or the park. It's quite true. I saw her and talked with her."

Baring looked down at Anne.

"Good Lord," he said, "those things—"

"Don't they?" she answered.

"I had a little girl with me," Anne went on after their silence. "She had on a white cloth cloak, and the woman knew she was lovely and tried to say so. But all she could say was: 'Ain't the little thing clean? Ain't she *clean?*' To be clean was the chief ideal and absolutely the only beauty she knew. *Doesn't* that make one—"

"I know, I know," said Baring.

Anne looked at him meditatively.

"I was afraid," she told him, "that you might tell me that I ought not to go round to these places!"

"Heaven forbid," said Baring. "I'm not much good, but I *am* alive. There was a little girl in our office today," he added, "the door boy's little girl. He is forty and he has tuberculosis. He took her round to all of us, and he apologized and made her shake hanks with us and do some nice little things she does. When she had gone he came to each one of us and told us why he had had her down. He hoped that one of us might adopt her so that he could know she had a home before—"

"Oh—" said Anne, "isn't that—"

"*Isn't* it?" said Baring.

They looked at each other across the blur of white and of dainty dishes, and for a moment their eyes clung, merely as if one person alive had met another person alive in a vast, otherwise manless waste; merely as if, to each, the fact of the other being there was a fine, incomprehensible thing to be hugged, with all the intricate waste as a dim background. But to Anne, as she looked at him, the background was one of the cheery, leaping, homey hearth; and to him, as he looked, the background was a window, and the black-windowed vista of other men's homes.

Presently the White Muslin Apron brought in the desert. It was a delicious dessert, all feathery yellow dressing, on a creamy, fruity surprise within. And as Anne Beacon served it, a welcome sense of well-being came flower-like from soil of a long and lonely preparedness and filled Baring's consciousness, and he sat watching the little ornament shine in her hair and watching her hands that looked firm and warm and—busy; and he was thinking about nothing at all. It is well known that a man has to be very well content to achieve thinking about nothing at all.

"Mrs. Wheeler's maid," said Anne, "is going back to Sweden to be married. She told me all about it while I was in the kitchen this morning. She said she didn't believe she would be any happier on her death bed, when heaven sets in."

Baring smiled and nodded. "Go on," he commanded.

Anne laughed out. "You said that," she told him, "just the way you used to say it when I was reading to you when you were sick."

Baring looked startled. "I didn't order you around, did I?" he asked horrified.

She nodded, so that the little star in her hair glowed and twinkled, and whatever was the recollection of having been ordered about by Baring, one would not have said that she had greatly minded.

"Hasn't anybody ever told you," she went on, "what a bad invalid you make?"

"Nobody ever came so near taking care of me," he said, "as you did when you read to me those days. You tell me."

"Never!" she assured him, "I shall not *Tell* you. Except that one day you were so cross to me that mother and I had to look out the window at a parade to laugh."

"Good heavens!" said Baring contritely.

"And when I stopped reading you always said 'Go on,' without looking at me. *Without looking at me.*"

"What a brute a man is when he is sick," said Baring solemnly. But he was thinking: "What an everlasting pity that I was too sick to pretend."

"Brute a little and boy a good deal," Anne admitted gravely. "But I should loathe a polite man-invalid."

"Really I'm no boy-brute," said Baring, with such momentary grieved melancholy that she laughed.

The talk went on, but now Baring was not thinking of his own part in it. That she had cared for him that time had come like a sudden link between them. He looked past Anne at the uncurtained window—a vast living picture of roofs and lights and black sky, and within the frame, beating and pulsing and *being*, was the life of which they had talked: The life where women care for men who are ill, where both go without things, struggle, love children, fight death, crave life, hold out their hands to one another. As he looked, it seemed to Baring that abruptly Anne had flowered from the great window of the city, like some one who had begun to be—This was the same stretch of roof on which he looked down from the window of his lonely room. There were the yellow-lighted panes which he fancied looked from some man's dining room, the ground glass of a hall door behind which lay some man's welcome, the cheery, common-place of lights in the upper windows, and all just as he saw them from his little window in the midst of his dreary game. And suddenly he sank back into the present with a good sense of warmth, of realization, of not being alone. And at that, Baring stared over at Anna Beacon. Why, he said incoherently to himself, she was making a kind of *thereness*——

On this high moment Gilliland arrived, and so did coffee. Gilliland was short, with a little head, so that his appearance was irresistibly triangular. To-night he was, in addition, radiant.

"How nicely like Mrs. Wheeler," Gilliland commented when he had heard, "how deliciously, extravagantly like her. Wasn't it?"

When Miss Beacon had poured the coffee she rose.

"Now," she said, "I'm going to leave you two. I shall sit up for my mother, and I shall write five hundred letters. And when Mrs. Wheeler comes, perhaps you will all come up for a sandwich."

Baring took her to the door. As she went beside him through the shadow-haunted, fire-lit room, he caught again that fragrance of "violets on a thousand hills," and he turned to look down at her in something like astonishment. To that sweetness of odor which he had long caught on stair and hall, had known that some day he should miss, he preceived now that he bore a certain time, he identified Anne herself. He looked down at her—slight, white thing moving beside him, talking, silent, smiling, pretty—and he felt a sudden, overruling satisfaction in the mere fact that she was there.

Because he wished that she were not going, and because he cast indefinitely about for some way to keep her for a moment, he said the first thing which occurred to him and the last thing which he had expected to say:

"You didn't happen," he put it almost wistfully, "to buy a hat today, did you?"

She disclaimed it merrily enough, but with the restful absence of bewilderment at any irrelevance which is the soul of the most intimate talk.

"This isn't my new hat year," she told him.

"I almost wish you *had* bought a hat," said Baring—but now the little joke-with-himself was less a joke than before. "A woman," he explained impromptu, "is never so much a woman as when she is describing the pursuit of her latest hat."

"All my hats—I mean, both my hats are early. Early Renaissance," she informed him gaily from the stair.

Baring turned back to the firelit, haunted room. And about the emptiness of the room there overswept him a certain, dreary sense of familiarity—as if it were his own empty room in the moment of his losing Her—the *Her* of the game—losing her absolutely. And presently, when he did not come back to the dining room, Gilliland came in and found him by the open fire, staring down miles into it past the red log.

"You didn't drink your coffee," said Gilliland.

"I don't want it," said Baring. "Bring yours in here."

"I don't want it," said Gilliland. "Baring, old man, I'm engaged."

Baring looked at him with new interest.

"Splendid," he said with enthusiasm. "It's Miss Earl, of course?"

"It is," said Gilliland reverently, "and the curious thing about it is, Baring, that it always was Miss Earl."

He sat by the fire and looked solemnly at Baring.

"Baring," he said, "Emily Earl is the one woman in this whole world for me. I know it now. If I hadn't met her—just think, Baring, of the chances I ran of not meeting her!—if I hadn't met her I should never have looked at any woman. It was planned for us somewhere—back and back and back. It *had* to be. I believe," said Gilliland modestly, "that I'm the one man in this universe for her."

Baring listened.

"Baring," said Gilliland, "now that we have found each other, it makes me shudder to think how easily we might have missed each other. I met her at my aunt's in Rio. And my uncle *nearly* moved to Montclair instead of to Rio. Isn't it wonderful that out of the whole, wide world we two should have got to Rio, and have met?"

Baring listened.

"Baring," said Gilliland, "we're going to have a little home. We've got the house—it's on Wood Walk Street—don't that sound like a home? Yes, sir. 19 Wood Street, there in Rio. Oh, Baring, it makes me wild to earn money. To fix up the little place. To get her the things she wants. To bring to lay a little by. To think ahead to the time——"

While he listened, Baring looked in the fire, miles down, and for a flash, and remotely, he understood Gilliland, and something about other men and, last of all, about himself.

"Gilliland," he said to him in the first pause, "suppose your uncle had't moved to Rio. Suppose he had moved to Montclair?"

"It was fate," said Gilliland with simplicity.

"I remember you told me at the time," said Baring brutally, "that it was so your aunt could be near a special hay-fever doctor."

Gilliland, who had risen to take leave, looked at him doubtfully, and past him to the great window toward the city with its lights of homes—and homes—and homes.

"I'm blessed if I understand life," said Gilliland gloomily. "I wish I did. But there's one thing I know, Baring," cried the little man. "When I'm with Emily Earl I feel as if something that had meant to be all along, is. I feel as if something big that was planned somewhere away off, had come true. And I bet it has—I bet it has!"

"God bless you, Gilliland," said Baring. "I bet so too."

When Gilliland had gone, Baring walked to the window and looked deep, deep down the way that it opened. Down the way that reaches round the world, roofs, and lights, and homes where men care for women and women for men, where both go without things, plan things for each other, struggle, love children, fight death, crave life, hold out their hands to one another. *Hold out their hands to one another.* That was it. Waiting for no impossible standard to be fulfilled, obeying the dominant seeking, the sharp need to be near an understanding heart; obeying the dominant urge toward others who are seeking too. That woman who climbed all those stairs and had never seen all those things—that man who was trying to make a home for his child so that he could seek his grave in peace—the very White Muslin Apron going to Sweden to her lover—yes, and Gilliland, who was blindly obeying the call and trying to make more money to buy things for Emily Earl and to lay a little by for the time when—Oh, they all knew, they all knew the big, vital things. All save himself, playing his little game by his lonely window and—Anne Beacon, doing the dreary things which a fourth-floor woman lodger does when that floor is not a home *in earnest*. Suddenly Baring saw his own loneliness as speech within him, trying to say all this. The roofs and the lights there were calling, bidding him to be of them. And here he was, waiting for the woman who now hung bodiless in space, an outline of pale blue with abundant hair, and held him bound, pretending his little game. Why, he was every bit as bad as Gilliland, with his talk about fate. *What if any one of many women could fill in that indeterminate outline which he had made?*

When at last he heard Mrs. Wheeler's ring, he met her at the door and hardly heard her pretty apologies.

"*Was* the roast spoiled?" she wanted to know. "And I could have wept in the cab when I thought of the dessert. *Wasn't* it too bad about Mrs. Beacon? She came in with me just now and I've asked her and Anne to come down for some scraps. And we're all going to get supper."

Baring, who had settled before the fire opposite Mrs. Wheeler, sprang to his feet.

"I'll go and fetch them," said he.

"Tell them to hurry!" Mrs. Wheeler admonished. "There are cold roast beef and some of Anne's dessert and all the properties of a debauch——"

Baring turned in the doorway.

"*Whose* dessert?" he demanded.

"Yes, Anne. Mercy, how abrupt you are," said Mrs. Wheeler. "She came down and made it for me this noon. You had it for dinner, I know it was good."

Baring looked down at the figures of the rug and smiled—and smiled.

"A dessert she made—*made!* he said inanely.

"Wasn't it good?" Mrs. Wheeler persisted.

"It was," said Baring, and closed the door. "*It was!*" he repeated as he raced up the length of matting and the bare, brutal boards.

The Beacons' door stood open, and at his knock Anne, who was in the room alone, turned from the window. And it was a window like Baring's and like those of Mrs. Wheeler's looking to that same big vista of city lights and roofs.

Baring strode across the floor.

"Anne Beacon," he said, "I want to tell you something I know."

She glanced up at him—a slight, white thing, with the star shining in her hair, and behind her the great tapestry of night and the world.

"You—look as you looked when you were cross—when I read to you," she said uncertainly.

"A kind of boy and a kind of brute," Baring put in. "That's it. You'll think so more than ever when I've done. But you've *got* to hear. Because I've had it all wrong. I've always thought there was somewhere a woman—the one woman you understand, living and waiting around for me. Well, I don't believe it. I believe she—the woman—might be one of a good many women—and that any one of them I might have wanted to be with always if I had happened to meet her first, see her often, and all that. But it happens that of them all I've met only you. I know now there must be others—I know it. Why, a man's got to know it if he thinks at all. But I've met you first. And you will be the only one—ever—if you want to be. Does that mean anything to you? Do you want to be told—like that? Will you be the one?"

She put up her hand; and she said quite the last thing that Baring had expected.

"Don't!" she said. "It's—it's *telling.*"

"Telling?" Baring repeated stupidly.

"Other men don't tell," Anne said. "Some of them must know. Lots must know. But they all make the woman think it never could have been anybody else. Maybe sometimes—it couldn't. But your saying it out is like—like being disloyal to the way the world has agreed on."

He stared down at her in the grip of his bewilderment. She knew! *Do* women know then—he wondered gropingly. Do they know, all the time, and just try not to believe?

"You know it is so—" he tried to say.

"Yes," she answered, "I do know. I don't think a woman ought to know—*unless* it can make her do her part, make her keep the man loving her, make her keep herself the one woman, because in her place there might so easily have been another—or another—or another. Oh, I mean it doesn't matter whether a man makes his whole ideal his wife. But it matters everything whether his wife can make herself his ideal. What does it matter what woman it is who—is the one—so long as she can make him happy and help him to do their share?"

Baring stretched out his hands.

"It would be you—that way—with me," he said.

He could see the star in her hair shining as if it were one with the stars in the huge, dark beyond.

"I would like to be the one—to you," she answered.

But when he would not have let her talk, she drew away from him with a great, new glow in her face. As if, in the surprise of it all to them both, door lay beyond door, and there were yet one more to be unlocked.

"There is something else," she said. "More—more than we've said. More than that."

He waited, expecting any new marvel. "I mean," said Anne Beacon," "would you mind very much—if it was that way with me, too? The way we said? Would you mind very much if I knew that if I hadn't met you, it might—some time—have been somebody else—who *wasn't* you?"

If daylight had streamed from the heavens it could not so essentially have altered the aspect of things for Baring. Within what had been warm presence and fellowing and infinite prophecy, and an honesty which was like the wings of a great wind to carry life, here was something chill and sinister, abruptly alienating him from all that he thought he had. And yet, why not? Why should he not face this as truth, too, and know himself for one of many men who might have won her?

"Would you understand—would you?" she asked again. "You see the other so clearly—and I do. I do, and I accept it. Haven't we both got to make the best of it all—see that for us both it is chance, and each be glad and grateful for the chance"

But Baring, looking past her at the window of homes, stood silent, his arms by his sides. Ausurdly enough, Gilliland's words—at which Baring had smiled—came back to him and besieged him with meaning: "I believe that I am the only man in the universe for Emily Earl." And Baring's heart gave a great, surprising, sickening throb of understanding, of homesickness for *Her*—for the woman in the room to whom he would have been the only one—the only one, as he had always been to Her the only one in his dreary little game.

Then, amazingly, Anne Beacon laughed. And it was a good little laugh, a glad laugh, a laugh that had in it a kind of pride and triumph, and a tenderness that went to Baring's head as nothing in the game had ever done. Before he could speak she came to him, had his face in her hands.

"Oh, you mind!" she cried. "You dear, you would!"

Baring looked down at her, and looked. And she met his eyes in the pride and the humility of the thing that she knew.

"But you ought to mind," she said. "I wouldn't love you if you didn't mind. *And it isn't true.* From the days when you were sick and I came to read to you, I've loved you. I loved the boy in you—and the big, dear man in you. And you've got to know it as I know it, and believe it, because there isn't anything truer—that it could never, never have been anybody else in this world, only you—you—*you!*"—By Zona Dale, in *The American Magazine.*

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN

DAILY THOUGHT.

It is better that our griefs should not spread far. —*George Elliot.*

The exceeding thinness and flimsiness of the upper portion of the blouses or bodices belonging to smart three-piece costumes doubtless has much to do with the raising of the coat protection across the chest, says a New York *Sun* writer. There are many frocks built up almost entirely of thick, soft, fleecy woolen material, frocks that seem altogether too warm for any indoor wear, but the frock of the three-piece costume—which in such case is really a two-piece costume—is usually of exceeding thinness in the upper part of the bodice.

Sometimes the whole bodice is thin and the sheer stuff even runs down into the skirt; but more often the skirt material runs up into the bodice in some fashion. Separate blouses are not endorsed by most of the French designers, though several of the great houses show a few delightful blouses, but that does not affect the fact that the practical costume blouse will be worn by a majority of womankind.

There are some pretttier blouses in crepe and soft silk than there have been in recent years, but the chiffon blouse matching the costume is still very popular. In its best form this fall it is likely to have long sleeves and some sort of full length trimming or a little waistcoat arrangement instead of the transparent guimpe and cross-trimmed front, but there are plenty of models in the latter type, too.

One house that always carries particularly chic and exclusive blouses for semi-tailored wear has an uncommonly pretty model in chiffon. It is rather severe in line, pin tucked vertically by hand in groups of eight tucks. The long sleeve is just a little full with a pin tucked wrist band and has one wide group of pin tucks down its outer side.

The blouse opens in front and has a narrow full length waistcoat of white satin buttoning with little white satin buttons and practically covered, save in glimpses, by little frills of narrow lace—a frill set under each side of the chiffon front and falling forward over the waistcoat. Edging each side of the chiffon front and heading the narrow lace frills is a very narrow band of fur. The blouse is collarless, but the narrow fur finishes the neck at the base of the throat and a transparent guimpe collar can of course be worn with it.

Blouses with the upper part in broche crepe and the lower part of the suit material and with a little line of fur defining the union of the two are good looking, and there are numerous pretty simple blouses entirely of broche crepe or satin.

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Though fullness is being introduced by Parisians, even to the paneling of tailor gowns, it is never at any time to the destruction of the slim outline, from which for the psesent, at least, we have no inclination to depart. To achieve the effects which are dernier cri the dressmaker or the tailor must be an artist, but the result is wholly charming when it is well done.

Take, for instance, the pleated skirt, which is being made by tailors both in fine and heavy materials. The pleats are so small, so flat, so closely stitched around the hips, and such flare as they have around the foot is so tightly pressed and lies so flatly that the figure remains straight, while it is svelte and graceful and cunningly expressive of the influences.

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In a house of dignified colonial or Georgian style, but modern build, the entrance hall is nearly square with northern lighting, and continues in a long passage through the lower floor, affording a glimpse of the garden through the French window at the other end. Throughout, the walls are covered with grass cloth in a deep warm yellow. The ceiling is white plaster, stippled, the narrow moulding and other woodwork white enamel and the doors mahogany.

The floor is stained mahogany also with one exquisite Persian rug in blue and yellow in the front hall, and a narrow deep blue carpet in the passages. There is the usual fan light above the door, and the narrow windows at either side have straight curtains of white net. The stairs face the door, low and broad, with mahogany treads and hand rail and white rises and banisters. On the landing is a tall old mahogany clock and a small oriental rug.

A mahogany gate-legged table against the wall below the stairs, facing the entrance, holds a pou-pourri jar of blue Chinese ware, a Sheffield plate tray and above hangs a black-framed silhouette. Beside them is a rush-seated antique mahogany chair. To the right of these is the door to the rest of the hall, with straight portiers of sapphire blue velvet.

At the right of the entrance hangs an antique mirror with a quaint picture in the upper part, beneath it a tall blue jar for umbrellas. Opposite hangs a dark old family portrait.

In the corner on the left is a simple straight costumer matching the rest of the furniture. The artificial light comes apparently through candles in an old-fashioned chandelier, bright with glass. Nothing in this hall is ordinary or obvious and it is very lovely.—*The Modern Priscilla.*

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