

**Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep.**

In the quiet nursery chamber,  
Snowy pillows yet unpressed;  
See the form of the little boy,  
Kneeling, white-robed, for their rest;  
All in quiet nursery chambers,  
While the dusky shadows creep,  
Hear the voices of the children,  
"Now I lay me down to sleep."  
In the meadows and the mountains  
Calmly shine the winter stars,  
And across the glistening landscape  
Slants the moonbeams' silver bars—  
In the silence and the darkness,  
Darkness growing still more deep,  
Listen to the little children,  
Praying God their souls to keep.  
"If we die"—so pray the children,  
And the mother's head drops low;  
(One from down the purple distance  
Deep beneath the winter's snow.)  
"Take our souls" and part the cement  
Flits a gleam of crystal light,  
Like the trailing of his garments,  
Walking evermore in white.  
Little souls that stand expectant,  
Listening at the gates of life;  
Hearing far away the murmur  
Of the tumult and the strife.  
We who fight beneath those banners,  
Meeting ranks of foeman there,  
Find a deeper, broader meaning  
In your simple vesper prayer.  
When your hands shall grasp this standard  
Which to-day you watch from far,  
When your deeds shall shape the conflict  
In this universal war,  
Pray to Him, the God of battles,  
Whose strong eye can never sleep,  
In the warring of temptation,  
Firm and true your souls to keep.  
When the combat ends, and slowly  
Clears the smoke from out the skies,  
Then far down the purple distance  
All the noise of battle dies.  
When the last night's solemn shadows  
Settle down on you and me,  
May the love that never fades  
Take our souls eternally.

**JOSEPH'S CHRISTMAS.**

It was very strange, thought old Joseph Golding, that he couldn't be master of his own mind. He had lived a great many years, and neither remorse nor memory had ever been in the habit of disturbing him; but now it seemed to him as if the very foundations of his life were breaking up. He was well through with his day's work—he had dined comfortably—he sat in an easy chair in a luxurious drawing room, whose crimson hangings shut out the still cold of the December afternoon—he had nothing to do but to enjoy himself. Mr. Golding liked to enjoy himself at this season as much as others did, for it was Christmas Eve. What though he was in the habit of spending it solitarily?—he liked solitude.  
For many a year on Christmas Eve he had sat balancing in his mind the great accounts presented in his ledger, the accumulating coffers at his banker's, the strokes of business he would make in future. Not so now. The year was drawing to a close; some intruding voice kept whispering that in like manner so was his career. He could not put it from him, try as he would. The voice reminded him of a coming time when his life's work would be all done—even as his day's work was done now—when he would be ready to sit down in the evening and look over the balance-sheet of his deeds, good and evil. Curiously the old days came trooping in slow procession before him. And he had been able to forget them for so very long!  
His dead wife. He had not loved her much when she was with him, but how vivid was his memory of her now! He could see her moving round the house, noiseless as a shadow, never intruding in him after he had once or twice repulsed her gruffly, but going on her own meek, still ways, with her face growing whiter every day. He began to understand, as he looked back, why her strength had failed; and she had been ready, when her baby came, to float out on the tide and let it drift her into God's haven. She had had enough to eat and drink, but he saw now that he had left her heart to starve. Heavens; what a hard man he had been! He seemed to see her white, still face, as he looked at it the last time, with the dumb reproach frozen on it; the eyes that would never plead vainly any more, closed for ever.  
He recalled how passionately the three-days-old baby had cried in another room just at that moment, moving all the people gathered together for the funeral with a thrill of pity for the poor little motherless morsel. She was a passionate, willful baby, all through her babyhood; he remembered that. She wanted—missed without knowing what she lacked—the love and sustenance which her mother would have given her and protested against fate with all the might of her infant lungs. But as soon as she grew old enough to understand how useless it was, she had grown quiet, too; just like her mother. He recalled her all through her girlhood, a shy, still girl, always obedient and submissive, but never drawing very near him. Why? Because he would have repulsed her as he repulsed her mother. He could see it now. It was very strange these facts should come back to him to-day, and their naked truth with them. He had been a cold, hard, ungenial man, without sympathy for any one human being; absorbed utterly in the pursuit of money-making. And so the child, Amy, had grown up without him.  
But suddenly, when she was eighteen, the old, passionate spirit that had made her cry so when a baby must have awakened again, he thought; for she fell in love then, and wished to marry. To marry in defiance of his wishes. He remembered her standing proudly before him after one of their quarrels, where she had been harsh and bitter, and abus-

ive of the man she wanted to call husband. She had borne in silence reproach of herself, but not of him who had become to her as her best existence. Her words came back to the old man now.  
"Father, do you know anything against Harry Church?"  
"Yes," he had answered, wrathfully; "I know that he is a poor man, and that he cannot keep a wife as a daughter of mine must be kept."  
"Anything else, father?" looking him steadily in the eye.  
"No, that's enough," he had thundered. "I'll tell you, besides, that if you marry him my doors will never open to you again, never."  
He met with a will as strong as his own, that time. She did marry him, and went away with him from her father's house. Mr. Golding had known the day the wedding was to take place, and disdained to stop it. He washed his hands of Harry Church, and of Amy, his wife. She wrote home afterwards, over and over again, but Mr. Golding sent all the letters back unopened. Subsequent to that, they disappeared from town; and he had never heard what became of them. It was at least ten years ago now.  
It seemed very strange that these things should have come back to-night to haunt him—and with a wild remorse, a pitying regret. He had done nothing to recall them. Could it be his sense of failing health that brought them?—if so, what sort of anguish might he not look for as he drew nearer and nearer to the end? He began to wish that he knew what had been in those rejected letters—whether Amy had been suffering for anything that money could supply. The next thought that struck him was, why he had opposed the marriage so virulently. It is true Harry Church had been but a clerk in his own employ; but he was a well-educated gentleman, and would rise with time. Faithful, intelligent, persevering, respected—but poor! In that last word lay the head and front of Harry Church's offending. He, Joseph Golding, was rich then; he was far richer now; but he could not help asking it, what special good were his riches bringing him? He was an old man, the span of life running quickly on, and he was all alone. Who would take his gold then? He could not carry it along with him. All in a moment—he saw it clearly—the dreadful truth stood naked and bare: his life and its object had been mistaken ones.  
"All alone! all alone!" he kept saying to himself, in a sort of vague self-pity. "I've toiled and worked for nothing!"  
But during this time, even now, as he sat there, a message of love was on its way to him. Perhaps Heaven had but been preparing his heart to receive it.  
He heard a ring at the door-bell. Heard it without paying attention to it. Rings were nothing to him; people did not come on business to his residence, and of visitors he expected none. Down went his head lower and lower with its weight of thought.  
Meanwhile two people were admitted into the hall below; a man and a little girl. The man took off the child's warm cloak and hood, and she stood revealed: a dainty, delicate creature of some eight years old; her golden curls drooping softly round her face, with its large blue eyes and its cherry lips. The servant who admitted them, not knowing what to make of this, called Mr. Golding's housekeeper, old Mrs. Osgood. The latter went into a tremor as she came forward and look at the face.  
"It's Miss Amy's child!" she exclaimed to the man, nervously. "I couldn't mistake the likeness."  
"Miss Amy's that was," he answered. "Mrs. Harry Church she has been this many a year."  
"I know. It's as much as my place is worth to admit any child of hers."  
"You are Mrs. Osgood," exclaimed the little girl. "Mamma said I should be sure to see you."  
"Hear the blessed lamb! And so she remembers me."  
"She talks of you often; she says you were always kind to her; nobody but you loved her."  
"Well, I did love her. The old house has never been the same since she went out of it. What's your name, my pretty one?"  
"Amy."  
"Amy!" repeated the housekeeper, lifting up her hands, as if there were some wonder in it.  
"And mamma said you would let me go up alone to grandpapa."  
"And so you shall," decided Mrs. Osgood, after a minute's hesitation. "I won't stand in the way of it, let master be as angry with me as he will. He is up in the drawing room, all by himself."  
The man sat down to wait. And the child went up alone.  
Opening the door, she went softly in, not speaking, perhaps the stern-looking old man, sitting there with bent head, awed her to silence. Joseph Golding, waking up from his deep reverie, saw a letter held out to him. He took it mechanically, supposing its messenger, hidden behind his large chair, was

one of his servants. With a singular quickening of pulse, he recognized his daughter's writing.  
She had waited all these silent years, she told him, being determined never to write to him again until they were rich enough for him to know that she did not write from any need of his help. They had passed ten years in the West, and Heaven had prospered them. Her husband was a rich man now, and she wanted from her father only his love—wanted only, that death should not come between them, and either of them go to her mother's side without having been reconciled to the other.  
"How did this come here?—who brought it?" demanded Mr. Golding, in his usual imperious manner.  
"I did, grandpapa."  
He sprang up at the soft, timid voice, as if some fright took him, and stared at the lovely vision, standing there like a spirit on his hearthstone, with her white face and her gleaming golden hair. Was it real? Where was he? Who could the child be? But, as he looked, the likeness flashed upon him—and he grew hungry to clasp her to him. It was the little Amy of the old days grown into beauty—for Amy had never been so wondrously fair as this.  
"Come here, my child; don't be afraid. Tell me what your name is?"  
"Amy, grandpapa."  
Another Amy! Grandpapa! He felt the sob rising up in his heart with a great flood of emotion; but he choked them back.  
"What have they told you about me?" he rejoined, after a long pause. "Have they bid you hate me?"  
"They always told me that you were far away toward where the sun rose; and if I were good they would bring me to see you some day. Every night I say in my prayers, 'God bless papa and mamma, and God bless grandpapa.'"  
"Why didn't they bring you? What made them let you come alone?"  
"Mamma sent me with John to give you the letter," was the simple answer. "The carriage is at the gate waiting for me."  
"Who is John?"  
"Papa's servant."  
"And—where are they staying?"  
"At the hotel. We only got here this morning."  
Mrs. Osgood, hovering in the hall, looked on in wonder. Her master was coming down stairs, calling for his hat and coat, and leading the child. He got into the carriage with her and it drove away. Mr. Golding was wondering vaguely whether it was real.  
They arrived at last, and the child led him in, opening a door at the end of a long corridor. She spoke cheerfully.  
"Mamma, here's grandpapa. He said he would come back with me."  
Mr. Golding's head went off in a swim. Advancing weakness tells upon people in such moments as these. He sat down; and there were Amy's arms—his own Amy's—about his neck. Which of the two sobbed the most, could not be told. Why had he never known what he lost through all those vanished years?  
"Father, are we reconciled at last?"  
"I don't know, my daughter, until you tell me it you forgive me."  
"There should be no talk about forgiveness," she said. "You went according to your own opinion of what was right. And perhaps I was to blame, too. Father, it is enough that God has brought us together again in peace. I thought that no one could resist my little Amy, least of all, her grandpapa."  
He looked up. The child stood by, silently; the frelight glittering on her golden hair, her face shining strangely sweet. He put out his arms and drew her into them, close—where no child, not even his own, had ever nestled before. Oh how much he had missed in life—he knew it now. He felt her clinging hold round his neck—her kisses dropped upon his face like the pitying dew from heaven; and he—was it himself, or another in his place?  
"Father, see."  
Amy's voice had a full, cheerful ring in it. Her married life had been happy. Mr. Golding turned at the call.  
"Here are Harry and the boys waiting to speak to you," she said, in a less assured tone.  
He shook his son-in-law's hand heartily. Old feuds, old things, were over now, and all was become new. In his heart, he had always liked Harry Church. Then he looked at the two boys, brave, merry little fellows, of whom he might be proud.  
Explanations ensued. Fortune had favored Mr. Church; they had come back for good, and were already looking out for a house.  
"No house but mine," interrupted Joseph Golding. "It will want a tenant when I am gone. You must come home to-morrow."  
"To-morrow will be Christmas Day," said his daughter, doubtfully.  
"All the better. If Christmas was never kept in my house, it shall be now. I shall not live to see another, Amy."  
She looked up at the changed, thin face, and could not contradict him.

Some one, going to the Western home had told them how Joseph Golding was breaking; the news had caused them to return prematurely. Amy said to her husband that if her father died, unreconciled to her, she should be full of remorse forever.  
"You will come home to-morrow, all of you," repeated Mr. Golding. "And mind, Amy, you do not go away again."  
"But—if the children should be too much for you, father!"  
"When they are, I'll tell you, he said, with a touch of the former gruffness. "The old house is large enough."  
He went out and found his way to the shops—open to the last on Christmas Eve—looking for Christmas gifts. New work for him!—but he entered into it earnestly. Perambulating the streets like a bewildered Santa Claus, he went home laden with books and toys, and jewels, and bonbons. Mrs. Osgood lifted her hands, and thought the end of the world must be coming.  
"Help me to put these things away, Mrs. Osgood. Don't stare as if you were moonstruck. And look here—there'll be company to dinner to-morrow. Mind you send in a good one."  
"The best that ever was seen on a table,—if it's for them I think it is for."  
"Well, it is. Miss Amy's coming home again."  
"Heaven be praised, sir! The house has been a dull one since she left it."  
"They are all coming. And they will not go away again, Mrs. Osgood. If you want more servants, you can get them."  
"It's the best Christmas greeting you could have given me, master."  
And they came. Amy and Amy's husband and the pretty boys were there; and, best of all, the sweet little girl with the golden hair, sitting next to grandpapa. It was too happy a party for loud mirth. And among them Joseph Golding saw, or fancied he saw, another face, over which, almost thirty years ago, he had watched the grave sod piled—a face sad and wistful no longer, but bright with a strange glory. Close by him she seemed to stand; and he heard, or fancied that he heard, a whisper from her parted lips, though it might have come only from his own heart:  
"Peace on earth and good will toward men."  
Six Inches of String.  
AN INVENTION TO WOMEN WHICH MADE TWO FORTUNES.  
"You see that large factory? It covers the entire block. Half a million of money wouldn't buy it. Well, it was built by a little piece of cord not more than six inches long." Here the speaker paused and scrutinized the reporter's countenance for indications of incredulity, not to astonishment. But the narrator was talking to a man, who, since the introduction of the telephone, has made it a point of principle to be ready for anything and to believe all that he hears. The speaker added: "Eight years ago there lived on the west side, in the third story of a cheap tenement, down near the North river, a poor mechanic, who was kept poor because he had a passion for inventing; it amounted to a passion. He didn't drink and didn't travel with the politicians; and all who knew his family wondered why they should be so poor. But at last he perfected an invention—the simplest thing on earth—and with his patent in his hand he went down-town one day, and called for the head of a house whose check was current for five figures anywhere in 'the street.' The inventor offered to sell two-thirds of his patent for \$20,000 if the house would bind itself to put \$100,000 into factories for producing the little thing that he had invented. The firm signed papers in less than an hour from the time of hearing the proposal, and in another hour the inventor had converted the firm's check for \$20,000 into greenbacks. Lots were bought and a factory was erected. The business speedily grew to gigantic proportions and at length the firm acquired all the rest of the block and covered it with brick and mortar, and now the inventor is able to associate with the millionaires. The little glove fastener—a piece of cord about six inches long and a dozen little metal hooks or buttons—is the thing that was invented."  
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