

you don't mind if I try while I'm here talking. . . It sort of steadies my nerves to have my fingers going."

"No," said Mary Heckscher slowly, "I don't mind." She seated herself before the dressing-table, and as she felt the girl's slim fingers at work among her loosened tresses her sense of bewilderment increased.

Miss Stannard was not long silent. "You must have thought it was awful queer my coming to you to-night," she began presently, placing a hair-pin to her liking and drawing back to admire the effect; "but to tell you the truth I felt as if I wanted to ask somebody's advice, and you're not a bit like madam and the rest." She jerked her head to indicate the members of the household down-stairs, and Mary smiled. "The truth of the matter is," Emily's mouth was full of pins, and her cheeks were suddenly crimson, "my friend and I have had trouble, and I don't know what to do about it, and I thought—"

"Your friend?" Miss Heckscher repeated. "You don't mean—"

Emily moved away impatiently. "My gentleman friend, of course! You needn't pretend to be so slow, and I thought you would help me; but if—" The girl's voice broke, and the tears were near the surface again.

Mary Heckscher put out an impulsive hand. "My dear, I didn't mean to be unsympathetic. Those old exercises must have made me stupid; but if you'll be a little patient with me, I'll do my best to understand, and help if I can," and Emily, completely mollified, went on with her story.

"I haven't seen him for two weeks," she said quaveringly, "and it wasn't all my fault, really; but I'd meet him half-way if I only knew how to go about it, and when madam told that story to-night I just thought perhaps there might be something in that mind-influence business. Then you said what you did, and it kind of choked me off. I knew if I told madam she would stuff me full—she believes in all that kind of thing. And maybe it is fake; but—ay, Miss Heckscher, do you think there'd be any chance if I did as madam said and willed it—willed it real hard—that Ted would try to make up with me?"

Mary Heckscher looked ahead at the face reflected in the glass over the dressing-table. It was a face she seemed to know, and yet it had an oddly unfamiliar look. She saw puffs and waves of shining brown hair where usually there were smooth bands; she saw a tinge of pink in cheeks that were accustomed to be sallow; and an erstwhile listless mouth had taken on a new curve of interest and sympathy. Was it her own voice she heard saying:

"I never really thought there was anything in it before, Miss Stannard; but madam seemed so positive that she was almost convincing, and you know she has lived a great deal longer than either you or I. Suppose you try. It won't do any harm and it might do some good."

"Do you really think so?" Emily laid down the brush and stood off to get a better view of her handiwork. "Your hair is grand that way," she said enthusiastically. "Your best fellow wouldn't know you, and he'd fall in love all over again. Let me fix that piece on the side once—there, that's better. And you don't think it would be silly, Miss Heckscher? You think I might try?" She paused half-way across the room.

Mary nodded. "Yes, I think you might try," she said, her eye still on the mirror.

"Madam said it was best after you'd gone to bed and everything was quiet." Emily's hand was on the door-knob, her eyes were big and luminous. "She said you must put everything out of your mind and just lie still, and by and by you could fix your thoughts on—on the thing you wanted to, and it would come—perhaps not at first, but after awhile. Thank you ever so much for advising me, Miss Heckscher, and good-night!"

Long after the girl had left her Mary lay on her narrow bed, wide awake, her body motionless, her eyes fixed on a spot of the wall-paper, upon which the electric light from the street, straying through a torn spot in the curtain, played fantastically, her mind running back ten, nearly eleven, years to the summer before she went to Miss Rokind's. The nearest approach to a romance that had ever come

into her life had blossomed that summer, and that last night under the apple-trees she thought John Winston was beginning to care a little. He was going away the next day, and he wanted to write to her if—she would let him. She blushed now as she remembered her whispered assent—and—and that was all. The letter never came, though she had watched the mails, she was startled when she recalled how eagerly, and then she came to the city, buried herself in her teaching, and forgot all about it.

She had not thought of John in ages. It must have been Emily, with her lover's quarrel and her attempts at hair-dressing, that had brought him to her mind. John once told her she had pretty hair. She remembered that too now. She wondered how Emily's plan for healing her quarrel would turn out. She wondered, if she willed it, if she could find the explanation of the non-arrival of that letter. She wondered if— Here she sat up suddenly in bed and stared hard at the flickering spot of light.

"No one will ever know," she whispered, "and as I told Emily, there is no harm in trying. Perhaps I may find out why." She lay down again, and closed her eyes.

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"I was down at the post-office yesterday afternoon," it was Mrs. Lester who spoke, stopping between her words with maddening deliberation, as she filled the coffee-cups at the eight o'clock breakfast one morning two weeks later, "and I happened to look through the list of unclaimed letters. There was one for you, Miss Heckscher. I thought maybe you'd like to know."

"For me?" Miss Heckscher's eyes came back from the window, through which she had been watching the February snow-storm, a bright spot glowing in either cheek. "It must have been another Miss Heckscher. I haven't many correspondents."

"It was Miss Mary Heckscher all right." Miss Lester placidly stirred her coffee. "I'd look it up if I were you—it might be a valentine." She laughed good-naturedly.

"A valentine?" Miss Heckscher repeated the words as she stepped out into the snowy street. She said them again now and then to herself in the busy morning hours. It was valentine day—the pupils' desks were heaped with mysterious-looking envelopes; there was a temporary post-office established in the upper school-room—and she had never had a valentine in all the thirty years of her life. Perhaps Mrs. Lester was right, and this was one. At any rate she would go and see.

For the first time in years she watched the clock-

### IN THE MIRROR

By Clinton Scollard

I may not pluck the morn-gold daffodil  
To picture her the glory of her hair;  
I may not quote the thrush-note debonair  
And thus reveal her voice's lyric thrill.  
The sky confines no azure to my will  
That I may show to her how deep and fair  
Her eyes gleam, and the shell withholds its share  
Of colors that her cheek's soft contours fill.

Hence am I poor in all things visible  
That mirror her perfection; poor indeed  
In heart-revealing words—the grace thereof;  
I who so much in winning wise would tell,  
In my extremity, my soul's sore need,  
Can only iterate: I love! I love!

### MY VALENTINE--By Grace G. Wiederseim

