

be through. The assistant had talked to her a little while, but he had seemed strange today, distant and cool as he used to in the fall. And she remembered with a pang that this was the last time. She worked away doggedly at her last experiment trying to keep her mind down to chlorine gas. But somehow she was slow. Other students were locking their desks and filing down to the assistant to hand in joyfully their last papers. Jean worked at the hood that opened through into the Sophomore's laboratory. Two students were talking just around in the other room. Almost before she knew it Jean was listening.

"I expect to be assistant myself next year."

"Why, is Hilton going away?"

"Going to Germany to study, so I hear."

"Bad luck to Germany!"

"And good luck to this University!"

The words were spoken vehemently.

"You seem to think he's better across the ocean."

"Well, he's no credit to this university; I know that. No decent girl ought to be allowed to speak to him."

Jean moved slowly back to her desk. What had she heard, she asked herself with trembling lips.

The voices on the other side of the hood went on.

"They say he is not so wild as he was a year ago. He fired the tongs that used to hang around his room. He's strong enough to right about if he wants to."

Then sarcastically; "It's a curiosity, if he wants to."

But Jean did not hear this. She bent over her desk and laid her face on her arm. She must never speak to him again. If she could only hate him as she had at first. How glad she was now that school was nearly out and that he was going away. She felt a numbness creeping into her brain and roused herself, remembering where she was.

"I must finish my work," she told herself stupidly and folded up her papers, unfinished as they were, to hand in. A few minutes at her desk and she was almost ready to go. She looked around her for a moment fearfully. The rest were all gone. She heard the rustle of papers at the assistant's desk down by the door. She must go down there and hand in her papers. Could she? But she must

The assistant saw her coming. He too had noticed that the rest were all gone. How tired she looked, and worn. He noticed the nerveless droop of her white eyelids and the motionless curve of her white cheek. It had been a hard year for her. He longed to take her and rest her head over his heart. But he was not wise enough.

He took the papers from her still fingers. These were the last of her papers. His eyes were steadfastly on her face.

"I go tomorrow," he said quietly. "I will not wait for commencement. Did you know? It will be three years. I may not come for a longer time."

Other words trembled on his lips. He saw Jean raise her eyelids for a moment and drop them again. He could not read what her eyes said. Her words he could not mistake.

"I hope you will not come—for a long, long time—forever."

She swayed dizzily but before he could speak she was gone.

He half stepped to follow her. Then he shut his teeth. What had she meant? His own thoughts answered themselves. He saw her snatch back her hand from him again all blistered. She had shrunk from him now as she had before that day in the fall.

And she thought, poor child, that she had done what was for the best; that sometime, perhaps, she would be glad.

ANNIE PREY.

A Question.

Am I selfish, hard of heart?
Tell me how to gain the art
Of soft speech I do not feel.

My own brother went away;
I was not moved.
My wedded sister left our home;
I did not care.
Father, careworn, gone a year, returned;
I was not glad:
My mother smiled through happy tears;
My heart was cold.
My girlhood friend, Luella, died;
I did not mourn.

John's letter did not come to-day;
The burning tears came to my eyes:
Am I selfish, hard of heart?

ALASKA.