

CHAPTER VII

MY first quarter at Lowood seemed an age; and not the golden age either; it comprised an irksome struggle with difficulties in habituating myself to new rules and unwonted tasks. The fear of failure in these points harassed me worse than the physical hardships of my lot; though these were no trifles.

During January, February, and part of March, the deep snows, and, after their melting, the almost impassable roads, prevented our stirring beyond the garden walls, except to go to church; but within these limits we had to pass an hour every day in the open air. Our clothing was insufficient to protect us from the severe cold: we had no boots, the snow got into our shoes and melted there: our ungloved hands became numbed and covered with chilblains, as were our feet: I remember well the distracting irritation I endured from this cause every evening, when my feet inflamed; and the torture of thrusting the swelled, raw, and stiff toes into my shoes in the morning. Then the scanty supply of food was distressing: with the keen appetites of growing children, we had scarcely sufficient to keep alive a delicate invalid. From this deficiency of nourishment resulted an abuse, which pressed hardly on the younger pupils: whenever the famished great girls had an opportunity, they would coax or menace the little ones out of their portion. Many a time I have shared between two claimants the precious morsel of brown bread distributed at teatime; and after relinquishing to a third half the contents of my mug of coffee, I have swallowed the remainder with an accompaniment of secret tears, forced from me by the exigency of hunger.

Sundays were dreary days in that wintry season. We had to walk two miles to Brocklebridge Church, where our patron officiated. We set out cold, we arrived at church colder: during the morning service we became almost paralysed. It was too far to return to dinner, and an allowance of cold meat and bread, in the same penurious proportion observed in our ordinary meals, was served round between the services.

At the close of the afternoon service we returned by an exposed and hilly road, where the bitter winter wind, blowing over a range of snowy summits to the north, almost flayed the skin from our faces.

I can remember Miss Temple walking lightly and rapidly along our drooping line, her plaid cloak, which the frosty wind fluttered, gathered close about her, and encouraging us, by precept and example, to keep up our spirits, and march forward, as she said, 'like stalwart soldiers.' The other teachers, poor things, were generally themselves too much dejected to attempt the task of cheering others.

How we longed for the light and heat of a blazing fire when we got back! But, to the little ones at least, this was denied: each hearth in the schoolroom was immediately surrounded by a double row of great girls, and behind them the younger children crouched in groups, wrapping their starved arms in their pinafores.

A little solace came at tea-time, in the shape of a double ration of bread- a whole, instead of a half,

slice- with the delicious addition of a thin scrape of butter: it was the hebdomadal treat to which we all looked forward from Sabbath to Sabbath. I generally contrived to reserve a moiety of this bounteous repast for myself; but the remainder I was invariably obliged to part with.

The Sunday evening was spent in repeating, by heart, the Church Catechism, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St. Matthew; and in listening to a long sermon, read by Miss Miller, whose irrepressible yawns attested her weariness. A frequent interlude of these performances was the enactment of the part of Eutychus by some half-dozen of little girls, who, overpowered with sleep, would fall down, if not out of the third loft, yet off the fourth form, and be taken up half dead. The remedy was, to thrust them forward into the centre of the schoolroom, and oblige them to stand there till the sermon was finished. Sometimes their feet failed them, and they sank together in a heap; they were then propped up with the monitors' high stools.

I have not yet alluded to the visits of Mr. Brocklehurst; and indeed that gentleman was from home during the greater part of the first month after my arrival; perhaps prolonging his stay with his friend the archdeacon: his absence was a relief to me. I need not say that I had my own reasons for dreading his coming: but come he did at last.

One afternoon (I had then been three weeks at Lowood), as I was sitting with a slate in my hand, puzzling over a sum in long division, my eyes, raised in abstraction to the window, caught sight of a figure just passing: I recognised almost instinctively that gaunt outline; and when, two minutes after, all the school, teachers included, rose en masse, it was not necessary for me to look up in order to ascertain whose entrance they thus greeted. A long stride measured the schoolroom, and presently beside Miss Temple, who herself had risen, stood the same black column which had frowned on me so ominously from the hearthrug of Gateshead. I now glanced sideways at this piece of architecture. Yes, I was right: it was Mr. Brocklehurst, buttoned up in a surtout, and looking longer, narrower, and more rigid than ever.

I had my own reasons for being dismayed at this apparition; too well I remembered the perfidious hints given by Mrs. Reed about my disposition, etc.; the promise pledged by Mr. Brocklehurst to apprise Miss Temple and the teachers of my vicious nature. All along I had been dreading the fulfilment of this promise,- I had been looking out daily for the 'Coming Man,' whose information respecting my past life and conversation was to brand me as a bad child for ever: now there he was.

He stood at Miss Temple's side; he was speaking low in her ear: I did not doubt he was making disclosures of my villainy; and I watched her eye with painful anxiety, expecting every moment to see its dark orb turn on me a glance of repugnance and contempt. I listened too; and as I happened to be seated quite at the top of the room, I caught most of what he said: its import relieved me from immediate apprehension.

'I suppose, Miss Temple, the thread I bought at Lowton will do; it struck me that it would be just of the quality for the calico chemises, and I sorted the needles to match. You may tell Miss Smith that I forgot to make a memorandum of the darning needles, but she shall have some papers sent in next week; and she is not, on any account, to give out more than one at a time to each pupil: if they have

more, they are apt to be careless and lose them. And, O ma'am! I wish the woollen stockings were better looked to!- when I was here last, I went into the kitchen-garden and examined the clothes drying on the line; there was a quantity of black hose in a very bad state of repair: from the size of the holes in them I was sure they had not been well mended from time to time.' He paused.

'Your directions shall be attended to, sir,' said Miss Temple. 'And, ma'am,' he continued, 'the laundress tells me some of the girls have two clean tuckers in the week: it is too much; the rules limit them to one.'

'I think I can explain that circumstance, sir. Agnes and Catherine Johnstone were invited to take tea with some friends at Lowton last Thursday, and I gave them leave to put on clean tuckers for the occasion.'

Mr. Brocklehurst nodded.

'Well, for once it may pass; but please not to let the circumstance occur too often. And there is another thing which surprised me; I find, in settling accounts with the housekeeper, that a lunch, consisting of bread and cheese, has twice been served out to the girls during the past fortnight. How is this? I looked over the regulations, and I find no such meal as lunch mentioned. Who introduced this innovation? and by what authority?'

'I must be responsible for the circumstance, sir,' replied Miss Temple: 'the breakfast was so ill prepared that the pupils could not possibly eat it; and I dared not allow them to remain fasting till dinner-time.'

'Madam, allow me an instant. You are aware that my plan in bringing up these girls is, not to accustom them to habits of luxury and indulgence, but to render them hardy, patient, self-denying. Should any little accidental disappointment of the appetite occur, such as the spoiling of a meal, the under or the over dressing of a dish, the incident ought not to be neutralised by replacing with something more delicate the comfort lost, thus pampering the body and obviating the aim of this institution; it ought to be improved to the spiritual edification of the pupils, by encouraging them to evince fortitude under the temporary privation. A brief address on those occasions would not be mistimed, wherein a judicious instructor would take the opportunity of referring to the sufferings of the primitive Christians; to the torments of martyrs; to the exhortations of our blessed Lord Himself, calling upon His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him; to His warnings that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; to His divine consolations, "If ye suffer hunger or thirst for My sake, happy are ye." Oh, madam, when you put bread and cheese, instead of burnt porridge, into these children's mouths, you may indeed feed their vile bodies, but you little think how you starve their immortal souls!'

Mr. Brocklehurst again paused- perhaps overcome by his feelings. Miss Temple had looked down when he first began to speak to her; but she now gazed straight before her, and her face, naturally pale as marble, appeared to be assuming also the coldness and fixity of that material; especially her mouth, closed as if it would have required a sculptor's chisel to open it, and her brow settled

gradually into petrified severity.

Meantime, Mr. Brocklehurst, standing on the hearth with his hands behind his back, majestically surveyed the whole school. Suddenly his eye gave a blink, as if it had met something that either dazzled or shocked its pupil; turning, he said in more rapid accents than he had hitherto used-

'Miss Temple, Miss Temple, what- what is that girl with curled hair? Red hair, ma'am, curled-curl'd all over?' And extending his cane he pointed to the awful object, his hand shaking as he did so.

'It is Julia Severn,' replied Miss Temple, very quietly.

'Julia Severn, ma'am! And why has she, or any other, curled hair? Why, in defiance of every precept and principle of this house, does she conform to the world so openly- here in an evangelical, charitable establishment- as to wear her hair one mass of curls?'

'Julia's hair curls naturally,' returned Miss Temple, still more quietly.

'Naturally! Yes, but we are not to conform to nature; I wish these girls to be the children of Grace: and why that abundance? I have again and again intimated that I desire the hair to be arranged closely, modestly, plainly. Miss Temple, that girl's hair must be cut off entirely; I will send a barber tomorrow: and I see others who have far too much of the excrescence- that tall girl, tell her to turn round. Tell all the first form to rise up and direct their faces to the wall.'

Miss Temple passed her handkerchief over her lips, as if to smooth away the involuntary smile that curled them; she gave the order, however, and when the first class could take in what was required of them, they obeyed. Leaning a little back on my bench, I could see the looks and grimaces with which they commented on this manoeuvre: it was a pity Mr. Brocklehurst could not see them too; he would perhaps have felt that, whatever he might do with the outside of the cup and platter, the inside was further beyond his interference than he imagined.

He scrutinised the reverse of these living medals some five minutes, then pronounced sentence. These words fell like the knell of doom-

'All those top-knots must be cut off.'

Miss Temple seemed to remonstrate.

'Madam,' he pursued, 'I have a Master to serve whose kingdom is not of this world: my mission is to mortify in these girls the lusts of the flesh; to teach them to clothe themselves with shame-facedness and sobriety, not with braided hair and costly apparel; and each of the young persons before us has a string of hair twisted in plaits which vanity itself might have woven; these, I repeat, must be cut off; think of the time wasted, of-' Mr. Brocklehurst was here interrupted: three other visitors, ladies, now entered the room. They ought to have come a little sooner to have heard his

lecture on dress, for they were splendidly attired in velvet, silk, and furs. The two younger of the trio (fine girls of sixteen and seventeen) had grey beaver hats, then in fashion, shaded with ostrich plumes, and from under the brim of this graceful head-dress fell a profusion of light tresses, elaborately curled; the elder lady was enveloped in a costly velvet shawl, trimmed with ermine, and she wore a false front of French curls.

These ladies were deferentially received by Miss Temple, as Mrs. and the Misses Brocklehurst, and conducted to seats of honour at the top of the room. It seems they had come in the carriage with their reverend relative, and had been conducting a rummaging scrutiny of the room upstairs, while he transacted business with the housekeeper, questioned the laundress, and lectured the superintendent. They now proceeded to address divers remarks and reproofs to Miss Smith, who was charged with the care of the linen and the inspection of the dormitories: but I had no time to listen to what they said; other matters called off and enchained my attention.

Hitherto, while gathering up the discourse of Mr. Brocklehurst and Miss Temple, I had not, at the same time, neglected precautions to secure my personal safety; which I thought would be effected, if I could only elude observation. To this end, I had sat well back on the form, and while seeming to be busy with my sum, had held my slate in such a manner as to conceal my face: I might have escaped notice, had not my treacherous slate somehow happened to slip from my hand, and falling with an obtrusive crash, directly drawn every eye upon me; I knew it was all over now, and, as I stooped to pick up the two fragments of slate, I rallied my forces for the worst. It came.

'A careless girl!' said Mr. Brocklehurst, and immediately after- 'It is the new pupil, I perceive.' And before I could draw breath, 'I must not forget I have a word to say respecting her.' Then aloud: how loud it seemed to me! 'Let the child who broke her slate come forward!'

Of my own accord I could not have stirred; I was paralysed: but the two great girls who sat on each side of me, set me on my legs and pushed me towards the dread judge, and then Miss Temple gently assisted me to his very feet, and I caught her whispered counsel-

'Don't be afraid, Jane, I saw it was an accident; you shall not be punished.' The kind whisper went to my heart like a dagger.

'Another minute, and she will despise me for a hypocrite,' thought I; and an impulse of fury against Reed, Brocklehurst, and Co. bounded in my pulses at the conviction. I was no Helen Burns.

'Fetch that stool,' said Mr. Brocklehurst, pointing to a very high one from which a monitor had just risen: it was brought. 'Place the child upon it.'

And I was placed there, by whom I don't know: I was in no condition to note particulars; I was only aware that they had hoisted me up to the height of Mr. Brocklehurst's nose, that he was within a yard of me, and that a spread of shot orange and purple silk pelisses and a cloud of silvery plumage extended and waved below me.

Mr. Brocklehurst hemmed.

'Ladies,' said he, turning to his family, 'Miss Temple, teachers, and children, you all see this girl?'

Of course they did; for I felt their eyes directed like burning-glasses against my scorched skin.

'You see she is yet young; you observe she possesses the ordinary form of childhood; God has graciously given her the shape that He has given to all of us; no signal deformity points her out as a marked character. Who would think that the Evil One had already found a servant and agent in her? Yet such, I grieve to say, is the case.'

A pause- in which I began to steady the palsy of my nerves, and to feel that the Rubicon was passed; and that the trial, no longer to be shirked, must be firmly sustained.

'My dear children,' pursued the black marble clergyman, with pathos, 'this is a sad, a melancholy occasion; for it becomes my duty to warn you, that this girl, who might be one of God's own lambs, is a little castaway: not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien. You must be on your guard against her; you must shun her example; if necessary, avoid her company, exclude her from your sports, and shut her out from your converse. Teachers, you must watch her: keep your eyes on her movements, weigh well her words, scrutinise her actions, punish her body to save her soul: if, indeed, such salvation be possible, for (my tongue falters while I tell it) this girl, this child, the native of a Christian land, worse than many a little heathen who says its prayers to Brahma and kneels before Juggernaut- this girl is- a liar!'

Now came a pause of ten minutes, during which I, by this time in perfect possession of my wits, observed all the female Brocklehursts produce their pocket-handkerchiefs and apply them to their optics, while the elderly lady swayed herself to and fro, and the two younger ones whispered, 'How shocking!'

Mr. Brocklehurst resumed.

'This I learned from her benefactress; from the pious and charitable lady who adopted her in her orphan state, reared her as her own daughter, and whose kindness, whose generosity the unhappy girl repaid by an ingratitude so bad, so dreadful, that at last her excellent patroness was obliged to separate her from her own young ones, fearful lest her vicious example should contaminate their purity: she has sent her here to be healed, even as the Jews of old sent their diseased to the troubled pool of Bethesda; and, teachers, superintendent, I beg of you not to allow the waters to stagnate round her.'

With this sublime conclusion, Mr. Brocklehurst adjusted the top button of his surtout, muttered something to his family, who rose, bowed to Miss Temple, and then all the great people sailed in state from the room. Turning at the door, my judge said- 'Let her stand half an hour longer on that stool, and let no one speak to her during the remainder of the day.'

There was I, then, mounted aloft; I, who had said I could not bear the shame of standing on my natural feet in the middle of the room, was now exposed to general view on a pedestal of infamy. What my sensations were, no language can describe; but just as they all rose, stifling my breath and constricting my throat, a girl came up and passed me: in passing, she lifted her eyes. What a strange light inspired them! What an extraordinary sensation that ray sent through me! How the new feeling bore me up! It was as if a martyr, a hero, had passed a slave or victim, and imparted strength in the transit. I mastered the rising hysteria, lifted up my head, and took a firm stand on the stool. Helen Burns asked some slight questions about her work of Miss Smith, was chidden for the triviality of the inquiry, returned to her place, and smiled at me as she again went by. What a smile! I remember it now, and I know that it was the effluence of fine intellect, of true courage; it lit up her marked lineaments, her thin face, her sunken grey eye, like a reflection from the aspect of an angel. Yet at that moment Helen Burns wore on her arm 'the untidy badge;' scarcely an hour ago I had heard her condemned by Miss Scatcherd to a dinner of bread and water on the morrow because she had blotted an exercise in copying it out. Such is the imperfect nature of man! such spots are there on the disc of the clearest planet; and eyes like Miss Scatcherd's can only see those minute defects, and are blind to the full brightness of the orb.

### 第七章

在罗沃德度过的一个季度，仿佛是一个时代，而且并不是黄金时代。我得经历一场恼人的搏斗，来克服困难，适应新的规矩和不熟悉的工作。我担心这方面出错。为此所受的折磨，甚过于我命里注定肉体上要承受的艰苦，虽说艰苦也并不是小事。

在一月、二月和三月的部分日子里，由于厚厚的积雪，以及化雪后道路几乎不通，我们的活动除了去教堂，便被困在花园的围墙之内了。但就在这个牢笼内，每天仍得在户外度过一小时。我们的衣服不足以御寒。大家没有靴子，雪灌进了鞋子，并在里面融化。我们没有手套，手都冻僵了，像脚上一样，长满了冻疮。每晚我的双脚红肿，早上又得把肿胀、疼痛和僵硬的脚趾伸进鞋子，一时痛痒难熬，至今记忆犹新。食品供应不足也令人沮丧，这些孩子都正是长身体的年纪，胃口很好，而吃的东西却难以养活一个虚弱的病人。营养缺乏带来了不良习气，这可苦了年纪较小的学生。饥肠辘辘的大龄女生一有机会，便连哄带吓，从幼小学生的份里弄到点吃的。有很多回，我在吃茶点时把那一口宝贵的黑面包分给两位讨食者，而把半杯咖啡给了第三位，自己便狼吞虎咽地把剩下的吃掉，一面因为饿得发慌而暗暗落泪。

冬季的星期日沉闷乏味。我们得走上两里路，到保护人所主持的布罗克布里奇教堂去。出发的时候很冷，到达的时刻就更冷了。早祷时我们几乎都已冻僵，这儿离校太远，不能回去吃饭，两次祷告之间便吃一份冷肉和面包，份量也跟平时的饭食一样，少得可怜。

下午的祷告结束以后，我们沿着一条无遮无拦的山路回校。刺骨的寒风，吹过大雪覆盖的山峰，刮向北边来，几乎要从我们的脸上刮去一层皮。

我至今仍然记得，坦普尔小姐轻快地走在我们萎靡不振的队伍旁边，寒风吹得她的花呢斗篷紧贴在身上。她一面训导，一面以身作则，鼓励我们振作精神，照她所说的，“像不屈不挠

的战士”那样奋勇前进。可怜的其他教师，大都自己也十分颓丧，更不想为别人鼓劲了。

回校以后，我们多么渴望熊熊炉火发出的光和热！但至少对年幼学生来说，并没有这福份。教室里的每个壁炉立刻被两排大姑娘围住，小一点的孩子只好成群蹲在她们身后，用围涎裹着冻僵了的胳膊。

吃茶点时，我们才得到些许安慰，发给了双份面包——一整片而不是半片——附加薄薄一层可口的黄油，这是一周一次的享受，一个安息日复一个安息日，大家都翘首企盼着。通常我只能把这美餐的一部分留给自己，其余的便总是不得不分给别人。

星期天晚上我们要背诵教堂的教义问答和《马太福音》的第五、六、七章，还要听米勒小姐冗长的讲道，她禁不住哈欠连天，证明她也倦了。在这些表演中间，经常有一个插曲，六、七个小姑娘总要扮演犹推古的角色，她们因为困倦不堪，虽然不是从三楼上而是从第四排长凳上摔下来，扶起来时也已经半死了。补救办法是把她们硬塞到教室的中间，迫使她们一直站着，直至讲道结束。有时她们的双脚不听使唤，瘫下来缩作一团，于是便不得不用班长的高凳把她们支撑起来。

我还没有提到布罗克赫斯特先生的造访，其实这位先生在我抵达后第一个月的大部分日子里，都不在家，也许他在朋友副主教那里多逗留了些时间。他不在倒使我松了口气，不必说我自有怕他来的理由，但他终究还是来了。

一天下午（那时我到罗沃德已经三星期了），我手里拿了块写字板坐着，正为长除法中的一个总数发窘，眼睛呆呆地望着窗外，看到有一个人影闪过。我几乎本能地认出了这瘦瘦的轮廓。因此两分钟后，整个学校的人，包括教师在内都全体起立时，我没有必要抬起头来后过究竟，便知道他们在迎接谁进屋了。这人大步流星走进教室。眨眼之间，在早已起立的坦普尔小姐身边，便竖起了同一根黑色大柱，就是这根柱子曾在盖茨黑德的壁炉地毯上不祥地对我皱过眉。这时我侧目瞟了一眼这个建筑物。对，我没有看错，就是那个布罗克赫斯特先生，穿着紧身长外衣，扣紧了钮扣，看上去越发修长、狭窄和刻板了。

见到这个幽灵，我有理由感到丧气。我记得清清楚楚，里德太太曾恶意地暗示过我的品行等等，布罗克赫斯特先生曾答应把我的恶劣本性告诉坦普尔小姐和教师们。我一直害怕这一诺言会得到实现——每天都提防着这个“行将到来的人”。他的谈话和对我往事的透露，会使我一辈子落下个坏孩子的恶名，而现在他终于来了。他站在坦普尔小姐身旁，跟她在小声耳语。毫无疑问他在说我坏话，我急切而痛苦地注视着她的目光，无时无刻不期待着她乌黑的眸子转向我，投来厌恶与蔑视的一瞥。我也细听着，因为碰巧坐在最靠房子头上的地方，所以他说的话，一大半都听得见。谈话的内容消除了我眼前的忧虑。

“坦普尔小姐，我想在洛顿买的线是管用的，质地正适合做白布衬衣用，我还挑选了同它相配的针。请你告诉史密斯小姐，我忘掉了买织补针的事。不过下星期我会派人送些纸来，给每个学生的一次不得超过一张，给多了，她们容易粗枝大叶，把它们弄丢了。啊，小姐！但愿你们的羊毛袜子能照看得好些！上次我来这里的时候到菜园子里转了一下，仔细瞧了瞧晾在绳子上的衣服，看见有不少黑色长袜都该补了，从破洞的大小来看，肯定一次次都没有好好修补。”



他顿了一下。

“你的指示一定执行，先生，”坦普尔小姐说。

“还有，小姐，”他继续说下去，“洗衣女工告诉我，有些姑娘一周用两块清洁的领布。这太多了，按规定，限制在一块。”

“我想这件事我可以解释一下，先生。上星期四，艾格妮丝和凯瑟琳·约翰斯通应朋友邀请，上洛顿去用茶点，我允许她们在这种场合戴上干净的领布。”

布罗克赫斯特先生点了点头。

“好吧，这一次就算了，但是请不要让这种情况经常发生。还有另一件事也叫我吃惊，我跟管家结帐，发现上两个星期，两次给姑娘们供应了点心，吃了面包奶酪，这是怎么回事？我查了一下规定，没有发现里面提到过点心之类的饭食。是谁搞的改革？又得到了谁的批准？”

“我必须对这一情况负责，先生，”坦普尔小姐回答说。“早饭烧得很糟糕，学生们都咽不下去。我不敢让她们一直饿看肚子到吃中饭。”

“小姐，请允许我说上片刻——你该清楚，我培养这些姑娘，不是打算让她们养成娇奢纵欲的习惯，而是使她们刻苦耐劳，善于忍耐，严于克己，要是偶尔有不合胃口的小事发生，譬如一顿饭烧坏了，一个菜作料加少了或者加多了，不应当用更可口的东西代替失去的享乐，来加以补救。那样只会娇纵肉体，偏离这所学校的办学目的。这件事应当用来在精神上开导学生，鼓励她们在暂时困难情况下，发扬坚韧不拔的精神。在这种场合，该不失时机地发表一个简短的讲话。一位有识见的导师会抓住机会，说一下早期基督徒所受的苦难；说一下殉道者经受的折磨；说一下我们神圣的基督本人的规劝，召唤使徒们背起十字架跟他走；说一下他给予的警告：人活着不是单靠食物，乃是靠上帝口里所说出的一切话；说一下他神圣的安慰‘饥渴慕义的人有福了。’啊，小姐，当你不是把烧焦的粥，而是把面包和奶酪放进孩子们嘴里的时候，你也许是在喂她们邪恶的肉体，而你却没有想到，你在使她们不朽的灵魂挨饿！”

布罗克赫斯特先生又顿了一下，也许是感情太冲动的缘故。他开始讲话时，坦普尔小姐一直低着头，但这会儿眼睛却直视前方。她生来白得像大理石的脸，似乎透出了大理石所特有的冷漠与坚定，尤其是她的嘴巴紧闭着，仿佛只有用雕刻家的凿子才能把它打开，眉宇间渐渐地蒙上了一种凝固了似的严厉神色。

与此同时，布罗克赫斯特先生倒背着双手站在炉子跟前，威风凛凛地审视着全校。突然他眼睛眨了一下，好像碰上了什么耀眼刺目的东西，转过身来，用比刚才更急促的语调说：

“坦普尔小姐，坦普尔小姐，那个，那个卷发姑娘是怎么回事？红头发，小姐，怎么卷过了，满头都是卷发？”他用鞭子指着那可怕的东西，他的手抖动着。

“那是朱莉娅·塞弗恩，”坦普尔小姐平静地回答。

“朱莉娅·塞弗恩，小姐！为什么她，或是别人，烫起卷发来了？她竟然在我们这个福音派慈善机构里，无视学校的训戒和原则，公开媚俗，烫了一头卷发，这是为什么？”

“朱莉娅的头发天生就是卷的，”坦普尔小姐更加平静地回答。

“天生！不错，但我们不能迁就天性。我希望这些姑娘是受上帝恩惠的孩子，再说何必要留那么多头发？我一再表示我希望头发要剪短，要朴实，要简单。坦普尔小姐，那个姑娘的头发必须统统剪掉，明天我会派个理发匠来。我看见其他人头上的那个累赘物也太多了——那个高个子姑娘，叫她转过身来。叫第一班全体起立，转过脸去朝墙站着。”

坦普尔小姐用手帕揩了一下嘴唇，仿佛要抹去嘴角上情不自禁的笑容。不过她还是下了命令。第一班学生弄明白对她们的要求之后，也都服从了。我坐在长凳上，身子微微后仰，可以看得见大家挤眉弄眼，做出各种表情，对这种调遣表示了不满。可惜布罗克赫斯特先生没有能看到，要不然他也许会感受到，他纵然可以摆布杯盘的外表，但其内部，却远非他所想的那样可以随意干涉了。

他把这些活奖章的背面细细打量了大约五分钟，随后宣布了判决，他的话如丧钟般响了起来：

“头上的顶髻都得剪掉。”

坦普尔小姐似乎在抗辩。

“小姐”他进而说，“我要为主效劳，他的王国并不是这个世界。我的使命是节制这些姑娘的肉欲，教导她们衣着要谦卑克制，不梳辫子，不穿贵重衣服。而我们面前的每个年轻人，出于虚荣都把一束束头发编成了辫子。我再说一遍，这些头发必须剪掉，想一想为此而浪费的时间，想……”

布罗克赫斯特先生说到这儿被打断了。另外三位来访者，都是女的，此刻进了房间。他们来得再早一点就好了，赶得上聆听他关于服饰的高论。她们穿着华丽，一身丝绒、绸缎和毛皮。二位中的两位年轻的（十六、七岁的漂亮姑娘）戴着当时十分时鲜一笑。多好的微笑！我至今还记得，而且知道，这是睿智和真正的勇气的流露，它像天使脸上的反光一样，照亮了她富有特征的面容、瘦削的脸庞和深陷的灰眼睛。然而就在那一刻，海伦·彭斯的胳膊上还佩戴着“不整洁标记”；不到一小时之前我听见斯卡查德小姐罚她明天中饭只吃面包和清水，就因为她在抄写习题时弄脏了练习簿。人的天性就是这样的不完美！即使是最明亮的行星也有这类黑斑，而斯卡查德小姐这样的眼睛只能看到细微的缺陷，却对星球的万丈光芒视而不见。

“好粗心的姑娘！”布罗克赫斯特先生说，随后立刻又说，“是个新来的学生，我看出来了，”我还没喘过气来，他又说下去，“我可别忘了，有句关于她的话要说，”随后大着嗓门说。在我听来，那声音有多响啊！“让那个打破写字板的孩子到前面来！”

我自己已经无法动弹了，我瘫了下来。可是坐在我两边的两个大姑娘，扶我站了起来，把我推向那位可怖的法官。随后坦普尔小姐轻轻地搀着我来到他的脚跟前，我听见她小声地劝导我：

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“别怕，简，我知道这不是故意的，你不会受罚。”

这善意的耳语像匕首一样直刺我心扉。

“再过一分钟，她就会把我当作伪君子而瞧不起我了，”我想。一想到这点，心中便激起了一腔怒火，冲着里德太太和布罗克赫斯特一伙们，我可不是海伦·彭斯。

“把那条凳子拿来，”布罗克赫斯特先生指着一条很高的凳子说一位班长刚从那儿站起来。凳子给端来了。

“把这孩子放上去。”

我被抱到了凳子上，是谁抱的，我并不知道，我已经不可能去注意细枝末节了。我只知道他们把我摆到了跟布罗克赫斯特先生鼻子一般高的地方；知道他离我只有一码远；知道在我下面，一片桔黄色和紫色的闪缎饰皮外衣和浓雾般银色的羽毛在扩展，在飘拂。

布罗克赫斯特先生清了清嗓子。

“女士们，”他说着转向他的家人，“坦普尔小姐，教师们和孩子们，你们都看到了这个女孩子了吧？”

她们当然是看到了。我觉到她们的眼睛像凸透镜那样对准了我烧灼的皮肤。

“你们瞧，她还很小。你们看到了，她的外貌与一般孩子没有什么两样，上帝仁慈地把赐与我们大家的外形，一样赐给了她，没有什么明显的残疾表明她是个特殊人物。谁能想到魔鬼已经在她身上找到了一个奴仆和代理人呢？而我痛心地说，这就是事实。”

他又停顿了一下。在这间隙，我开始让自己紧张的神经稳定下来，并觉得鲁比孔河已经渡过，既然审判已无法回避，那就只得硬着头去忍受了。

“我的可爱的孩子们，”这位黑大理石般的牧师悲切地继续说下去，“这是一个悲哀而令人忧伤的场合，因为我有责任告诫大家，这个本可以成为上帝自己羔羊的女孩子，是个小小的被遗弃者，不属于真正的羊群中的一员，而显然是一个闯入者，一个异己。你们必须提防她，不要学她样子。必要的话避免与她作伴，不要同她一起游戏，不要与她交谈。教师们，你们必须看住她，注意她的行踪，掂量她的话语，监视她的行动，惩罚她的肉体以拯救她的灵魂，如果有可能挽救的话，因为（我实在说不出口），这个姑娘，这个孩子，基督国土上的本地子民，比很多向梵天祈祷，向讷里什那神像跪拜的小异教徒还坏，这个女孩子是一个——说谎者！”

这时开始了十分钟的停顿。而此时我已经镇定自若，看到布罗克赫斯特家的三个女人都拿出了手帕，揩了揩眼镜，年长的一位身子前后摇晃着，年轻的两位耳语着说：“多可怕！”

布罗克赫斯特先生继续说。

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“我是从她的恩人，一位廉诚慈善的太太那儿知道的。她成了孤儿的时候，是这位太太收养了她，把她作为亲生女儿来养育。这位不幸的姑娘竟以忘恩负义来报答她的善良和慷慨。这种行为那么恶劣，那么可怕，那位出色的恩主终于不得不把她同自己幼小的孩子们分开，生怕她的坏样子会沾污他们的纯洁。她被送到这里来治疗，就像古时的犹太人把病人送往毕士大搅动着的池水中一样。教师们，校长们，我请求你们不要让她周围成为一潭死水。”

说了这样精彩的结语以后，布罗克赫斯特先生整了一下长大衣最上头的一个钮扣，同他的家属嘀咕了几句，后者站起来，向坦普尔小姐鞠了一躬。随后所有的大人物都堂而皇之地走出了房间。在门边拐弯时，我的这位法官说：

“让她在那条凳子上再站半个小时，在今天的其余时间里，不要同她说话。”

于是我就这么高高地站着。而我曾说过，我不能忍受双脚站立于房间正中的耻辱，但此刻我却站在耻辱台上示众。我的感触非语言所能形容。但是正当全体起立，使我呼吸困难，喉头紧缩的时候，一位姑娘走上前来，从我身边经过。她在走过时抬起了眼睛。那双眼睛闪着多么奇怪的光芒！那道光芒使我浑身充满了一种多么异乎寻常的感觉！这种新感觉给予我多大的支持！仿佛一位殉道者、一个英雄走过一个奴隶或者牺牲者的身边，刹那之间把力量也传给了他。我控制住了正待发作的歇斯底里，抬起头来，坚定地站在凳子上。海伦·彭斯问了史密斯小姐某个关于她作业的小问题，因为问题琐碎而被申斥了一通。她回到自己的位置上时，再次走过我，对我微微一笑。多好的微笑！我至今还记得，而且知道，这是睿智和真正的勇气的流露，它像天使脸上的反光一样，照亮了她富有特征的面容、瘦削的脸庞和深陷的灰眼睛。然而就在那一刻，海伦·彭斯的胳膊上还佩戴着“不整洁标记”；不到一小时之前我听见斯卡查德小姐罚她明天中饭只吃面包和清水，就因为她在抄写习题时弄脏了练习簿。人的天性就是这样的不完美！即使是最明亮的行星也有这类黑斑，而斯卡查德小姐这样的眼睛只能看到细微的缺陷，却对星球的万丈光芒视而不见。