AM THE Resurrection and the Life.” The minister’s voice in solemnly rising inflections came through the open window. It was an afternoon in early summer. Long pulsating lines of heat beat down from a cloudless sky on the dusty road and the dry fields. The flowers in the small square front yard and the lilac bush by the gate showed gray with dust. The whir of locusts and the drowsy drone of bees filled the sleepy silence.

“I am the Resurrection and the Life.” Amelia Young sitting in the front room in her place among the mourners looked about her at the assembled company. She sat very straight and stiff in her plain-fitting black dress. The minister’s voice in its irritating monotone came to her as from afar. With a strange sense of detachment she tried to bring herself to realize that the still form lying before her in all the insignia of death was her father, and that this was her father’s funeral sermon; his just due and tribute after years of homely toil.

The room smelt damp and musty. The two north windows had been thrown open to admit the light and each object in the room took on a startling familiarity. There was a marble-topped table between the windows. It had a bead mat on it and a lamp. There was a china card-basket and two books bound in red and blue. Amelia found herself trying to read their titles, although she knew them by heart. On a shelf with a lambrequin were tall red and white vases. They held bunches of dried grasses. There were some small shells on the shelf and a string of gilded cones. Over on the floor in the corner was a huge conch shell. Amelia remembered the few rare occasions of her childhood when the best room had been opened and she had been allowed to hold the shell to her ear. Even now she could hear the sound of the sea. There were some pictures on the walls; portraits of her mother’s people, and one, a picture of her father as a young man.

Amelia’s eyes rested on each of her relatives in turn. Aunt Maria and Uncle John and their two children sat together on the haircloth sofa. They had driven over that morning. Aunt Maria was crying softly. Uncle John shifted his feet now and then uncomfortably, and with a curious sound that made itself fearfully felt in the somber silence. He kept his eyes fixed on the cornfield to the west of the house. Men might come and men might go, but the question of crops remained ever uppermost.
THE TRANSPLANTING OF ANN YOUNG

Cousin Delia sat on the opposite side of the room. Every now and then she drew out her handkerchief and gave a furtive dab at her eyes, but for the most part she busied herself with looking about her. A gleam of sunshine, quivering across the carpet, rested on the lower part of the marble-topped table; it caught and held a few particles of dust in its radiance. Cousin Delia watched it until she knew Amelia had seen her steady gaze and knew on just what it rested.

Amelia did not cry. She sat very erect in her straight chair. Her face was pale and her lips were drawn tightly together. She was a tall, spare woman. She had light blue eyes and her hair, of a light indeterminate brown, was drawn tightly back from a broad, high forehead. She had her father’s plain features.

Old Mrs. Young in her black dress and her black cotton gloves sat next to her daughter. She was a little woman with thinly parted gray hair. She cried continually until her face was red and swollen. She made no movement. Once she cried out aloud. Amelia looked sternly up at her. After that she cried quietly into her handkerchief.

The afternoon was very warm. The grass in the front yard seemed to shrivel and shrink in the fierce glare of the sun. There was a round shell-bordered bed of clove pinks and their spicy fragrance floated in through the windows. The yard sloped a little down to the gate. Just outside there was a long row of buggies.

Amelia kept her eyes fixed on the glancing mote of sunlight. Only once did her glance rest on the long black coffin in the middle of the room. Then she seemed to see instead her father’s gaunt, thin figure as he lay in bed that last day. His face showed a yellow pallor against the pillows. Amelia sat beside the bed crocheting some coarse lace. The habit of work was too strong upon her to be laid aside even in the presence of death. Mrs. Young sat at the foot of the bed. Her little thin body shook in an agony of sobs which she tried in vain to repress. Some medicine bottles and a glass covered over with an envelope and a spoon stood on the dresser. Out of doors the rays of sunlight lay long and level across the summer fields. Now and then a bird shadow darkened the window. The smell of the pinks was sweet and spicy.

Ephraim’s eyes moved restlessly back and forth from his daughter’s calm face to his wife’s quivering one. His long fingers plucked at the coverlet nervously. When he spoke the words came with an effort.

“The old place ’ll hev to go,” he began, “’nless——” He paused a moment. ‘I’ve kinder ben lettin’ the payments slide a little, lately.
THE TRANSPLANTING OF ANN YOUNG

Didn’t seem like there was much use. I seen Andrew one day an’ he said ’twas all right. He said as how it wouldn’t make much diff’runce anyway. I knowed right along ’twould be all right some day ’tween him and ’Melia.” A spasm of coughing seized the old man. Amelia, her lips strangely set, rose and poured out some medicine. Mrs. Young’s sobs broke out afresh. The paroxysm of coughing past, Ephraim tried to speak again.

“You an’ Andrew,” he began, “hed better,” the words seemed torn from his throat, “you an’ Andrew—I allays knowed ’twould be all right.” His voice trailed into silence as he sank back on his pillows. The room was hot and still. Suddenly a shudder passed over the old man. It was only an instant, then all that was mortal of Ephraim Young lay rigid beneath the bedclothes.

Ephraim Young died serene in the knowledge that through his daughter Amelia his failures and shortcomings would be set right. The place had belonged to his wife and to her father before her. Her children had been born and had died there. Amelia was the only one left of a large family. Ephraim Young was a good man, but he lacked initiative. The first few years he had managed the place successfully. Then came a year of failure. The one that followed was not much better. Where another man would have forced a rich yield, Ephraim succeeded in getting but a mere living; where another man would have ventured ahead, Ephraim held back.

The place was badly run down. Then Old Hiram Vane, Andrew’s father, whose broad yielding acres touched those of the Youngs on the left, offered to take the farm. The years went on, Ephraim meeting the payments as best he could. Hiram died and the place fell into Andrew’s hands. For years Andrew Vane had been in love with Amelia Young. He was a good-looking young man; mild-mannered, with blue eyes and features almost as delicate as a girl’s. People wondered what he could see in Amelia Young with her plain features and her still plainer figure. He was considerably younger than she.

Ephraim had carefully concealed from his wife and daughter all knowledge of the affair of the farm. To the younger woman, the truth when it did come had all the force of a double blow. Calm in her pride but with white lips, Amelia had given Andrew Vane his dismissal one summer night long ago. There were pale stars in a still paler sky and the scent of the pinks in the front yard was very sweet.

Today, as Amelia sat listening to the monotonous drone of the minister’s voice, while the sunlight of the June day crept across the
faded carpet in rays of burnished gold, while the fields and meadows
of her childhood’s home rolled away from her on either side bound
by a low line of softly shadowed hills, something of the simplicity
and the pathos of that faith in which her father had died content,
touched her heart, yet had no power to pierce the shell of her New
England pride.

With that forgetfulness of all save good which is death’s legacy
to the living, poor old Mrs. Young, her little, bent body shaken with
grief, looked up every now and then into her daughter’s face. She
clung tightly to Amelia’s arm as they passed out of the house. In
the front yard was a group of men in their Sunday black clothes,
friends and neighbors Amelia had known from her childhood. An-
drew Vane was among them. Cousin Delia, walking just behind,
looked sharply at Amelia. The latter, though she did not turn her
head, knew that Andrew Vane was looking at her. She noted his
stooped shoulders and the dust of his unbrushed Sunday coat.

On their return home from the cemetery Amelia went straight
upstairs and took off her black dress. Then she set about getting
supper. Her mother sat in the front room with Uncle John and Aunt
Maria and Cousin Delia. There was a long, painfully empty space
in the middle of the floor. Cousin Delia’s voice suddenly clipped
the silence. “Wan’t that Andrew Vane I see out in the yard this
afternoon? Seems to me he looked kind o’ peaked.” She leaned
forward. She had a small, thin face and little piercing black eyes.
“I allays had an idea there was somethin’ ’tween him an’ ’Melia.”
She looked sharply at Ann. Just then the door opened and Amelia
came into the room.

After the early supper Cousin Delia and Aunt Maria and Uncle
John started on their long homeward drive. Amelia and her mother
stood at the gate and watched them until they drove out of sight.
Then they went back into the house and sat down together in the
empty sitting room.

The day was slowly hushing into silence.” The sun sank in a
yellow glory behind the purple hills. Across the fields the shadows
wheeled and lengthened. A belated butterfly, resting in its flight,
poised an instant on the window sill, its delicate wings outspread.
Over on his own porch Andrew Vane sat alone in the dusk of the sum-
ner night. The rings of smoke from his pipe floated slowly upward.

For a long time Amelia and her mother sat together in silence and
strange reserve, until the darkness gathered and the stars came out
one by one. Then they went upstairs to bed.
The next morning Amelia rose at the usual time. The very relentlessness, the utter inevitableness of death shows itself in the fact that we pause in our busy lives only for an instant at its threshold before we take up once more the shuttle and the threads and begin again where we left off. Amelia slept with her mother. The old woman watched her furtively from the bed, as she dressed in the early morning light. The younger woman’s face wore a look of settled resolve. She finished dressing and went down into the kitchen and set about getting breakfast.

The air was fresh and cool. The dew lay heavy and each separate blade of grass glittered in the sunlight like a tiny jeweled sword. There was a sudden step on the porch, a shadow crossed the kitchen window and the next moment Andrew Vane stepped across the threshold. He went straight up to Amelia. His face, in spite of the gray about the temples, still retained something of its boyishness. He looked as he had looked that night long ago out under the stars. He began to speak hurriedly. “I came to tell you, ’Melia, that I want you should stay on in the old house, jest the same, you an’ your mother. It ain’t goin’ to make one mite o’ diff’rance. I——”

He got no farther. Amelia turned on him almost fiercely. The dish she held in her hands trembled. “You needn’t say another word, Andrew Vane. D’ye think I’d stay on in this house when it an’ everything in it belongs to you? I want nothin’ that ain’t my own by rights. This place is yours an’ you’re goin’ to hev it. I guess ’twon’t take mother an’ me long to git our things ready. I couldn’t never pay up to you ef I worked my fingers to the bone. The place is yours, Andrew Vane, an’ you can hev it.”

Amelia finished speaking and went on with her preparations for breakfast. Andrew Vane stood looking at her for a moment, then he crossed the room and went out again into the early morning.

Amelia was mixing something in a yellow bowl when her mother came downstairs. “What be you doin’, ’Melia?” “I thought I’d jest stir up some cake.” The old woman looked at her sharply. She sat down to the table, but ate scarcely anything for breakfast. Afterward she sat in her rocking chair by the kitchen window. She watched Amelia when she thought the latter did not see her. “What be you stirrin’ up the cake for, ’Melia?”

“I thought mebbe we’d better hev a little in the house.”

Old Mrs. Young was silent a few moments. Then she spoke again timidly, as if afraid of the sound of her own voice. “What be you goin’ to do, ’Melia?”
“What am I goin’ to do?” Amelia turned and looked at her mother. “Well, I guess there ain’t but one thing to do as I kin see. D’ye s’pose I’m goin’ on livin’ in a place that don’t belong to me? We’re goin’ away, you an’ me. We’re goin’ off to another town. We’ll take the money that’s in the bank. ‘Taint much, but I reckon it’ll keep us ‘bout as long there as twill here. Then I’m goin’ to do some o’ that knitted lace.”

Amelia spoke rapidly. She scarcely paused to take breath. The old woman looked up at her with a pitiful shrinking. “Oh, ’Melia, I can’t never go. I can’t never go, nohow.”

“Now mother, there ain’t no use o’ you’re goin’ on so. We’ve got to go, an’ we’re a-goin’.” Amelia’s face was grim. She did not look at her mother.

“When be we goin’, ’Melia?”

“We’re goin’ jest as soon as I kin git ready. Tomorrow, mebbe.”

“Oh, ’Melia, I can’t never go.” The old woman rocked back and forth. The morning sunlight filtered through the kitchen window and on the pots of red geraniums on the sill. The far fields were flooded with the warm light. “Ef—if you only felt it to marry Andrew Vane, ’Melia——” Ann Young began, then she fairly shrank before the look in Amelia’s eyes.

“Now, mother, you jest see here. I ain’t a-goin’ to hear one word. I don’t want Andrew Vane an’ I ain’t a-goin’ to hev him neither. There ain’t no use o’ you’re sayin’ anythin’ more ‘bout it. D’ye think I’m goin’ to be beholden to any man?”

The old woman did not speak again. Amelia went about her work swiftly and silently. She had a man’s strength in her thin arms and narrow shoulders. At noon she set out a lunch on the kitchen table. Mrs. Young did not eat anything. Amelia drank her tea and ate her bread in silence. In the afternoon she gathered together the few things they were to take with them. Her mother followed her from room to room. She cried now and then pitifully. “Oh, ’Melia, I can’t never go. I can’t never go, nohow.” She repeated the words over and over like a little child. “Ain’t you goin’ to take none o’ the furniture, ’Melia? Ain’t I goin’ to hev my rockin’ chair?”

“No, I ain’t.”

“What’s goin’ to become o’ all them portraits in the parlor? Your father’s, too. I can’t go, ’Melia. I can’t go. I ain’t never ben to any other place.” Her voice had grown sharply querulous.

Amelia did not speak. She went about her work with the air of one who has known beforehand just what was to be done. The
afternoon was soft and brilliant. The birds, building their nests in the eaves of the old house, flew back and forth with sharp twitterings. Across the way a man’s figure moved back and forth in the sunlight. It was Andrew Vane at work in his fields. When the afternoon drew to its close, their few belongings stood packed and ready. Neither woman ate any supper. They sat together in the sitting room and watched the sunset linger on the hills. It was still early when they went to bed.

Once, during the night, Amelia, lying with wide-open eyes, heard her mother’s voice in its childish repetition, “I can’t never go. Oh, ’Melia, I can’t never go.”

In the gray dawn the two women arose. Ann Young’s old fingers shook as she dressed herself. After breakfast Amelia washed up the dishes and packed them away with the rest of the things. Then she put on her hat and sat down to wait. The gray mist lifted slowly from the fields. In the front yard the clove pinks hung heavy with dew. The color trembled on the hills.

Ann Young sat in her rocking chair by the kitchen window. She had on her best black dress and bonnet and a little shawl pinned about her shoulders. She rocked back and forth holding her cotton gloves tightly in one hand.

“You’d better set right here, ’till I come back, mother.” Amelia rose. “I’m a-goin’ down to see about a wagon. We’ll go jest ’s soon as I git back. You’d better jest set still.”

Amelia was gone longer than she expected. She hurried as she turned the corner of the dusty road and came in sight of the old home. The smell of the pinks reached her, sweet and pungent in the soft morning air. She went in at the kitchen door. The room had the strange stillness that the absence of a human presence always lends. The rocking chair beside the window was empty.

“Mother,” she called. There was no answer. She went on to the front parlor. As she opened the door the damp, musty air struck her as with a chill. “Mother,” she called again, sharply. In the silence her father’s portrait and those of her mother’s family stared down at her from the walls. She closed the door and went on upstairs. One by one she went through the empty rooms. Then she came downstairs again and out into the kitchen. A wagon had driven up to the door and stopped. Amelia went out and told the man to drive on. She went back and forth across the yard calling in a high shrill voice that carried far across the fields. Andrew Vane hoeing in his garden paused a moment.
THE TRANSPLANTING OF ANN YOUNG

It was almost an hour before she went into the house. The stillness seemed to flaunt itself in her face. She sat down in her mother’s chair beside the window. The sunlight quivered across the sill and on the pots of red geraniums. She had not stopped to take off her hat and she still sat with it on. Her tall figure was sharply erect.

The sun climbed higher and higher. Long bars of light lay across the floor. The kitchen stove stood black and cold. At noon Amelia arose and went out once more into the yard. “Mother, mother,” she called over and over again, and her voice had in it a sharp note of pain. As she stood there in the noontide hush Andrew Vane came across the intervening fields. He had his hoe in his hand and he looked at Amelia, inquiringly.

“It’s mother,” she began. “She’s been gone since early this morning. I’ve been all over the house an’ she ain’t there. I don’t know of anywheres else she could hev gone to.”

Andrew Vane asked no questions. “You’d better go back in the house, ’Melia. I’ll go over an’ hitch up an’ see what I can do. Don’t you worry.”

Amelia stood watching him as he went back across lots to his own home. Then she turned and went into the house. She sat down once more in her mother’s rocking chair beside the kitchen window. In the middle of the afternoon she got up and made herself a cup of tea. She drank it hurriedly and took her place again at the window. She sat on dully all through the long afternoon. The air held in it a strange, expectant hush. The shadows lay still on the summer fields. At sunset she went upstairs. She was gone some time and when she came down again she built a fire in the kitchen stove and put on the teakettle.

The light waned on the far hills. It was just dusk when a little, bent figure came trembling across the yard and up to the kitchen door. “Oh, mother, where hev you been?” Amelia’s voice was high and strained.

Ann Young stood in the doorway, a pitiful little figure. There were wisps of hay in her thin gray hair, and her best black dress and bonnet were covered with dust and cobwebs. Her face was streaked with dirt. “Oh, ’Melia, I couldn’t help it. I run away. I’ve been a-hidin’ up in the barn loft. I got to thinkin’ after you’d gone an’ I couldn’t stan’ it no longer. Oh, ’Melia, I hadn’t never been anywheres else in my whole life. I’ve been up there hidin’ all day. I heard you a-callin’. I couldn’t help it, ’Melia. But I’ve come back, an’ we kin go now, can’t we?”
THE LAND WHICH IS AFAR OFF

She stood there, a little shrinking figure in the fading dusk. Amelia Young went up to her and put her hand on the old woman’s shoulder. “You come right into the house, mother, an’ take off your things an’ set down in that chair. I’ve unpacked all the things an’ put ‘em back where they b’long. Now I’m a-goin’ to get us some supper.”

Old Mrs. Young began to cry.

“Now see here mother. Don’t you go to cryin’. You’ll feel better after you’ve hed a cup o’ hot tea.” There was a step on the porch and a sudden shadow fell across the floor as Andrew Vane stood in the doorway. “I’m goin’ to make a batch o’ warm biscuits, too. I’ve got the table all set, an’ Andrew, you’d better come in an’ hev some supper.”

THE LAND WHICH IS AFAR OFF

Who hath found a land serene,
Fruited with a mellow peace,
Sorrowed not for his release
In some lovelier land unseen?

Who hath wrought in splendid art—
Living color, breathing strings—
Hath not wept for nobler things
Alien to his aching heart?

Who hath known a love so fair,
Fairer love he did not yearn,
Prayed within his soul might burn
Flame more luminous and rare?

Where’s the land of Golden Rest,
Where hath joy forgot grief’s name,
Where doth burn the perfect flame
God leaves smouldering in our breast?

Emery Pottle.