ONE day, among the soft folds of a Human Brain—that strange, bewildering country where even scientists have lost their way, and among whose crevices are hidden the cradles of young Ideas, the pillows of sleeping Memories and the graves of forgotten Dreams—a little Thought was born. And the Thinker gazing on it, wondered, for it was very fair.

"Look!" cried the other Thoughts. "See how beautiful it is! How soft its eyes are and how tenderly it smiles!" And they held out their arms in loving welcome to the little stranger, and even the old Memories stirred in their sleep.

Days passed and the little Thought grew strong and beautiful, feeding on Hopes and Wishes and visions of Things-to-come, listening to tales of Yesterday and crooned to sleep by mystic lullabies. And its comrades watched it grow, and murmured: "It is the fairest of us all."

At last the little Thought said to the Thinker: "This brain of yours is a beautiful place to live in and I am very happy here; but I cannot stay forever. I must go out into the world and speak my message and pour my beauty into the hearts of others to make them like myself. Dear Thinker, I am ready. Let me go!"

But the Thinker shook his head and smiled. "Nay, stay a little longer with thy comrades and grow strong. Thou art too frail and delicate a thing to venture out into an unknown world. Thou couldst not brave its terrors or fight thy way. Wait a little longer, till thy strength is come."

"But I am strong already, good Thinker!" cried the little Thought, all eager to be gone. "And as for courage, why, I have no fear!"

"That is because thou dost not know the world," the Thinker said. "Is it then so strange a place?" asked the little Thought, wondering. But the Thinker only answered: "Wait and see."

So the Thought waited, patient, but filled with longing; and at last the time came. Never had the Thought seemed more radiant, more hopeful, more divine! "The world is waiting for me!" it cried.

Once more the Thinker smiled. "Not yet," he said. If thou shouldst go forth as thou art, the world would never see thee. Dost thou not know that Thought is invisible, and must be clothed in Language before it can exist for others? Come, I will clothe thee."

Then went the Thinker to the Wardrobe of his Vocabulary and opened the door. The little Thought peeped in, a trifle timid at the vast array.

"What are they called, those strange, beautiful things?" it asked.
THE THOUGHT: AN ALLEGORY

"Those are Words," the Thinker answered.
"Are they all yours?" asked the Thought.
The other nodded.
"You must be very rich!" the Thought said, admiringly. "There
is so much to choose from."
"Ah!" said the Thinker. "That's just it—the choosing. 'Tis
no easy task."

Then, very tenderly and carefully, he began, wrapping the little
Thought in words that shone almost as brightly as the Thought,
words that seemed to reflect, in their wondrous, glowing colors the
warmth and beauty of the love that chose them; phrases as delicate
and fragile as the thing they clothed, and expressions picked to match
the very shade of beauty of its wondering eyes. Sometimes, how-
ever, instead of using the Words he had just chosen, the Thinker
would frown, and tossing them back impatiently into his Vocabulary,
search for something that might prove more worthy a garment for a
Thought so fair. As for the little Thought, it waited patiently, droop-
ing a trifle beneath the growing weight of strange attire, but hoping
and full of courage.

"So many words, so many words!" sighed the Thinker, as one by
one he caught them up and threw them aside. "Shall I never find
the right ones?"
"Can I not go as I am?" suggested the Thought, timidly. "Surely
they will see me now?"

When at last it was finished, the Thinker paused, and said: "Art
very weary, little Thought?" And the Thought nodded, too tired
to speak, with its head drooping, and eyes which had lost their luster
and arms hanging listless beneath the unaccustomed weight of words.
And the Thinker, looking, felt guilty, as one who had caught a but-
terfly within his net and rubbed the bloom from off its fluttering
wings.

"Courage!" he said, making an effort to be cheerful, though he,
too, was worn out with the task. "Courage, little one, and let thy
beauty shine through!" So the Thought smiled again, and stretched
out both arms to say good-bye.
"Wait," said the Thinker. "I would show thee to a friend." And
he called to his friend, and said: "Come, I have a beautiful
Thought to show thee. See, is it not fair?"
"Yes, it is very nice," said the friend; but without enthusiasm.
"But is it not wonderful?" the Thinker persisted, caressing it
tenderly as he spoke.

His friend smiled. "I have Thoughts of my own," he said—and
passed on. But the other gazed unheeding into the deep, clear
eyes of his Thought until his own shone with the reflected light, and his heart was filled with peace.

"Go forth, little Thought," he said, "and shine upon the thoughts of others. Be strong, courageous and unashamed; for I have clothed thee in the fairest words that I could find, and thine own beauty lends them grace."

"Farewell, O Thinker!" cried the little Thought, and turned away. "I will come back. Farewell—the World is waiting!"

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Time passed, and the Thinker waited, working meanwhile, for he was not wholly a dreamer, and wondering as he worked how fared his Thought. Then, one day, the silence of his heart was broken, and he found a tear-stained wanderer in his arms. Instead of the radiant little vision that had gone forth so bravely to carry its helping message to the world, he held only a crushed and drooping form.

Gently and sorrowfully he smoothed the tangled hair. "Was there no welcome for thee, then, O Thought of mine?" he murmured; and the little Thought shook its head.

"Tell me thy grief," the Thinker said; and after a little while the Thought began:

"When I went forth I was full of hope, and cried to the World, 'O World, open your arms! I am a Beautiful Thought, and I have come to dwell in your midst.' But the World was very busy, and paid no heed.

"Then I spoke again, and the people heard, and said: 'See, what a beautiful Thought!' 'Yes, it is very charming,' the others answered, 'but we have need of actions. Already we have too many Thoughts, and what good have they done us? Come, we must work.' And they turned away.

"Then I came to some who were digging gold out of the earth, and they looked up and said: 'Ah, here comes another Thought. Let us hear what it has to say.' And they asked me: 'What is thine errand, O Thought?'

"I answered: 'To shine upon the lives of men and make them beautiful.' But they asked me: 'Canst thou give us Wealth?' And I told them: 'No, but I can make your hearts rich with beauty.' At which they laughed, and turned to dig again.

"The next who spoke said: 'Yonder Thought is very fair; but it is overdressed. It is almost hidden beneath those ill-fitting Words.' While another cried: 'To me, its Language seems very scant and poor. If the Thought were mine, I would clothe it in quite a different fashion.' So I passed on.

"I knocked at the door of many a heart, but few would open.
Often the people said: 'We have quite enough Thoughts of our own. What need have we of new ones when the old suffice? Besides, it is against our principles to entertain strange Thoughts.'

"Others asked briefly: 'Who sent you?' And when I told them, they said: 'We do not know him,' and closed the door.

"At last I stood upon the threshold of one for whom the sun had gone out, and she stretched forth her hands to me and cried: 'Little Thought, they tell me thou art fair. Come to me, that I may feel of thy beauty.' Very gently she passed her fingers over my face, and touched the strange Word-garb in which I was wrapped. Then she said: 'O Thought, I am glad thou didst come, for thou art very beautiful. The memory of thee shall stay with me in the dark.' And I was glad that to one, at least, I had brought happiness.

"Next I came to a man who was weeping bitterly; and I touched him on the shoulder, and said: 'Friend, let me soothe thy grief. For I am a Beautiful Thought, and am come to smile upon thy heart and give thee courage.'

"He stopped weeping for a moment, and looking up asked: 'Canst thou restore the dead?' And I answered: 'I can fill thy soul with peace.' But he turned away and wept again.

"Some asked me: 'Canst thou give us Fame?' And I answered: 'That is for you to win.' Another, when he saw me, pitied me, but laughed. 'Thou art too dainty and delicate a Thought,' he said, 'for this rough world. Thou would'st need a fist of iron and a voice of thunder to stir mankind today. This is the hour for the conquering giants—not frail pigmies such as thou.' And sorrowfully I journeyed on.

"Many and many were those to whom I gave the message, but they would not heed. And now, O Thinker, I have come back, for the World needs me not.'

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Then all the other Thoughts stretched out their hands in sympathy, and cried: 'Come, play with us and be happy again!'

But the little Thought shook its head, and answered: 'No; I have no heart to play. I would rest. Give me sleep or death, I care not which, so long as I forget.'

Then it tore off the ragged Words, and threw aside the cloak of Language, which was dusty and full of holes, and crept into a sheltering fold of the Thinker's brain to sleep; for it was very tired.

Gently and silently across its couch Time's tender fingers wove the Cobwebs of Forgetfulness and stretched the Curtain of Peace; and now the little Thought is only a Memory, sleeping among the other Memories in the Thinker's brain.