

Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will—as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: “free, free, free!” The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon

her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

✓ There would be no one to live for her during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

And yet she had loved him—sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

“Free! Body and soul free!” she kept whispering.

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→ She felt that something was coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. She finds the feeling is hard to resist. She finds it approaching slowly. She cannot define it properly and express it openly. The repressive society has stifled her emotions in such a way that she feels it difficult to describe the unidentified feeling. The consequence of such an unknown feeling tremble her. Though she is waiting for it, she finds it too difficult and 'too subtle and elusive' to name.

She feels all the 'sounds', the 'scents', and 'the colour' embodying the spirit of the feeling. Slowly, she feels it encompassing her entirely.

→ Though Louis tries to keep her thought away, she becomes increasingly excited and agitated. Her bosom rises and falls tumultuously and she begins to grasp the feeling. She is trying to suppress her thoughts with all her will. Suddenly in little whispering, a word escapes her through her 'slightly parted lips' -

"Free, free, free!"

→ The emotional excitement makes her heart beat faster. Her blood rushed through her body, warming and relaxing every inch of her body. Her intense excitement exhilarates her and she feels a sudden rush of thrill and adventure. She pays no heed to justify the reason for her elation. Though she knows she will undergo inconsolable grief on seeing the dead body of her husband, she welcomes the new feelings with open arms. The clear vision of a future full of freedom makes her happy. She is happy to envision her new life when she is no more restricted to the shackles of the institution.

of marriage. She wishes to make her own choices now and live for herself in the coming years. That she will regret seeing her husband's dead body proves that she holds no such grudges against him. However, her unusual reaction hearing the death of her husband also emphasises her indifference towards her marriage.

→ She knows there would be no one to live for her in the coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no patriarchal conventions and rigidities of marriage that would restrict her dauntless walk of life. She attaches more importance to the possession of self-assertion than the values of love and marriage. Though she confesses that she has loved her husband sometimes, there are clear indications to depict that her husband has also been an oppressive factor in her life. This is the reason why his death gives her an unusual joy and she repeatedly whispers:

"Free! Body and soul free!"

In the 19th century, the woman enjoyed no such freedom and were expected to depend financially on their husbands. In such rigid social conditions, Louise clearly understands the joys leading a free life. She grabs this opportunity to lead a single life devoid of any limitation. Her self-assertion has rendered her both physically and emotionally free.