

**THE
NARROW HOUSE**

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The narrow house by Evelyn Scott

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THE NARROW HOUSE

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*“ Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.”*

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE NARROW HOUSE

PART I

THE hot, bright street looked almost deserted. A sign swung before the dishevelled building at the corner and on a purple ground one could read the notice, "Robinson & Son, Builders," painted in tall white letters. Some broken plaster had been thrown from one of the windows and lay on the dusty sidewalk in a glaring heap.

The old-fashioned house next door was as badly in need of improvements as the one undergoing alterations. The dingy brick walls were streaked by the drippage from the leaky tin gutter that ran along the roof. The massive shutters, thrown back from the long windows, were rotting away. Below the lifted panes very clean worn curtains hung slack like things exhausted by the heat.

Some papers had been thrust in the tin letter box before the clumsy dark green door, and as Mrs. Farley emerged from the house she stopped to glance at them before descending to the street. One of the papers had a Kansas City postmark and she thought it must have come for her husband from

a certain woman whom she was trying to forget. She placed the papers clumsily back where she had found them.

As she passed down the stone stairs she stooped to toss a bright scrap of orange peel to the gutter. She sighed as she did it, not even taking the trouble to brush the dust from the shabby white cotton gloves she wore. Her skirt was too long behind and as she dragged her feet across the pavement it swept the ground after her. She glanced into the place which was being repaired and wished that something might be done to improve her home. At any rate now that her daughter-in-law, Winnie, had become reconciled to her parents things would be better. Mr. and Mrs. Price were rich. They had a carriage and an automobile. Mrs. Farley told herself that it was because of her grandchildren that the end of the long family quarrel brought some relief. Winnie's two babies, a girl and a boy, would now enjoy many things which the Farleys had not been able to provide. Mrs. Farley thought of them going to church in Mrs. Price's fine carriage. Mrs. Farley knew that she should have taken the part of her son, Laurence, who had been responsible for the disagreement, but somehow it had been impossible to condemn Winnie. The poor girl was not strong. Laurie was a harsh man. He was stubborn. He did not forgive easily and would suffer everything