

WITHIN THE GATES

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Within the Gates by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps

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ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

**WITHIN
THE GATES**

To Annie Fields

With Christmas love from
E. S. P. W.

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(MRS. WARD)

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK

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BY

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1901

This drama has so departed from the plan of the original story, "The Gates Between," published by me long ago, that it is, in fact, a new work, and has therefore received a new title. — E. S. P. W.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DOCTOR ESMEERALD THORNE, *a city physician.*

HELEN THORNE, *his wife.*

LADDIE, *their child. (Between four and five years of age.)*

MRS. FAYTH, *a patient of the Doctor's, and a friend of Mrs. Thorne's, an invalid.*

DOCTOR GAZELL, *a hospital physician not in harmony with Dr. Thorne.*

DR. CARVER, *a young surgeon.*

MAGGIE, *a maid.*

A Priest, Nurses, Patients, Servants, People in the Street, Spirits, the Angel Azrael.

WITHIN THE GATES

ACT I., SCENE I

A library in a city house. A dining-room opens beyond a portière. The dinner-table is set. The library is furnished in red leather and dark wood. Books run to the ceiling. The carpet is indeterminate in tone. The heavy curtains are of a rich, dark crimson. A window is to be seen. The library is littered a little with the signs of feminine occupation. At one of the tables sits Mrs. Thorne. She is a young and beautiful woman, of stately presence and modest, high-bred manner. She is well-dressed—but not overdressed—in a tea-gown such as a lady might wear in her own home when guests are not expected. The dress is cream-white; it falls open over a crimson skirt. The lamps are shaded with lace of red or of white. One with a white shade is on the table by which she sits. Her sewing materials are lying about, among books and magazines half-cut. She tries to sew upon a little boy's lace collar, but throws her work down restlessly. Her face wears a troubled expression.

(She rises and crosses the room nervously; goes to the window, and stands

between the long lace curtains, looking out. She consults her watch; speaks.)

MRS. THORNE. It is not so very late! Hardly past six o'clock yet. What can be the matter with me? I must not become a worrier. A doctor's wife can never afford to be that.

Enter MAGGIE.

MAGGIE. Shall I serve dinner, ma'am?

MRS. THORNE. The Doctor has not come, Maggie. We must wait — Jane will be careful not to burn the soup.

(Rises and looks again restlessly out of the window; calls:)

Maggie!

MAGGIE. Ma'am?

MRS. THORNE. When you went up to light the Doctor's candles, how did Laddie seem? Did Molly say?

MAGGIE. Just the same, she said. He does seem sort of miser'ble. [*Exit MAGGIE.*

MRS. THORNE *(takes up a magazine and tries, in vain, to read; sighs, and lays it*