

but she slackened not her pace. Following the long curved path of the mower she circled the field to meet the oncoming machine. Her dry lips moved soundlessly, her parched tongue seemed to choke her, her brow dripped with sweat. She stumbled as she ran over the rough stubble and the piles of new mown hay, but she recovered herself and quickened her speed.

Halfway across the hay field her husband saw her coming. ~~Stolid~~ Stolid son of the earth, unimaginative and unemotional, his wife's sudden appearance in the hayfield, nevertheless brought a pucker to his brows. Mechanically the long whip cracked above the heads of the team and they pulled and strained upon the traces. With a loud crunch the mower came to a stop level with the stumbling woman.

Her breath was coming in great sobbing gasps. She shook her head from side to side, frantically, desperately, and her rough little hands tore at her lips that could no longer speak. In that terrible moment when she needed most her husband's help speech had failed her. The shock had rendered her dumb.

"Why, mother, what has happened?"

Her lips moved, but the words came not. She clutched with shaking ~~xx~~ hands at his arm, her imploring eyes entreating his own.

Over a piece of rising ground came the following rake, and as it came, the song of the boy that rode it resounded beautifully in the quiet clear evening, but stopped suddenly as he saw his parents in the field. Less phlegmatic than his father, of an affectionate, impulsive ~~manly~~ nature, young