

'No,' said the mother, 'I did not dare to raise a fuss again, although many a time I've wept bitter tears in secret.'

'But how could you rest in the present circumstances, knowing they were in such imminent danger?'

'The thought of it nearly broke my heart these days and nights I have watched them. Oh, how I prayed to God that something might happen that they could be baptised. But I am afraid to mention it to my husband; he would get into a rage, and it might bring on a hemorrhage.'

'You are timid,' said the nurse, 'this is a question of three immortal souls, and they must be saved. Is there a priest in the neighborhood?'

'Oh, yes, I believe there is, but I beg of you not to mention it to my husband,' said the weak little woman.

'Does he come up to see the children?'

'Every morning, the first thing. If he hears us talking he will get alarmed, and will be up before you know it.' A moan from the little girl called the nurse and mother to her side. The child wanted a drink, and while the nurse gave it and soothed her the mother stood there smiling.

Just then the dry cough of the father was heard. He had just come into the room.

'The baby,' he said in a husky voice, 'is he alive?'

'He is alive, and will pull through,' said the nurse gently.

'She has worked miracles with them; they are all better,' said his wife.

'God bless you, nurse,' said the man, deeply moved. The nurse grasped her opportunity.

Mr. Stanton, these children must be baptised. You must send for a priest this morning. You don't want to lose all your darlings at once. Get them baptised, for they are of your wife's religion and mine. I am a Catholic, and I cannot stand by and see those sweet children debarred from heaven. They must be baptised, and I will stay with them till they are prattling around your knees once more.'

The wife did not raise her eyes; the man looked at the nurse with a frown. She met his gaze firmly. He looked at her for a minute, and then held out his hand.

'I admire a woman that stands up for her convictions,' he said. 'If you want the children baptised you send for whoever you wish to do it, I'll not hinder you. If you pull them through and let them be around me for the short time I have to live, you'll be the best friend we have, and your wish shall go every time.'

'Thank you, Mr. Stanton. I knew I would not be disappointed in you. I'll do so to-day. And now I'll prescribe a little for you. You don't look as if you slept last night. Let me look at your medicine.' And as the man, after looking at the three children, who seemed quiet and restful, turned downstairs, the nurse followed. She straightened the bed, shook up the pillows, ordered him to lie down, and from her own satchel gave him a stimulant and a sedative, drew the blinds, and commanded him to sleep till she called him. Then, closing the door gently, she went upstairs.

The mother was weeping quietly.

'Oh, nurse, you have been sent from heaven. How easily you got that promise from my husband!'

'Your husband is all right. Perhaps you have been too pliant, too easily subdued.'

'Perhaps I was. I must do better,' said Mrs. Stanton. 'How can I ever thank you?'

'Don't thank me,' said the nurse, 'but if you feel rested, put on your hat and go to the six-thirty Mass this beautiful morning, and afterwards tell the priest what has happened, and ask him to come this morning and baptise the children, and pray with all your soul before the altar that God may give you strength to return to your duty.'

'You talk like the nuns who instructed me at school,' said Mrs. Stanton. 'I'll go.'

'I have just graduated from the Nuns' Training School for Nurses,' said Laura, 'and I am trying to do what they taught me—save both soul and body.'

The mother departed, and Nurse Laura watched her charge. The man slept soundly downstairs, while the children fretted from time to time. When the wife returned, refreshed by her walk and the good night's sleep, she told the nurse the priest would be there that morning. After breakfast Mr. Stanton was so much better from the effects of his restful sleep and the bright, cheerful influence of the nurse, the improvement in the children, and the general sunshine of encouragement that was diffused over the little cottage that he forgot to be ungracious to the priest, who came as he promised, and even invited him to sit down and talk to him.

The children were baptised, and Nurse Laura breathed freely, for they were by no means out of danger, but the 'miracles' had begun. When the doctor arrived laden with messages from Bob and a basket of fruit and other dainties, it was a different household he met the first day.

'Why, the miracles have started, sure enough,' said he as he noted the improvement in each little patient. 'This baby isn't going to die, after all. They are all on their way out of the woods. Miss Laura, you are a wonder-worker. But, mind, you're to take a rest now. Mrs. Stanton will look to things for a while. I'll be back to-morrow,' and so he left, muttering to himself: 'God will never be outdone in generosity, sure enough.'

The days passed on—weary days, with many a hope and fear alternating. Every day, however, the doctor, the nurse, and the happy mother felt that the improvement was increasing. In two weeks the children were sitting up. But now their father was visibly failing. He would sit in the children's room for hours, watching Nurse Laura minister to them. He was gentle to his wife, and when she told him she had returned to the Church, had been to Confession and Holy Communion, he only kissed her and said she should never have left her religion.

Nurse Laura, like a good angel, hovered round the family, keeping up an atmosphere of sunshine and hope.

One by one the children were let downstairs to their father's room, and once downstairs their convalescence progressed until their merry laughter in the little garden of the cottage made the mother and father glad. But Mr. Stanton grew weaker each day. Nurse Laura had gone back to the hotel under Bob's protection, but came frequently and cheered the patient. One morning they were alone, and the nurse said: 'Mr. Stanton, you are not getting better. You have seen what the Catholic Church has done for your wife and children; why do you hesitate to look into her claims? You would certainly join us.'

'I don't need to look into her claims,' was the surprising answer. 'I have watched you, nurse, and I have read a bit, and I have only waited for you to ask me if I wanted to be a Catholic, for I do.'

The nurse took his thin white hand fervently.

'Thank God, Mr. Stanton. I have prayed for this ever since the children were baptised. May I send for that good priest once more?'

'Any time you wish,' was the reply.

And then the nurse with joy told Mrs. Stanton, who had suspected this was coming, and was full of gratitude to the devoted girl who had brought this happiness to her home.

The priest came. Mr. Stanton was instructed and baptised, and as his days passed by made his First Communion. Still the nurse tarried, for her practised eye saw that he was not long for earth.

One evening about the Angelus hour she was sitting by his bed when the dread messenger came.

Quietly she called the wife and children, and telephoned for the priest. He came, and as the night shadows fell the agony ceased and the purified spirit of Mr. Stanton, with the words of the last Benediction still on his ear, passed without a struggle to the Lord Who had created him.

Nurse Laura closed his eyes, comforted his wife, soothed the children, and when she knelt in the little chapel at the funeral Mass, she could not help looking back in wonder on the month just passed, and she