

happen so that you, my last chance, should not fail me.

But even while she thus urged him he moved restlessly and fidgeted to be gone, and, the tears falling unrestrained down her cheeks, the duchess moved to the door and opened it. Nor was the doctor himself much less distressed.

'Not ten but a hundred miles would I travel were it any time but this,' he said in a choked voice; 'but now, believe me, I dare not; I cannot tear myself away.'

The street door was already opened when upon the threshold stood Father St. John. He had heard in the town of the steaming horses that had dashed along with the Duchess of Lille's carriage to Doctor Morrow's house, and, wondering what it might portend, had come along himself to inquire; and now the door opened and he saw the duchess in tears and the doctor beside her. The tale told itself—he knew without asking that she had come to seek his aid, and guessed that he had refused.

The arrival of Father St. John just at that moment was God's answer to those repeated prayers on the headlong ten-mile journey.

'Let me see your son, doctor, before the duchess goes,' he said, and, not really needing permission, went softly but quickly upstairs. In a moment or two he returned, and the duchess, guessing his meaning, waited his verdict with a piteous look of expectation.

'How long did the journey here occupy?' he asked her.

'Scarcely more than an hour,' she answered.

The priest calculated, and murmured 'Three or four hours'—exactly the duchess's own calculation.

'It will do,' he said, and then, turning to the doctor: 'Doctor Morrow, if your own health permits of the journey you may safely undertake it. I will sit with your son and be answerable to you for his being no worse on your return, and you may go with an easy mind to cure where others have failed.'

Even the hearty words and confident manner of the priest failed altogether to move him. Certainly with no lesser man's assurance would he have been satisfied. He stood for a moment undecided and unwilling, but at last he pulled himself together and said simply:

'I will go, and let us not waste a moment. Father St. John, I leave my son in your hands—and in the hands of God. I will not go up again now. Tell him where I have gone. Duchess, I am ready.'

To describe her almost hysterical relief at these words should be difficult. So glad was the look on her face that she might already have been told that her daughter was better and would live.

She hurried out to instruct the footman that no pains were to be spared as far as humanity allowed in urging the horses forward at their fastest, and in less than three minutes Doctor Morrow, seated opposite the duchess and her maid, was watching the flying panorama of phantom trees and hedges, as they sped swiftly by in the darkness.

His mind was too occupied to take much note of the passage of time, and he was surprised at its seeming shortness when the panting horses at last turned into the avenue and soon afterwards drew up with a jerk before the open castle door.

'No change, madam,' said the butler softly, anticipating the question which his mistress already had upon her lips; 'but once or twice lately Miss Helene has asked for you.'

'My darling, my darling! I am coming, I am coming!' she said, and together mother and doctor went without delay to the sick chamber.

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Three hours later Doctor Morrow was back by the bedside of his son, flushed with his journey and its success. His first glance at the beautiful sick girl had told him that none but desperate remedies could avail, and boldly choosing the most desperate of all, he succeeded beyond all expectation and had left her in a calm and healthful sleep. And may be as a reward for leaving the son whom he thought was dying, to

perform that act of mercy, he found on his return that there was a remarkable change for the better. Father St. John was still at his post of trust, and was delighted to hear of the success of the doctor's mission and the joy and rapture of the duchess at what she deemed was little less than a miracle. At first his son did not seem quite to understand where the doctor had been, but on mentioning the name of Helene he looked around and blushed.

'Helene, did you say? Helene—?'

'Helene de Lille,' replied Doctor Morrow, and noticing the blush and curious look upon his son's face, he added: 'Did you think it was a Helene of your acquaintance?'

'There is one I know,' he answered, 'but it is unlikely to be she.'

That night seemed to be the turning point of the illness. The next morning he was better, and on each succeeding morning; until at last one day three weeks later, he was able, leaning lightly upon his father's arm, to take a turn or two up and down the street. As they were turning the duchess's carriage drove up to the doctor's door, and this time a radiant vision of youth and beauty stepped out with the duchess and blushed to find herself face to face with the doctor and his son. Or was it only on finding herself face to face with the son, who in his turn was blushing like a schoolboy?

But the duchess herself had noticed none but the doctor. For the hundredth time she repeated her gratitude, the impossible debt she owed to his goodness, her gratification that his son was better, her thanks again and again to the cleverest man in the whole wide universe. He ought to be Court Physician; he was already talked of by half the nobility for fifty miles around; he would become as famous as any doctor who had ever lived.

And then for a moment she ceased her voluble flow of praise to notice that a few paces off Helene and the other newly recovered patient seemed, without introduction, to be on a surprisingly friendly footing.

'Helene, how forward!' she said.

The young man raised his hat, and Doctor Morrow introduced his son.

'Your daughter and I have met before,' the young man told the duchess.

'He forestalled my dear, dear doctor in saving my life,' said Helene, 'and that was five years ago. It is true I had not forgotten it—and—and—well, he tells me he, too, has remembered.'

'But what a romance!' said the duchess. 'Tell us how it was, Mr. Morrow. Why, my daughter's life really scarcely belongs to her if both of you have saved it.'

'I was able to be of a little service, that is all,' the young man answered. 'Your daughter's horse had overpowered her and was near a precipice. My own horse was the faster, and so, of course, the precipice was never reached.'

'Helene, you never told me!'

'I feared you might forbid me to ride again: that was why I did not tell you. But Mr. Morrow has not done himself justice. It was not the simple act he says. He threw himself from his horse to catch my bridle, and brought my horse to its knees on the very edge of the cliff. He saved my life as certainly as you saved it again the other day, doctor.'

There seemed so much to talk about that the carriage was put up at the neighboring stables, and nothing would please the duchess more than a little cold luncheon, if it was not imposing upon the doctor's kindness. And after lunch, when the carriage returned, she resolutely declined to leave the house until they both had accepted her invitation to stay at the castle for at least a week in the ensuing summer.

'My practice has already suffered,' urged the doctor. 'I dare not leave the remains of it to look after itself. But, noticing the disappointed look on his son's face, his business instinct succumbed and the promise was given.'

'Shall I tell you, Frank, what is going to happen?' he said when their visitors had gone. 'You have made