

you might all the more surely strike your blow. I have no word of fault to find. I bow to your indignation, but for all that is past, I love you now, deeply, devotedly, with all my heart. My own heart is my own shame. I could not go away without telling you this. Now, farewell.

He held out his hand as he spoke; his face was pale and set.

She took his hand mechanically without meeting his eyes or speaking a word. He stood a moment, then, with a sigh, turned away and was gone.

For some time Beatrice did not move but remained sitting where she was, with her eyes looking unseeingly out over the river, then, with a low moan, she sank on the grass and buried her face in her hands.

'Oh, Harold, Harold!' she sobbed, 'come back to me!'

But Harold Markham was long since out of hearing, and once more her pride had ruled her heart.

But he was not destined to leave her so.

When Beatrice had dried her eyes, and quieted her beating heart sufficiently to meet the rest of the party again. Markham had driven away to the station behind Mrs. Browning's lowly pair of grays. The remainder of the afternoon passed like a dream to Beatrice; heart and brain were both numbed with a dull, aching pain, until, as merry party were driving homeward when the sun was slowly disappearing amid crimson clouds in the west, a man on horseback, driving like mad, met them. Even the sight of this rider tearing along toward them, which immediately interested the balance of the party, did not arouse the girl from her lethargy until he wheeled up alongside the carriage, and gasping for breath, which he had ridden out, cried to Mrs. Browning:

him back.

On the fourth day he began to show signs of returning consciousness, and calling softly to the nurse, who was sleeping in the next apartment, she looked at him for a moment, her eyes filled with soft love-light—for now in his helplessness could she not love him as she would if he were dead?—and moved lightly from the room.

From that moment he grew steadily better; the crisis was passed. Beatrice had saved his life. She did not again enter the room, but each day met the doctor outside the door and heard his reassuring report.

At last one morning, as she was waiting outside his door, the doctor came out smiling, but did not close the door behind him as usual. Espying Beatrice, he cried, heartily:

'Ha, here's the little nurse that brought my patient back through the gates. I've been telling Mr. Markham about you for the first time this morning, and he is anxious to thank you; and seeing you saved his life, I think it's quite proper in him. Come, he is right smart this morning, and it will do him good to see some one.'

'Oh, no, no!' cried Beatrice, turning pale, and pushing the kind-hearted doctor away, who was trying to draw her into the room.

'Come along, come along,' he persisted misunderstanding her objection. 'I tell you it will do him no harm, on my professional word,' and he laughed one of his hearty, ringing laughs, and despite her struggling resistance, dragged her into the room.

The chamber was darkened, and at first she could distinguish nothing, as the doctor pushed her, with good-natured force, into the middle of the room and went out and shut the door; but for Markham who was leaning on his arm eagerly watching, the light was sufficient.

'Beatrice!' he cried to the girl, who stood still in the middle of the room, with her head bowed, where the doctor had left her, 'Beatrice, have you brought me back to life or death?'

There was a piteous, pleading tones in his weak voice, and he tried to hold his hands out to her. She slowly raised her eyes to his; hers were full of tears—all the pride was gone.

'Beatrice, come!'

With a little grasping cry she moved toward the bed and sank upon her knees.

'Forgive me!' she sobbed. 'I tried to call you back, but it was too late—too late!'

He gently drew her head toward him and tenderly kissed her forehead.

'Let us both forgive,' he said, presently, and then he put both his arms around her neck and rested her head on his breast.

For a long time remained so, and then he said, softly, putting his hand under his pillow:

'Here, Beatrice, is a letter I have kept because it tells of my love for you. You have read it before. Will you mail it for me?'

It was only a little half-frightened whisper that answered:

'Yes, dear.'

But it was enough to warm the heart of Harold Markham.

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