

PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

## DR. RUMSEY'S PATIENT:

A VERY STRANGE STORY.

BY L. T. MEADE AND DR. HALIFAX,

Joint authors of "Stories from the Diary of a Doctor."

Copyrighted, 1896, by L. T. Meade and Dr. Halifax.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Awdrey's cure was complete; he had passed right through the doom of his house, and got out on the other side. He was the first man of his race who had ever done that; the others had forgotten as he forgot, and had pined, and dwindled, and slipped and slipped lower and lower down in the scale of life until at last they had dropped over the brink into the Unknown beyond. Awdrey's downward career had been stopped just in time. His recovery had been quite as marvellous as his complaint. When he saw his own face reflected in the pond of Salisbury Plain the cloud had risen from his brain, and he remembered what he had done. In that instant his mental sky grew clear and light. He himself had murdered Horace Frere; he had not done it intentionally, but he had done it; another man was suffering in his stead; he himself was the murderer. He knew this absolutely, completely, clearly, but at first he felt no mental pain of any sort. A natural instinct made him desirous to keep his knowledge to himself, but his conscience set light within him, and he could not speak at all. He was now anxious to conceal his emotions from the doctor; his mind had completely recovered its balance, and he found this impossible. Rumsey was as much astonished at the cure as he had been at the disease; he accompanied Awdrey back to London next day, and told Margaret what a marvellous thing had occurred. Awdrey remembered all about his son; he was full of grief for his loss; he was kind and loving to his wife; he was no longer morose; no longer sullen and apathetic; his mental and physical parts were once again well awake; but the strange and almost inexplicable thing in his cure was that his moral part still completely slumbered. This fact undoubtedly did much to establish his mental and physical health, giving him time to recover his lost ground.

Rumsey did not profess to understand the case, but now that Awdrey had quite come back from the borderland of insanity, he advised that ordinary remedies should immediately be resorted to; he told Margaret that in a few months her husband would be fully and completely able to attend the duties of life as any other man of his day and station. He did not believe, he said, that the strange attack through which Awdrey had passed was ever likely to return to him. Margaret and her husband shut up their house in town, and went abroad; they spent the winter on the continent, and day by day Awdrey's condition, both physical and mental, became more satisfactory. He slept well, he ate well; soon he began to devour books and newspapers; to absorb himself in the events of the day; to take a keen interest in politics; the member for Grandcourt died, and Awdrey put up for the constituency. He was obliged to return suddenly to England on this account, and to Margaret's delight elected to go back at once to live at the Court. The whole thing was arranged quickly. Awdrey was to be nominated as the candidate for Grandcourt; he was also to resume his rightful position as the Squire on his own property. Friends from all over the country rejoiced in his recovery as much as he had sincerely mourned his strange and inexplicable illness. He was welcomed with rejoicing, and came back as a king to take possession of his kingdom.

But on the night that he returned to the Court, the higher part of his nature began to stir uneasily within him. He had quite agreed to Margaret's desire to invite Mrs. Everett to meet them on their return, but he read a certain expression in the widow's sad eyes, and a certain look on Hetty's face, which stirred into active remorse the soul which had suffered more severely than anything else in the ordeal through which he had lived. His soul was now awake, and his voice was very poignant and keen; his notes clear, sharp and unrelenting.

In his excellent physical and mental health his first impulse was to defy the voice of his soul, and to live down the deed he had committed. His first wish was to hide his knowledge from all the world, and to go down to his grave in the course of time with his secret unconfessed. He did not believe it possible at least at first that the moral voice could not be easily silenced; but even on the first night of his awakening he was conscious of a change in himself. The sense of satisfaction, of complete enjoyment in life and its surroundings which had hitherto done so much for his recovery, was absent; he was conscious, intensely conscious, of his own hypocrisy, and he began vehemently to hate himself. All the same, his wish was to hide the evil thing, to allow Mrs. Everett to go down to the grave with a broken heart—to allow Everett to drink the cup of suffering and dishonor to the dregs.

Awdrey slept little during the first night of his return home. In the morning he arose to the full fact that he must either carry a terrible secret to his grave, or must confess all and bear the punishment which was now awarded to another. His strong determination on that first morning was to keep his secret. He went downstairs, putting a guard upon himself. Margaret saw nothing amiss with him—his face was full of alertness, keenness, interest in life, interest in his fellow creatures. Only Mrs. Everett, without understanding it, read the defiance, the veiled meaning in his eyes. He went away presently, and spent the day going about his property, seeing his constituents, and arranging the different steps he must take to ensure his return at the head of the poll. But as he visited from house to house, the new knowledge which he now possessed of himself kept following him. On all hands he was being welcomed and rejoiced over, but he knew in his heart of hearts that he was a hypocrite of the basest and lowest type. He was deliberately allowing another man to suffer in his stead. That fact caused the cruellest stab of all; it was that which harassed him, for it was contrary to all the traditions of his

house and name. His mental health was now so perfect that he was able to see with a wonderfully clear perception what would happen to himself if he refused to listen to the voice of his fast-recovering soul. In the past, while the cloud was over his brain, he had undergone terrible mental deterioration. The time might come when no un-canny voices would upbraid him, but then, as far as his soul was concerned, he would be lost. He knew all this, and bated himself profoundly, nevertheless his determination grew stronger and stronger to guard his secret at all hazards. The possibility that the truth might out, notwithstanding his efforts to conceal it, had not occurred to him, to add to his anxieties.

The day, a lovely one in late spring, had been one long triumph. Awdrey was assured that his election was a foregone conclusion. He tried to think of himself in the House; he was aware of the keenness and freshness of his own intellect; he thought it quite possible that his name might be a power in the future government of England. He fully intended to take his rightful position. For generations men of his name and family had also fought for their country both on land and sea. Yes, it was his bounden duty now to live for the honour of the old name; to throw up the sponge now, to admit all now would be madness—the worst folly of which a man could be capable. It was his duty to think of Margaret, to think of his property, his tenants, all that was involved in his own life.

Everett and Mrs. Everett would assuredly suffer; but what of that if many others were saved from suffering? Yes, it was his bounden duty to live now for the honour of the old name; he had also his descendants to think of. True his child was gone, but other children would in all probability yet be his—he must think of them. The future lay before him; he must carry the burden of that awful secret; he would carry it so closely pressed to his innermost heart that no one should guess by look, word, manner, by its gloomy eye, by an unsmiling lip, that its weight was on him. He would be gay, he would be brave, he would banish grief, he would try to banish remorse, he would live his life as best he could.

"I must pay the cost some day," he muttered to himself, "but I put off the payment. That is best. There is a tribunal, at the bar of which I shall doubtless receive full sentence; but that is all in the future; I accept the penalty; I will reap the wages by and by. Yes, I'll keep my secret to the death. The girl, Hetty, knows about it, but she must be silenced."

Awdrey rode quickly home in the sweet freshness of the lovely spring evening. He remembered that he was to meet Hetty the meeting would be difficult and also of some importance, but he would be guarded he would manage to silence her, to quiet her evident fears. Hetty was a guileless, affectionate, and pretty girl; she had been wonderfully true to him; he must be good to her, for she had suffered for his sake. It would be best to send Hetty and her husband to Canada; Vincent, who was a poor man, would doubtless be glad to emigrate with good prospects. Yes, they must go; it would be unpleasant meeting Hetty, knowing what she knew. Mrs. Everett must also not again be his guest; her presence irritated him, he disliked meeting her eyes; and yet he knew that while she was in the house he dared not shrink their glance; her presence and the knowledge that her pain was killing her made the sharp voice within him speak more loudly than he could quite bear. Mrs. Everett must go, and Hetty must go, and what was this memory which made him draw up his horse abruptly?—his lost walking stick. Ridiculous that such a trifle should worry a man all through his life; how it had haunted him during the six years when the cloud was over his brain! Even now the memory of it came up again to torment him. He had murdered Frere with that stick; the whole thing was the purest accident, but that did not greatly matter for the man had died, the ferrule of Awdrey's stick had entered his brain, causing instant death.

"I hid it in the underground," thought Awdrey. "I wonder where it is now—doubtless still there—but some day that part of the wood may be cut down and the stick may be found. It might tell tales, I must find it."

He jogged his horse, and rode slowly home under the arching trees of the long avenue. He had a good view of the long, low, rambling house from there—how sweet it looked, how homelike! But for this secret what a happy man he would be tonight! Ah, who was that standing at his office door? He started and hastened his horse's steps. Hetty Vincent was already there waiting for him.

"I must speak to her at once," he said to himself. "I hope no one will see her; it would never do for people to think she was having private interviews with me. This will be a disagreeable half-hour and must be got over quickly."

The square rode round the part of the avenue which led past the front of the long house. His wife, sisters, and Mrs. Everett were seated near a large window. They were drinking tea and talking. Margaret's elbow rested upon the window ledge. She wore a silk dress of the softest grey. Her lovely face showed in full profile. Suddenly she heard the sound of his horse's steps and turned round to greet him.

"There you are; we are waiting tea for you," she called out.

"Come in Robert, and have some," called Dorothy, putting her head out of the window.

Dorothy was his favorite sister. Under other circumstances he would have sprung from his horse, given it to the charge of a groom who stood near, and joined his wife and friends. Now he called back in a clear, incisive voice.

"I have to attend to some business at my

office, and will be in presently. Here, Davies, take my horse."

The man hurried forward and Awdrey strode round to the side entrance where his office was.

Hetty looking flushed and pretty in her rustic hat with a bunch of cowslips pinned into the front of her jacket, stood waiting for him.

Awdrey took a key out of his pocket. The office had no direct communication with the house, but was always entered from outside. He unlocked the door and motioned Hetty to proceed into the room. She did so, he entered after her, locked the door, and put the key into his pocket. The next thing he did was to look at the windows. There were three large windows to the office, and they all faced on to a grass lawn outside. Anyone passing by could have distinctly seen the occupants of the room.

Awdrey went and deliberately pulled down one of the blinds.

"Come over here," he said to Hetty. "Take this chair." He took another himself at a little distance from her. So seated his face was in shadow, but the full light of the western sun fell across hers. It lit up her bright eyes until they shone like jewels, and gave a bronze hue to her dark hair. The flush on her cheeks was of the damask of the rose; her cheeks were the rest of her face was milky white.

Long ago, as a young man, Awdrey had admired Hetty's real beauty, but no thought other than that of simple admiration had entered his brain. He was not the nature to be really attracted by a woman below himself in station. Now, however, his pulse beat a little faster than its wont as he glanced at her. He remembered with a swift, poignant sense of regret all that she had done for him and suffered for him. He could see traces of the trouble through which she had lived in her face; that trouble and her present anxiety gave a piquancy to her beauty of the rustic village girl. As he watched her he forgot for a moment what she had come to speak to him about. Then he remembered it, and he drew himself together, but a pang shot through his heart. He thought of the small deceit which he was guilty of in drawing down the blind and placing himself and his auditor where no one from outside could observe them.

"You want to speak to me," he said abruptly. "What about?"

"You must know, Mr. Robert," began Hetty. Her coral lips trembled, she looked like someone who would break into hysterical weeping at any moment.

"This must be put a stop to," Awdrey bestowed another swift glance upon her, and took her measure.

"I cannot pretend ignorance," he said, "but please try not to lose your self-control."

Hetty gulped down a great sob, the tears in her eyes were not allowed to fall.

"Then you remember?" she said.

Awdrey nodded.

"You remember everything, Mr. Robert?"

He nodded again.

"But you forgot at the time, sir."

The Squire stood up; he put his hands behind him.

"I forgot absolutely," he said. "I suffered from the curse of my house. A cloud fell on me, and I knew no more than a babe unborn."

"I guessed that, sir; I was certain of it. That was why I took your part."

Awdrey waited until she was silent. Then he continued in a monotonous strained tone.

"I have found my memory again. Four or five months ago at the beginning of this winter I came here. I visited the spot where the murder was committed, and owing to a chain of remarkable circumstances, which I need not repeat to you, the memory of my deed came back to me."

"You killed him, sir, because he provoked you," said Hetty.

"You were present and you saw everything?"

"I was, sir, I saw everything. You killed him because he angered you."

"I killed him through an accident. I did so in self-defence."

"Yes, sir."

Hetty also stood up. She sighed deeply.

"The knowledge of it has nearly killed me," she said at last, sinking back again into her seat.

"I am not surprised at that," said the Squire. "You did what you did out of consideration for me, and I suppose I ought to be deeply indebted to you—he pained and looked fixedly at her—"all the same," he continued, "I fully believe it would have been much better had you not sworn falsely in court—had you not given wrong evidence."

"Did you think I'd let you swing for it?" said the girl with flashing eyes.

"I should probably not have been hanged. You could not have proved that the assault was unprovoked, and that I did what I did in self-defence. I wish you had not concealed the truth."

"Sir, is that all the thanks you give me? You do not know what this has been to me. Aunt Fanny and I—"

"Does your aunt, Mrs. Armitage, know the truth?"

"I had to tell Aunt Fanny or I'd gone mad, sir. She and me, we swore on the Bible that we would never tell mortal man or woman what I saw done. You're as safe with Aunt Fanny and me, Mr. Robert, as if no one in all the world knew. You were one of the family—that was enough for aunt—and you was to me—she paused, coloured, and looked down. Then she continued abruptly, "Mr. Everett was nothing, nothing to me, nothing to aunt. He was a stranger, not one of our own people. Aunt Fanny kept me up to it, and I didn't make one single mistake in court, and not a soul in the world guesses."

"One person suspects," said Awdrey.

"You mean Mrs. Everett, sir. Yes, Mrs. Everett is a dreadful woman." She frightened me. She seems to read right through my heart."

The Squire did not reply. He began to pace up and down in the part of the room which was lying in shadow. Hetty watched him with eyes which seemed to devour him—his upright figure was slightly bent, his bowed head had lost its look of youth and alertness. He found that the moral part of him could be troublesome to the point of agony. If the inner voice spoke like this often and for long could he endure the frightful strain? There was a way in which he could silence it. There was a path of thorns which his feet might tread. Could they take it? That path would lead to the complete martyrdom, the absolute ruin of his own life. But life, after all, was short, and there was a beyond. Mar-

garet—what would Margaret feel? How would she bear the awful shock. He knew then, a flash of thought convinced him, that he must never tell Margaret the truth if he wished to keep this ghastly thing to himself, for Margaret would rather go through the martyrdom which it meant, and set his conscience and her own free.

Awdrey looked again at Hetty. She was pale, her eyes almost wild with fear—she seemed to be reading his thoughts. Suddenly her outward calm gave way, she left her seat and fell on her knees—her voice rose in sobs.

"I know what you're thinking of," she cried. "You think you'll tell me—your think you'll save him and save her, but for God's sake—"

"Do not say that," interrupted Awdrey.

"Then for the devil's sake—for any sake, for my sake, for your own, for Mrs. Awdrey's, don't do it, Squire, don't do it."

"Don't do what?" said Awdrey. "I'll be damned if I will."

"What did you think I was going to do?"

"Oh, you frightened me awfully when you looked like that—I thought you were making up your mind. Squire don't tell what you know—don't tell what I've done. I'll be locked up and you'll be locked up, and Mrs. Awdrey's heart will break; we'll all be disgraced, and, Squire, maybe they'll hang you. Think of one of the family coming to that. Oh, sir, you've no right to tell now. You have to think of me now. I've kept your secret for close on six years, and if they knew what I had done they'd lock me up, and I couldn't stand it. You dare not confess now—for my sake, sir."

"Get up," said Awdrey. "I can't talk over matters while you kneel to me. I have done a good deal for me, and I'm bound to consider your position. Now, I am going to tell you something which perhaps you will scarcely understand. I remember the act of which I was guilty several months ago, but until last night I was not troubled about what I had done. I had no remorse. Now, I am full of remorse. It is impossible for me to tell you at present whether I shall do the right—the only right thing, or elect to lead a life of deceit and hypocrisy. Both paths will be difficult to follow, but one leads to life, the highest life, and the other to death, the lowest death. It is quite possible that I may choose the lowest course. If I do, you, Hetty Vincent, will know the truth about me. To the outside world I shall appear to be a good man, for whatever my suffering, I shall endeavour to help my people, and to set them an outward example of morality. I shall apparently live for them and will think no trouble too great to promote their best interests. Only you, Hetty, will know me for what I am—a liar—a man who has committed murder, and then concealed his crime—a hypocrite. You will know that much as I am thought of here amongst my own people, I am allowing an innocent man to wear out his life in penal servitude because I have not the courage to confess my deed. You will also know that I am breaking the heart of this man's mother."

"The knowledge won't matter to me, Squire. I'd rather you were happy and all the rest of the world miserable. I'd far, far rather."

"Do you think that I shall be happy?"

"I don't know," cried Hetty. "Perhaps you'll forget after a bit, and that voice inside you won't speak so loud. It used to worry me once, but now—it has grown dull."

"It will never cease to speak. I know myself too well to have any doubt on that point, but all the same I may take the downward course. I can't say. The inner voice has only just begun to trouble me. I may obey its dictates, or I may deliberately lead the life of a hypocrite. If I choose to do the latter, can you stand the test?"

"I have stood it for five years."

"But I have not been at home—the Court has been shut up. An absentee landlord is not always to the front in his people's thoughts. Let me look at you, Hetty Vincent. You are not well—your cheeks are hollow and your eyes are too bright. Mrs. Everett is persuaded that you carry a secret. I see this so others may think the same. Your aunt also knows."

"Aunt is different from me," said Hetty. "She didn't see it done. I don't wear her like it wears me. But I think, sir, now that you have come back, and I am quite certain that I know your true mind, and when I remember, too, that you are carrying the burden as well as me, and that we two—she paused, her voice broke—"I think, sir," she added, "that it won't wear me so much in the future."

"You must on no account be tried. If I resolve to keep the secret of my guilt from all the rest of the world, you must leave the country."

"We leave the country?" cried Hetty. "My face became ghastly, her eyes brimmed again with tears. "Then you would indeed kill me," she said, with a moan—"to leave you Mr. Robert, you must guess why I have done all this."

"Hush," he said, in a harsh tone. He approached the window, where the blind was drawn up. He saw, or fancied he saw—Mrs. Everett's dark figure passing by in the distance. He retreated quickly into the shaded part of the room.

"I cannot afford to misunderstand your words," he said, after a pause. "But that is a subject I will not discuss. The thing for you to remember is this—if I keep this thing to myself I can only do it on condition that you and your husband leave the country. I have not yet made up my mind."

## It Makes a Good Breakfast.



Above all drinks for the morning meal Coffee stands supreme. The odor of it, rich and pungent, prevades the house like an incense. It is our claim and pride that we supply the homes of the land with Coffee of the finest quality. The best the earth affords we give them. There is no variation in the quality of our "Seal Brand" Coffee, every package is of the same high grade. On it our reputation stands.

Packed in air tight tin cans only.

CHASE & SANBORN.

BOSTON. MONTREAL. CHICAGO.

Nothing can be settled to-night. You had better not stay any longer."

Hetty rose tottering and approached the door. Awdrey took the key from his pocket, and unlocked it for her. As he did so he asked her a question.

"You saw everything. You saw the deed done?"

"Yes, sir, I saw the stick in your hand—"

"That is the point I am coming to," said the Squire. "What did I do with the stick?"

"You pushed it into the midst of some underwood, about twenty feet from the spot where—"

"She could not finish her sentence."

"Yes," said Awdrey, slowly. "I remember that. Has the stick been found?"

"No, Mr. Robert, that couldn't be."

"Why do you say so? The underwood may be cut at any moment. The stick has my name on it. It may come to light."

"I can't, sir—taint there, Aunt Fanny and me, we thought of that, and we went the night after the murder, and took the stick out from where you had put it, weighed it with stones, and threw it into the deep pond close by. You need not fear that, Mr. Robert."

Awdrey did not answer, but his eyes narrowed to a line of satisfaction, and a cunning expression came into them, altogether foreign to his face.

He softly opened the door, and Hetty passed out, then he locked it again.

He was alone with his conscience. He fell on his knees and covered his face.

"God, Thy judgments are terrible," he groaned.

## CHAPTER XXII.

There was a short cut at the back of the office which would take Hetty to the high road without passing round by the front of the house. It so happened that no one saw her go. When she reached the road she stopped still to give vent to a deep sigh of satisfaction. Things were not right, but they were better than she had dared to hope. Of course, the Squire remembered—he could not have looked at her as he had done the night before, if memory had not fully come back to him. He remembered—told her so, but she was also nearly certain that he would not confess to the world at large the crime of which he was guilty.

"I'll keep him to that," thought Hetty. "He may think nought of himself—it's in his race not to think of themselves—but he'd think of his wife and praps he'd think a bit of me. There's Mrs. Everett and there's her son, and they both suffer and suffer bad, but then again there's Mrs. Awdrey and there's me—there's two on us agen two," continued Hetty, rapidly thinking out the case, and ranging the pros, and cons, in due order in her mind, "yes, there's two agen two," she repeated. "Mrs. Everett and her son are suffering now—then it'd be Mrs. Awdrey and me—and surely Mrs. Awdrey is nearer to the Squire, and maybe I'm a bit nearer to the Squire than he, other two yes, it is but fair that he should keep the secret to himself."

The sun had long set and twilight had fallen over the land. Hetty had to walk uphill to reach the Gables, the name of her husband's farm. It would therefore take her longer to return home than it did to come to the Court. She was anxious to get back as quickly as possible. It would never do for Vincent to find out that she had deceived him. If he slept soundly, as she fully expected he would, there was not the least fear of her secret being discovered. Susan never entered the house after four in the afternoon. The men who worked in the fields would return to the yard to put away their tools but they would have nothing to do in connection with the house itself—thus Vincent would be left undisturbed during the hours of refreshment and restoration which Hetty hoped he was enjoying.

"Yes, I did well," she murmured to herself, quickening her steps as the thought came to her. "I've seen Squire and there's nought to be dreaded for a bit anyway. The more he thinks of it the less he'll like to see himself in the prisoner's dock and me and Mrs. Awdrey and aunt as witnesses agen 'im—and knowing, too, that me, and, perhaps, aunt, too, will be put in the dock in our turn. He's bound to think of us, for we thought of him—he won't like to get us into a hole, and he's safe not to do it. Yes, things look straight enough for a bit, anyway. I'm glad I saw Squire—he looked splendid, too, stronger than I ever see 'im. He don't care one bit for me, and I—his eyes flashed so angry when I nearly let out—yes, I quite let out my secret. He said, 'I can't affect to misunderstand you.' Ah, he knows at last, he knows the truth. I'm glad he knows the truth. There's a fire inside of me, and it burns and burns—it's love for him—all my life it has consumed within me. There nought I wouldn't do for 'im. Shame! I'd take it light for his sake—it rested me fine to see 'im, and to take a real good look at 'im. Queer, ain't it, that I should care so much for a man what never give me a thought, but what is, is, and can't be helped. Poor Vincent, he worships the ground I walk on, and while Squire lives, I wonder if Squire thought me pretty to-night. I wonder if he noticed the wild flowers in the bosom of my jacket—I wonder! I'm glad I've a secret with 'im; he must see me sometimes, and he must talk on it; and then he'll notice that I'm pretty—prettier than most girls. Oh, my heart, how it beats!"

Hetty was struggling up the hill, pant-

ing as she went. The pain in her side got worse, owing to the exercise. She had presently to stop to take breath.

"He said summat 'bout going away," she murmured to herself; "he wants me and Vincent to leave the country, but we won't go. No, I draw the line there. He thinks I'll split on 'im. I! Little he knows me. I must manage to show him that I can hold my secret, so as no one in all the world suspects. Oh, good God, I wish the pain in my side did not keep on so constant. I'll take some of the black stuff when I get in; it always soothes me; the pain will soon go after I take it, and I'll sleep like a top tonight. Poor George, what a sleep he's havin'; he'll be lively, and in the best of humors when he wakes; you always are when you've taken that black stuff. Now, I must hurry on, it's getting late."

She made another effort, and reached the summit of the hill.

From there the ground sloped away until it reached the Gables Farm. Hetty now put wings to her feet and began to run, but the pain in her side stopped her again, and she was obliged to proceed more slowly.

She reached home just when it was dark; the place was absolutely silent.

Susan, who did not sleep in the house had gone away; the men had evidently come into the yard, put their tools by, and gone off to their respective homes.

"That's good," thought Hetty. "Vincent's still asleep—I'm safe. Now, if I hurry up he'll find the place lighted and cheerful, and everything nice, and his supper laid out for him, he'll never guess, never, never."

She unlatched the gate which led into the great yard; the fowls began to rustle on their perches, and the house dog, Rover, came softly up to her, and rubbed his head against her knee; she patted him abstractedly, and hurried on to the house.

She had a latchkey with which she opened the side door; she let herself in, and shut it behind her. The place was still and dark.

Hetty knew her way well; she stole softly along the dark passage, and opened the kitchen door. The fire smouldered low in the range, and in the surrounding darkness seemed to greet her, something like an angry eye. When she entered the room, she did not know why she shivered.

"He's sound asleep," she murmured to herself; "that lovely black stuff has done 'im a power of good. I'll have a dose soon myself, for my heart beats so 'ard, and the pain in my side is that bad."

She approached the fire place, opened the door of the range, and stirred the smouldering coals into the semblance of a blaze.

By this light which was very fitful and quickly expired, she directed her steps to a shelf, where a candle-stick and candle and matches were placed. She struck a match and lit the candle. With the candle in her hand she then, softly on tiptoes, approached the settle where her husband lay. She did not want to wake him yet, and held the candle in such a manner that the light did not fall on his face. As far as she could tell he had not stirred since she left him, two or three hours ago; he was lying on his back, his arms were stretched out at full length at each side, his lips were slightly open—as well as he could see, his face was pale, though he was as a rule a florid man.

"He's sleepin' beautiful," thought Hetty; "everything has happened splendid. I'll run upstairs and take off my hat and jacket; and make myself look as trim as I can, for he do like, poor George do, to see me look pretty. Then I'll come down and lay the supper on the table, and then when everything is ready I think I'll wake him. He'll asleep soon after four, and it's a good bit after eight now. I slept much longer than four hours after my first dose of the nice black stuff, but I think I'll wake him when supper is ready. I'll be real fun when he sees the hours and knows how long he's slept."

Holding her candle in her hand Hetty left the kitchen and proceeded to light the different lamps which stood about in the passages. She then went to her own nice bedroom and lit a pair of candles which were placed on each side of her dressing glass. Having done this, she drew down the blinds and shut the windows. She then carefully removed her hat, took the cowslip out of her bosom of her dress, kissed them and put them in water.

"Squire looked at 'em," she said to herself.

"He didn't touch 'em, no, but he looked at 'em, and then he looked at me and I saw in his eyes that he knew I were pretty. I was glad then. Seemed as if it were worth living just for to