

home. She informed me that Marie was now a sister in St. Jeanne D'Armoise Hospital at Rolston, and further added that she had assumed the name Mary St. Thomas.

Being fond of adventure, and having nothing in particular to do for a month or so, I decided to visit the place and to learn what I could of her.

When I went up the big stone stairs, when I was ushered into the spacious writing-room, I hadn't the slightest idea that my request would be granted, but summoning all my courage I asked if I might see Sister Mary St. Thomas. My request was granted, but with a reservation, for another sister accompanied her. She dared not even smile, and the coldness of manner, the deep black gown, caused me to lose all interest in her for the time. Nevertheless, I decided to give her a fairer chance to talk with me, and for this purpose engaged a room in her ward, under the pretense that I wished a rest from business.

No sooner was I installed in my room than I heard some one sadly singing. They opened the door. It was Marie, or, as I should say, Sister Mary St. Thomas. She forgot all her nunly dignity, she rushed toward me, but checked herself and, advancing, took my hand, which I had stretched out unwittingly. Looking straight into my eyes she half sobbed: "Can't you, oh, won't you help me?" I stood dazed, I can't say how long, then I realized that I was actually holding a nun's hand, and that I had one arm around her waist. I almost pushed her from me and sank into a chair. She did the same; and then finally uttered: "I acted rashly, I was so glad to see you, and yet I had to remain so dignified in the waiting-room—at the same time I feared I'd never see you again. You'll forgive me, won't you?" Forgive her? I nearly forgot she was a nun; she was again my old friend Marie. She told me how for four years she had been locked up in that nunnery, with windows barred, dismal walls and ceilings, ghostly crosses, and seeing no one but nuns; how she dared not tell how she hated all this, lest a hundred and one curses be pronounced on her. She told me how she hated the hospital, the odor of the drugs, the groans of the patients, and finally implored me, actually implored me, to aid her to escape.

I had come for adventure, and surely I was not disappointed—here this girl's whole future happiness depended on me. Successful and again she would be free; unsuccessful and she would, in all probability, be barred up for life in a nunnery.

Numerous plans presented themselves, escape by alley-ways, by rear entrances under cover of darkness, but all these plans gave way to the boldest of all. She was off duty at nine o'clock; at this hour she would disguise herself by dressing in the clothes of one of the patients and we would escape openly. Everything favored this scheme. All the lights in the halls were turned low at this hour; the elevator stopped running, although anyone might use it who understood how to work it. There were several trains leaving the city about that time, and we would not likely be missed for several hours.

On the stroke of nine Marie came to me to say she would soon be ready, and twenty minutes later a beautiful young girl came waltzing into my room, humming one of the old tunes. She was the same girl as of old, and I caught