

"It is curious, and in his own way of looking at things may be significant, that your telegram reached me on the day following the seventh anniversary of the beginning of his exile."

"He had looked forward to the seventh anniversary as marking the end of the dark influences; he believed there would be a vast change in his affairs."

"If only he lives!" she exclaimed. "Is it possible that he can ever step back into the world he left?"

"You may be sure he has planned a return, with marriage at the very threshold."

"Then God grant that he may live!" she said fervently.

The following evening, after Dr. Mosgrove's visit had left their hopes high, Archie carried her to Heart o' Dreams. Happiness shone in the stars over the northern waters. Putney Congdon and his wife were enjoying to the full the peace that followed upon the storms of their married life. They had established themselves in a tent on the outskirts of the camp and declared that they might remain there forever. A girl bugler sounded taps and the lights went out, leaving tired and happy youth to the fellowship of dreams.

Isabel gave Archie no opportunity to speak to her alone, and he found her aloofness dismaying. Her scruples against hearing protestations of love from a man she believed she had injured were creditable to her conscience, but Archie was all impatient to shatter them. She made a candid confession to Mrs. Congdon, with Putney and Archie standing by.

"With malice aforethought I practiced my vampirish arts upon these two men! And, Alice, the cruelest thing you could do would be to forgive me!