

the night. She ordered breakfast in her room, and, making a careful toilet, entered the library before ten. Felisa left her chair and came to purr a welcome at her feet. Madge had tried to persuade her uncle to remain in bed for the day. Dr. Soper had said rest was desirable. The old man would have his own way. Why had they refused to let Archer attend him? Soper was a petticoat doctor. He insisted on rising even earlier than usual, and after breakfast went into the library. Here Mrs. Hunter found him seated.

"I will come back presently," said Madge, and left the room as Lucretia entered.

"Where have you been?" Fairthorne said to Lucretia. "If you neglect me I shall die."

She soothed him, stroked his gray hair, and gave a laughing account of her shopping and of the bad manners of the shop-girls. Had he taken his arsenic? As she desired to please Soper, she had given it steadily of late.

"No; no one looked after him." This was incorrect; Mary had given it before breakfast, but he had forgotten.

"I will give it," she said; "Dr. Soper wishes it given in a little sherry."

She went down-stairs and poured into the small medicine-cup a glassful of sherry wine. In her own room she added a teaspoonful of aconite and then a little water. She put the half-empty vial in her pocket and returned to the library.

On the stair she halted. The indecision of the unhabitual criminal was upon her. Was there no