

while the priest said things they but half understood, but that made the world's difference to them, then and afterwards.

It was soon done, and he raised his trembling hand and blessed them, saying the words very softly and clearly and without stumbling, for they were familiar, and meant much; and having reached them, his haste was over. The dwarf was on his knees, his rough red head bent reverently low, and on the other side Inez knelt with joined hands, her blind eyes turned upward to her sister's face, while she prayed that all blessings of life and joy might be on the two she loved so well, and that they might have for ever and unbroken the infinite happiness she had felt for one instant that night, not meant for her, but dearer to her than all memories or hopes.

Then as the priest's words died away in the silent room, there was a sound of many feet and of many voices on the terrace outside, coming nearer and nearer to the door, very quickly; and the priest looked round in terror, not knowing what new thing was to come upon him, and wishing with all his heart that he were safe in his tower room again and out of all harm's way. But Don John smiled, while he still held Dolores' hand, and the dwarf rose quickly and led the priest into the study where Dolores had been shut up so long, and closed the door behind him.

That was hardly done when the outer door was opened wide, and a clear, formal voice was heard speaking outside.