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sitting-room, arranged after the fashion of most undergraduates' rooms, though with abundant indication, in the books and papers which strewed the tables, and in the engravings on the walls, that Reginald Courtenay was not one of the fast men of his college. The room was empty, but a half open door led into another, and Ernestine went in at once. On the threshold, however, she stopped, startled to the last degree at the sight which presented itself. The room was small, like most college bedrooms, and contained little besides the bed and a table covered with books, where a lamp, which Reginald had apparently forgotten to extinguish, still burned with a sickly flame, scarce visible in the bright sunshine that filled the room. Reginald himself sat in a low easy-chair at the open window, gazing out into the clear sky, which alone was visible from it. He did not hear his sister's light step, and she had time to scan the familiar face, so changed, that she scarcely recognised it, before he turned. It was nearly a year since she had seen him. In the previous long vacation he had gone with a reading party to Wales, and had, much to her regret, avoided, on some slight pretext, coming to London to see her before returning to Greyburgh in October. When they last met, he had been delicate-looking, as he always was; but the indications of weakness of the chest, which had often alarmed her about him, had been less apparent than formerly. In the interval, he had never said a word about failing health, and had indeed written rarely and briefly, although his letters, short as they were, had betrayed a *malaise*, either mental or bodily, which had caused her a vague uneasiness. And now, as she looked at him, the conviction came upon her, sudden and irresistible, that he was not only dangerously ill, but that he had scarce a few days to live. The shock of this overwhelming impression was so great that she stood transfixed to the spot, scanning in dismay the wasted features, with their unmistakable symptoms of decaying life, and the attenuated figure, lying motionless in the languor of utter weakness. He was but one-and-twenty, and had been remarkable for the refined beauty of his face. It was now white and sharp of outline, as if cut in marble, and all that remained to him of life seemed gathered in his dark eyes, which looked, from his extreme emaciation, unnaturally large, and were glowing with a restless, feverish light, that spoke of intense unrest. The heavy masses of his dark hair, damp with the dews of weakness, were pushed back from his hollow temples, as if their weight were too

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