

The Marriage of William Ashe

Looking back afterwards, also, he remembered that she spoke several times of religious hopes and beliefs—especially of the hope in another life—and that they seemed to sustain her. Most keenly did he recollect the delicacy with which she had refrained from asking his opinion upon them, lest it should trouble him not to be able to uphold or agree with her; while, at the same time, she wished him to have the comfort of remembering that she had drawn strength and calm, in these last hours, from religious thoughts.

For they proved, indeed, to be the last hours. About three the morning began to dawn, clear and rosy, with rich lights striking on the snow. Suddenly Kitty sat up, disengaged herself from her wraps, and tottered to her feet.

“I’ll go back to my room,” she said, in bewilderment. “I’d rather.”

And as she clung to him, with a startled yet half-considering look, she gazed round her, at the bright fire, the morning light, the chair from which he had risen—his face.

He tried to dissuade her. But she would go. Her aspect, however, was deathlike, and as he softly undid the doors, and half-helped, half-carried her across the passage, he said to her that he must go and waken Fräulein Anna and find a doctor.

“No—no ” She grasped him with all her remaining strength; “stay with me.”

They entered the little room, which seemed to be in a glory of light, for the sun striking across the low roof of the inn had caught the foamy water-fall beyond, and the