

It is almost sure that the mother knew what was passing in his mind, but she had grown accustomed to find her joy in such little things, and now the wonder of his last few words overwhelmed her; she neither questioned nor qualified them; they were so beautiful to her, lifting her absolutely out of the dark anguish of the last twenty-four hours, endowing her with a hope she had never imagined she would know again!

John Cheston paused for a moment watching her, then he said "Good-night" for a second time, and at the sound of his voice she woke from the magic of the spell he had put upon her.

She moved forward hurriedly.

"Good-night, my dearest, . . . my dear one," she said; "God bless you always!"

He gave her a short nod of the head, then closed the door and went away.

The dying coals in the grate shifted suddenly, and a strong flame leaped into being for a few seconds; the light fell on the face of the woman standing in the middle of the room, and found there a look of almost radiant youth!