

the priest's voice, so I took courage and pushed the door a little open so that I could see the King.

It was very dark within the curtains, for they were drawn against the candlelight; but I could see what was passing. His Majesty was lying flat upon his back, with his hands clasped beneath his chin, and Mr. Huddleston was in the very act of arranging the coverlet over him again, after the last Anointing. As I looked the priest turned and caught my eyes, as he put the oil-stock and the wool away again in his cassock-breast. I nodded three times very emphatically—(His Majesty did not see me at all, for his eyes were closed)—and went back again down the stairs and kneeled once more. A few moments later Mr. Huddleston came through.

I have never seen so swift a change in any man's face. He had been terrified as he had gone in—all pale and shaking. Now he was still pale, but his eyes shone, and there was a look of great assurance in his face. He came straight down the steps without speaking, kneeled, rose again, took up the Pyx and the corporal which Father de Lemoz had spread beneath it, and passed up and out again. His priesthood, I suppose, had risen in him like a great tide, and driven out all other emotions.

Again I followed him to the door, and kneeled there where I could see; and then there followed such a scene as I had never dreamed of.

The curtains on the other side of the bed had been drawn back just enough to admit the face of the Duke who now kneeled there, yet not so much that any of the three others at the further end of the chamber could see into the bed. The candlelight streamed in through the opening above the Duke's head; and in it, I saw His Majesty, all weak as he was, striving to rise, with his eyes fixed on That which the priest was holding in his right hand. I saw the priest's left hand go out to restrain him; but I heard the King's voice distinctly.

"Father," he said very brokenly, "let me receive my Heavenly Saviour in a better posture than lying on my bed."