

"It was not because you have fallen in love with me, then?" I scoffed.

"When you are Margaret, I love you . . . I love you."

The whole secret flashed on me then, flashed through his strange, perfervid eyes. We were in full view of a curious housemaid at a window, but he knelt down by my couch, as he had knelt by Margaret.

"You are Margaret. I have really known it all the time. Tell me the truth. And there is no other fellow now. You always said if it were not for Gab Stanton . . ."

I quieted him with difficulty. I saw what was the matter. Of course I ought to have seen it before, but vanity, and Ella, obscured the truth. The poor fellow's mind was unhinged. For years he had brooded and brooded, yet worked magnificently at his profession, worked at making amends. The place where I had brought out the latent mischief. Now he implored me to marry him, to show him I was glad I had carried out my wishes.

"Your heart is now quite well . . . I have sounded it over and over again. You will never have a return of those pains. Margaret . . ."

I got rid of him that day as quickly as possible, not answering yes or no definitely, marking time, soothing him disingenuously. Before the next was at its meridian I had hurriedly quitted Browans. Left Pineland all the strange, absorbing story, and this poor, obsessed doctor. I left a letter for him, the most difficult piece of prose I have ever written. I was writing to a madman to persuade him he was sane! I gave urgent