
THE WATER CURSE

"Rushing to the kitchen, he seized a large tin of water, and carrying it to his lips, he began to drink eagerly. I thought he would kill himself, for he took every drop, except what he spilled in his madness to drink and satisfy his terrible thirst.

"Strange to say, he calmed down, and burying his face in his hands, he wept, a broken-spirited man."

"You think it changed him?"

"He was from that moment another man. A more hopeless and afflicted looking man you could not easily find. I feared insanity before the curse worked its worst upon him. I do not know what the effect of the fatal thirst will finally be, but if he does not lose his reason entirely, he will kill himself. Poor boy, poor boy!" murmured the old man.

"It seems to me a wonderful case, and impossible to understand. Has he been under any treatment?"

"He spent some time with two eminent physicians who were interested in his case, but they failed to help him in any way, and did not seem to understand the affliction at all. He is away now. It unfits him sadly for any occupation, and his easy means of living permits him too much time to brood over his condition."

"He has ceased expecting any hope from Marie, then?"

"He no longer speaks of her. He does not even mention your name now. He is dead to his old life, old in his youth, and with no desire in life but