

had been in the nature of a triumphal procession, first one and then another had crowded to shake hands, to have a word with him, to offer a welcome, or congratulate him on his recovery.

Having at length escaped from nurses and medical students, he stood looking upon the poor wreck of a woman, who was being slowly snatched back from the jaws of death. A very travesty of a woman! Hollow-cheeked and hollow-eyed, without movement or desire for life.

Arnold tried to trace in the altered features some resemblance to the beautiful girl he had been called out to attend on the fatal night when he disappeared from Harley Street. As he watched her, the weary lids lifted, and again he saw sad violet eyes lifted appealingly to his with a shrinking terror which was pitiful to see. In the lifted eyes he read the resemblance he had before sought for in vain.

"Do you remember me?" he asked gently.

"You came—once—a doctor?" the words were whispered softly.

"I see you do remember," said Arnold kindly. "What is your name?"

"Rose."

Arnold Bassingbroke looked more attentively at her with a new and startled interest. Some tone in the low, slow voice, some expression in the sad eyes, an almost intangible resemblance, recalled Violet to him. He bent lower and said quietly:

"Rose—Vernon?"

She looked at him in surprise.

"How did you know? That was my name before I—married—Archie—Robinson."

Arnold started violently.

"Archie Robinson? You were married to him?—When?"

"Three years ago—before we went to France. I was companion to Miss Field-Robinson—he didn't want—his aunt—to know."

"Where were you married?"

"At—a registry office—in—London." Her voice grew very faint.

"You mean, to Lord Wallsend?" asked Arnold.

The woman shook her head.

"Lord Wallsend—is—his—uncle. I've heard—Archie mention him. It was because of his great relations—he didn't want our marriage known. He forbade me—to—write—to anyone—or to—tell anyone."

"Old Lord Wallsend died over a year ago. Your husband has the title now."

THE woman lay for some time with closed eyes, as if trying to grasp the meaning of these words, then she looked up again.

"I know now why he changed so suddenly—he never told me. When he left me—he said he was going to Africa—to start an ostrich farm—I was to follow when he got one. He left me in Brittany—I never heard from him again. The place was so lonely that I felt—like a prisoner—I became ill—I believe I was being poisoned. I got away. A fisherman helped me to escape. I came over in a fishing smack from France. It was so rough—the violent pitching and seasickness brought on the premature birth of my baby at sea—it was dead—I had no attention and I was nearly dead too, by the time I reached Portman Square."

She shuddered at the name and closed her eyes again.

"Why did you go there?" asked Arnold in surprise.

"I meant to—to—throw myself on the mercy of Miss Field-Robinson. She was always—good to me. I didn't—know—she was dead. When I got to the house—I fell into one fainting fit after another—I could go no further."

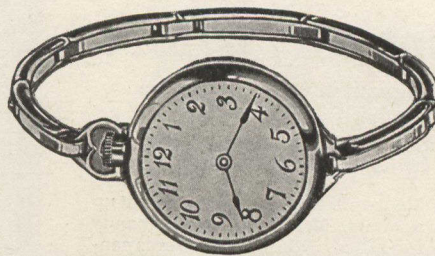
"And then?"

"They went—for—a doctor—they got frightened—thought I was dying—I wish I had died," she sighed.

"When you got better—you didn't leave?"

"I couldn't. I was ill—a—long time—I was penniless. When I tried to get away, I found I was a prisoner, I was locked in an empty room. I think they used to drug me with

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