

"Hold on," said Brown in a loud voice. "Shock will be here in a minute. He'll be sorry to miss you, I am sure."

For a moment Helen stood irresolute, when the door opened and Shock, pale, but quiet and self-controlled, appeared. He had just been face to face for the first time with his great grief. The thought that filled his mind, overwhelming all others, was that his mother had passed forever beyond the touch of his hand and the sound of his voice. Never till that moment had he taken in the full meaning of the change that had come to his life.

During the minutes he had spent in his mother's room he had allowed his mind to go back over the long years so full of fond memory, and then he had faced the future. Alone henceforth he must go down the long trail. By his mother's bed he had knelt, and had consecrated himself again to the life she had taught him to regard as worthy, and with the resolve in his heart to seek to be the man she would desire him to be and had expected him to be, he rose from his knees.

When he opened the door the dignity of his great grief and of a lofty purpose was upon him, and he greeted Helen unembarrassed and with a serene consciousness of self-mastery.

"I am glad to see you, Miss Fairbanks," he said, taking her hand. "I am glad that we meet here, for it was here, in this house, that you gave such loving and tender care to my dear mother. However long I may live, whatever may come to me, I shall never for-