

little man followed through the outer room. He beckoned to two others within the sick-room, a white-capped woman and a doctor. They saw, understood, and Andrew went up to the bed alone with the door closed behind him.

"Judith," he said, "my own little girl."

A long tremour shook the slight form under the coverlets, and then—then he was on his knees with the flowers flung all across the bed and his arms about her. And Judith? Poor Judith's eyes were wide and frightened, for she thought the change had come that she had waited for, expected, even longed for; she thought this was Death, and even although the crab blooms were there, and Andrew, still it was awesome. Yet Death should have brought white flowers, not apple blooms such as grew in Andrew's woods. And were Death's arms ever so sustaining, so tender, so warm as these? And surely Death did not come garbed in shabby, smoky velvet, nor bend above his victims a brown passionate face wet with tears?

"Andrew, it's you, and you're crying," and then followed a faint whisper of delight—from her—for Andrew's courage and calm were gone at last. He could not speak. And once more she smiled at him the old womanly smile, from the old honest eyes, and stretched forth feeble fingers striving to reach about his neck.