

MERRY CHRISTMAS

"That sound!" he said. "Listen! It is guns—I hear them!"

"No, no," I said, "it is nothing. Only a car passing in the street below."

"Listen," he said. "Hear that again—voices crying!"

"No, no," I answered, "not voices, only the night wind among the trees."

"My children's voices!" he exclaimed. "I hear them everywhere—they come to me in every wind—and I see them as I wander in the night and storm—my children—torn and dying in the trenches—beaten into the ground—I hear them crying from the hospitals—each one to me, still, as I knew him once, a little child. Time, Time," he cried, reaching out his arms in appeal, "give me back my children!"

"You see?" said Time. "His heart is breaking, and will you not help him if you can?"

"Only too gladly," I replied. "But what is there to do?"

"This," said Father Time, "listen."

He stood before me, grave and solemn, a shadowy figure but half seen though he was close beside me. The firelight had died down, and through the curtained windows there came already the