

him delirious, gave him hallucinations—open-eyed illusions. All the time Rosalie knelt at the foot of the bed, her piteous tearless eyes for ever fixed on his face.

Towards evening, with an unnatural strength, he sat up in bed.

"See," he whispered, "that woman in the corner there; she has come to take me, but I will not go."

Fantasy after fantasy possessed him—fantasy, strangely mixed with facts of his own past. Now it was Kathleen, now Billy, now Jo Portugais, now John Brown, now Suzon Charlemagne at the Côte Dorion, again Jo Portugais. In strange, touching sentences he spoke to them, as though they were present before him. At length he stopped abruptly, and gazed straight before him—over the head of Rosalie into the distance.

"See!" he said pointing, "who is that? Who? I can't see his face—it is covered. So tall—so white! He is opening his arms to me. He is coming—closer—closer. Who is it?"

"It is Death, my son," said the priest in his ear, with a pitying gentleness.

The Cnré's voice seemed to calm the agitated sense, to bring it back to the outer precincts of understanding. There was an awe-struck silence as the dying man fumbled, fumbled, over his breast, found his eye-glass, and, with a last feeble effort, raised it to his eye, shining now with an unearthly fire. The old interrogation of the soul, the elemental habit outlived all else in him. The idiosyncrasy of the mind automatically expressed itself.

"I beg—your—pardon," he whispered to the imagined figure, and the light died out of his eyes, "have I—ever—been—introduced—to you?"

"At the hour of your birth, my son," said the priest, as a sobbing cry came from the foot of the bed.

But Charley did not hear. His ears were for ever closed to the voices of life and time.