

THE MAN WITHOUT A SHADOW

was it worse than that? Mad, perhaps? If that's the case, this building is an asylum, I suppose. But have I been here long?"

"I can't tell you anything about that," said the man; "I am just a guard. I—I'll go and call the doctor."

I reflected that it could hardly be so very unusual that even the maddest patient should enjoy an interval of sudden lucidity. This consideration made the guard's excitement rather hard to account for. Astonishment was hardly the word to describe the man's emotion, either. It seemed, now I reflected on it, more like a sort of vicarious alarm. He had bolted around the corner of the building without another word to me.

I rose from my bench, walked two or three paces, stretched my arms and looked myself over.

I was well dressed; there was no suggestion of a uniform about my clothes and no restriction on my moving about freely. Evidently I had been well taken care of. I raised my hand to my face, and somewhat to my surprise found a beard there. That was all I could determine about myself for the moment, so I walked a few paces down the path and turned back to look at the building against whose sunny wall we had been sitting.

It gave me, contrary to my expectations, a little momentary feeling of pleasure. It was small,