

"Was he killed?" said Jeanne, horrified.

"Crippled for life, ma'am. They sold the house in consequence. They say her Grace vowed she would never set foot in it again. She never came near your poor auntie. But the Duke called on her twice before he died," said Dunham, rather proudly, "and by all accounts she lost very little by not seeing the Duchess, for no one had a good word for her. They say she led the poor Duke a terrible life with her temper and all."

Jeanne looked pitifully at the scene of this long past catastrophe. She pictured "the little heir" running gaily forth from his nursery for the last time—the fall—the cry—the silence—and the terrified nurse lifting a little crushed figure.

"This part of the house has not been touched, ma'am, since Miss Marney came here. It had all been done up fresh when the poor Duke succeeded, only a year or two before the accident. Miss Marney had no use for this floor, so she left it alone, and only decorated the rooms she occupied. She never came up here, the stairs being so steep and her heart weak. There's two very nice-sized bedrooms, ma'am, beyond this," said Dunham.

Jeanne walked through the empty and silent nurseries, softly, and on tiptoe. They seemed haunted by the ghosts of the children who had played there, and who must have climbed on to chairs and tables, when they wanted to look out of the high, barred windows.

The walls were still covered with a faded paper of pictured nursery rhymes.

"We will leave these rooms just as they are," she said, "but oh, Mrs. Dunham, if you think I *might*, I would so much rather come upstairs to one of these large empty bedrooms, and have the one next to mine made ready for *him*. It would seem almost like company to know he was coming, and besides—I think—surely the maids must be sleeping on this floor, just beyond the baize door? I am very very often frightened at night, Mrs. Dunham—all alone among the empty drawing-