

"Tell me the truth, I pray you, as you love your children," she had said to the doctor, "will he die?"

"I will tell you the truth as you ask me to," replied the doctor. "He will not die—but—"

"But what?"

"He will be paralysed from the waist downwards for life, and will never get up from his bed again."

"*'O Theos einei kallos*" (God is good), said Zoitza, simply. "He might have taken him from me," and they let her go in to Vassili's room.

That day week they were married and many people said Zoitza was a fool.

Then she went to the directors of the bank and the result of her interview was that in consideration of Vassili's past services and of the circumstances of the case they agreed to allow him a small pension.

The prediction of the doctor came true. Vassili never left his bed again. Though eleven years had elapsed since the accident he was still a hopeless cripple, and all through those eleven years Zoitza had never left his side.

The Princess had a far away look in her eyes, and any remark she may have been about to make was cut short by the appearance of Zoitza herself brimful of smiles and sunshine as she opened the door to us.

I presented her to the Princess as to a friend of mine, and she was overwhelmingly glad to see us.

"But why did you not come last Thursday?" she