

then went on calmly: "Years ago, Dr. Reynolds, I was not the despised drunkard, Jerry Thompson. I was—but no matter now who I was. My wife, my angel wife, whose heart I broke, has been in her grave for thirty years. I have one son, a noble young man, but he knows nothing of his wretched father. Drink, accursed drink, dragged me down to this. I thought I was safe in my high sphere of life, but the taste once felt inwove itself with my life and withered my highest hopes and affections. My wife pined away, and after ten years of a wedded life, which had begun so happily, she gave up all care for evermore, and went to meet her father and mother in heaven. I could not give up drink even when friends left me and wealth took to itself wings, and at last they took my boy from me, and sent me away with a certain quarterly allowance. I came here under a new name and have lived a miserable sot, the sport of the rabble, ever since." He paused and rested to gain a little more strength, then he went on: "My boy was under the guardianship of a noble friend of early days. Once, years ago it seems, I saw something about him in a paper at Johnson's. As usual my money was gone, so I sold some—some things I didn't need, and went away to the city for just a glimpse of my son. My Fred spoke to the people in that vast hall, who listened just as they had listened to me years before, and when it was over I came back here to drown the gnawing hunger of my love and my self-loathing in rum. Now I am about to die and I want to see my boy. You'll send for him, won't you? He does not know where I am, or I know he would have been here long ago, but it is better so, I would only have disgraced his noble name. Will you send for him doctor?" he pleaded wistfully.

"Certainly I will" the doctor answered. "Give me his name and address and I'll telegraph."

"Come close, then," said old Jerry, "I must whisper it."

The doctor bent his head, and then raised it with a slight smile upon his lips. Perhaps, after all, the old man had been raving. He might have once been in better circumstances but the man he had named was surely never the son of this miserable, broken, rum-ruined creature. Next morning, half-bewildered, he sent a telegram to the address Jerry had given, secretly thinking that it was of no use, though if he was Jerry's son, he must hurry.

The doctor came to the cottage again at nightfall, Jemmy having stayed with the sick man through the day.

Fainter and fainter grew the light in old Jerry's eyes; his restless fingers pulled at the quilts; his breathing grew shorter. "Will—Fred—come?" he asked at times.

"Oh, I think so" said the doctor, though he had no hope.

The hours passed away. Then came the sound of sleigh bells, a quick stamping of feet, and a man hurried into the room.

"Fred! Fred!" shrieked the old man.

"My father," answered this tall, bearded gentleman, "I have found you at last."

Few and short were the words said at that bedside, the son repeating: "If I had only known of this, my father. Why did they keep me in ignorance? I have searched so long for you," and the old man murmured, "It's all right—Fred. I am—happy now. The past—I did it all—myself. I wasted my life—my talents, but—God's peace—has come to me here—and"—the rattling in his throat stopped utterance; a few struggles, quiet again, a last slow gasp, and he was at peace forever.

The snow that had fallen so softly on the last Friday evening of Jerry's life, was scraped away in one spot in the hill cemetery, where they laid his worn-out body. The villagers did not fail to notice the agitated stranger, who stood by Dr. Reynolds, but they forgot him again as the world moved on.

In the following spring two strangers came to the village, one a gray-haired, kindly-faced man, the other was old Jerry's son. They had come to see to the placing of a simple monument to his memory. When the work was finished, and the laborers had gone away, the two gentlemen stood thoughtfully looking across the green tinged fields and woods. The younger one spoke slowly: "The bitter regret that I could not attempt to save my father will follow me all the days of my life, but I here solemnly dedicate my power, my talents,

to do all the good I can in the world, to lift up the down-trodden, to use my influence against the curse of intemperance. To you, my guardian, my more than father, I owe my training into high ranges of thought, feeling, and action. I shall visit this ever as the saddest, most sacred spot in the world to me."

They shook hands warmly but silently, and turned back towards the village, which they left next morning for their accustomed walks of life. The names they registered at the little hotel were, Ralph Longley and Frederick Singleton. The name in gold letters on the marble shaft in the cemetery was the same as that of the younger man, "Frederick Singleton," and underneath, "*Requiescat in Pace.*"

THE END.

