

Pam's own tearful, lip-quivering emotion of gratitude play upon her two ministrants, that they discharged their self-sought duties in a reflected emotion scarcely less profound than the original; giving the girl tear for tear, and quiver for quiver.

And when they had rubbed and towelled her, they dressed her in the same loving, lavish way, and vied with each other in finding articles from their own wardrobe which might fit the girl; and when they had finished with her, they looked upon her completed presentment as proudly as though they actually made her.

And while Pam was being in this way taken to pieces and readjusted and put together again, Barclay and Dixon did the same by the Spawer, upstairs in his own bedroom; and laid him between the blankets with a hot-water bottle at his feet, that was fetched from the kitchen; and Arny harnessed Punch to the spring-cart and drove off for Father Mostyn and the Doctor—not that Father Mostyn's presence seemed called for on any urgent or spiritual grounds, but that Pam knew what a slight he would think had been administered upon his vicarial office, were he to be left one moment uninformed of such an occurrence as this.

And until the arrival of the Doctor, Pam's courage and good hope had never once deserted her. He for whom she would have died gladly twice over was saved, and the worst to be feared was feared and foundless. But as soon as she heard the ominous rattle of the spring-cart's return; that well-known clear-cut voice of the ecclesiast, and the sharp, Scotch, business-like tones of the Doctor—as direct and straight to their purpose as a macadamised road . . . she quailed, and her fortitude left her. It seemed as though the whole atmosphere were charged at once with electrical dangers at lightning-point.

She sat with her face plunged in her hands, by the side of the roaring kitchen fire, not daring to rise, or move, or go out to meet these awful newcomers, lest her movement might precipitate the danger. All her hearing was drawn out from her like wire, insupportably fine, to the doors of that dread bed-chamber. Sounds near at hand, the roaring of the fire, the fall of cinders, the subdued babel of downstairs voices, had no existence for her. Her hearing, as though it had been a telescope, was aimed above them to some distant star, and missed these terrestrial obstacles by miles and miles—but every sound from the far landing, every whisper, every turning of the handle, every creak of the bedroom floor-boards, was magnified a hundredfold. To support such auricular