

time to time when the patient's pain drove him into delirium; but at all other times he had refused it. A week before Christmas stupor had set in; and, it was thought, blindness. He talked a little from time to time, but had seemed to recognize nobody. Last night however he had awakened from unconsciousness, and Anna had had half an hour's talk with him. He had then fallen asleep; and an hour later the news had come to her that he still slept. He had told her, before he slept, that his blindness had come back.

This morning the daylight on the snow outside brightened the room wonderfully, though he would not be able to see it. The white light lay on the high polished furniture, the frames of the engravings, the folds of the chintz curtains—and above all, on the face of the dying man and the linen round his swathed head. He lay high in bed, his shoulders supported by a pile of pillows, and his hands hidden beneath the silk quilt. He had already been shaved and washed; and the folds and sunken hollows in his cheeks were vivid and sharp. His eyes were turned on Anna as she came in, and he smiled as he heard her step.

"That's you?" he said.

His voice was quite distinct and very quiet. It was not horrible in any way.

"Yes, my dear," she said; and sat down by his bedside.

"Give me a kiss if you don't mind."

She rose again, and kissed him very softly on his forehead, just below the wet bandage. The druglike smell was very clear to her as she did so.

"How long have I got?" he asked, as she sat down again.

She did not pretend not to understand.

"We must wait till the doctor comes," she said.

"You wired for Algy, as I asked you last night?"

"He'll be here by eleven."

An extraordinary steadiness of will had come down on her, since her last desperate struggle more than two