and miserable hours spent alone thinking of Lena, of his brother, and feeling vague unrest as to the future.

It was toward the close of a long Saturday afternoon, nearly three weeks from the day on which Mrs. Darcy had been taken sick. Jack sat alone in the great window-seat, gazing out into the street with a sad, wistful expression in his blue eyes.

The gas was lighted, and Dr. Jellet was making his evening visitation in the sick-room. The patient had been growing worse all day, and had reached a very critical condition. She had been delirious most of the time from the first, and her only really lucid interval had been that very morning, when little Elsie had gone in and had her usual quiet crying spell, because her mamma could not speak to her. The child's voice had aroused the sick woman, and she had drawn the little golden head down beside her emaciated face on the pillow, and feebly stroked the little tear-stained cheek. The moment of returning consciousness was a short one, however, and as the haggard face, which had once been so beautiful, turned restlessly away from the little rosy one on the pillow, the tired nurse turned abruptly away, and old Dr. Jellet's eyes were suspiciously luminous as he gently lifted the child and carried her out. He knew that it was for the last time, and a great lump rose in his throat as the child turned in his arms at the door and threw a kiss in the direction of the bed.

The doctor watched her tenderly as she got together some of the playthings which Jack had bought her, and started out to visit the little Crumps. When she had gone he went down into the office and found Jack, and told him to be prepared for the coming of the end. It was a blow to poor Jack. He saw his plans for the happiness of others, laid with such cost to himself, tottering on the verge of ruin; he thought of poor little Elsie; he thought of his brother,—the brother for whose sake he had suffered so much, and who was responsible for the ruin of the sweet life drawing so rapidly to a close; with that life would die all chance of atonement.

The portière over the door of the sick-room softly swung aside, and Dr. Jellet came slowly out. Jack heard his step, and walked toward him. The eyes of the two men met: those of one full of anxious inquiry and outspoken misery; of the other, full of keen searching light, yet withal sympathetic. What curious act of fate it was that prompted the old doctor to speak as he did,—to use a term which he had never before applied in Jack's presence,—will never be explained. He never removed his regard from the other's face, and it was a full moment before he spoke. "Mr. Darcy," he said, "your wife is—"

Jack started as if he had been shot. "My wife!" he repeated, in a slow, dazed way.

But Jack's startled look was not what interrupted the doctor. As he uttered the words he saw over Jack's shoulder a man appear in the open doorway,—a man with a face perfectly ghastly in the pallor which suddenly overspread it. With an exclamation of pain the newcomer raised his hand to his head, and staggered forward into the room.

Jack stood as if fascinated by the awful look in the man's eyes.

For a full moment they stood thus, facing each other; then Dysart slowly advanced, drawing off his glove as he did so. Jack never moved. Within a foot of him Dysart stopped, and raising his arm, struck the glove with all the force he was able across Jack's face. "You damned cad!" he hissed, between his clenched teeth.

For an instant Darcy swayed backward under the force of the blow. Slowly the look