

In a few minutes the little girl, a child of about eight years, tiptoed out of the bedroom.

'She is asleep,' she said, 'and she didn't speak to me. Oh, are you sick, too, Mr. Hat'way? You look just as though you were crying.'

'Do I?' said the young man. 'Well, that is very silly, I suppose, for a big man like me. Your mamma will soon be coming up here, will she not, dear? When she comes, if she finds me asleep, tell her not to mind me; I guess I will get along all right to-night somehow.'

Little Katie O'Connor, daughter of the kind-hearted janitress of the building, went down to her basement home, anxious to secure the co-operation of her mother in a great deed of mercy her busy mind was contriving.

'Oh, mamma,' she said, 'do you know, I believe Mr. Hat'way is hungry, and I want you to let me take him some supper. He says he is not sick, and he has been crying. I know he has, so he must be hungry, mamma, don't you think?'

'Well, he might be,' said good Mrs. O'Connor, smiling; 'but I don't think at this time of day he would go crying about a little thing like that. Perhaps the doctor has told him something about his sister's sickness that frets him. We will fix him up a plate of toast and a little pot of tea and you can take it up to him, one thing at a time, dear. Tell him to cheer up and eat all he can—things are not always as bad as they seem. He will find this nice fresh cup of tea all right, anyhow.'

So in a very little while after the good fairy Katie had her simple but inviting repast spread out on the little table beside the grieving young man. To satisfy the child, and then with awakened appetite after he had tasted the food, he ate and drank with relish.

'Now, I hope you will feel better, Mr. Hat'way,' said the little attendant, as she removed the tea thing.

I am going to ask Sister Agnes to put Miss Margaret in the prayers to-morrow, and I will have her put you in, too, if you want me to.'

'In the prayers!' repeated the young man. 'What does that mean, dear? I am afraid I don't quite understand.'

'Why, you see,' said Katie, pausing in her tidying performance, 'at school, when we know anyone is sick or somebody tells Sister Agnes about trouble they are having, she puts them in the prayers; then we all say one Hail Mary for them—the whole school together—and, of course, they get well or have something good happen instead of something awful, the way they had been expecting.'

'Why, that is very nice,' said Lester Hathaway, a wintry smile momentarily lighting his wan, sad countenance. 'Do, by all means, put Margaret and me in your prayers, then, for we want to have Maggie get well and lots of good things happen.'

'You are surer to get what you want if you say the prayers yourself, too, Sister says,' said Katie, pausing again, arrested by a new thought. 'Mamma told me once you were not a Catholic, and that you do not say prayers like ours, but if I give you my catechism you might learn the Hail Mary and say it with us, Mr. Hat'way. It is real short, and then you'll be sure to get what you want.'

'Certainly, dear,' said the young man. 'By all means bring me your book with the prayer, and I will learn it and say it earnestly, too, you may be sure, if it will bring about half the good you promise and your kind little heart would bestow anyhow.'

So Katie O'Connor brought her well-thumbed catechism that evening and spread it on the arm of the invalid chair, pointing out the Hail Mary as the subject of study and repetition to the young man, so seriously stricken in body and heart, and to whom the incident afforded something like a passing diversion of mind, if no greater benefit.

That night the despondent youth had a confidential conference with the janitress, when the true neighbor came up to see what she could do for him and his fever-racked sister before she retired to rest. The result of the interview was a proposal on Mrs. O'Connor's part to meet and acquaint the doctor with the financial straits of the two invalids, and thus let the physician know what the proposal to send the girl to the hospital meant under the circumstances.

When the doctor arrived and heard the recital, of course, this put a very different aspect on the case. He cheerily told Mrs. O'Connor and the anxious brother that he expected to be able to find good accommodation and care for the girl nevertheless by securing one of the free beds, those endowed refuges for the sore-smitten, which nearly every hospital possesses. The obtaining of this berth, however, would necessitate some

delay, as it would take time to find one not then occupied. Then, they assured the young man, he would be looked to and provided for somehow. So Margaret was left with her brother for another day—the brother even as helpless as herself, who could not as much as transport himself unaided to her bedside in the little apartment close by.

All that day the young man sat alone listening to the muttering and moaning of the sister he dearly loved and upon whom he was so entirely dependent. Mrs. O'Connor, good soul, came in from time to time as her multitudinous duties would permit, ministering to Margaret's few needs and bringing food to the young man, whose requirements in this line were very light indeed, so prostrated was he with apprehension of the cloud-enveloped future just before him, as well as the great present embarrassment and sorrow. He was of the keenly sensitive newy, who, while fully appreciating the kindly ministrations of the hand of charity, nevertheless shrink from the touch as from an ill-meant blow.

From time to time he mechanically took up little Katie's catechism, frayed and dog-eared, and read a few questions and answers here and there. As he did this he was surprised to find himself by and by becoming interested to the extent of caring to peruse whole chapters, saying to himself finally: 'I declare, if I were in a better frame of mind I would want to know something more about this little book and those doctrines it treats of.'

As he had promised his little benefactress, he gave due attention to the prayer she pointed out to him. He read it over several times, and then repeated it with such significance and devotion as he was able to muster in his depressed and despairing state: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, now—now—Oh, yes, now—in this hour of our great, our terrible need. I have prayed little, very little, during all my life; and believed not at all in the power of your intercession. If the teaching of this little book be true, I am indeed, then, a sinner—a sinner such as this prayer invokes you to have pity upon. Oh, Holy Mary, Mother, we are motherless, friendless, alone, my poor sister and I. We are now both stricken with disease, and grim want meets us at every turn. Oh, hear the prayers those children may say for us to-day, and to which I add the appeal of a poor, entreating sinner.'

The next morning when the doctor came a young man, his nephew, accompanied him. The young man had met his uncle going the rounds of his patients, and as he happened to be proceeding in the same direction the doctor was then taking, and beyond the present stop, he accepted the invitation to ride and also the suggestion to come up and talk with the crippled youth while the doctor attended to the sick sister.

The visitor tried to engage the languid invalid in a sort of desultory conversation, but without much success. As he talked, young Mr. Lawson idly fingered a large flat book lying at hand on the table close to which he was seated. Presently he inadvertently raised the cover, and, being attracted by the contents in the glimpse he got within, he asked permission to look over the book. As he did this, his interest seemed to grow, and in a few moments he inquired with a tone expressive of eagerness:

'Whose work is this, Mr. Hathaway? Can it be possible that your sister has made these drawings?'

'My sister, no,' answered the invalid addressed, in a voice of languid indifference. 'I had a few drawing lessons when I went to school, and since then—since I met with the accident which laid me up—I have pursued sketching at odd times as a sort of pastime.'

'You made those sketches? Indeed! Well, well, that may be quite fortunate for you, Mr. Hathaway,' said the other, almost excitedly. 'Say, what would you take for them, for some of them, I mean, just now? Here are—let me see, three, four, five—I am sure I could place for you directly. What would be your price for this lot?' and the visitor drew his chair nearer the invalid, specifying the sketches he desired.

Surprised and a little bewildered, Lester Hathaway answered:

'Why, I didn't know that those things had any value. Really, I would be willing to take most anything I could get for them. I—'

'I'll tell you what I will do,' said Mr. Lawson. 'I will take these with me over to our office, if you will permit me, and I will send back word what they will give for them; then, if you accept, you will have your cheque for the bunch this afternoon. You see, I am on the staff of one of the big daily papers; we use just such material as this for illustrations'