

lonely old man, who lived on and among his memories. Mary learned from the records at the Home that he was supported by a rich young divorcee, whose name Mary had noticed now and then in the society columns of the newspapers. She had left implicit instructions that her name be kept a secret—one of her works of charity, evidently, to cover a multitude of sins.

Danny sometimes talked of relatives—his "folks"—of whom he was very proud. They had come unexpectedly into a fortune, he would explain, and wealth advanced them to a place of social prominence which had no sympathy or room for a helpless invalid like himself. They had left him at White Memorial, "in good care," as they had told him. To all appearances they had forgotten him, but they were Danny's life, and in his generous gratitude he loved them, bravely putting out of his mind the bitter memories of their desertion.

As the days went by this odd friendship between a helpless old man and the popular nurse deepened, until now Danny looked on the girl as belonging to him. The other nurses marvelled at Mary's patience in sacrificing her spare time to cheer up the old fellow, for her companionship was in constant demand at the Memorial. She had come from the East with a letter of recommendation, very flattering praise, no less a being than the "Big Doctor" himself, who was regarded in this small community, as little lower than the President. At first the girls had envied her, because of her brilliancy and her capability, but most of all for the "Big Doctor's" letter. Mary, however, had won over all her associates by a modest bearing in spite of the honors, which to her retiring nature seemed distasteful as a subject of conversation. All eager questions about the "Big Doctor" were parried by a careless:

"Oh, one has to have credentials, you know. The "Big Doctor" is a very good very gentle person. Any one of you, had you worked with him, would have been praised just as generously as I."

The First Friday in June was very warm. Even the velvet lawns, usually so invitingly green and cool, seemed sadly shrivelled for so early in the season, and the heads of the stately hollyhocks were drooped and forlorn.

Danny was sitting in his wheel chair, on the wide veranda, but, unusual for him, he had removed the frayed frock coat. His tired eyes were closed, and the worn hands lay folded in his lap. Here Mary found him. Thinking him asleep when he did not stir at her arrival, she took a chair near by and commenced to work industriously on her knitting. Often she raised her eyes from the bright blue yarn in her lap to glance at kindly old Danny. What heartless people must they have been to leave him here all these long years? Why had they sent him no message in all that time—except perhaps the monthly cheque, which barely covered his meagre expenses?

Even as she was pondering, the old man stirred restlessly, and opened his eyes.

"Hot, eh?" he suggested, with a weak smile.

"Yes, it is rather warm," agreed Mary. "But," she added, with a knowing look to-

wards the sky, "there is rain in the air, I should not be surprised if we had a thunder storm this afternoon."

"Thunder storm reminds me of Little Billy," Danny said reminiscently.

Mary settled herself more comfortably in her chair, for she knew a story would follow the mention of that name.

"Did I ever tell you about the times we had playing soldiers?" he asked, after a pause.

"No, Danny, I don't believe you've told me about that," Mary said encouragingly.

"Well, those were real wars," he began, happy to have a listener for the story he loved to tell. "Little Billy wasn't much more than so high," indicating an extremely short distance from the ground. "He'd always be the Yankee army—his Daddy was from the North," explained Danny, half apologetically, "and of course, I was the South."

Pride thrilled in the old man's voice as he mentioned the cause that was lost but ever gloriously remembered.

"I recollect one day particularly. It was a hot June day like this. Little Billy's army of tin soldiers were not as lively as usual, so my men were winning right and left. And then, just as Billy Boy got in line where he could have wiped out the whole Southern army with one blow, his mother came in and kicked the whole lot of them all over the floor. Said she didn't want such trash cluttering up her best room. Martha was particular that way, for when the money came, there were always fine ladies calling on her."

Mary's needles clicked savagely.

"I remember how bravely Billy took it," he rambled on. "He got up like a little man, saluted me, and then he crumpled up, all a-quiver in my arms."

"Never you mind, Gramp"—he called me 'Gramp,' the dear little chap,—'never you mind. Some day when I get to be a big man, I'm going to build a house just for you an' me. An' you can smoke your ol' pipe all day, an' my tin soldiers can stay wherever we put 'em."

Mary knitted steadily in the silence that followed.

"He must be a fine man," mused Danny, more to himself than to Mary. "I wonder if he built the house. I wonder if he has a place for pipes and soldiers. I wonder if he'll come back."

"Perhaps he will, dear," said the nurse, soothingly.

"But it's been twenty years, Nurse," he objected, as the tired eyes closed again.

For a time both sat in silence.

"There, what did I tell you?" Mary cried, pointing to a dark shadow coming up out of the east. "That has rain in it, as sure as you're born. And it's a blessing, too," she murmured to herself, as her sympathetic gaze went from one bent, suffering form to another along the big, hot porch.

"You wait here, Danny," she cautioned him. "I'm going to get your coat."

Danny's grateful eyes followed her retreating form.

"God bless her," he said softly.

His shaky old hand felt for the pocket

of his shirt, and he brought out one by one the shiny coins.

"I still lack seventeen cents," he told the lady on a ten-cent piece sorrowfully. "But, then," with a sigh, "even if I had my dollar, how could I get away from here long enough for that? Mary! Perhaps I'll tell Mary. I wonder if she'd understand. I wonder if she'd take my dollar to Father Flynn, to have a Mass said in honor of the Sacred Heart—that Little Billy will come for me."

Meanwhile Mary was hurrying to Danny's room. She hardly glanced at the bed cover and plump pillow, hollowed in the centre by Danny's silvery head. The walls were decorated with clippings and bright colored pictures, while over the door a gilded horse-shoe hung perilously near the head of a nail that supported it. Mary reflected that here, as in every room in the hospital, there was a sad absence of holy things. White Memorial boasted that it was a strictly non-sectarian institution, and religion in any form was barred.

Across the back of a chair lay Danny's coat, neatly folded. Mary picked it up tenderly, and brushed a fleck of dust from the worn lapel. The movement caused the front of the coat to open, and Mary's astonished gaze rested on a small, oval-shaped badge. Faded with age, and stained in places as though from water, or from tears, was a Badge of the Sacred Heart, with a rim of red and blue lace, pinned with a huge safety pin to the torn lining.

"Oh, Danny," Mary cried, as she kissed the old Badge reverently, "why didn't you tell me?"

So this was his secret! Poor old Danny! A stranger in a strange land, helpless and alone, with nothing to live on but memories. Lovingly she laid her cheek against the tattered garment.

"You'll have to let me really adopt you now, my old fraud," she said, between smiles and tears. "I told you we belonged to each other."

"Some one in the sun room to see you, Mary," Rita Nolan told her, as Mary descended the stairs from Danny's room, his coat across her arm.

"It must be some one very important," laughed Mary. "You look as though you had seen a ghost."

"It was almost as bad," Rita told her mysteriously, and disappeared through the door leading to the nurses, home to spread her choice bit of news that the "Big Doctor" himself had called at the Home and had asked, personally, for Mary.

Mary entered the sun room, and closed the door softly behind her. For a moment she stood gazing at the broad back, which looked so strangely familiar. Then the "Big Doctor" turned, and without a word held out his arms.

"You!" she breathed. "Why did you come here?"

"Because," said the "Big Doctor" simply, "I love you."

"Please don't go into that again, she told him coldly. "My decision in regard to that was final. I could not even respect, far from love, a Catholic who does not practise, who is ashamed of his holy religion."