

breath. His wonderful mother had wings. Yes, yes she could fly. She flew with him out of the window to show him the snow and to give him some of the roses. He felt the snow on his chest and creeping up to his throat it formed a little necklace round his neck. It crept up—but not to my mouth Mother. Mother, not over my eyes.

In the middle of her singing there came a knock at the door. Two sharp knocks, they were like a blow on the heart to her. Still half under the spell of her singing like a queen she flung the door open. The doctor stood on the landing in his big driving coat. He was beating his fur hat against the stair rail. 'I am afraid I am interrupting' he said, and from his voice she thought he was accusing her. Her lips curled. 'Not at all' she said coldly. He strode into the room pulling off his big coat. She shut the door and leaned against it. 'The young man's never asleep, is it?' said the doctor. Still the same tone. 'Yes he is asleep' said Eleanor [sic] and she felt her glow ebb away from her like a retreating wave. The doctor went over to the bed. He parted the sheets and caught hold of Peter's arm to raise him. Suddenly she saw an extraordinary alertness in his face, in his movements. He dropped on one knee and put his arm under Peter's shoulder. 'Bring over that lamp' he commanded, 'and take off the globe. Quick now!' She held the lamp in her two hands. She felt the blood creep, creep away from her body. She saw the doctor give Peter a long searching glance, and then put him back on the pillows and straighten the sheet. 'So that's it' he said, shooting out his lower lip and frowning. 'What!' The word dropped from her lips like a pebble. The young doctor barely glanced at her. This time the sneer was unmistakable. 'You know as well as I do' he said. 'Here, give me that lamp.' And as he took the lamp from her he said quite calmly 'He is dead of course.'

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There is always something wonderfully touching in the sight of a young mother with a delicate child—and when the mother is beautiful and radiant, and when the child is like her but terribly unlike, a little shadow page carrying with bird-like hands his mother's glory—then the sight is enough to melt the most frozen heart. Not a heart had withstood Elena and Peter throughout the Journey. Arms had shot out to lift little Peter up and down steps, in and out of railway carriages, eyes had caressed them, Peter had been offered flowers and cakes—even some silver cachous from a minute flask dragged out of her red pocket by a French baby with long yellow boots on. Now it was the end of the day and the last stage of their journey. They had only one hour more,