

turn them gold, and yellow, and white. I want to make violets as big as daisies, and see them blooming all the year round. I love the flowers; they will grow as I wish. I want to hear the people say, "Look, there goes Rob Tregastris, the great gardener; *he's cultivated more perfect specimens than any man alive.*" And I hushed his nonsense, thinking the lad was over-tired and light in the head, being wishful to interfere with God's good providence, and told him of the situation at the brewery, and how his first duty was to help to keep his old mother and stop ranting. He said never a word, but oh! he looked at me long and sorrowful, and rose up and took all his fine leaves and beautiful flowers and put them on the fire, and stamped them down with his foot and kept it there till they were ashes. The next day he went to work—backwards and forwards every day this ten years—and he has never spoken of his flowers again, though he has studied many books about them, and spent all his pence on them, and our poor little windows are full of his blooms; and it's the longing and the dumbness that has eaten into his heart and is killing him; and it's his poor and blind, selfish, old mother that has done it."

Here Rob gives a long, tremulous sigh, and opens his eyes. I bend over him to see what he

needs, and my buttonhole, the lovely Russian violets you sent me this morning, fall from my gown on to his pillow. He sighs again and smiles, and murmurs, "Spring," and tries to raise his poor shaky hand towards the flowers.

Then the poor old woman begins to tremble, and says softly, "My dear, dear son. Oh! Nurse, he's come to. It's the scent of the violets; it's medicine to him." And I have to calm her, and settle her in a chair, where she can clasp her son's hand, and weep quiet, joyful tears. You know what a relief that is; and now, Jean, I want you to send me a little box of your best and sweetest flowers every day.

A little later, the House Physician of the Ward comes in, and, attended by Sister and Nurse Damian, pays a visit to each patient. When he comes to No. 26, he finds him conscious for the first time for many days, and speaks so feelingly to the poor old woman, quite rejoicing with her at her son's improved condition (you know I always did say men were more tender-hearted than women); and then he takes up the little red report-book, and reads the notes carefully.

"What does this mean, Sister?" he inquires, pointing to the night notes. "Wherefore a change of handwriting?"

Sister hesitates for a moment, and then

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