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AUTHORS; TAUCHNITZ
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THE HEALERS, VOL. II**

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MAARTEN MAARTENS

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OF
BRITISH AUTHORS
TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

VOL. 3874.

THE HEALERS. BY MAARTEN MAARTENS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE HEALERS

BY

MAARTEN MAARTENS *ipseuda of*

AUTHOR OF "GOD'S FOOL," "MY POOR RELATIONS," "DOROTHEA,"

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Schwartz

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1906.

THE HEALERS.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Edward returned to Auteuil next morning, he just caught on Barton's shaven mask a vanishing expression of alarm. "Mr. Graye left for London at day-break," said Barton, smooth and steady; "I was to say, sir, he'd be back to-morrow night."

"'Tis still wintry for such travel," said Edward.

"It come very sudden, sir; important business. You didn't notice as Mr. Graye was looking ill?"

"Not ill, only fagged last night."

"Commotions is bad for Mr. Graye, sir."

"Why, so they are for most men."

"Not in the same way. They tries him very terrible."

"He is undoubtedly nervous, but he has plenty of stamina," replied Edward.

The nervousness would hardly have been credited by those who saw Kenneth alight at Charing Cross. In

spite of cold weather and a rough and tumble crossing, the young man had kept his clear complexion and his general air of cultured prosperity and easy strength. Most of us are fortunately schooled to hide our weaknesses, but there is no surer proof of inherent health than a band-box appearance after a modern journey. In loose ulster and flat cap—the grotesque garb which even now has not crushed all masculine vanity—he proceeded through an oily haze of orange dirt, borne by a swift and spattering hansom, away into unknown depths of Bloomsbury. There he hid for that night in a little family-hotel, which nobody has ever heard of before or since.

The hiding, however, included a good deal of locomotion through the foggy streets. The first move was a visit to Dr. Gordon Scrubbs, whom the Grayes have habitually consulted. Scrubbs is one of those accomplished doctors whose waiting-rooms are hung with dubious Italian masters, mostly black. The blackest stood on an easel under the smoky smirch of sky. The doctor hurried in, wiping his lips, from an unreasonably late lunch, or perhaps it was an anticipatory dinner. "Let me get you some tea," he said. "We doctors must take our meals when we can."

"Thanks," said Kenneth. "It is certainly long since I tasted drinkable tea."

"You are in Paris still? We have all been immensely

interested by this wonderful operation. I was talking of it only yesterday to Sir Jasper Dixon-Potts. 'Remarkable.' That was Sir Jasper's word. 'Remarkable.' And we have no greater authority on the subject than Sir Jasper Dixon-Potts."

"You approved of the idea when I wrote to you about it. Don't let me interrupt your repast."

"Yes, I approved. Sir James is, I trust, doing well?"

"So, so. He continues very weak."

"That was what I feared. The strain!"

"But you said nothing about it when you wrote," protested Kenneth.

"I saw from your letter that you were anxious the experiment should take place. And professional etiquette, you know—very difficult to express an opinion—especially in another country. And Charcot is a great name. So is Lisse."

"But it isn't *the* Lisse."

"So I understood." The doctor took another cutlet. "It isn't anxiety about Sir James that has brought you here, I trust? There was always the risk of the strain."

"I have come here to ask you—thanks, the tea is very good—whether I ought to marry?"

"Every man ought," said the doctor, who was a bachelor.

"I mean, you, who know my constitution and my family history, would you advise me not to marry?"

"What do you mean by your family history?"

"My brother committed suicide while temporarily insane."

"That was the verdict."

"And his son is an idiot."

"And his father—your father—was an old-fashioned, sound-headed country gentleman."

"Who married an Italian wife of whose relations we know nothing."

"That proves him to have been more sentimental than I have just given him credit for, but it does not prove him to have been in any way deranged. In fact, he wasn't. Nor was Sir Ronald. We need not go into the painful circumstances of your brother's death. They affected Lady Graye so continuously—I may say so morbidly—that I ascribe to her state of mind at the time the condition of her son."

"My brother left a letter behind him saying he was tired of life. He had everything that makes life worth living."

"I suppose so," said the doctor uncomfortably.

"Have you any explanation to offer?"

"If it will set your mind at rest, yes. But you must not take offence, and, moreover, remember I have no proof."

"You could hardly do me a greater favour."

"From a conversation we once had, I was led to