

THE DEATH OF TINTAGILES
BY MAURICE MAETERLINCK Translated by ALFRED SUTRO
CHARACTERS

TINTAGILES,

YGRAINE, }

BELLANGÈRE, }

Sisters of TINTAGILES.

AGLOVALE,

THREE SERVANTS of the QUEEN.

ACT I SCENE—*On the top of a hill overlooking the castle.*

[*Enter YGRAINE, holding TINTAGILES by the hand.*]

YGRAINE. Your first night will be sad, Tintagiles. The roar of the sea is already about us; and the trees are moaning. It is late. The moon is sinking behind the poplars that stifle the palace. . . . We are alone, perhaps; but here, one has ever to be on one's guard. They seem to watch lest the smallest happiness come near. I said to myself one day, right down in the depths of my soul—and God himself could scarcely hear;—I said to myself one day that I was feeling almost happy. . . . There needed nothing more, and very soon after, our old father died, and our two brothers disappeared, and not a living creature can tell us where they are. I am here all alone, with my poor sister and you, my little Tintagiles; and I have no confidence in the future. . . . Come to me; let me take you on my knees. First kiss me; and put your little arms—there—right round my neck. . . . perhaps they will not be able to unfasten them. . . . Do you remember the time when it was I who carried you in the evening, when the hour had come; and how frightened you were at the shadows of my lamp in the corridors, those long corridors with not a single window? I felt my soul tremble on my lips when I saw you again, suddenly, this morning. . . . I thought you were so far away and so well cared for. . . . Who made you come here?

TINTAGILES. I do not know, little sister.

YGRAINE. Do you remember what they said?

TINTAGILES. They said I must go away.

YGRAINE. But why had you to go away?

TINTAGILES. Because the Queen wished it.

YGRAINE. Did they not say why she wished it?—I am sure they must have said many things.

TINTAGILES. Little sister, I did not hear.

YGRAINE. When they spoke among themselves, what was it they said?

TINTAGILES. Little sister, they dropped their voices when they spoke.

YGRAINE. All the time?

TINTAGILES. All the time, sister Ygraine; except when they looked at me.

YGRAINE. Did they say nothing about the Queen?

TINTAGILES. They said, sister Ygraine, that no one ever saw her.

YGRAINE. And the people who were with you on the ship, did they say nothing?

TINTAGILES. They gave all their time to the wind and the sails, sister Ygraine.

YGRAINE. Ah! . . . That does not surprise me, my child. . . .

TINTAGILES. They left me all alone, little sister.

YGRAINE. Listen to me, Tintagiles; I will tell you what I know. . . .

TINTAGILES. What do you know, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE. Very little, my child. . . . My sister and I have gone on living here ever since we were born, not daring to understand the things that happened. . . . I have lived a long time in this island, and I might as well have been blind; yet it all seemed natural to me. . . . A bird that flew, a leaf that trembled, a rose that opened . . . these were events to me. Such silence has always reigned here that a ripe fruit falling in the park would draw faces to the window. . . . And no one seemed to have any suspicion . . . but one night I learned that there must be something besides. . . . I wished to escape and I could not. . . . Have you understood what I am telling you?

TINTAGILES. Yes, yes, little sister; I can understand anything. . . .

YGRAINE. Then let us not talk any more about these things . . . one does not know. . . . Do you see, behind the dead trees which poison the horizon, do you see the castle, there, right down in the valley?

TINTAGILES. I see something very black—is that the castle, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE. Yes, it is very black. . . . It lies far down amid a mass of gloomy shadows. . . . It is there we have to live. . . . They might have built it on the top of the great mountains which surround it. . . . The mountains are blue in the day-time. . . . One could have breathed. One could have looked down on the sea and on the plains beyond the cliffs. . . . But they preferred to build it deep down in the valley; too low even for the air to come. . . .

It is falling in ruins, and no one troubles. . . . The walls are crumbling: it might be fading away in the gloom. . . . There is only one tower which time does not touch. . . . It is enormous: and its shadow is always on the house.

TINTAGILES. They are lighting something, sister Ygraine. . . . See, see, the great red windows! . . .

YGRAINE. They are the windows of the tower, Tintagiles; they are the only ones in which you will ever see light; it is there that the Queen has her throne.

TINTAGILES. Shall I not see the Queen?

YGRAINE. No one can see her.

TINTAGILES. Why can no one see her?

YGRAINE. Come closer, Tintagiles. . . . Not even a bird or a blade of grass must hear us.

TINTAGILES. There is no grass, little sister . . . [*a moment's silence*].
What does the Queen do?

YGRAINE. That no one knows, my child. She is never seen. . . . She lives there, all alone in the tower; and those who wait on her do not go out by daylight. . . . She is very old; she is the mother of our mother, and she wishes to reign alone. . . . She is suspicious and jealous, and they say she is mad. . . . She is afraid lest some one should raise himself to her place; and it is probably because of this fear of hers that you have been brought here. . . . Her orders are carried out: but no one knows how. . . . She never leaves the tower, and all the gates are closed night and day. . . . I have never seen her, but it seems others have, long ago, when she was young. . . .

TINTAGILES. Is she very ugly, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE. They say she is not beautiful, and that her form is strange. . . . But those who have seen her dare not speak of her. . . . And who knows whether they have seen her? . . . She has a power which we do not understand, and we live here with a terrible weight on our soul. . . . You must not be unduly frightened, or have bad dreams; we will watch over you, little Tintagiles, and no harm can come to you; but do not stray far from me, or your sister Bellangère, or our old master Aglovale.

TINTAGILES. Aglovale, too, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE. Aglovale too . . . he loves us . . .

TINTAGILES. He is so old, little sister!

YGRAINE. He is old, but very wise. . . . He is the only friend we have

left ; and he knows many things. . . . It is strange ; she made you come here, and no one was told of it. . . . I do not know what is in my heart. . . . I was sorrowful and glad to know that you were far away, beyond the sea. . . . And now . . . I was taken by surprise.

. . . I went out this morning to see whether the sun was rising over the mountains ; and I saw you on the threshold. . . . I knew you at once.

TINTAGILES. No, no, little sister ; it was I who laughed first. . . .

YGRAINE. I could not laugh . . . just then. . . . You will understand. . . .

It is time, Tintagiles, and the wind is becoming black on the sea. . . .

Kiss me, before getting up ; kiss me, harder, again, again. . . . You do not know how one loves. . . . Give me your little hand. . . . I will keep it in mine, and we will go back to the old sick castle.

[*They go out.*]

ACT II SCENE—*A room in the castle, in which AGLOVALE and YGRAINE are seated.*

[*Enter BELLANGÈRE.*]

BELLANGÈRE. Where is Tintagiles ?

YGRAINE. He is here ; do not speak too loud. He is asleep in the other room. He was a little pale, he did not seem well. The journey had tired him—he was a long time on the sea. Or perhaps it is the atmosphere of the castle which has alarmed his little soul. He was crying, and did not know why he cried. I nursed him on my knees ; come look at him. . . . He is asleep in our bed. . . . He lies there, with one hand on his brow, looking very serious, like a little sorrowful king. . . .

BELLANGÈRE [*suddenly bursting into tears*]. Sister ! Sister ! . . . my poor sister ! . . .

YGRAINE. Why are you crying ?

BELLANGÈRE. I dare not tell what I know . . . and I am not sure that I know anything . . . but yet I have heard—that which one could not hear . . .

YGRAINE. What have you heard ?

BELLANGÈRE. I was passing close to the corridors of the tower . . .

YGRAINE. Ah ! . . .

90 PSYCHE IN THE HOUSE

by

Charles Ricketts



BELLANGÈRE. One of the doors was ajar. I pushed it very gently . . . I went in . . .

YGRAINE. Where?

BELLANGÈRE. I had never seen. . . . There were other corridors lighted with lamps; and then low galleries, which seemed to have no end. . . . I knew it was forbidden to go farther. . . . I was afraid and was about to go back, but there was a sound of voices . . . though one could scarcely hear . . .

YGRAINE. It must have been the servants of the Queen; they live at the foot of the tower . . .

BELLANGÈRE. I do not know quite what it was. . . . There must have been more than one door between; and the voices came to me like the voice of some one who is being strangled. . . . I went as near as I could. . . . I am not sure of anything: but I believe they were speaking of a child who had arrived to-day, and of a crown of gold. . . . They seemed to be laughing . . .

YGRAINE. They were laughing?

BELLANGÈRE. Yes, I think they were laughing . . . unless it was that they were crying, or that it was something that I did not understand; for one heard badly, and their voices were low. . . . There seemed to be a great many of them moving about in the vault. . . . They were speaking of the child that the Queen wished to see. . . . They will probably come here this evening . . .

YGRAINE. What? . . . this evening? . . .

BELLANGÈRE. Yes . . . yes. . . . I think so . . . yes . . .

YGRAINE. Did they not mention any name?

BELLANGÈRE. They spoke of a child—a little, little child . . .

YGRAINE. There is no other child here . . .

BELLANGÈRE. Just then they raised their voices a little, for one of them had doubted whether the day was come . . .

YGRAINE. I know what that means, and it will not be the first time that they have left the tower. . . . I knew but too well why she made him come . . . but I could not think that she would show such haste as this! . . . We shall see . . . there are three of us, and we have time . . .

BELLANGÈRE. What do you mean to do?

YGRAINE. I do not know as yet what I shall do, but I shall surprise her . . . do you know what that means, you who can only tremble? . . . I will tell you . . .

TINTAGILES. I cannot tell, sister Ygraine . . . everywhere. . . .

YGRAINE. Come to me, Tintagiles. . . . You know that my arms are softer, and I will put them around you, and you will feel better at once. . . . Give him to me, Bellangère. . . . He shall sit on my knees, and the pain will go. . . . There, you see? . . . Your big sisters are here. . . . They are close to you . . . we will defend you, and no evil can come near. . . .

TINTAGILES. It has come, sister Ygraine. . . . Why is there no light, sister Ygraine?

YGRAINE. There is a light, my child. . . . Do you not see the lamp which hangs from the rafters?

TINTAGILES. Yes, yes. . . . It is not large. . . . Are there no others?

YGRAINE. Why should there be others? We can see what we have to see. . . .

TINTAGILES. Ah! . . .

YGRAINE. Oh! your eyes are deep. . . .

TINTAGILES. So are yours, sister Ygraine. . . .

YGRAINE. I did not notice it this morning. . . . I have just seen in your eyes. . . . We do not quite know what the soul thinks it sees. . . .

TINTAGILES. I have not seen the soul, sister Ygraine. . . . But why is Aglovale on the threshold?

YGRAINE. He is resting a little. . . . He wanted to kiss you before going to bed . . . he was waiting for you to wake. . . .

TINTAGILES. What has he on his knees?

YGRAINE. On his knees? I see nothing on his knees. . . .

TINTAGILES. Yes, yes, there is something. . . .

AGLOVALE. It is nothing, my child. . . . I was looking at my old sword ; and I scarcely recognise it. . . . It has served me many years, but for a long time past I have lost confidence in it, and I think it is going to break. . . . Here, just by the hilt, there is a little stain. . . . I had noticed that the steel was growing paler, and I asked myself. . . . I do not remember what I asked myself. . . . My soul is very heavy to-day. . . . What is one to do? . . . Men must needs live and await the unforeseen. . . . And after that they must still act as if they hoped. . . . There are sad evenings when our useless lives taste bitter in our mouths, and we would like to close our eyes. . . . It is late, and I am tired. . . .

TINTAGILES. He has wounds, sister Ygraine.

YGRAINE. Where?

TINTAGILES. On his forehead and on his hands. . . .

AGLOVALE. Those are very old wounds, from which I suffer no longer, my child. . . . The light must be falling on them this evening. . . .

You had not noticed them before?

TINTAGILES. He looks sad, sister Ygraine. . . .

YGRAINE. No, no, he is not sad, but very weary. . . .

TINTAGILES. You too, you are sad, sister Ygraine. . . .

YGRAINE. Why no, why no; look at me, I am smiling. . . .

TINTAGILES. And my other sister too. . . .

YGRAINE. Oh no, she too is smiling.

TINTAGILES. No, that is not a smile . . . I know. . . .

YGRAINE. Come, kiss me, and think of something else. . . . [*She kisses him.*]

TINTAGILES. Of what shall I think, sister Ygraine?—Why do you hurt me when you kiss me?

YGRAINE. Did I hurt you?

TINTAGILES. Yes. . . . I do not know why I hear your heart beat, sister Ygraine. . . .

YGRAINE. Do you hear it beat?

TINTAGILES. Oh! Oh! it beats as though it wanted to . . .

YGRAINE. What?

TINTAGILES. I do not know, sister Ygraine.

YGRAINE. It is wrong to be frightened without reason, and to speak in riddles. . . . Oh! your eyes are full of tears. . . . Why are you unhappy? I hear your heart beating, now . . . people always hear them when they hold one another so close. It is then that the heart speaks and says things that the tongue does not know. . .

TINTAGILES. I heard nothing before. . . .

YGRAINE. That was because. . . . Oh! but your heart! . . . What is the matter? . . . It is bursting! . . .

TINTAGILES [*Crying*]. Sister Ygraine! sister Ygraine!

YGRAINE. What is it?

TINTAGILES. I have heard. . . . They . . . they are coming!

YGRAINE. Who? Who are coming? . . . What has happened? . . .

TINTAGILES. The door! the door! They were there! . . . [*He falls backwards on to Ygraine's knees*].

YGRAINE. What is it? . . . He has . . . he has fainted. . . .

BELLANGÈRE. Take care . . . take care . . . He will fall . . .

AGLOVALE [*rising brusquely, his sword in his hand*]. I too can hear . . . there are steps in the corridor.

YGRAINE. Oh! . . .

[*A moment's silence—they all listen.*]

AGLOVALE. Yes, I hear. . . . There is a crowd of them. . . .

YGRAINE. A crowd . . . a crowd . . . how?

AGLOVALE. I do not know . . . one hears and one does not hear. . . . They do not move like other creatures, but they come. . . . They are touching the door. . . .

YGRAINE [*clasping TINTAGILES in her arms*]. Tintagiles! . . . Tintagiles! . . .

BELLANGÈRE [*embracing him*]. Let me, too! let me! . . . Tintagiles!

AGLOVALE. They are shaking the door . . . listen . . . do not breathe. . . . They are whispering. . . .

[*A key is heard turning harshly in the lock.*]

YGRAINE. They have the key! . . .

AGLOVALE. Yes . . . yes. . . . I was sure of it. . . . Wait . . . [*He plants himself, with sword outstretched, on the last step. To the two sisters*]. Come! come both! . . .

[*For a moment there is silence. The door opens slowly. AGLOVALE thrusts his sword wildly through the opening, driving the point between the beams. The sword breaks with a loud report under the silent pressure of the timber, and the pieces of steel roll down the steps with a resounding clang. YGRAINE leaps up, carrying in her arms TINTAGILES, who has fainted; and she, BELLANGÈRE, and AGLOVALE, putting forth all their strength, try, but in vain, to close the door, which slowly opens wider and wider, although no one can be seen or heard. Only, a cold and calm light penetrates into the room. At this moment TINTAGILES, suddenly stretching out his limbs, regains consciousness, sends forth a long cry of deliverance, and embraces his sister—and at this very instant the door, which resists no longer, falls to brusquely under their pressure, which they have not had time to relinquish.*]

YGRAINE. Tintagiles! [*They look at each other with astonishment.*]

AGLOVALE [*waiting at the door*]. I hear nothing now. . . .

YGRAINE [*wild with joy*]. Tintagiles! Tintagiles! Look! Look! . . .

He is saved! . . . Look at his eyes . . . you can see the blue. . . He is going to speak. . . They saw we were watching. . . They did not dare. . . Kiss us! . . . Kiss us, I say! . . . Kiss us! . . . All! all! . . . Down to the depths of our souls! . . . [*All four, their eyes full of tears, fall into each other's arms.*]

ACT IV SCENE—*A corridor in front of the room in which the last Act took place.*

[*Three SERVANTS of the Queen enter. They are all veiled, and their long black robes flow down to the ground.*]

FIRST SERVANT [*listening at the door*]. They are not watching. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. We need not have waited. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. She prefers that it should be done in silence. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. I knew that they must fall asleep. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Quick! . . . open the door. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. It is time. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. Wait there . . . I will enter alone. There is no need for three of us. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. You are right: he is very small. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. You must be careful with the elder sister. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Remember the Queen does not want them to know. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. Have no fear; people seldom hear my coming. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Go in then; it is time.

[*The FIRST SERVANT opens the door cautiously and goes into the room.*]

It is close on midnight. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. Ah! . . .

[*A moment's silence. The FIRST SERVANT comes out of the room.*]

SECOND SERVANT. Where is he?

FIRST SERVANT. He is asleep between his sisters. His arms are around their necks; and their arms enfold him. . . . I cannot do it alone. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. I will help you. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. Yes; do you go together. . . . I will keep watch here. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. Be careful; they seem to know. . . . They were all three struggling with a bad dream. . . .

[*The two SERVANTS go into the room.*]

THIRD SERVANT. People always know; but they do not understand. . . .

[*A moment's silence. The FIRST and SECOND SERVANTS come out of the room again.*]

THIRD SERVANT. Well?

SECOND SERVANT. You must come too . . . we cannot separate them. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. No sooner do we unclasp their arms than they fall back around the child. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. And the child nestles closer and closer to them. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. He is lying with his forehead on the elder sister's heart. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. And his head rises and falls on her bosom. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. We shall not be able to open his hands. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. They are plunged deep down into his sisters' hair. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. He holds one golden curl between his little teeth. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. We shall have to cut the elder sister's hair.

FIRST SERVANT. And the other sister's too, you shall see. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Have you your scissors?

THIRD SERVANT. Yes. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. Come quickly; they have begun to move. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Their hearts and their eyelids are throbbing together. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. Yes; I caught a glimpse of the elder girl's blue eyes. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. She looked at us but did not see us. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. If one touches one of them, the other two tremble. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. They are trying hard, but they cannot stir. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. The elder sister wishes to scream, but she cannot. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. Come quickly; they seem to know. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. Where is the old man?

FIRST SERVANT. He is asleep—away from the others. . . .

90 CEDIPUS
after a pen drawing
by
Charles Ricketts



SECOND SERVANT. He sleeps, his forehead resting on the hilt of his sword. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. He knows of nothing ; and he has no dreams. . . .

THIRD SERVANT. Come, come, we must hasten. . . .

FIRST SERVANT. You will find it difficult to separate their limbs. . . .

SECOND SERVANT. They are clutching at each other as though they were drowning.

THIRD SERVANT. Come, come. . . .

[They go in. The silence is broken only by sighs and low murmurs of suffering, held in thrall by sleep. Then the three SERVANTS emerge very hurriedly from the gloomy room. One of them carries TINTAGILES, who is fast asleep, in her arms. From his little hands, twitching in sleep, and his mouth, drawn in agony, a glittering stream of golden tresses, ravished from the heads of his sisters, flows down to the ground. The SERVANTS hurry on. There is perfect silence ; but no sooner have they reached the end of the corridor than TINTAGILES awakes, and sends forth a cry of supreme distress.]

TINTAGILES *[from the end of the corridor]*. Aah! . . .

[There is again silence. Then, from the adjoining room the two sisters are heard moving about restlessly.]

YGRAINE *[in the room]*. Tintagiles! . . . where is he?

BELLANGÈRE. He is not here. . . .

YGRAINE *[with growing anguish]*. Tintagiles! . . . a lamp, a lamp! . . . Light it! . . .

BELLANGÈRE. Yes . . . Yes. . . .

[Ygraine is seen coming out of the room with the lighted lamp in her hand.]

YGRAINE. The door is wide open!

The voice of TINTAGILES [almost inaudible in the distance]. Sister Ygraine!

YGRAINE. He calls! . . . He calls! . . . Tintagiles! Tintagiles! . . .

[She rushes into the corridor. BELLANGÈRE tries to follow, but falls fainting on the threshold.]

ACT V SCENE—*Before a great iron door in a gloomy vault.*

[*Enter YGRAINE, haggard and dishevelled, with a lamp in her hand.*]

YGRAINE [*turning wildly to and fro*]. They have not followed me! . . . Bellangère! . . . Bellangère! . . . Aglovale! . . . Where are they?—They said they loved him and they leave me alone! . . . Tintagiles! . . . Tintagiles! . . . Oh! I remember . . . I have climbed steps without number, between great pitiless walls, and my heart bids me live no longer . . . These vaults seem to move . . . [*She supports herself against the pillars*]. I am falling . . . Oh! Oh! my poor life! I can feel it . . . It is trembling on my lips—it wants to depart . . . I do not know what I have done . . . I have seen nothing, I have heard nothing . . . Oh, this silence! . . . All along the steps and all along the walls I found these golden curls; and I followed them. I picked them up . . . Oh! oh! they are very pretty! . . . Little childie . . . little childie . . . what was I saying? I remember . . . I do not believe in it . . . When one sleeps . . . All that has no importance and is not possible . . . Of what am I thinking? . . . I do not know . . . One awakes, and then . . . After all—come, after all—I must think this out . . . Some say one thing, some say the other; but the way of the soul is quite different. When the chain is taken off, there is much more than one knows. . . . I came here with my little lamp. . . . It did not go out, in spite of the wind on the staircase . . . And then, what is one to think? There are so many things which are so vague . . . There must be people who know them; but why do they not speak? [*She looks around her.*] I have never seen all this before . . . It is difficult to get so far—and it is all forbidden . . . How cold it is . . . And so dark that one is afraid to breathe . . . They say there is poison in these gloomy shadows . . . That door looks very terrible . . . [*She goes up to the door and touches it.*] Oh! how cold it is . . . It is of iron . . . solid iron—and there is no lock . . . How can they open it? I see no hinges . . . I suppose it is sunk into the wall . . . This is as far as one can go . . . There are no more steps. [*Suddenly sending forth a terrible shriek.*] Ah! . . . more golden hair between the panels! . . . Tintagiles! Tintagiles! . . . I heard the door close just now . . . I remember! I remember! . . . It must be! [*She beats frantically against the door with hands and feet.*] Oh, monster! monster! It is here that I find you! . . . Listen! I blaspheme! I blaspheme and spit upon you!

[*Feeble knocks are heard from the other side of the door: then the voice of TINTAGILES penetrates very feebly through the iron panels.*]

TINTAGILES. Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine! . . .

YGRAINE. Tintagiles! . . . What! . . . what! . . . Tintagiles, is it you? . . .

TINTAGILES. Quick, open, open! . . . She is here! . . .

YGRAINE. Oh! oh! . . . Who? Tintagiles, my little Tintagiles . . . can you hear me? . . . What is it? . . . What has happened? . . . Tintagiles! . . . Have they hurt you? . . . Where are you? . . . Are you there? . . .

TINTAGILES. Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine! . . . Open for me—or I shall die . . .

YGRAINE. I will try—wait, wait . . . I will open it, I will open it. . . .

TINTAGILES. But you do not understand! . . . Sister Ygraine! . . . There is no time to lose! . . . She tried to hold me back! . . . I struck her, struck her . . . I ran . . . Quick, quick, she is coming!

YGRAINE. Yes, yes . . . where is she?

TINTAGILES. I can see nothing . . . but I hear . . . oh, I am afraid, sister Ygraine, I am afraid . . . Quick, quick! . . . Quick, open! . . . for the dear Lord's sake, sister Ygraine! . . .

YGRAINE [*anxiously groping along the door*]. I am sure to find it . . . Wait a little . . . a minute . . . a second. . . .

TINTAGILES. I cannot, sister Ygraine . . . I can feel her breath on me now. . . .

YGRAINE. It is nothing, Tintagiles, my little Tintagiles; do not be frightened . . . if I could only see . . .

TINTAGILES. Oh, but you can see; I can see your lamp from here . . . It is quite light where you are, sister Ygraine . . . Here I can see nothing. . . .

YGRAINE. You see me, Tintagiles? How can you see? There is not a crack in the door . . .

TINTAGILES. Yes, yes, there is; but it is so small! . . .

YGRAINE. On which side? Is it here? . . . tell me, tell me . . . or is it over there?

TINTAGILES. It is here . . . Listen, listen! . . . I am knocking. . . .

YGRAINE. Here?

TINTAGILES. Higher up . . . But it is so small! . . . A needle could not go through! . . .

YGRAINE. Do not be afraid, I am here. . . .

TINTAGILES. Oh, I know, sister Ygraine! . . . Pull! pull! You must pull! She is coming! . . . if you could only open a little . . . a very little . . . I am so small!

YGRAINE. My nails are broken, Tintagiles . . . I have pulled, I have pushed, I have struck with all my might—with all my might! [*She strikes again, and tries to shake the massive door.*] Two of my fingers are numbed. . . . Do not cry. . . . It is of iron. . . .

TINTAGILES [*sobbing in despair*]. You have nothing to open with, sister Ygraine? . . . nothing at all, nothing at all? . . . I could get through . . . I am so small, so very small . . . you know how small I am. . . .

YGRAINE. I have only my lamp, Tintagiles. . . . There! there! [*She aims repeated blows at the gate with her earthenware lamp, which goes out and breaks, the pieces falling to the ground.*] Oh! . . . It has all grown dark! . . . Tintagiles, where are you? . . . Oh! listen, listen! . . . Can you not open from the inside? . . .

TINTAGILES. No, no; there is nothing. . . . I cannot feel anything at all. . . . I cannot see the light through the crack any more. . . .

YGRAINE. What is the matter, Tintagiles? . . . I can scarcely hear you. . . .

TINTAGILES. Little sister, sister Ygraine. . . . It is too late now. . . .

YGRAINE. What is it, Tintagiles? . . . Where are you going?

TINTAGILES. She is here! . . . Oh, I am so weak. Sister Ygraine, sister Ygraine . . . I feel her on me! . . .

YGRAINE. Whom? . . . whom? . . .

TINTAGILES. I do not know . . . I cannot see. . . . But it is too late now. . . . She . . . she is taking me by the throat. . . . Her hand is at my throat. . . . Oh, oh, sister Ygraine, come to me! . . .

YGRAINE. Yes, yes. . . .

TINTAGILES. It is so dark. . . .

YGRAINE. Struggle—fight—tear her to pieces! . . . Do not be afraid . . . Wait a moment! . . . I am here . . . Tintagiles? . . . Tintagiles! answer me! . . . Help!!! . . . where are you? . . . I will come to you . . . kiss me . . . through the door . . . here—here.

TINTAGILES [*very feebly*]. Here . . . here . . . sister Ygraine . . .

YGRAINE. I am putting my kisses on this spot here, do you understand? Again, again!

TINTAGILES [*more and more feebly*]. Mine too—here . . . sister Ygraine! Sister Ygraine! . . . Oh!

[*The fall of a little body is heard behind the iron door.*]

YGRAINE. Tintagiles! . . . Tintagiles! . . . What have you done? . . . Give him back, give him back! . . . for the love of God, give him back to me! . . . I can hear nothing. . . . What are you doing with him? . . . You will not hurt him? . . . He is only a little child. . . . He cannot resist. . . . Look, look! . . . I mean no harm . . . I am on my knees. . . . Give him back to us, I beg of you. . . . Not for my sake only, you know it well. . . . I will do anything. . . . I bear no ill-will, you see. . . . I implore you with clasped hands. . . . I was wrong. . . . I am quite resigned, you see. . . . I have lost all I had . . . You should punish me some other way. . . . There are so many things which would hurt me more . . . if you want to hurt me. . . . You shall see. . . . But this poor child has done no harm. . . . What I said was not true . . . but I did not know. . . . I know that you are very good. . . . Surely the time for forgiveness has come! . . . He is so young and beautiful, and he is so small! . . . You must see that it cannot be! . . . He puts his little arms around your neck: his little mouth on your mouth; and God Himself cannot say him nay . . . You will open the door, will you not? . . . I am asking so little . . . I want him for an instant, just for an instant. . . . I cannot remember. . . . You will understand. . . . I did not have time. . . . He can get through the tiniest opening . . . It is not difficult. . . . [A long inexorable silence]. . . . Monster! . . . Monster! . . . Curse you! Curse you! . . . I spit on you!

[*She sinks down and continues to sob softly, her arms outspread against the gate, in the gloom.*]