

CHAPTER XXI

THE MIDNIGHT GATHERING

WHEN the train from Rigsworth brought Violet into Euston Station, she hurried through the barrier and asked an official to direct her to the nearest post-office. At this instant a slight accident happened which had a singular bearing on the events of the day. Neil, the valet, who had driven to Euston just in time to meet the incoming train, had seen her, and was pressing in close pursuit when he tripped over a luggage barrow and fell headlong.

He was not much injured, but shaken more than a little, and when he was able to take up the chase again, Violet had vanished. Hence she was freed from espionage, and Van Hupfeldt could only curse his useless emissary. The man Neil certainly did rush about like a whirlwind as soon as he recovered his breath; but Violet was in the post-office writing to David, and securely hidden from his ferret eyes.

Oddly enough, the first person she wished to see was Miss Ermyn L'Estrange. She remembered the actress well, as she had visited her once (Jenny, the maid, was out on an errand at the time), and it was one of the many curious discrepancies in the tissue of