

times I think this shock has taken it away. But," with sudden bravery kissing Ella's mournfully drawn lips, "I did not mean to vex you. I am so angry with myself, while—while I only ought to be sorry for you. Oh, Sambo, my darling, I *must* be sorry for I understand. When you lost Miles, was it not—awful?"

"Don't speak of it," sighed Ella. "Do you wonder that my life is wrecked?"

"Is it? I mean, Ella," (Derry's breath came quickly as she stood looking with puzzled wistfulness down into her sister's face), "no one can help believing or disbelieving things, for people can't *make* themselves believe or disbelieve things, can they? I want to feel how different it is. If you really believe what we have heard, you are very noble not to utter a word against him, especially here, for this was, in a way, his home. May I thank you?"

"You mean Steven? I was very, very sorry, Derry. I should have done all in my power to prevent his being imprisoned, if he had not met so sad a fate—for we need not surely credit that he put an end to his own existence. I could have done something surely, for if I do not wish to avenge my lover's death, no one else need."

"I—I am senseless, and miserable, and ill-tempered," cried Derry, suddenly turning away and pacing the room. "I can scarcely follow you. It is like a horrible mist even in this room. Oh, Sambo, I am a wretch to let your kind words chafe me. Try to be patient with me for a little while."

"I will come again," said Ella, with a gentle sigh. "I see it will be better for me to go now, dear."

"What has come to me?" cried Derry, starting back a moment to look dazedly into her sister's sad face. "Am I growing—cruel, Sambo? Have I let you think it is not a delight to me to have you with me? Oh! forgive me, my dear!"

"There's nothing to forgive," said the younger sister. "We all must be a little out of temper occasionally, and you are never cruel—never were, except when you used to talk to me of Miles Derry" (after a thoughtful pause), "you little thought how near you were to the discovery you sought, did you? Even I

never guessed, though I thought—you see" (forbearing other words), "I knew how Steven hated Miles."

"Everybody hated Miles," cried Derry, in a burst of uncontrollable passion. "I'm sure he was a selfish, violent, heartless—Oh, Ella, Ella" (with again the passionate contrition and prompt self-reproach), "don't forgive me this time. Let me suffer. I don't deserve your sweet forbearance. Go away, I am not fit to be with you."

But when Ella, thinking it wisest, turned to leave the room, Derry stood before her, and seizing both her hands in a tight, long clasp, bent and kissed her on the lips, without a word.

Mrs. Frayd had so long listened vainly for any sound from her young lodger's parlor, that when two hours had passed since she watched Miss Hope drive away, she got so uneasy that she would have invented an errand into the room, had not a welcome one just then presented itself. In the dusk of the February evening, she caught sight of Miss Basset, attended by the old butler from the Tower, walking across the slope of the downs, taking the short way from the Tower to the Beacon. With genuine delight, Mrs. Frayd hastened to meet her, and to take her straight into Derry's room. Then, while she entertained the old butler in her own premises with much speaking and plenty of home-brewed ale, she busily prepared a festive tea for the two young ladies, her copious discourse flowing glibly on while she inwardly rejoiced that Miss Basset's visit would enliven Miss Hope. But, to the good woman's surprise, she found, when she took in the tray, that it was Miss Hope who was enlivening Miss Basset.

"Well, it'll do," she muttered to herself, as she closed the door again upon the friends. "You can't pick a person up and stay down yourself at the same time."

"Come for a ramble with me tomorrow, will you, Primrose?" Derry was saying just then. "I believe we should find celandine now in the woods, as well as your namesakes. Why, even here the birds this morning distinctly sang to me that spring had come. You will go with me, Primrose? You have had such a sad, sad time."

"Derry"—Primrose Basset had scarce-

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