

seemed unfeeling to him that night. He was longing to talk about his anxieties, longing to be comforted with a word of love or hope.

When Mary's note came, it was the last straw he felt able to bear. It had been a day of trouble and sorrow to him; he had been down the fell three times; it was raining and gloomy; he was weary and heartsick, and shrank from hearing anything more of life until he was stronger to bear it. But the urgency of the note admitted of no delay. He said, with a sigh, "Salome, I must go to Mary; she needs me very particularly, she says."

"And I say you shall not go out again to-night. I am not going to be left alone at all hours for your sister's whims."

"I have not asked thee yet whether I can go or not, I am going; thou may be sure of that."

"I am afraid to be left alone."

"Joseph Naylor is sitting with Ann in the kitchen. I will tell him to stop until I return."

"I am so lonely."

"Not thou. Thou can go on talking to that bit of coloured worsted. It is better company to thee than I am. It has been 'one, two, three, four, slip one, take two,' ever since thou sat down."

"I think you had better stop with your sister. If you are not home by ten o'clock, I shall lock the doors."

He stood still with his coat half on, and looked at her; and for once she trembled before the anger she had tempted.

"Nay, thou need not be frightened; I am none of them who would strike a woman, however cruel she is; but I will tell thee one thing, and thou had better mind it: if thou dares to turn the key of my door against me, thou may go home to thy father to-morrow."

When he entered Mary's room, he was wet through, and crosser than Mary had ever seen him before. "Whatever is the matter?" he asked fretfully. "A man may as well live between two fires as between two women." And she saw the tears standing in his large gray eyes—standing there, as some very bitter tears will stand, without overflowing.

She helped him off with his coat, and pulled his chair before the bit of bright fire, and when his wet feet were on the fender, and the pipe she kept ready for him in his hand, she told him all about Luke's visit, and showed him the gold.

Before the story was half finished, John had forgotten all his own troubles. He was thinking only of what great good the money would do, and of what course must be taken with regard to Luke; for Mary had asked him, anxiously, "If he comes back on Saturday night, John, what must we do?"

"Well, I hope we have a religion, Mary, that will reach to