

is at the door, they are in, and whirling rapidly to the station. There is time to get tickets, to take their places in the compartment, and no more. The door shuts upon them, the whistle shrieks, and they are flying along Cornwall-ward almost before Dorothy Valentine has had time to catch her bewildered breath.

'We have done wrong to leave her, Camilla,' she gasps, flurried and breathless. 'We might have telegraphed to Vane, and waited until to-morrow. We have done wrong. Vane will be very angry.'

Miss Routh laughs—a laugh neither mirthful nor pleasant to hear.

'Yes, Dorothy,' she says, sweetly, 'I think he will. But not with us. We have obeyed orders. Yes, he will be angry, and I think—I think with reason.'

'Then why,' demands Miss Valentine, with acerbity, 'did you urge me to come? I would have staid with her, but you said—'

'I said Vane had ordered us not to stay, and I said truly. We have done as commanded—he has no right or reason to find fault with us. To-morrow is but one more day—to-morrow he will return for her, and then—'

'Well—and then?' says the elder woman, struck by the strange look Camilla Routh's face wears.

'And then he will bring her to Flintbarrow—perhaps,' answers Camilla, with her most suggestive smile.

Dolores' excuse has been something more than a mere excuse; her head does ache with a dull, persistent pain. But as the carriage rolls away she gets up and dresses—not in one of her pretty, much-embroidered morning robes, but in the plainest travelling suit her wardrobe contains. For she is going on a journey to-day, though not to Cornwall, a very long journey, and Manor Valentine is to know her no more. This is the end. All she can bear she has borne, fight alone is left. Death were better than what awaits her in that desolate house down by the Cornish sea. Life by the side of Vane Valentine is at an end for all time. Outrage, insult, sneers, neglect, have been her portion from the first in this hated house—this house to which neither she nor the man who is her husband has any longer claim. To-day she quits it to return no more. She has thought it out, over and over again, during these two silent, secluded days; no one shall know whither she goes, not even Rene—least of all Rene. He is still at the village inn she is aware, but she will neither see him nor write to him. She

is going to her one faithful friend. Jemima Ann, waiting for the answer to her letter, in her London lodgings, and with her she will return to America. What she will do when she gets there she does not yet know, time enough for that, at present she has but one thought, escape, before her husband comes. To-morrow night he will be here, angry, suspicious, more sullen and despotic than ever—her escape must be secured before that time. And once away, no power on earth shall compel her to return. Come what may—death itself—she will never return to this life from which she flies.

She dresses. She packs a satchel with some needful things; she takes the jewels given her by Madam Valentine, and money sufficient for all present needs. If these things are not hers, they are not at least the property of Vane Valentine. If M. Paul is their rightful owner, M. Paul is her true and generous friend. Then she rings for tea and toast, and makes an effort to eat. Strength is necessary—courage, presence of mind. Hope is rising within her. Once free—once with Jemima—once far from this house—once across the ocean—once fairly out of the power of her tyrant and Camilla Routh, and she fears nothing, neither work, nor poverty, nor homelessness. She will be free—her heart beats at the thought. A few weeks more of this life would drive her mad.

The house is very still, in its long forenoon repose. The servants are engaged in their various duties—the watchful Lucy has gone with her mistress. No one notices the quiet figure that, veiled and cloaked, with hand-bag and shawl strap, leaves the house by a side entrance, and disappears amid the thick growth of the park-land. She takes the short cut to the station, along which Rene came, and found her the other day—there is a London up-train at eleven fifty. At the turn where the path branches off and the house disappears, she turns for a moment, aversion, hatred, strong in her face, and looks back. It is a leaden, sunless day, threatening rain—the gray old Manor looks grayer and more gruesome than she has ever seen it. How utterly miserable from the very first she has been there. With a shudder she turns away, pulls her veil over her face, and hurries on.

She is in excellent time. She takes her ticket, and hidden behind her thick veil, waits. No one she knows is at the station—the village folks have seen very little of her during her brief reign at the Manor House. Presently the train rushes in—she slips into an empty carriage—a moment more and she is speeding on her London way—flying from Valentine—free.