

I am going. Who knows when or how we may meet again? Say you forgive me before I go."

"Forgive you, my brother?"

"For coming. I should not have come. I have brought you nothing but trouble. All the amends I can make is to go, and return no more. Return I never will—that I swear! *Petite Reine*, adieu!"

"*Leonce*, *Leonce*," she cries, in an agony, "you mean something! Oh, what is it?"

"I mean nothing, dear *Petite*, but farewell. Once more adieu!"

He leans forward, and salutes her in his familiar French fashion on both cheeks. Her eyes are full of tears. Something in his face, in his eyes as they look at her, chills and terrifies her.

"*Leonce*," she says again, but he is gone.

Once he looks back to wave his hand and smile farewell. She stands and watches the slight, active figure until he turns the corner and is gone.

The darkness has fallen. She is conscious for the first time how bleakly cold it is. A high wind sweeps around her, a few drops of rain fall from the overcast sky. Chilled in the wet and windy darkness, she turns with a shiver and goes back to the house.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TWO IN THE MORNING.

MRS. WINDSOR'S influenza is worse, *Reine* discovers, when she re-enters the parlour, and Mrs. Windsor's temper suffers in proportion. The paroxysms of sneezing are incessant now; there appears to be nothing for it but bed-betimes, and a mustard footbath, warm gruel, and a fresh supply of hot lemonade. All these remedies with the help of Jane and Catherine, are attainable. The lady is helped to her chamber, is placed in bed, the nightlight turned down to a minute point, the door is closed, and she is left to repose.

Reine returns below.

"It is barely eight o'clock, and there is a long evening before her. How shall she spend it? If she were in the mood for music, music is out of the question, with grandmamma invalided above. There are books, but she reads a great

deal, and even books grow wearisome: "Of the making of many books there is no end, and much learning is a weariness of the flesh." Everything is a weariness; there are good things in the world, but they do not last—nothing lasts but the disappointments, the sin, the suffering, the heartbreak. They go on for ever.

Shall she go and see Miss *Hariott*? Catherine has just informed her that Candace has informed her that Miss *Hariott* has returned. She has missed her friend unutterably, her strong common sense, her quick, ever-ready sympathy for all troubles great and little. Her troubles are not little, *Reine* thinks; they are very great and real, and even Miss *Hariott* is powerless to help her.

Still, it will be something only to look into her brave, frank eyes, to feel the strong, cordial clasp of her hand, to hear her cheerful, cosy gossip, to sit in that comfortable ingle nook which Longworth talks of so often and likes so well.

She goes to the window and looks out at the night—black, pouring, windy. But she is not afraid of a little rough weather, and the long hours here alone will be simply intolerable. Yes, she will go. She gets her waterproof and rubbers, pulls the hood over her head, takes an umbrella, looks into the kitchen to tell them, and starts forth into the wet and windy darkness. The distance is not long; she knows the road well; ten minutes brisk walking will bring her to the cottage, and does.

Yes, Miss *Hariott* is at home. The light from her windows streams forth cheerily into the bleak wet street. *Reine* rings, half smiling to think how surprised her friend will be, and Candace admits her.

"Lawful sakes!" Candace begins; but her mistress's voice from the half-open sitting-room door, breaks in—

"If that's the post-man, Candace, don't stand talking there; fetch me my letters instantly."

It isn't the postman, Miss *Hester*, honey," says Candace; "it's Miss *Reine* come to see you through all the pourin' rain. Lor, chile, how wet you is!"

Instantly Miss *Hariott* is in the hall, indignant remonstrance in face and tone struggling with gratified affection.

"You ridiculous child to come out