

with the young girl's tone of mind. No added tenderness did she suffer herself to be betrayed into; no observation, nor even anxiety, was ever apparent, to grate upon the jealous sensitiveness of the sufferer. She was simply and naturally herself, it seemed. Her habits were unaltered—she still gave the children their lessons, and their usual mirth was only enough checked, that it should not penetrate too rudely to Caroline's quiet chamber. Sometimes, she noted with a degree of satisfaction, that the wandering echo of a childish laugh reaching that still retreat would arouse its inmate for an instant from her trance-like immobility. She would look round with knit brows and an irritable gleam in the hitherto clouded eyes. With stoical contentment, Miss Kendal marked these signs of displeasure in her darling. Vitality—even though it were a vitality of pain—was what she desired to see re-assert itself.

It was nearly a week after Mr. Hesketh's death, and was the afternoon appointed for the funeral. Some instinct must have told Caroline of this, for no word had been uttered in her hearing concerning it. The governess was almost startled in the midst of lessons, to see the pale face, the unnaturally large eyes, looking wanly but with an eager intentness at her amidst the busy group in the school-room. The children stared in silent awe at the "sad lady." She gave them no glance in return, but only beckoned her friend.

"I want you. I must go to the little church to-day."

"Not to-day, my dear; you are not strong enough."

"I must go," she persisted—"I must go."

To all her persuasions and arguments, she replied only by a reiteration of those three stubborn words. Miss Kendal hardly knew whether it was most perilous to indulge or to resist her urgings. With a perplexity most unusual to her, she allowed the girl to wrap herself in a cloak, and then lead the way to the door. But there the difficulty was decided for her. The free air, the fresh gust of wind that swept across the hills, and greeted her as she stood on the threshold, seemed to bear some mystical influence with them. Caroline staggered giddily, and fell to the ground.

She was quite helpless for the time. Miss Kendal lifted her, carried her into the bright drawing-room, and laid her on the sofa there. Even then, it was physical power, not mental consciousness, that failed her. Her eyes, wide opened, expressed a dumb impotent anguish, very terrible to see. At last, it was more than the friend who loved her could bear to stand by calmly and watch. She knelt down beside her, and gathered her in her arms; she laid the poor, drooping head upon her bosom, in the old sweet, comforting endeavour, that so very rarely fails of its object.