

"Yes," the priest assented. "Now, come to my house and we will have tea. What are your names?"

"Agnes and Dorothy," Dorothy said, "and Austen."

"Austen!" both gentlemen exclaimed.

"Yes." Dorothy looked frightened. "Mamma was Mrs. Austen."

"Can it possibly be the children — my cousin's children?"

"Let us go slowly," Father Audley cautioned; "and let us have tea first. And the priest's housekeeper was much surprised when her master ordered a substantial meal for the two strangers. When tea was over Dorothy told as much of her history as she knew.

"Papa was a soldier and was killed far away," she narrated, "and mamma had not much money. She gave lessons to girls, and then she was ill and died; and Miss Espey said we should have to go to the workhouse, and we ran away."

"What was your mother's name?" Mr. Austen questioned.

"Editha. Look, her prayer book is in the bundle," Dorothy answered, and Agnes found the book.

"Yes," the questioner glanced to the priest, and passed him the book. "There is the name, Editha Austen, and in her own handwriting. The whole affair is marvelous, Father Audley. I was the only one that knew of poor Jack's secret marriage to Editha Wilton — the only one of his relations, I mean. Jack's grandfather was a most tyrannical old gentleman, and Jack, very foolishly, kept his marriage a secret. I had gone on that journey of mine to Central Asia and to years of imprisonment in Tibet before the outbreak of war in South Africa. I only learned of poor Jack's death when I reached England last year. The old gentleman had died a month or so after Jack, and the lawyers hailed me as next of kin. I told them of Jack's marriage, and they and I