

hurriedly back across the hall to find his mistress. She made a step forward to meet him.

"Who is it, Higgs?"

"It's Sir George Ellison's groom, miss; and oh, miss, he says there has been an accident!"

"An accident!" cried Miss Blair, alteringly, whilst her stepmother ran hastily down stairs to hear. "Who is hurt, Higgs? is it Sir George?"

"Oh no, miss—it is poor Miss Travers; and it was close by, in the field just below the village, that it happened, and so they are bringing her here, poor young lady!"

Juliet uttered one cry of dismay, and then her presence of mind came back to her. Without a moment's hesitation she went out to the door, and ordered the groom to ride off with the utmost speed to the town to summon Dr. Ramsden; then she sent for Mrs. Pearse, the housekeeper; and a room on the ground-floor, which was occasionally used as a bachelor's bedroom, was hastily got ready, Juliet running about and helping the maids, and superintending every arrangement herself, with blanched cheeks and a beating heart.

She did not dare to think in what condition her poor little friend would be brought to her house. She had just gathered from the groom that Georgie was not killed; but she knew well that she must be very much hurt, as much by the man's frightened face as by his saying that they were carrying her up to the house on a hurdle.

Meanwhile Mrs. Blair sat uselessly trembling and wringing her hands on the lowest step of the stairs, with Ernestine standing over her, plying her with sal volatile and smelling-salts.

It made Juliet angry to see them there. She stopped for one moment as she sped past them with her arms full of pillows, and said impatiently,

"If your mistress is ill, Ernestine, take her upstairs at once into her own room, and wait upon her there. You are very much in the way where you are; I cannot have any faintings and hysterics going on;" and she passed on.

"Ah, you have no heart, Juliet," whimpered Mrs. Blair, affectedly; "nothing seems to upset you. My nerves are so shaken by this dreadful—dreadful——"

"Come into your room, madame," in-

terrupted Ernestine, thinking it wise to take Miss Blair's hint; "it would be terrible for you to be here when the poor demoiselle arrives."

"Oh no—no! I couldn't see her!" cried her mistress, clinging hysterically to her; "take me away!"

And Ernestine did take her away safely up to her own bedroom, where in time a strong cup of tea and a couple of nice hot buttered muffins effectually restored her equanimity.

And presently they brought her into the house. From the mist and darkness of the winter evening, into the light and warmth and sweet scents of exotic plants in the hall, came the hurdle, with its living, suffering freight, slowly, carefully carried between two men. Close behind, with a white, scared face and chattering teeth, half dragged along, half supported by Sir George Ellison's strong arm, tottering and stumbling at every step, and staring in front of him with fixed crazy-looking eyes, came Squire Travers. Three or four gentlemen, with frightened awe-struck faces, followed them, to see if they could be of any use.

And thus it was that Georgie Travers was borne over that door-way through which she had so often passed before—sometimes tripping in lightly in her habit, jumping up the stone steps two at a time; sometimes more soberly following in the wake of her parents, in all the sheen of her silken evening garments; sometimes with soft laughter, if she came in with others; or sometimes whistling a merry little tune below her breath, if she came in alone.

Often and often had she come up those steps and entered that hall before, but never as she comes in now.

Georgie lies stretched flat out on the hurdle, half covered by her father's scarlet hunting-coat. She is not unconscious; her eyes, big and blue, are very wide open, and on her deathly white face there are, nevertheless, two crimson fever patches, one on either cheek—for they had poured half a flask of brandy down her throat when they first found her.

As she catches sight of Juliet coming to meet her, she begins to speak, weakly, waveringly, with fever-stricken rapidity.

"Oh, is that you, Juliet? I can't think what they are bringing me here for. I am not hurt badly, you know—only bruised