

to meet no one. Colonel Deering calls according to promise, but my lady is engaged, and does not see him. Her conduct these last two days is decorum itself. Well, time will tell; to-morrow at nine they start, and Camilla, by this, has worked herself into a fever of curiosity to know how all this is to end.

This last day is spent in packing. Lady Valentine has no maid; she has declined all successors to *Jemima Ann*. Miss Routh kindly presses upon her the services of *Lucy*; the offer is declined with cold thanks. Still not a sigh, a hint, a look to show whether it is to be *Cornwall* or not.

The last night comes—goes, and the morning is here. An early breakfast has been prepared. At eight o'clock Miss Routh and Miss Valentine, 'booted and spurred' for this trip, appear in the breakfast room.

One hasty glance from Camilla's green eyes, her heart quickening expectantly its calm beating—Dolores is not there.

'Where is Lady Valentine?' demands Miss Dorothy; 'is she not ready? Go up, Dobson, and see. Tell her we have but just fifteen minutes for breakfast as it is. Make haste.'

Dobson goes—returns, and alone.

'Well?' Miss Dorothy demands, with asperity.

'Please, 'm,' says Dobson, breathless, 'my lady's compliments, 'm,' and she ain't a-goin'!'

'What!'

'Which it's a bad headache, 'm, and she ain't hup. She says don't wait for her, if you please, 'm. She says she ain't able to go nowhere's to-day, please 'm.'

Miss Dorothy adjusts her double eye-glass more firmly on her Roman nose, and glances sternly at Camilla Routh. That young lady shrugs her shoulders and sips her tea, a gleam of exultation in her cat-like eyes.

'What does this mean, Camilla?'

'You had better go and ask, Dorothy. You need not glare at me in that blood-freezing fashion—I have nothing to do with it. Impossible to account for the vagaries of our charming Dolores. Go up and see for yourself if you are curious. It may be as she says, she may possibly have a headache. Meantime I will finish my breakfast.'

She pours herself a second cup of tea. But her hand shakes, and her pulse beats quick and high. Not going after all!

Miss Dorothy much perturbed, takes the advice, and marches up to the chamber of her sister-in-law. Entering, she finds Dolores in semi-darkness, and Dolores herself, lying pale among her pillows. Her eyes are closed, her hands are clasped above her head

her fair hair is tossed about—so lying she looks so wan, so worn, so really ill, that Dorothy is startled and alarmed.

'My dear Dolores,' she exclaims, 'what is this? Is it possible you are really ill?'

The blue eyes open and look up at her. The dark circles that tell of sleepless nights surround them.

'Not really ill, only out of sorts and altogether unfitted for a railway journey. My head aches. You will please start without me. It is impossible for me to go to *Cornwall* to-day.'

'But Vane said—'

'I know,' quickly, 'he could not force this. Indeed my head aches horribly; I was awake all night. Do not stay for me—with a few hours' perfect quiet I shall do very well. There is no reason why you and Miss Routh should disappoint him. Do not lose your train by waiting here. A few hours' repose, and I will be quite well again. Your brother will be angry if you disappoint him, you know.'

This is so true 'hat Miss Valentine winces. She stands more thoroughly at a loss than ever before in her life. To go, or not to go, that is the question. Which will anger Vane most—to go to him and leave Dolores behind, or to remain with her, and disappoint him? His irritation is certain either way. While she stands irresolute Camilla comes fluttering gayly to the rescue.

'Ill, Lady Valentine? So sorry. So very inopportune, Cousin Vane will be so disappointed. Still, Dorothy, it will not do for us to disappoint him as well. His wishes were most positive, you may remember to go to-day without fail. You had better not linger. We will tell him of Dolores' indisposition, and of course he will come for her to-morrow. So sorry to leave you quite alone—such a bore for you—but it is only for one day. Come, Dorothy, we shall certainly miss our train.'

'You really think, then, Camilla, that Vane would prefer us to go and leave Dolores?' asks the perplexed Dorothy.

She has much faith in Camilla Routh's opinion where Vane is concerned, much faith in her influence over him.

'Certainly I do,' Miss Routh responds promptly. 'I not only am sure he would prefer it, but that he will be alarmed as well as angry, if we do not. Adieu, Dolores, chérie—be ready to come with Vane to-morrow. Now, Dorothy!'

Her tone is sharp, she moves away impulsively, she hurries off the still doubtful, still disposed-to-linger Dorothy before there is time for further discussion. The carriage