

miles away. The white face, so peculiar to these sunless workers, was made still more pallid by the gray light, the mass of black hair surrounding it, and the loose suit of black corduroy. He stood with his hat in his hand, speechless, and looking full at Mary.

She answered the gaze, curiously at first; then, trembling from head to foot, she rose from her chair, and cried out, "Luke! Luke Bradley! Is it really thee?"

"Ay, it is me; but I wouldn't dare to come where thou art, if I hadn't a good reason."

"Thou art home again?"

"I have been back nearly six years. Many a morning and evening I have laid low in the ling and watched thee and John going to chapel."

"John is married now."

"I know."

"Well, Luke?"

"For sure, I was forgetting what I have come for. I have been working in Lister pits ever since I got back."

"That was a queer thing for thee to do."

"I was bound to be where I could get a sight of thy face once in a while. In a public-house near to the pits I met Jerry Moxham. He had been over the sea, too, and if ever he cared to talk a bit about the hell we had both been in. He worked in Lister pits, and I thought it was a very proper place to hide my face in. So we lived and worked together until he went to the devil last week."

"Luke!"

"Ay, he said he was going to him, and it's likely he knew. He went roaring drunk, too, as he always said he would. He had no relations, and nobody he liked as well as he liked me, so he left me all the money he had saved. There is as much as six hundred and odds. I have brought it to thee—not for thyself; oh, no! I knew better than that—but for the poor women and childer that are clemming all around."

As he spoke, he took from his hat a new white kerchief, in which he had tied up the gold; and he laid it down upon the chair nearest to him. "I bought the handkerchief on purpose; they were in Moxham's dirty leather bag, and I washed every bit of gold in the little beck that runs above the Force. It is clean money every way; Moxham worked honest for it. Wilt thou take it?"

"I will take it, and thank thee for it, Luke. It will bring thee the love of little children, and the blessing o' those ready to perish. Whatever made thee think of such a thing, Luke?"

"I'll tell thee. Moxham was buried last Saturday, and I knocked off work. I thought I wouldn't lift a pick again as long as the money lasted. Sunday morning I wanted to have a