

not lost its warmth. Once more the band was playing a lively air. The crowd had increased. The space in front of the kiosk was thronged with people. The footman again got down from the box of the victoria and stood beside it, so that the view of his mistress was not impeded. Leaning back with the dog still held on her knee, she looked across the roadway.

Exactly in front of her, sideways to her carriage, a big, red motor-car was drawn up. It contained a tribe of very fair youngsters in jerseys and red caps. They were Russians, blooming with health, with sturdy limbs, frank blue eyes, and primrose coloured hair. Among them, almost immersed in them, was a patriarch. His yellow, serene face, with prominent cheek-bones, his thick, snow-white hair, showed as it were through a moving veil of children, which almost hid him from sight. Beside the chauffeur, who wore a long fan-shaped black beard, sat a small woman of about forty, who looked like a governess.

The children, of whom there were probably five or six, but who moved about with such rapidity—climbing on the seats, disappearing unexpectedly into the depths of the motor, and with equal unexpectedness popping up again—that it was not easy to number them, talked perpetually in French, now among themselves, now to the governess or to the old gentleman sunk down in the seat of honour. They pointed at everything which interested them, beat time to the music with their little soft hands—hands which looked strangely innocent—uttered shrill cries, and occasionally clambering up to some point of vantage, tumbled from it, drawing shrieks of laughter from safety-planted brothers and sisters. The governess, turning, sometimes held up a warning finger, which was joyously disregarded by all. As to the old grandpapa, he remained calm as some contented old tree about which young tendrils were twining, throwing their tender green arms about his gnarled and weather-beaten trunk, striving to conceal the ravages of time with their fresh beauty, and clinging to his well-tried strength.

The woman in the victoria watched this joyous party.

She was just twenty-nine, but looked scarcely more than twenty-six, despite her pale complexion, and the pathetic