

The command, though sudden, was so pleasant and kind that it might have stopped a child who had been running away from the sisters. Penkus paused a moment, panting as she stared into Derry's face. "I sawr 'im! I sawr 'im! she gasped, and was about to career on again when Derry held her. The child had been going to shake herself free from the detaining touch, but after a furtive glance into Derry's amused eyes she stood motionless, muttering with a frown on her wizen little face, "I sawr 'im. I want to be quick."

"You would tumble down in another minute, and never sawr 'im aguin," said Derry, in that friendly way of hers that was irresistible, though she was smileless. "We are going very, very, very quick, and you'll sawr 'im again in a minute. Get your breath now. I have you safe, stand still."

"Are you really going to hold your arm around that little object?" inquired Ella.

"You don't mind, Ella, do you? I suppose her father is in front, just round that bend, most probably; and we can put her down the moment she reaches him. She is utterly exhausted."

"Little silly for racing so," observed Ella, with still a kind smile for the child. "I would put her down if I were you, Derry; but if you will not, why, you will not! Just at the turn there the descent on your side has been quarried, I think."

"But what difference will that make?" asked Derry, in simple surprise. "The child will be quite still. She can not frighten the ponies, and they are like lambs in your hands."

"You have hampered yourself of your own accord."

"Ella, what can you mean?" asked Derry, turning anxiously to look into her sister's face.

"That infant was safe enough running by herself; but now, if anything happens—"

"But what can happen? Do you" (in a low unfamiliar voice) "expect anything to happen?"

"Things happen to other people, why not to us? Never mind. You did it to rest the puny little mortal and help her on. You generally find time to think of other people, Derry, as I have noticed.

Many haven't time. I was thinking only yesterday of the difference between Aunt Crystal and you; she says so many kind things and means so little. You think so many kind things and says so little. We are close to the turn now, and the quarries. There's no man in sight, so I expect that child was pretending to be following her father. Would you like to put her out—here on my side? This slope is gradual, and the grass pleasant for her to run on, but on your side it would scarcely be safe for her, even if the quarried parts were not close in front. Will you?"

"No, please, for I believe she could not stand. I have hard work to hold up as it is, poor little maid. She has expended the short supply of strength she had."

"Then, now we have had enough of this snail's pace," said Ella, gathering the whole loop of the reins into the grasp of her left hand, and with her long driving whip giving two sharp cuts over the ears of her spirited ponies. From her left hand then she tossed the reins forward on their necks, and from her right flung the whip after them, and as the maddened ponies dashed away, she sprung from the low carriage to the sunny slope on her right.

There was a wild consciousness in Derry's mind now that she known this was going to happen; had even been expecting it. Looking straight before her she held little Penkus close to her, firm and secure; longing to save the child, and never guessing that by so doing she would make the child her savior too.

"I sawr 'im," Penkus whispered, as if she had at last found breath to utter her one all-important announcement; then with a wild shriek she struggled to get away from Derry's encircling arm.

With their heads down, and the reins entangling their rushing feet, the unguided ponies tore along the narrow, irregular bridle-road on the hill-side, the light carriage reeling, and the quarries now in sight. Derry saw them, as she saw the whole scene, blurred and indistinct, while she sat motionless, her protecting clasp about the terrified child. The turn in the narrow drive had come, when one wheel slipped to