

"London empty!" said Cecilia, with a shrill laugh, "I have scarcely a moment to myself, even at this time of year."

"I suppose *you* have a great many friends," said Jeanne, with a sigh.

"Heaps—of a kind—acquaintances and so forth," said Cecilia vaguely. "But they come and go"—she added in a hurry, as though she were afraid her old friend was about to ask her for introductions to this wide and evanescent circle.

She affected once more to be absorbed in her son.

"Come away, Joey, and don't flatten oo' little nose against the window-pane any more. Won't 'oo tum to oo' mammy like a dood boy?"

Jeanne's rising tears were dried by the scorn which all honest natures, however gentle, feel for affectation.

She began to button her little black cloth jacket,—which she had opened on account of the heat of the unscreened fire—preparatory to rising.

"If she can't be natural I won't stop and make ridiculous conversation with her," she thought, and her face burnt with indignation.

"Dere's de tarriage," said Joey, ignoring his parent's blandishments.

"What carriage?"

"Mine," said Jeanne, in a trembling voice, and she rose from the sofa.

"Yours! What do you mean?" said Cecilia in her natural tones of alert curiosity. "Who drove you here?"

"My coachman," said Jeanne, with a dignity belied by her beating heart.

Jenny to be going about in a large double brougham, drawn by a pair of fat grey horses, and driven by her own coachman! Cecilia was astounded.

"Are you married?" she cried, with a gasp. It appeared to her the only possible solution.

"No, I am not married, and the carriage belongs to