

cloak, and attend me yourself, with Gabriel. And tell Jenkin to follow me with the chariot into the High-street. Gabriel will shew him where to stop."

"But, madam, you will not come yourself! I cannot derange you thus," began Frank, eagerly.

"I must do it in my own way. You will not deny me the pleasure of fetching your cousin myself," she said, turning to him with a smile. "I am curious to see her, and shall be honoured by having her in my care. All I shall ask of you is to escort me to this baker's shop."

Frank could only bow, for he knew Lady d'Aubigny well. The waiting-maid brought her cloak; she took his arm, and they went down the old oak staircase, along a stone passage, across the quadrangle, out through the gateway into the lane, and on into the High-street, somewhat quieter now, in the deepened darkness, than when Dorothy saw it first.

She was still lying on the settle in the little back room; it all seemed like a sad dream to her wearied brain; she hardly realized that Frank had been there, talking to her, and she lay there, faintly wondering whether she should see him again, and scarcely hearing Jasper and the good woman as they consulted over her. She was glad, nevertheless, when they closed the door and left her alone, too tired to think or move, with only a consciousness of pain and disappointment weighing on her vaguely and heavily, like a nightmare.

The room was quite dark, but for the fitful flickering of the fire, when the door opened again, and Frank and Lady d'Aubigny entered together, followed by the good baker-woman with a rush-light, which she considerably screened from Dorothy's eyes. She started up, however, on seeing the stranger, but could hardly stand, from weakness and giddiness, and leaned heavily on Frank's ready arm.

"Nay; do not rise, I pray you," said Lady d'Aubigny's sweet voice. "Present me to your cousin, Captain Audley, and tell her how happy I shall be if she will honour my poor lodging."

"It is the Lady d'Aubigny," said Frank to Dorothy, "who is so very good—"

"I thank your ladyship," said the fugitive, with a slight reverence. "I am ashamed to be seen in so sorry a plight, but indeed it is not my fault. They would have sent me to prison, Frank, if I had stayed at Dering."

"Much better that you should come to your friends," said Lady d'Aubigny.

"Friends! Alas, I have none," sighed Dorothy. "I entreat your pardon. I am so weak, I know not what I am saying."

She saw signs and glances pass between her companions, and then found herself left alone with Lady d'Aubigny, who instantly made her lie down again on the settle, and sat down herself beside her, holding her hand.

"Do not disturb yourself," she said, gently: "You are quite safe now, far enough from all your enemies." She looked pitifully at the fair young face, and the wistful eyes that gazed at her so wearily. "Poor child," she went on, half to herself, "you are too young for all this trouble. But no Roundheads can reach you here."

"Ah!" said Dorothy, "there are folk more cruel than Roundheads. But I shall not see him again, to look at me so cruelly! You will not let him come near me? Ah, dear lady, I see him now!" She clasped Lady d'Aubigny's hand in both her own, and pressed it to her eyes.

"My sweet friend, what is this?" exclaimed her protectress, rising and bending over her. Dorothy did not speak, but lay and trembled. Warm as the room was, her hands and face were cold and damp. Lady d'Aubigny gently disengaged her hand, sat down by her on the settle, and drew her into her arms, caressing and soothing her as if she had been a child.

So Frank found them, when he came in to say that the chariot was waiting at the door. Lady d'Aubigny saw his anxious glance, and was much too wise to tell him anything that Dorothy had said.

"This long dangerous journey has been too much for her," she said, gently. "But you must leave her to me, and she shall soon be herself again. My sweet child, can you walk as far as the door? Here is your good cousin's arm for your support, and I will follow close behind."