

and contendedly. But it is best for me to go—for England is too dear—England is too full of thoughts of home—of you. In a word it is best for me to go, because—because I love you.”

He watched her relentlessly—she had no chance to hide a shade of inflection on her face—it was better to dare his gaze than to tremble under it. She looked at him again, and the look sufficed.

“You *would* not deceive me even unwittingly. Answer me truly, what does that look mean? What are your thoughts saying?”

She tried to speak steadily and clearly, but it was a very stammering, faltering, ill-constructed sentence that came out at last. “Saying that—if you only go away because you love me, it is—it is unnecessary—for you to go.”

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“Well, my friends,” observed Miss Kendal to herself, as, after losing sight of them for at least an hour and-a-half, she perceived them quietly walking up and down the terrace, as if no such institution as tea ever existed in the world, “I hope you can appreciate patience as well as you practice deliberation. I am hungry.”

This final remark she loudly repeated at the open window, till she succeeded in attracting their attention.

Then Caroline came running towards her—“What is it?” said she, with the most crimson assumption of unconsciousness in her face. “Do you want me?”

“Do I want you? I want my tea! And so you’ve torn your pretty new dress? Heedless child!”

“It was not I—it was the gate—at least, it was at the gate—the little wicket,” she explained.

Mr. Farquhar put his arm round her, and led her into the room, in the full front of Miss Kendal’s eagle glance.

“Blessed little wicket!” said he, more than half-solemnly. Caroline broke from him, and was clinging to her old friend, hiding her face again. Miss Kendal looked at Mr. Farquhar with an unwonted quiver of her steady mouth in silence; then, as was her habit, she tried to veil the too great earnestness of the moment with a jest.

“My dear,” she said, sententiously bending over “her girl,” “I can darn it, you know—I darn so beautifully. It isn’t worth while to fret, though it is a new frock.” But for all her philosophy, a single great tear fell on Caroline’s hair as she spoke.

“Come,” said she, almost defiantly looking at the said tear, “let us behave as wisely as may be.” She held out her hand to Mr. Farquhar—