

The chambermaid, candle in hand, was awaiting Alicia, and the two ascended the broad staircase with its squat, quaint rails, to a long, narrow corridor, at the end of which was her room. The maid flung open the door. Like every other room in the house, it was somewhat low-ceilinged, panellled, and with a bow window. The fire blazing in the grate seemed to welcome her.

"I am glad you lighted a fire," said she.

"Yes, madam. The gentleman ordered it."

Of course it was Graydon who was responsible for this thoughtfulness. She felt grateful to him for it. A man who could look ahead for the comfort of other people was not to be despised.

She dreaded going to bed. Her brain was excited—nervous, fevered, and for several minutes she paced the room. Then drawing a comfortable, old-fashioned, cretonne-covered easy chair to the fire, she sank down wearily. After a while the long lashes were slowly lifted, the large, grey eyes gazed steadily at the dancing flames, but their dreamy, far-off expression showed that the fire flickered and danced in vain for any image it conveyed to the mind of the gazer.

"Dead! I can hardly believe it. Murdered! Oh, how terrible!"

She covered her eyes with her hands, and her whole body seemed to vibrate. For several minutes she remained thus, her elbows resting on the arms of the chair, her white fingers pressed tightly over her temples. What train of thought was passing through her mind it was hard to say, but naturally the effect of the death of David Haggart upon herself and upon her circumstances would come uppermost.