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place I should have found pretty cottages, however humble, not common town-looking houses."

Her search for rooms was dispiriting. Her surroundings were more uncongenial than she had imagined, smoking men, crying children, gossiping women.

"Why don't you get lodgings up the hill, Miss?" asked one woman, who seemed to understand that she was forlorn, and pitied her. "You can get rooms much more suitable to you for a pound a week."

"A pound a week!" Mary replied with dismay, "that is far beyond my means. And there is no reason why I should not live as other factory girls do. I am going to work at the mill."

"You!" exclaimed the woman.

"What is wrong with me?" asked Mary, who had recovered her self-possession. "Is not my hair done in the same fashion as other girls' (except that I observe theirs is rather more curled and frizzed), is not my dress the same?"

"It isn't that," said the woman, "it is you."

"Perhaps it is because I have come from London. I beg you to believe that I am a working girl who has to earn her own living," for Mary was intensely anxious not to be taken for a lady.

"Are all London girls like you?" asked the woman shrewdly, glancing at her carefully dressed ruddy brown hair, her clear blue eyes, her delicate complexion and hands.

Mary laughed, disheartened as she felt. "I do not know," she replied, and turned away.

ALANE opened on her right, she wandered up. A few hundred yards further on stood an old fashioned farmhouse, a card with "Lodgings" was in the window. Without much hope that the price would suit she knocked at the door. A clean-looking, sharp faced woman opened it and listened to her application.

"It certainly isn't much you have to give, she replied, "but I don't suppose you will be much trouble, and my rooms are all unlet. You shall have two small ones for that."

"Thank you," said Mary gratefully, for she felt strangely humble since her quest had begun. I shall give scarcely any trouble I assure you. I will do whatever I can for myself."

The sitting-room was stone paved, with a small square of cocoanut matting on the floor, the furniture was plain in the extreme, but everything was scrupulously clean, and she rejoiced to think she would be secluded here, and away from the noisy village street. The windows looked into an orchard and a potato field, while cultivated hills formed the background.

The landlady's son agreed to fetch her luggage from the station at once.

"I take the rooms now," said Mary, "but I am not going to sleep here to-night, or indeed for some days to come. I shall return on Sunday. I am going into the country for a few days."

"Oh, very well," replied Mrs. Mason, who was a good hearted though rough mannered woman, with a strong Devonshire accent. "Please yourself. Everything will be ready for you whenever you like."

As soon as her luggage had arrived Mary set out, carrying with her a large, heavy parcel.

"That isn't fit for you to take," said Mrs. Mason; "let my boy carry it for you to the station."

"I am not—" Mary began, and checked herself, altering her sentence into, "Thank you very much, but I would rather take it myself."

It was the beginning of July, the weather was very warm. She walked slowly up the village street, but instead of going to the station, crossed the river, and took the steep road behind the mill, which led to the moorland. It was both hot and dusty, with large stones lying in all directions. Her parcel was very heavy, and more than once she put it down and rested. After a mile of continuous ascent the walking became easier, the road narrower and prettier. On either side of the hedges foxglove, stonecrop, and hardy ferns were growing, a brooklet ran beneath, while magnificent views of the country round were now visible.

After a time she turned off to the right, and, entering a gate, reached the beginning of the moorland, going steadily upwards, although skirting the sides of the hills.

It was an exquisite evening, the dark rounded tors were covered with long sweeping cloudy shadows and lights, the distant river below ran amongst its boulders, making a soothing sound, the air was scented with early heather. She forgot her fatigue as she trod on the springy turf, and breathed the exhilarating moorland air. The cultivated hills lay behind her, in front were the Dartmoor ranges, grand, silent, inexpressibly beautiful with their solemn stateliness, and wild rocky summits.

SHE passed a lonely farmhouse where children were playing, then crossed a rivulet by stepping stones. In the distance she saw a horseman driving in some sheep, droves of Dartmoor ponies and cattle raced about gaily, but otherwise the solitude was complete. A few rooks sailed overhead, a lapwing crossed her path, and then, after a time, she was in absolute loneliness.

She sat down on a boulder and took out a map and a pocket compass, studying both attentively. A faint moon was shining, the land below was wrapped in the stillness of evening. A dread overcame her, not of man, but of these marvellous silent witnesses around her; she felt, as many a one had done before her, her own utter insignificance in the presence of Nature and Nature's God.

She knew that it would soon be nightfall and, making a great effort, she resumed her way, going now up the side of the tor known as Three Barrows. The climb was steep and exhausting. She placed her parcel, which was carefully tied up and sealed in all directions, on the ground, removing from the top of it a thick waterproof cloak and a small basket of provisions. She was now amongst the rocks and could obtain shelter. Before sitting down she went round the summit, looking in all directions to make sure no other tourist was there also. But she was considerably astonished on looking in the direction of Willowbridge to see Ronald Westlake coming up the side of the tor with a rapid step, and as she knew that he had seen her and escape was impossible, she awaited his coming. She was very angry that he had followed her, and yet was greatly relieved to find that it was none other than he.

"Miss Williams!" he exclaimed, as soon as he was by her side, "do you know that it is now growing dark. Let me beg of you to return to Willowbridge at once or you will be benighted. As it is, you cannot possibly get there by daylight, but I will see you home."

"And by what right have you had the impertinence to follow me?" she asked haughtily. I beg your pardon, I forgot you were my master," she added with sarcasm. "Pray forgive me, I was only speaking to you as if you had been an ordinary gentleman."

"In one way I did not follow you," Ronald replied coolly; "I was out riding and caught sight of you, and as I knew you were in a strange and unsafe locality I took the liberty of seeing after you. As I have walked some miles, and gone without my dinner in your service, I think you might speak a little more pleasantly," he added with a laugh.

"Did I ask you to pursue me? Did I ask you to go without your dinner? I do not thank you, for you have only embarrassed me. What would be said in the village at your seeing a mill-hand home, you the son of the proprietor?"

"I really can't help that; you shouldn't have come out so late, Miss Williams. I must insist on your returning at once."

"It is not my intention to return. I am going on."

A sudden suspicion came into his mind, which caused his voice to become hard and cold.

"Pardon me for my interference. No doubt you are going to meet someone, and will be well protected. I apologise."

"I am neither going to meet man, woman nor child. I shall be entirely