

cold. The men were enjoying themselves after their own manner. Freda was at liberty for her expedition.

His lordship was in the library, the footman said, looking doubtfully at Freda, whose air had something unfamiliar about it to the eye of an English servant. His lordship was busy with his papers. He did not like to be disturbed.

"Please say that I come from Almoners," said Freda.

"From Almoners," the man repeated, suddenly alert and forgetting the professional manner for something more human. "It isn't that there's anything wrong with Miss Cecile?"

"No, no, there is nothing wrong," Freda answered making haste to reassure him.

But, shown into Lord Grandison's presence, it was easy to see that he, too, had been startled by a messenger from Almoners. He advanced a little way down the long room to meet Freda, a slender, dark man with a worn face, looking at her his courteous inquiry as to the cause of her visit, not a glimmer of recognition in the sunken eyes, but only some surprise when Freda shrank back before his offered hand.

To her it seemed incredible that he should not recognise her. She would have recognised him anywhere. The years that had passed over him had left their traces indeed in a face seamed with lines and worn to a haggard fineness, but his person hardly seemed to have aged. Despite his sedentary life he