

imprisonment. They crowded together, gazing at Ernestine with eager looks. She soon found she was expected to play her part in a small drama, which the astute governor originated for the occasion.

"Yes ma'am, this is our exercise ground," he said, with a wave of his hand. "Male prisoners walk here at one, female prisoners at two o'clock. We are careful of their health, ma'am; you shall go through their cells presently."

"I am glad they have a little fresh air," said Ernestine.

"Oh yes, ma'am; and I gives them every indulgence in my power, when they behave steady and does their oakum properly. Have you all picked your full quantity this morning?" he added, turning to the women.

"Yes, sir," they answered in chorus.

"Then I'll give you a treat, and let you see this pretty picture," and he held out Annie's portrait. With a shriek of delight they rushed forward, and crowded around him to look at it. For a moment there was a silence, then a shout from two or three, "Why, it's Rosie Brown!"

"Well, to be sure, and so it is," said another.

"It's Rosie, only prettier," said a fourth.

"Ah! that's the flowers sets her off," said another; and so on, one and all agreeing on the identity of the portrait. Ernestine remembered Thorold had told her of the probable change of name. Brown was just what Annie might have been expected to choose, and very likely Mr. Brown himself had given the name of Rose to the sweet, blushing face represented in the sketch.

"Yes, it is Rosie Brown," said the gaoler. "I thought you would know her. It's like her ain't it? But this was done before she came to Greyburgh."

"Any one may see that," said a girl; "Rosie looks ever so much older now."

"Oh! can you tell me where she is at present?" exclaimed Ernestine eagerly.

"There! you've been and spoiled all," muttered the gaoler.

"Yes, sure," said one of the younger girls; she is at Mother Dorrell's."

She was interrupted before she completed the name by a companion, who twitched her sleeve, while a sharp glance towards Ernestine and a look of intelligence among themselves passed round the circle.

"Rosie Brown," said the woman who had stopped the other; "oh! she is gone away, been gone ever so long; don't live anywhere near Greyburgh now."

"Polly Smith, if you've got nothing but lies to tell, you'll be pleased to hold your tongue," said the gaoler.

"Law bless you, Mr. Bolton," said a slim, black-eyed girl, springing half across the yard towards him, "don't you know as Rosie went off in a coach and six, quite grand and respectable? There a was gentleman inside, with a cocked hat, and I think it must have been the mayor."

"Lydia Merritt if you dares to give me any of your chaff, you'll be locked up that's all. Ma'am I'll show you over the rest of the gaol, if you please now; there's nothing more to see here."

He held the door open for Ernestine, and she could not choose but go towards it, her expressive face shadowed by sorrow at the thought that her own indiscretion had defeated her object. A sad-eyed girl, who had remained silent from the first, was watching Ernestine intently. Suddenly she went towards her, and whispered in a low voice,—

"You mean nothing but good to Rosie, don't you?"

"Nothing, nothing but good," said Ernestine anxiously.

"Then you'll find her at Mother Dorrell's in Priory Lane."

"Oh, thank you!" said Ernestine, pressing the girl's hand. A look of astonishment passed into the care-worn faded face as the woman felt the touch of that soft, white hand. She watched Ernestine till the last fold of her dress disappeared through the door, and then went and sat down in a corner, with her face buried in hands.

The gaoler conducted Ernestine back to his room, and then turned round and looked at her,—

"You was never made for a detective officer," he said.

"I don't suppose I was," said Ernestine, laughing. "I saw how foolish I had been the moment I asked that question."

"It was a green thing to go and do," said the gaoler pensively.

"But did you hear what that girl said to me as we came out?" exclaimed Ernestine. "She said Rosie Brown was at Mother Dorrell's in Priory Lane. It is such an odd address that I remembered it well."

"Yes, yes; and it was right enough, no doubt. It was Nell Lewis told you that, and there's a deal of good in that gal. I know all about her from the first, and the bigger rascal than the young fellow that ruined her does not live, for all he is a lord with a fine estate at his back."

"Then if you know where this place is, had I not better go at once?" said Ernestine eagerly.

The gaoler sat down deliberately, put his hands on his knees, and looked steadily at her.

"Be you a going to take my advice?" he said, "or be you a-going to take your own way?"

"Oh! I shall certainly take your advice, said Ernestine. You must know much better than I can do what is best. I only want so much to find this poor girl."

"And you shall find her if you are guided by me, for I'll help you. I'll help you for two reasons: first and foremost, because I like to help those that are trying to do good. Though I've lived among a blessed lot of blackguards all my days, I still believe it's possible to do them good when folks goes at it with a will as you do. They've got the Lord on their side, and the devil's no match for them. And, secondly, I'll do what I can for you; because you are a real lady every inch of you; and I can tell you I know a lady when I see her, from a make believe, dressed up in silks and satins."

"Thank you very much," said Ernestine; "I am sure we shall succeed, if you are kind enough to help me."

"We shall succeed; but first, I'll tell you what would happen if you went yourself to Mother Dorrell's. You would knock at the door, and some one would take a look at you through a hole in the shutter of a closed window. You'd be kept waiting a bit; then the door would open, and you would see a most respectable-looking widow, who would say she was sorry to keep you waiting, but she had been lying down, her nerves were so bad ever since her poor dear husband died. Then you would ask for Rosie Brown, and she would say she never heard of no such person; and you would say, wasn't she one of the gals lodging here? Then she'd hold up her hands, and say, Gals lodging there! whatever did you mean? And you'd say, Wasn't she Mrs. Dorrell? Yes, sure, she was Mrs. Dorrell, a lone widow, getting an honest livelihood; and whoever had dared to say she took in gals to lodge there? Oh the wickedness of this world! They wouldn't have ventured to say such a thing if her poor dear husband had been alive to protect her. And she'd ask you to inspect the premises, and see if she had any room for lodgers there; and you'd see a tidy parlour, with a Bible on the table, and a picture of the bishop on the wall, and a little kitchen, and nothing more; and you'd pass a little door to the back as you went out again, and take no notice of it. But if you could have opened it, which you couldn't, for the old hypocrite would have the key in her pocket, you'd have seen a court with twenty or thirty rooms round it, and two or three gals in each of them; and there's nothing much more like hell upon earth than that is, so far as sin and wickedness is concerned."

Ernestine shuddered. "I could indeed do no good there; but how then shall I ever see this girl?"

"Well, I shall just speak a word to the university police, and tell them all about it. I'll let them see this picture, they'll have her took up in a trice, and soon get her sent