

Magdalen looked at her with great, haggard eyes.

"I left it at the station. Rachel, when did Laura die?"

"Yesterday," old Rachel answered, crying again; "an hour after her baby was born."

"Her baby? Oh, Rachel!" with a wild start, "I did not know—I did not know—"

The old woman undid the bundle of flannel. The babe lay soundly asleep.

The girl covered her colorless face for a moment, her tears coming at last, falling like rain.

"Laura! Laura! My sister!"

Her tears were noiseless, burning, bitter. She looked up presently, to bend over the sleeping child and kiss its velvet cheek.

"Laura's baby! Poor little motherless thing! Oh, Rachel, it is very, very hard!"

"Very hard, my dearest and terrible to bear; but it must be borne, for all that. My pet, go up to your room and change these dripping clothes. I don't want to lose you, too."

"Better so," the girl said, wearily. "Better and it all, and lie down and die with them. Others would die of half this misery, but I only suffer and live on!"

Slowly and spiritlessly she ascended the stairs to her own familiar room. She changed her wet garments, bathed her aching head, brushed out the rippling, yellow ringlets—all in a weary, aimless sort of way—and then returned to the apartment below. It was a very simple toilet she had made, and her black dress was frayed and faded, and scant and ill-made; but for all that she was well worth looking at.

She was very pretty, in spite of her pallor—so brightly pretty, that it was a pleasure only to look at her.

"My own darling!" the old nurse said, fondly kissing her, "you are more beautiful than ever, and almost a woman at sixteen. It's a sad pity, but oh dear, dear! how can I help it? To think you can go to school no more."

"I must only study at home," Magdalen said, "and prepare my minds as well as I can. I suppose no one would be willing to engage a governess only sixteen years old. Have we enough to live on for a year, Rachel?"

"Not, I am afraid, enough. Your poor papa's lawyer, Mr. Hamilton, will tell you. It is very hard, my poor