

the stationmaster—and they were off, the pace increasing rapidly as they went.

Miss Farrant settled herself, took a book from her travelling bag, and tried to read, but the small indistinct type, especially affected by railway literature, was too trying in the dim light. So she shut up the volume and leaned back in the corner farthest from the door by which she had entered, hoping to sleep, for her thoughts were rather troubled.

Hope Farrant was the only child of the General's favourite brother, and had a nice little fortune, inherited from her mother. Both her parents were dead, and she had been brought up with her cousins, Bob, Jim, and a little girl, May, who was much younger than any of them, the children of General Farrant.

When that officer, after honourable service in the Indian Mutiny and sundry other frontier disturbances, retired, in consequence of impaired health, and settled himself at Uplands, in a well-known hunting country, Hope took the place of elder daughter, and, as the General was a widower of some years' standing, she naturally became mistress of the house, May not being yet free from the trammels of school. Bob, the eldest son, was in a light dragoon regiment. Jim was at Oxford, and intended for the Church.

Miss Farrant attempted in vain to sleep. At length, opening her eyes, she gazed at vacancy, and let her thoughts wander where they would.

"Dear old uncle! His matchmaking, is quite too transparent. I wish I could please him! But I really like Bob too well in one way to care about him as a lover; though I am rather afraid he is fond of me. He is a good fellow; very good! but too young—only two years older than myself, as years reckon, but younger by more than that in reality. Why should I marry at all? I have enough to live upon; and I don't think I shall ever care very much for any one. I have been out quite four years! The only