

Helen looked up ; fear, dread, all were for the moment forgotten as her eye rested on the noble, manly bearing of her betrothed, who was advancing rapidly to meet them.

"This is very good, my dear Helen, you know not how much gratified I feel ; my heart misgave me for a moment, till I saw your carriage drive up ; I feared I should have my trust in your strength of mind shaken ; but, how is this,—such pale cheeks, ah ! and tearful eyes ; this must not be."

And he looked earnestly and anxiously upon her. That loving, searching look soon brought back the warm blood to the fair face he gazed on, though she had ventured to give but one hasty glance at his.

"I feel better already, now I am with you, and will try and do my best. Do you not believe me, Cecil?"

But the bell rings warningly, passengers hurry to their seats, and before she realizes the fact, Helen finds herself in the dreaded train. Mr. Seymour is seated between the sisters.

In the compartment, immediately opposite, is a portly, stately looking old gentleman, apparently too well cased in a sense of his own dignity and importance, to notice either train or passengers. In the other remaining compartment are two ladies, with a decided frigidity of manner, which at once reveals to Helen, she has no sympathy to expect from them, in return to her startled look as the train moves on. Poor Helen, no sympathy for you there, or in the stoical face of the old gentleman, which if any change at all was discernable in it, only gave token of something very much approaching to contempt, as at times an irrepressible start of terror proceeded from the poor girl, to the astonishment of the stiff lady passengers, and the vexation of Mr. Seymour.

He in vain sought to reassure her, her bowed head prevented him from knowing the full extent of her terror, yet he felt annoyed at the strange fixed gaze of her startled countenance, which certainly looked wilder than he would have approved, and which was not unlikely from her having entered the train near the Lunatic Asylum, to create some very unpleasant suspicions with regard to that establishment. Added to that, Mr. Seymour's military appearance, his commanding look, and imperturbable gravity, as from time to time he gently but decidedly spoke in low tones to Helen, over whom for the moment he seemed to have a magical power, added to the uneasiness of the strange ladies.