

tonse tone, her eyes glittering. "I know the man!"

"Indeed! He was not masked, then? Some one of the town? Do I know him?"

"It was the Frenchman, Durand!"

He drops her hand, and stares at her in consternation.

"It was my granddaughters' relation—it was the Frenchman, Durand—and I believe Reine Landelle told him of the money and admitted him here last night!"

But Longworth only sits, perfectly dumb with the shock of the announcement, staring at her.

"I saw his face as plainly as I see yours now," she goes on, excitedly. "I was asleep, I suppose, when he entered; but some slight noise he made awoke me. A man was fitting a key in that cabinet yonder behind you. I started up in bed, and screamed out. Like a flash he turned, and I saw his face. Before I could cry out again he had put his hand over my mouth, and held a sponge saturated with chloroform under my nostrils. I remember no more. This morning I awoke from my drugged sleep to find the room in perfect order, the cabinet as usual, the money gone, and myself sick as death from the overdose of the drug!"

"This is horrible!" Longworth says, finding his voice; "I cannot realize it. But why should you suspect Mademoiselle Reine? Surely she knows nothing of this!"

"She was the only one who knew of this money. When Mr. Martin, left he saw her whispering to him across the gate. He was here this morning, and told me."

"Still——"

"Look here, Laurence"—she holds up a handkerchief, marked with the name in full, "Reine Landelle"—"Catherine found this at my bedside this morning. It was not there last night."

"Still——"

"Look here! look here!"—in a state of feverish excitement she holds up to view a sponge and two or three small keys—"Catherine found these in her room this morning; they fell out of her dress pocket. The woman is her friend—she would not have told if she had thought it could hurt her. Smell that

sponge. Has it been soaked in chloroform? I tell you she let him in, and was with him last night. His keys would not fit; he had to pick the lock. Laurence, you have had an escape. I never liked her—I always knew she was bad, bad, bad to the core. You must give her up, and at once!"

He rises from his seat and walks to the window. He has given her up—he believes her false and treacherous—but it wrings his heart to hear this.

"Have you asked her?" he says, coming back. "It is not fair to condemn her unheard. Your evidence is circumstantial evidence, the most unreliable in the world. It may only be a combination of circumstances; she may be innocent in the face of it all."

"You do not believe one word of what you are saying. I can see it in your face. No, I have not seen her—I never want to see her again. Catherine tells me she has kept her room, that she looks dazed with terror—guilt would be the better word. Well she may! She is guilty of something worse than a crime—she is guilty of being found out."

"What do you intend to do?"

"I intend to turn her out. Yes, this very day. Not another night shall she sleep under this roof; it has never been a shelter for thieves. Let her go and join her robber lover, for he is her lover and followed her here. What he has stolen from me will keep them for a while; when that is gone, she can help him to steal more."

"Madam! you are merciless. You must not act in this reckless way for your own sake. Remember, she is your granddaughter—your child's child."

"My curse on them both—the mother who fled from me, the daughter who has disgraced me! The name of Windsor has been dishonoured by them both. How dare you plead for her? But for you these girls never would have set foot in this house!"

"No need to remind me of that. I regret my ill-starred advice as deeply as you do. Still justice is justice. Condemn her if you like; but hear her—send for her, and ask her to tell you the truth."

She seizes the bell-rope, and pulls it before he has fairly spoken the words. In all the years he has known her, Longworth has never seen her proud