

## XVII.—THE TWO DUKKERIPENS

Was the mystery at an end? Was there one point in this story of stories which this letter of D'Arcy's had not cleared up? Yes, indeed there was one. What motive—or rather, what mixture of motives—had impelled Sinfi to play her part in restoring Winifred to me? Her affection for me was, I knew, as strong as my own affection for her. But this I attributed largely to the mysterious movements of the blood of Fenella Stanley which we both shared. In many matters there was a kinship of taste between us, such as did not exist between me and Winnie, who was far from being scornful of conventions, and to whom the little Draconian laws of British "Society" were not objects of mere amusement, as they were to me and Sinfi.

All this I attributed to that "prepotency of transmission in descent" which I knew to be one of the Romany characteristics. All this I attributed, I say, to the far-reaching influence of Fenella Stanley.

But would this, coupled with her affection for Winifred, have been strong enough to conquer Sinfi's terror of a curse and its supposed power? And then that colloquy recorded by D'Arcy with what she believed to be her mother's spirit—those words about "the two dukkeripens"—what did they mean? At one moment I seemed to guess their meaning in a dim way, and at the next they seemed more inexplicable than ever. But be their import what it might, one thing was quite certain—Sinfi had saved Winifred, and there swept through my very being a passion of gratitude to the girl who had acted so nobly which for the moment seemed to drown all other emotions.

<sup>†</sup> had not much time, however, for bringing my thoughts