

A path led one through the hollow to red brick steps, down which one could plunge into a sunk lane; then by more red brick steps one plunged again, until, through a miniature labyrinth of fishermen's cottages, one emerged into the coal-stained roadway by Harhour Wall. This was the short cut from the Lodge to the village, and it was by this route that Mr Burgoyne and his niece plunged down to their secret task.

"Look," said Mr Burgoyne, as they walked heneath the bare branches of chestnut and beech. "Some wind still!" and he pointed upward to the slowly moving sails of the windmill. "Not too much for bicycling, I hope—not enough to tire your aunt."

"Oh no," said Effie. "*Some* wind is fun. If you've *no* wind you can't have the wind behind you. Don't be afraid, Uncle. And Jack is so sensible—he would never let her do too much."

"That's right. Stone is indeed wise, beyond his years—always considerate"; and they hurried along the path, prattling most cheerfully. "See, Effie—empty seats, vacant thickets: no lovers' walk to-day, is it? No loving couples proving their affection at the expense of their good manners."

"No, Uncle Richard. That's a comfort, isn't it?"

In the tourist season the cool and shady paths were much affected by humble visitors who seemed to think that arms round waists were the best and most natural ornament to young ladies figures. Effie, who loved this rapid descent to shops or pier, had complained that the vulgar tourists debarred her from using it when she most wanted to use it—in the burning summer-time.

"Uncle, see——" This was as they came out among the hanging nets and the piled eel-baskets behind the cottages—"there goes Miss Granger—in a new dress. I am certain that it's a new dress. Oh, do you think she is trying to find Dr Wren to let him see how smart she is?"

"Well, my dear—in strict confidence—I shouldn't wonder if she was."