

the silver candelabrum on the stand at her elbow, she was glancing up at her visitor, out of a pinched white face ; all the more white and waxen for the startling contrast with the black silk kerchief tied three-corner-wise over her silvery hair. It gave her the look of a religieuse ; a look flatly contradicted by the quick, vivacious eyes—

“Coal coal black, and they’re like a hawk,  
And they winna let a body be,”

said Kendal to himself, while she was welcoming him in French much older than herself :

“Dr. Kendal, is it not ? I am charmed to see you ; though perhaps you may think my sending for you a mere trap to catch a visitor ? The truth is, my good Marguerite here—”

A smile of friendly understanding passed between mistress and maid, as the latter softly withdrew from the room.

“My good Marguerite will have it that I am not quite strong this summer ; and so, as I am entirely dependent on her for companionship, I find it wisest not to dispute on the point of a needle, and am a little ill accordingly.”

Kendal looked at her in some doubt as to how much of the cheerful tone was real, how much assumed. To him, the first light touch of death was so apparent in the delicate, pinched features