

"Yes, dear uncle, I can defy the weather."

"I suppose we'll not see you again for a month?"

"Oh! I only said three weeks."

"I'd lay long odds that exacting old woman will not let you off under a month."

"Uncle, she is not exacting! She is an old dear."

"Hum, well, maybe so—to you, perhaps." A pause.

"I have written to Bob," resumed the General. "He will be able to run up pretty often, there is not much doing at Aldershot just now, and you'll want a tall cousin to take you about while you are in town."

"Oh! I must not trouble him too much."

"Trouble! You know best whether he considers it trouble, acting orderly to your fanciful self."

"Now, uncle, I am not fanciful, I——"

"Here's the train," he interrupted, peering into the fog, and the next minute the engine came snorting and puffing alongside.

There was always a halt at Markborough to examine the wheels, to fill the grease boxes, and replenish the boiler, previous to the long, unbroken run of an hour and a quarter into London.

Several passengers alighted and went into the refreshment room, while others walked to and fro to restore circulation.

"You'll be all right here, for you don't stop before the end of your journey," said the General, handing his niece into an empty first-class carriage. "Send me a card to-night. Of course Lady Thornton will meet you?"

"Take your seats," shouted the guard, and every one rushed to their places.

"Oh! stay, uncle. This carriage smells horribly of tobacco. I shall have such a headache!"

"Well! look sharp! Get into this one behind; it is also empty."

The change was rapidly accomplished. The general gave his niece a hearty kiss—"Stand back!" called