

late myself on the pleasure of knowing a heroine who can profoundly keep her own secrets."

"Ah! now you are laughing at me. And indeed I was, and am anxious to know." A troubled look creeps into the wistful eyes fixed upon him. "Do you tell us, monsieur—you know her well—what is our grandmother like?"

"Like a queen, mademoiselle, if queens are always stately and tall, handsome and high-bred; severe, perhaps, cold certainly, but a lady to her finger tips."

"*Une grande dame*; I said so, *Petite*," murmurs Marie.

"Cold and severe, and we are coming uninvited and unwelcome," Reine responds, under her breath.

"But to the home that is ours by right—the only home we have in all the world," says Marie, and a look of resolution that is not unlike Mrs. Windsor's own sets her young face. "It is our right to go there, my sister."

"So!" Longworth thinks, "in spite of your pretty face, you will have a will of your own, and are a much better diplomat than *Petite Reine*. I foresee, if madame melt at all, it will be towards you."

Mr. Longworth, on the whole, decidedly enjoys this day's ride and companionship, although he is not so fascinated that he cannot desert them at intervals for a brief retreat to the smoking-carriage. Among all the enchantresses that ever turned the heads of men, was there ever one yet who had not a formidable rival in her lover's cigar case?

They dine together in a very friendly fashion at two. Mademoiselle Marie manifests that admirable appetite which perfect health, beauty, and twenty sunny years require, but Reine's flags. She takes little; she looks restless and nervous and excited. This expression deepens as the afternoon wears on. Longworth sees it in the large eyes that glance up at him upon one of his returns from smoking. Marie, angelic almost in her slumber, has made a pillow of her shawl, removed her hat, and sleeps—a lovely vision. Reine lifts a warning finger.

"Sh! monsieur, she sleeps. She is not accustomed to railway travelling, and it fatigues her."

She looks with loving eyes at that fair, sweet, sleeping face. Longworth looks, too, with the admiration he cannot quite hide in his eyes. What a model she would make, he thinks, for a sleeping Venus. How some artistic Bohemians he wots of in New York would rave of that wondrous chevelure of red gold, those long amber eyelashes, that faint, delicate flush on the waxen skin.

"It is a pity," he says, "but I am afraid we must. In another five minutes we change carriages for Baymouth."

A flicker of fear passes over her face, and he sees it with a touch of compassion for this nervous, sensitive child.

"The other will be the better off," he thinks. "This poor little creature is to be pitied."

"How long before we reach Baymouth, monsieur?" Reine inquires.

"We shall be there at six; it is now half-past four. Here is the junction; they are slowing already. Pray wake your sister, mademoiselle, while I collect our goods and chattels."

"Marie, *m'amour*," Reine whispers, and Marie opens wide her lovely eyes.

"Are we there?" she asks, stifling a yawn.

Reine explains.

"Change for Baymouth!" shouts the conductor; and preceded by Longworth the two French girls go, and presently find themselves in another train, and flying along in another direction on the last stage of their journey home.

From this moment Reine does not speak. She looks cold and pale, and is trembling with suppressed nervous excitement. Marie sits tranquil and serene, the faint flush of sleep yet on her cheeks, a smile on her lips, a starry light in her eyes, talking brightly, and without a tremor.

"Yes," thinks Longworth, for the third time, "you will do. I fancy you were the one who wrote that remarkably cool letter. But for this *Petite Reine*—

Alas, poor princess, to thy piteous moan Heaven send sweet peace.

This excitable nature of yours will work you woe in Mrs. Windsor's stern household."

The train stops at last. As all the fierce steam whistles of the Baymouth