

"No, no! She could only bring joy wherever she went—no matter who her parents were, or how she was born, my poor little one!—she has suffered for no fault at all of her own!"

He listened to the dying clamour of the storm—the wind still careered round the house, making a noise like the beating wings of a great bird, but the rain was ceasing and there was a deeper sense of quiet. An approaching step startled him—he looked up and saw Priscilla. She smiled encouragingly.

"Cheer up, Mister Robin!" she said. . . . "She is much better—she knows where she is now, bless her heart!—and she's glad to be at home. Let her alone—and if she 'as a good sleep she'll be a'most herself again in the morning. I'll leave my bedroom door open all night—an' I'll be lookin' in at 'er when she doesn't know it, watchin' her lovin' like for all I'm worth! . . . so don't ye worry, my lad!—there's a good God in Heaven an' it'll all come right!"

Robin took her rough work-worn hands and clasped them in his own.

"Bless you, you dear woman!" he said, huskily. "Do you really think so? Will she be herself again?—our own dear little Innocent?"

"Of course she will!" and Priscilla blinked away the tears in her eyes—"An' you'll mebbe win 'er yet!—The Lord's ways are ever wonderful an' past findin' out——"

A clear voice calling from the staircase interrupted them.

"Priscilla! Robin!"

Running to answer the summons, they saw Innocent at the top of the stairs, a little vision of pale, smiling sweetness, in her white wool wrapper—her hair falling loose over her shoulders. She kissed her hands to them.