

PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT.

Her Promise True.

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SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I. II. III.—Hugh Gilbert and Belle Wayland are bidding each other good-bye at Brighton as he is about to sail for India with his regiment. Belle promises to be true and agrees to meet him that evening for a final farewell. Upon her return to the hotel, where she and her mother and brother were the husband of Mrs. Wayland's sister has arrived and has invited her mother and her to dine with him on Monday. Mrs. Wayland goes out to see her sister, and is left apparently asleep in her room. After dinner Mrs. Wayland discovers that Belle has gone out to meet Gilbert and is very angry. Mrs. Wayland writes an account of the affair to her sister, Lady Stanmore, and the latter comes immediately to Brighton.

CHAPTER IV.—Lady Stanmore comes to Brighton and has an important interview with Mrs. Wayland in which they decide Belle's future. Lady Stanmore reads a letter from Gilbert to Belle and lays her plans accordingly. She decides to intercept the letters between the lovers. Lord Stanmore becomes deeply interested in Belle and invites his sister-in-law, Mrs. Wayland, and Belle to spend a few weeks at his country residence.

CHAPTER V.—Belle begins a diary in order that she may read an account of each day to her absent lover.

CHAPTER VI.—Lady Stanmore thinks over the situation. She decides that Belle is not in love with Jack. Lord Richard Probyn calls upon the party, and invites them to visit him at Hurst Hall. He is greatly smitten with Belle. Lady Stanmore sends a letter from Hugh Gilbert to Belle and burns it.

CHAPTER VII.—Lord Stanmore becomes jealous of Sir Dick. Belle tells Lady Stanmore of her engagement and that Lady Stanmore's idea. They go to Hurst Hall.

CHAPTER VIII.—Belle's diary continued. She tells Lady Stanmore of her dream about Hugh. That day she decides to write Mrs. Balfour.

CHAPTER IX.—Lady Stanmore destroys a letter Belle has written to Hugh Gilbert. Jack Stanmore confesses his love for Belle to his sister-in-law. Mrs. Wayland falls ill and the stay at Redvers Court is prolonged. Sir Dick Probyn arrives. Belle and is refused Lady Stanmore gets a letter from Mrs. Balfour who writes to her to go to India on the same ship with Hugh Gilbert. It contains the starting news of Hugh Gilbert's marriage to Miss Vane. Belle is told the news and is greatly shocked. In taking a morning walk she breaks through the ice.

CHAPTER X. XI. XII.—Stanmore rescues Belle from drowning. She takes cold and has a severe illness. A letter arrives for Belle during her illness and is destroyed by Lady Stanmore.

CHAPTER XIII.—Belle is convalescent. Stanmore proposes to her and in her anxiety to show Hugh Gilbert that she too has forgotten she accepts the offer. Stanmore and his sister-in-law arrange matters and Belle acquiesces. The marriage is arranged for an early day.

CHAPTER XIV.—The eve of the wedding. Lady Stanmore writes a letter to Belle in Bombay and tells her of the marriage and specially requests that the news be told Hugh Gilbert whom she represents as a friend only of Belle's.

CHAPTER XV.—THE FIRST WOMAN. Lord and Lady Stanmore return to Redvers Court. Belle is not happy and Stanmore sees that she has not learned to love him. Sir Dick and Lady Probyn call upon them and invite them to dine at Hurst.

CHAPTER XVI.—PLAYING WITH FIRE. Sir Dick grows more in love with Lord Stanmore's wife which causes a mother much uneasiness. Lord Stanmore also notes the young man's infatuation and warns Belle against encouraging him. They dine at Hurst and Belle is presented to Mr. Trelawney the vicar and Sir Dick's old tutor, and his daughter Amy who has known and loved Sir Dick Probyn from her boyhood as they have grown up together but who only regards Amy with a sisterly affection.

CHAPTER XVII.—Sir Dick offers a diamond pendant to Belle but it is refused; she tells him that his confession of love must end a pleasant friendship and he goes home. Belle and Stanmore decide that she is not worth living and attempts to shoot himself but his mother who had feared something and had followed him screams when she sees what he is about to do and the bullet goes through his cheek. Lord Stanmore believes Belle is to blame for encouraging Sir Dick and reads her a lecture which she resents.

CHAPTER XVIII.—An unforgotten face. Lord and Lady Stanmore have an understanding and are better friends. She tells him all about her interview with Sir Dick. The Stanmore's get an invitation to a ball at Marchmont Court. They go and there Belle and Hugh Gilbert meet. After the shock has somewhat died away she enquires for his wife and learns that he has never been married.

CHAPTER XIX.—The lost letters; Belle and Captain Gilbert have mutual explanations in which Lady Stanmore's treachery is revealed. Lord Stanmore is introduced to Gilbert and asks him to dine with them the following day. Belle accuses her aunt of destroying her letters and the latter acknowledges her guilt but nothing of the situation is told to Stanmore who receives Captain Gilbert very kindly and invites him to Scotland for the shooting season and at Belle's request the latter consents to go.

CHAPTER XX.—Gilbert hears of Belle's accident on the lake and of Stanmore's appearance on the scene in time to save her life and the result.

CHAPTER XXI.—The whole party go to Strathearn and are charmed with the beauty of the lake and the result. The Marchmonts furnish their own shooting box and invite Gilbert to join them. He is inclined to do so as he does not notice case at Strathearn, but he and Belle discuss the matter and she requests him to stay for a few days more.

CHAPTER XXII.—A stray shot. Gilbert is wounded by a shot from Mr. Marchmont's gun. Belle hears the news and almost betrays her love for Gilbert. A doctor and nurse are summoned from London and the wound is pronounced not dangerous.

CHAPTER XXIII.—An old friend. Belle makes many anxious enquiries about Gilbert and sends him a rose by Jim Marchmont. Lady Stanmore receives a letter from M. Marchmont who is expected in a day or two to stay at their new shooting box, in which she tells her that Mrs. Seymour is coming to stay with them at Glenwath. She tells her to wish her to go away with her during Mrs. Seymour's stay but Belle declines.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Mrs. Seymour. Lady Stanmore leaves Strathearn after first telling Lord Stanmore of Mrs. Seymour's expected arrival. The latter comes to Scotland and Belle meets her. Gilbert makes his first appearance downstairs since the accident and is received by Belle. He is still very weak and faints away while listening to Belle reading.

CHAPTER XXV.—A new fear. Stanmore and Sir John Leech discuss the Marchmonts who have called and persuaded Belle to accompany them to a picnic. Gilbert continues to improve and goes daily to Belle's boudoir for a cup of tea.

CHAPTER XXVI.—A spray of heather. Gilbert is able to be out again and he and Belle have a walk on the terrace. They are joined by the Marchmont girls who come to carry Belle off to a picnic. Lord Stanmore suggests to Jim Marchmont that it is time for Gilbert to leave Strathearn and he accordingly makes preparations to go to Glenwath for a time. That spray of heather shall lie on my breast after I am dead.

CHAPTER XXVII.—A picnic. Belle overhears a conversation between Mrs. Seymour and Lord Stanmore, in which the latter says he regrets the mistake he made in marrying Belle. A storm comes up during the picnic party, and Belle and Gilbert take shelter in a cave.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—More than life. Belle and Gilbert have an interview, in which their fight is planned. Stanmore discovers that Belle has left him and gone with Hugh Gilbert.

CHAPTER XXIX.—BELLE'S LETTER. The words which Stanmore read with a frowning brow and an angry heart were as follows:—

"Stanmore,—When you read these lines I shall have left your roof forever. I know, that this will surprise you, but before you condemn me you must hear my story. You remember seeing me long ago sitting on the sea-wall at Brighton with Hugh Gilbert. He was then on the eve of embarking for India, and I was engaged to be married to him, and loved him with a deep and abiding love. Before we parted I gave him a solemn promise always to be true to him—a promise that in my heart I never broke. After he left Brighton I received one letter from him. It was from Southampton, and in it he told me he had accident-

ally met his Colonel's daughter, Miss Vane, in the street, and that she also was going out to India to rejoin her father, after inheriting a large fortune in England from a relative. She was accompanied by a Mrs. Balfour, a friend of Aunt Lucy's, and the wife of an officer in the same regiment as Hugh Gilbert. I was re-reading the letter when Aunt Lucy came hastily into my room at Brighton, and sent me down on some errand about changing a carriage. Before I left the room, I, however, placed Hugh's letter in my writing-case. Now, I know Aunt Lucy read this letter, and thus learnt Miss Vane's name. But I must make a long story short. I never received another letter from Hugh Gilbert, though he wrote to me again and again; and he never received one from me, though I wrote to him by each Indian mail, and thought he would find these letters awaiting him on his arrival at Bombay. All our letters were, in fact intercepted by Aunt Lucy.

"We went, as you know to Redvers Court, and when the time came that I knew Hugh must have arrived in India I watched with feverish impatience when you opened the bag, hoping to receive a letter from him. But none ever came. At last one morning a letter did come from Bombay—a letter from Mrs. Balfour to Aunt Lucy. She said there was some news in it I ought to know. What do you think that news was? That Hugh Gilbert, the man to whom I was engaged, the man I loved, had married Miss Vane the day after they landed at Bombay. This was added as a postscript to Mrs. Balfour's letter. Aunt Lucy showed me this letter, and after I had read it all my life seemed a dreary blank.

"Stanmore, the whole story was a lie, invented by Aunt Lucy! Hugh Gilbert had never married Miss Vane, nor thought of marrying her. I met him again at the Marchmonts' fête, and when I asked after his wife, you may imagine his astonishment. Then he told me how again and again he had written to me, and had received no answer; and how at last a letter had come to Mrs. Balfour to tell her I was married, or about to be married, to you. Now you know the whole truth. What Aunt Lucy's motive could be for her cruel conduct I know not. But she did not deny what she had done; she knew, in fact, that Hugh would hear from Mrs. Balfour that she had never written that he was married to Miss Vane.

"Stanmore, when I learnt all this, when I knew how basely I had been deceived, I was your wife. You had been good to me; you had saved my life, though you never thought how in my despair at the idea of Hugh's falseness I had purposely rushed on the frail ice, hoping to end my misery. Yet this was so. My heart seemed to die within me from the day I read of Hugh Gilbert's marriage. And when I saw him, again, though we both felt our love for each other could know no change, we still never thought of doing any wrong. It was I who urged him to come here; I who thought our friendship would always last. It was not until I saw him carried in wounded, not until I was with him day by day in his weakness and illness, that I felt it was impossible to part with him any more. I have cast my lot with him, and I am alone can now separate us, and that only for a little while. And I am glad to think that this decision at least will give you no pain. I overheard you tell Mrs. Seymour at Glenwath that your marriage to me had been a mistake. For my sake and your own, free me from this bond—a bond I never should have entered on had I not been so shamefully deceived. In the little packet you will find near this letter are the keys of my jewel case. I have returned everything that in your kindness you gave me, and forgive and forget me, Belle."

The expression of Stanmore's face changed as he finished reading this long letter. He knew Hugh Gilbert was poor, that Belle was leaving wealth and rank for the sake of her love, and somehow this idea softened his heart.

"Poor Belle!" he thought. "Well, this must be love."

Then suddenly his brow darkened.

"What motive could that vile woman Lucy have?" he reflected. "For deceiving the poor girl? I suppose she wanted what is called a good match for her niece. It could be to gain Alice Seymour? At all events, she has ruined Belle's life."

He felt sorry for Belle, and yet he was wounded. No man likes to think he cannot win a woman's love when he tries, and in the early days of their married life Stanmore had certainly tried to gain Belle's affection. But he had been always conscious that her heart was not his, and he had wearied of her coldness and indifference.

And now he had to face a scandal—to have his name dragged into court! "Hugh shall suffer for this," he thought darkly; "vile schemer that she is!"

He felt greatly disturbed, and more so when during the evening the butler informed him that the pony-chaise that "my lady used in the afternoon," had been returned from the station.

"My lady left by the five express," continued the butler, with an unmovable countenance, but with a secret belief in his heart that his lady had left her home for good.

For a moment Stanmore hesitated; then he forced himself to ask a question.

"Did anyone accompany her?" he said.

"Yes, my lord, there was a gentleman with her, the man said who brought the pony carriage," answered the butler.

Stanmore turned abruptly away without another word. His pride was wounded to the quick, if his heart were not. He thought of starting for town the next day, but finally decided to ride over in the morning to Glenwath, and see Mrs. Seymour before he left Scotland.

"She would not have treated me thus," he reflected, and perhaps this idea gave him some consolation.

He accordingly did go to Glenwath, the day after Belle had quitted Strathearn. Mrs. Seymour was sitting by one of the

windows and saw him arrive, and rose with emotion she could scarcely hide to receive him. She glanced to be alone, and after a few ordinary words, approached the subject he had come to speak of.

"I have something to tell you," he said, rising abruptly and going to the window.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Seymour, also with agitation.

"Belle has left me," answered Stanmore forcing himself to speak the painful words.

"What!" cried Mrs. Seymour, starting to her feet.

"Yes," said Stanmore bitterly, turning round and facing her, "I have the honor to be a forsaken husband—she has run away with Captain Gilbert."

Again a sort of cry escaped Mrs. Seymour's last whitening lips.

"When I went back to Strathearn last evening I found she was gone," continued Stanmore. "But she had left a letter for me—which you may read."

He placed Belle's letter in Mrs. Seymour's trembling hand as he spoke the last few words, and she read it with emotion and excitement.

"Oh, Jack, she loves him—she loves him!" she presently exclaimed.

"Then she should not have married me," it was that bad woman did it all. She was deceived—Oh, Jack, you cannot blame her!"

Stanmore shrugged his shoulders.

"It was in the storm," continued Mrs. Seymour, still greatly excited. "I saw a look on her face when she came in that only love gives—she had promised to go with him then."

"And make a fool of me," said Stanmore. Mrs. Seymour raised her great, lustrous eyes to his face, with a look of sudden and painful anxiety.

"But you regretted your marriage?" she said, after a moment's pause.

"Yes, that is true, Alice, I regretted it, but still—"

"It will only be a nine days' wonder—anything is better than a loveless marriage—I know too well."

Stanmore did not speak. He began slowly walking up and down the room, and Mrs. Seymour's eyes followed him.

"He will marry her; you see she asks you to set her free," continued Mrs. Seymour.

"I suppose he will marry her," answered Stanmore. "Well, she has chosen her own fate; I shall not interfere."

"She was driven into it, Jack! Your marriage nearly killed me; it was that woman, Lady Stanmore, did it. She did it because she knew I liked you, and she hated me; hated me without reason; but she was jealous of your brother though she had no cause."

Again Stanmore shrugged his shoulders.

"I always said you women were unaccountable creatures," he said. "But why Lady should be jealous of poor Stanmore, I cannot tell, since I do not think she was particularly attached to him."

"She could really be attached to no one; her heart is too cold; she knows not what it is to live in another's love."

Again Stanmore was silent. He was in too ruffled a mood to make any response to Mrs. Seymour's words.

"Well," he said presently, "I came to tell you this, and to say good-bye; I mean to leave Scotland today."

"To-day?" repeated Mrs. Seymour. "And where will you go?"

"To town first; my amiable sister-in-law is at Brighton, and I mean to go down and have it out with her—and then I think I will go abroad for a bit till all this blows over."

"I will see you in town then; I do not care to stay on here."

"Very well; write to the club if you want to see me. I will leave it to you to tell the Marchmonts."

"Do you wish me to tell them?"

"It's no good making a secret of it. As you say, it will only be a nine days' wonder."

Upon this agreement they parted and Stanmore left Glenwath, and Mrs. Seymour hastened not unwillingly, to tell the news. At first the Marchmonts refused to believe it.

"It is impossible!" said Mrs. Marchmont. "Hugh Gilbert is only a poor man. She never would be so mad as to leave Lord Stanmore for his sake."

"She has been so mad at all events," answered Mrs. Seymour. "Lord Stanmore came to tell me; he showed me her letter."

Then she is disgraceful, and Hugh Gilbert is disgraceful, I am ashamed they have met under my roof!" exclaimed Mrs. Marchmont, indignantly.

"Fancy leaving a beautiful place like Redvers Court for a penniless soldier!" cried Helen Marchmont, in genuine astonishment.

Only Jim Marchmont was really sorry.

"I am very grieved to hear it," he said. "I knew they cared for each other very much, but I hoped that Gilbert—"

"He ought to be ashamed of himself," replied Mrs. Marchmont, as Jim paused, "to drag a lady in her position down to poverty."

"Well, he's a fine fellow, and I don't care what anyone says," retorted Jim; and true to his friendship he never allowed anyone to abuse Gilbert in his presence.

They talked of the affair the whole day afterwards at Glenwath, and when on the following day Mrs. Seymour announced her intention of leaving Scotland, for a moment Mrs. Marchmont and her eldest daughter exchanged curious glances. But, of course, nothing was said regarding the abrupt end of her visit having anything to do with Lord Stanmore's departure. She made some excuse, and the excuse was accepted. But the Marchmonts knew very well her reason for leaving.

In the meanwhile Stanmore had proceeded to town, and the day after he arrived there he went down to Brighton. He knew that his sister-in-law, Lady Stanmore, was staying at the Metropole there, and he speedily found his way to the hotel, and was presently ushered into Lady Stanmore's private sitting-room.

He had not announced his intention of visiting her, and when his card was presented to her she arose with real pleasure to receive him.

"Jack!" she said, with outstretched hand. "Well, this is a surprise."

But Stanmore did not accept the offered hand. He drew back; he looked at his sister-in-law with an expression on his face that she had never seen there before, and Lady Stanmore instantly knew that something had occurred.

"What is the matter?" she asked quickly.

"I have come to ask you a question," answered Stanmore; "and as it is now too late to do any further harm, perhaps you will for once speak the truth."

"What do you mean?" I do not understand you."

"I will put it very plainly. What was your motive for the lies you told Belle to induce her to marry me? I mean, why did you tell her that her old lover was married to another girl, when you knew perfectly well he was not?"

Lady Stanmore's face flushed, and then grew pale, and her eyes fell.

"She has been telling you this old story, then?" she said, after a moment's silence. I thought she was too wise."

"But why did you do it?" repeated Stanmore, raising his voice. "What was your motive for such a vile deception?"

"I do not say that I did it," she said.

"But you know you did," answered Stanmore, passionately. "And you have ruined the poor girl's life—she has run away with Gilbert."

"What!" cried Lady Stanmore, starting to her feet. "But, no, it cannot be—she cannot have been such an idiot—so mad!"

"You can read the copy of the letter she left with me," said Stanmore slowly drawing a letter from his pocket, and handing it to Lady Stanmore. "I hope now you are satisfied with the evil you have done."

Lady Stanmore snatched the letter from his hand and read it through, and then threw it indignantly on the floor.

"The fool! the idiot!" she said. "But she will find out her mistake."

"No doubt she will. But you have not answered my question. Why did you deceive Belle? Was it because you wished your niece to marry what is vulgarly called 'a good match'?"

Lady Stanmore looked somewhat curiously in his face.

"No," she said, "I did not particularly care for Belle making a good match. I had, in fact, no particular interest in her."

"Why did you lie to her then?"

"Because," answered Lady Stanmore, her temper getting the better of her prudence, "I saw that you—a middle-aged man—were too young to be in love with her, and I knew that if you did not marry her, that another woman—a woman I detested—would not let you escape her! There! that's the truth, if you want it. Belle was better at all events to my mind, than Mrs. Seymour."

"So that was your motive!" said Stanmore, looking steadily in his sister-in-law's angry face. "In your hatred to another woman you spoil Belle's life."

"She has spoiled her own, the fool!" retorted Lady Stanmore passionately. "But I could tell you something about Belle that would surprise you even more than this—something about her birth."

"I want to hear no more inventions," replied Stanmore sternly. "But from this day remember you are a stranger to me; I will never again speak to you or see you willingly. And the very thing you plotted to prevent will probably now happen."

Without another word he quitted the room, and Lady Stanmore was left to her own reflections. And the bitterest of these was that she fully understood the meaning of Stanmore's last words.

CHAPTER XXXV.—A NEW LIGHT.

When the news reached Hurst that Lady Stanmore had left her husband, Lady Probyn knew not how to break it to her son. Sir Dick seemed now a changed man. All his youthfulness, his high spirits, had passed away. His good looks, too, were gone, but to his mother he was everything; she lived but in his life.

How could she tell him then that the woman for whose sake he had wished to die, had done what Lady Probyn never could forgive? She had always unjustly blamed Belle, not her boy's foolish infatuation for a fair face. And yet he must hear this cruel story. "Better from my lips than another's," Lady Probyn told herself, as she tried to nerve herself to tell him the truth.

She went to seek him for the purpose, and found him slowly pacing up and down one of the sheltered walks in the beautiful garden at Hurst. He was walking with a bent head, and when he heard his mother's step on the gravel, he looked up and smiled.

She went up to him, and slid her hand through his arm.

"Dick, I have something to tell you," she said in a low and trembling voice.

"What is it?" he asked quickly.

The disfigured side of his face was turned to his mother, as he asked this question, and involuntarily her eyes fell on the scar that had almost totally changed his appearance.

"I can scarcely find words to tell you," went on Lady Probyn deeply moved; "but—but it is said—it is true—that Lady Stanmore has quitted her husband's roof."

Dick Probyn visibly started; he grew pale, he bit his under lip; his mother's words evidently painfully affected him.

"Quitted it under circumstances disgraceful to her," continued Lady Probyn, still in those trembling accents. "She has run away with a young man—a Captain Gilbert."

"Gilbert!" repeated poor Dick, with a sort of gasp. "She was engaged to a Mr. Gilbert once—when I knew her first—when I asked her to marry me; but she told me that he had married someone else—she told me at Monte Carlo."

"It is probably the same man; his wife may be dead; or who knows? he may be as faithless as she is."

For a moment Dick Probyn did not speak. Then a sudden flush rose to his face.

"Do not speak against her to me mother!" he said excitedly. "I will not hear one word against her!"

"Yet for this woman's sake—" began Lady Probyn.

"For this woman's sake," continued Dick Probyn, still in the same excited tones, "I would have died—I wished to die! But it was no blame of hers; she never gave me one word, one look of love. It was my own folly only; I saw she did not love Lord Stanmore, and I hoped she might learn to love me. This is the truth; and on that day when I acted so madly, she told me I was nothing to her. I said, 'You do not love Lord Stanmore,' and she answered, 'Nor do I love you.'"

For a brief space Lady Probyn made no answer to this passionate outburst. She stood looking at her son; tears rose in her eyes, and then she gently, almost timidly, laid her hand on his arm.

"You will forget her now, at least, Dick?" she said.

"How can I tell?" he answered, turning away his head. "We cannot control these things."

"But you will never see any more," continued Lady Probyn, pleadingly. "She has gone to India with this man, they say; in time, Dick, you will learn to love some good girl; some one who loves you."

"Who will ever love me now, disfigured as I am?"

"I know someone whom I am sure does," answered Lady Probyn, almost passionately. "Have you never guessed, Dick? Amy Trelawney!"

"This is folly, mother."

"It is not! The girl's heart is bound up in you. I guessed it before, but during your illness I knew it; she suffered more than I can tell you."

A dusky blush rose to Sir Dick's altered face.

"Does she know?" he asked after a moment's hesitation.

"She only knows it was an accident," answered Lady Probyn with a faltering tongue. "Dick, you can make the happiness or misery of her life."

Dick Probyn made no reply to this. He wished to be alone, and with the keen instincts of love Lady Probyn understood this. But before she left him she softly kissed his cheek.

"Think of what I have said," she half whispered, and then turned away, and Dick Probyn was left to his own thoughts.

It was no news to him, as we know, that Belle had given him no love. But it was that another woman had, and during the next half-hour his mind dwelt gently, almost pityingly, on Amy Trelawney. He remembered the early days when they had been boy and girl together; the old sports, and sunny happy hours. Then had come the fever and romance of his life, which had swept away with irresistible force all other thoughts and affections. And his love had been all wasted! Belle had given him nothing; a good-natured friendly regard, nothing more. No one knew this better than Sir Dick; and yet this strange strong love had lingered in his heart. But it was all over now, he told himself; as his mother had said, he would probably see her no more.

And perhaps another feeling, too, grew in his heart. Belle was lost to him for ever. She must have loved this other man, Sir Dick reflected, as deeply and truly as he had loved her. And half unconsciously—still thinking of these things—he left the garden at Hurst and walked slowly down the country lane leading to the vicarage.

It did not surprise him to meet Amy Trelawney there. She was carrying a small basket, and Sir Dick saw the sudden and violent blush which mounted to her face as she met him. It was the first time he had ever noticed such a sign of emotion, and his mother's words naturally recurred to his mind.

"Well, Amy, where are you bound for?" he said. "To meet mother?"

"No," answered the girl, looking shyly in his face; "I am going to see little Jack Foster, who is ill, and am taking him some things."

"Suppose you leave little Jack Foster alone for awhile, and come and have a short walk with me instead, and I will carry your basket?"

Amy Trelawney visibly hesitated as Sir Dick made this proposal. To walk with him to her near him, was to her more than she even dared to admit to herself. But on the other hand the small boy to whom she was carrying various luxuries was really very ill, and she had promised to take these things to him, and the child would be disappointed if she did not.

"I think poor Jack is expecting me," she said, "and of course—"