

and police there are difficulties in the way of a man's dealing primitively with his enemy. There had been one or two awkward meetings between the two in the open street; and at the Parlour, among his special intimates, Daddy had elaborated a Purcell myth of a Pecksniffian character which his invention perpetually enriched. On the whole, however, it was in his liking for young Grieve, originally a casual customer at the restaurant, that Dora saw the chief effects of the feud. He had taken the lad up eagerly as soon as he had discovered both his connection with Purcell and his daring rebellious temper; had backed him up in all his quarrels with his master; had taken him to the Hall of Science, and introduced him to the speakers there; and had generally paraded him as a secularist convert, snatched from the very jaws of the Baptist.

And now!—now that David was in open opposition, attracting Purcell's customers, taking Purcell's water, Daddy was in a tumult of delight: wheeling off old books of his own, such as 'The Journal of Theology' and the 'British Controversialist,' to fill up David's stall, running down whenever business was slack to see how the lad was getting on; and meanwhile advertising him with his usual extravagance among the frequenters of the Parlour.

All through, however, or rather since Miss Purcell had returned from school, Dora and her little cousin Lucy had been allowed to meet. Lomax saw his daughter depart on her visits to Half Street, in silence; Purcell, when he first recognised her, hardly spoke to her. Dora believed, what was in fact the truth, that each regarded her as a means of keeping an eye on the other. She conveyed information from the hostile camp—therefore she was let alone.

#### CHAPTER V

'Why—Lucy!'

Dora was still bending over her work when a well-known tap at the door startled her meditations.

Lucy put her head in, and, finding Dora alone, came in with a look of relief. Settling herself in a chair opposite Dora, she took off her hat, smoothed the coils of hair to which it had been pinned, unbuttoned the smart little jacket of pilot cloth, and threw back the silk handkerchief inside; and all with a feverish haste and irritation as though everything she touched vexed her.

'What's the matter, Lucy?' said Dora, after a little pause. At the moment of Lucy's entrance she had been absorbed in a measurement.

'Nothing!' said Lucy quickly. 'Dora, you've got your hair loose!'

Dora put up her hand patiently. She was accustomed to be put to rights. It was characteristic at once of her dreaminess and her powers of self-discipline that she was fairly orderly, though

she had great difficulty in being so. Without a constant struggle, she would have had loose plaits and hanging strings about her always. Lucy's trimness was a perpetual marvel to her. It was like the contrast between the soft indeterminate lines of her charming face and Lucy's small, sharply cut features.

Lucy, still restless, began tormenting the feather in her hat.

'When are you going to finish that, Dora?' she asked, nodding towards the frame.

'Oh it won't be very long now,' said Dora, putting her head on one side that she might take a general survey, at once loving and critical, of her work.

'You oughtn't to sit so close at it,' said Lucy decidedly; 'you'll spoil your complexion.'

'I've none to spoil.'

'Oh, yes, you have, Dora—that's so silly of you. You aren't sallow a bit. It's pretty to be pale like that. Lots of people say so—not quite so pale as you are sometimes, perhaps—but I know why *that* is,' said Lucy, with a half-malicious emphasis.

A slight pink rose in Dora's cheeks, but she bent over her frame and said nothing.

'Does your clergyman *tell* you to fast in Lent, Dora—who tells you?'

'The Church!' replied Dora, scandalised and looking up with bright eyes. 'I wish you understood things a little more, Lucy.'

'I can't,' said Lucy, with a pettish sigh, 'and I don't care twopence!'

She threw herself back in her rickety chair. Her arm dropped over the side, and she lay staring at the ceiling. Dora went on with her work in silence for a minute, and then looked up to see a tear dropping from Lucy's cheek on to the horsehair covering of the chair.

'Lucy, what *is* the matter?—I knew there was something wrong!'

Lucy sat up and groped energetically for her handkerchief.

'You wouldn't care,' she said, her lips quivering—'nobody cares!'

And, sinking down again, she hid her face and fairly burst out sobbing. Dora, in alarm, pushed aside her frame and tried to caress and console her. But Lucy held her off, and in a second or two was angrily drying her eyes.

'Oh, you can't do any good, Dora—not the least good. It's father—you know well enough what it is—I shall never get on with father if I live to be a hundred!'

'Well, you haven't had long to try in,' said Dora, smiling.

'Quite long enough to know,' replied Lucy, drearily. 'I know I shall have a horrid life—I must. Nobody can help it. Do you know we've got another shopman, Dora?'

The tone of childish scorn she threw into the question was inimitable. Dora with difficulty kept from laughing.

'Well, what's he like?'

'Like? He's like—like nothing,' said Lucy, whose vocabulary was not extensive. 'He's fat and ugly—wears spectacles. Father says he's a treasure—to me—and then when they're in the shop I hear him going on at him like anything for being a stupid. And I have to give the creature tea when father's away. He's so shy he always upsets something. Mary Ann and I have to clear up after him as though he were a school-child.—And father gets in a regular passion if I ask him about the dance—and there's a missionary tea next week, and he's made me take a table—and he wants me to teach in Sunday School—and the minister's wife has been talking to him about my dress—and—and—No, I *can't* stand it, Dora—I can't and I won't!'

And Lucy, gulping down fresh tears, sat intensely upright, and looked frowningly at Dora as though defying her to take the matter lightly.

Dora was perplexed. Deep in her dove-like soul lay the fiercest views about Dissent—that rent in the seamless vesture of Christ, as she had learnt to consider it. Her mother had been a Baptist till her death, she herself till she was grown up. But now she had all the zeal—nay, even the rancour—of the convert. It was one of her inmost griefs that her own change had not come earlier—before her mother's death. Then perhaps her mother, her poor—poor—mother, might have changed with her. It went against her to urge Lucy to make herself a good Baptist.

'It's no wonder Uncle Tom wants you to do what he likes,' she said slowly. 'But if you don't take to chapel, Lucy—if you want something different, perhaps—'

'Oh, I don't want any *church*, thank you,' cried Lucy, up in arms. 'I don't want *anybody* ordering me about. Why can't I go my own way a bit, and amuse myself as I please? It is *too*, too bad!'

Dora did not know what more to say. She went on with her work, thinking about it all. Suddenly Lucy astonished her by a question in another voice.

'Have you seen Mr. Grieve's shop, Dora?'

Dora looked up.

'No. Father's been there a good many times. He says it's capital for a beginning and he's sure to get on fast. There's one or two very good sort of customers been coming lately. There's the Earl of Driffield, I think it is—don't you remember, Lucy, it was he gave that lecture with the magic lantern at the Institute you and I went to last summer. He's a queer sort of gentleman. Well, he's been coming several times and giving orders. And there's some of the college gentlemen; oh, and a lot of others. They all seem to think he's so clever, father says—'

'I know the Earl of Driffield quite well,' said Lucy loftily. 'He used to be always coming to our place, and I've tied up his books for him sometimes. I don't see what's the good of being an earl—not to go about like that. And father says he's got a grand

place near Stalybridge too. Well, if *he's* gone to Mr. Grieve, father 'll be just mad.' Lucy pursed up her small mouth with energy. Dora evaded the subject.

'He says when he's quite settled,' she resumed presently, 'we're to go and have supper with him for a house-warming.'

Lucy looked ready to cry again.

'He couldn't ask me—of course he couldn't,' she said, indistinctly. 'Dora—Dora!'

'Well? Oh, don't mix up my silks, Lucy; I shall never get them right again.'

Lucy reluctantly put them down.

'Do you think, Dora, Mr. Grieve cares anything at all about me?' she said at last, hurrying out the words, and looking Dora in the face, very red and bold.

Dora laughed outright.

'I knew you were going to ask that!' she said. 'Perhaps I've been asking myself!'

Lucy said nothing, but the tears dropped again down her cheeks and on to her small quivering hands—all the woman awake in her.

Dora pushed her frame away, and put her arm round her cousin, quite at a loss what to say for the best.

Another woman would have told Lucy plumply that she was a little fool; that in the first place young Grieve had never shown any signs of making love to her at all; and that, in the second, if he had, her father would never let her marry him without a struggle which nobody could suppose Lucy capable of waging with a man like Purcell. It was all a silly fancy, the whim of a green girl, which would make her miserable for nothing. Mrs. Alderman Head, for instance, Dora's chaperon for the Institute dance, the sensible, sharp-tongued wife of a wholesale stationer in Market Street, would certainly have taken this view of the matter, and communicated it to Lucy with no more demur than if you had asked her, say, for her opinion on the proper season for bottling gooseberries. But Dora, whose inmost being was one tremulous surge of feeling and emotion, could not approach any matter of love and marriage without a thrill, without a sense of tragedy almost. Besides, like Lucy, she was very young still—just twenty—and youth answers to youth.

'You know Uncle Tom wouldn't like it a bit, Lucy,' she began in her perplexity.

'I don't care!' cried Lucy, passionately. 'Girls can't marry to please their fathers. I should have to wait, I suppose. I would get my own way somehow. But what's the good of talking about it, Dora? I'm sick of thinking about it—sick of everything. He'll marry somebody else—I know he will—and I shall break my heart, or—'

'Marry somebody else, too,' suggested Dora slyly.

Lucy drew herself angrily away, and had to be soothed into forgiving her cousin. The child had, in fact, thought and worried

herself by now into such a sincere belief in her own passion, that there was nothing for it but to take it seriously. Dora yielded herself to Lucy's tears and her own tenderness. She sat pondering.

Then, suddenly, she said something very different from what Lucy expected her to say.

'Oh! if I could get him to go and talk to Father Russell! He's so wonderful with young men.'

Her hand dropped on to her knee; she looked away from Lucy out of the window, her sweet face one longing.

Lucy was startled, and somewhat annoyed. In her disgust with her father and her anxiety to attract David's notice, she had so entirely forgotten his religious delinquencies, that it seemed fussy and intrusive on Dora's part to make so much of them. She instinctively resented, too, what sounded to her like a tone of proprietary interest. It was not Dora that was his friend—it was she!

'I don't see what you have to do with his opinions, Dora,' she said stiffly; 'he isn't rude to you now as he used to be. Young men are always wild a bit at first.'

And she tossed her head with all the worldly wisdom of seventeen.

Dora sighed and was silent. She fell to her work again, while Lucy wandered restlessly about the room. Presently the child stopped short.

'Oh! look here, Dora—'

'Yes.'

'Do come round with me and look at some spring patterns I've got. You might just as well. I know you've been slaving your eyes out, and it's a nice day.'

Dora hesitated, but finally consented. She had been at work for many hours in hot rooms, and meant to work a good many more yet before night. A break would revive her, and there was ample time before the three o'clock dinner which she and her father took together after the midday rush of the restaurant was over. So she put on her things.

On their way Dora looked into the kitchen. Everything was in full work. A stout, red-faced woman was distributing and superintending. On the long charcoal stove which Daddy under old Barbier's advice had just put up, on the hot plates near, and the glowing range in the background, innumerable pans were simmering and steaming. Here was a table covered with stewed fruits; there another laden with round vegetable pies just out of the oven—while a heap of tomatoes on a third lent their scarlet to the busy picture. Some rays of wintry sun had slipped in through the high windows, and were contending with the steam of the pies and the smoke from the cooking. And in front of all on an upturned box sat a pair of Lancashire lasses, peeling apples at lightning speed, yet not so fast but they could laugh and chat the while, their bright eyes wandering perpetually through

the open serving hatches which ran along one side of the room, to the restaurant stretching beyond, with its rows of well-filled tables and its passing waitresses in their white caps and aprons.

Dora slipped in among them in her soft deprecating way, smiling at this one and that till she came to the stout cook. There she stopped and asked something. Lucy, standing at the door, saw the huge woman draw a corner of her apron across her eyes.

'What did you want, Dora?' she inquired as her cousin rejoined her.

'It's her poor boy. He's in the Infirmary and very bad. I'm sure they think he's dying. I wanted to send her there this morning and do her work, but she wouldn't go. There's no more news—but we mustn't be long.'

She walked on, evidently thinking with a tender absorption of the mother and son, while Lucy was conscious of her usual impatience with all this endless concern for unknown people, which stood so much in the way of Dora's giving her full mind to her cousin's affairs.

Yet, as she knew well, Sarah, the stout cook, had been the chief prop of the Parlour ever since it opened. No other servant had stayed long with Daddy. He was too fantastic and exacting a master. She had stayed—for Dora's sake—and, from bearing with him, had learnt to manage him. When she came she brought with her a sickly, overgrown lad, the only son of her widowhood, to act as kitchen-boy. He did his poor best for a while, his mother in truth getting through most of his work as well as her own, while Dora, who had the weakness for doctoring inherent in all good women, stuffed him with cod-liver oil and 'strengthening mixtures.' Then symptoms of acute hip-disease showed themselves, and the lad was admitted to the big Infirmary in Piccadilly. There he had lain for some six or eight weeks now, toiling no more, fretting no more, living on his mother's and Dora's visits, and quietly loosening one life-tendril after another. During all this time Dora had thought of him, prayed for him, taught him—the wasted, piteous creature.

When they arrived at Half Street, they let themselves in by the side-door, and Lucy hurried her cousin into the parlour that there might be no meeting with her father, with whom she was on decidedly uncomfortable terms.

The table in the parlour was strewn with patterns from several London shops. To send for them, examine them, and imagine what they would look like when made up was now Lucy's chief occupation. To which might be added a little strumming on the piano, a little visiting—not much, for she hated most of her father's friends, and was at present too closely taken up with self-pity and speculations as to what David Grieve might be doing to make new ones—and a great deal of ordering about of Mary Ann.

Dora sat down, and Lucy pounced on one pattern after another, folding them between her fingers and explaining eagerly how this or that would look if it were cut so, or trimmed so.

'Oh, Dora, look—this pink gingham with white spots! Don't you think it's a love? And, you know, pink always suits me, except when it's a blue-pink. But you don't call that a blue-pink, do you? And yet it isn't salmon, certainly—it's something between. It *ought* to suit me, but I declare—' and suddenly, to Dora's dismay, the child flung down the patterns she held with a passionate vehemence—'I declare nothing seems to suit me now! Dora!'—in a tone of despair—'Dora! don't you think I'm going off? My complexion's all dull, and—and—why I might be thirty!' and running over to the glass, draped in green cut-paper, which adorned the mantelpiece, Lucy stood before it examining herself in an agony. And, indeed, there was a change. A touch of some withering blight seemed to have swept across the whole dainty face, and taken the dewy freshness from the eyes. There was fever in it—the fever of fret and mutiny and of a starved self-love.

Dora looked at her cousin with less patience than usual—perhaps because of the inevitable contrast between Lucy's posings and the true heartaches of the world.

'Lucy, what nonsense! You're just a bit worried, and you make such a lot of it. Why can't you be patient?'

'Because I can't!' said Lucy, sombrely, dropping into a chair, and letting her arm fall over the back. 'It's all very well, Dora. You aren't in love with a man whom you never see, and whom your father has a spite on! And you won't do anything to help me—you won't move a finger. And, of *course*, you might!'

'What could I do, Lucy?' cried Dora, exasperated. 'I can't go and ask young Grieve to marry you. I do wish you'd try and put him out of your head, that I do. You're too young, and he's got his business to think about. And while Uncle Tom's like this, I can't be always putting myself forward to help you meet him. It would be just the way to make him think something bad—to make him suspect—'

'Well, and why shouldn't he suspect?' said Lucy, obstinately, her little mouth set and hard; 'it's all rubbish about girls leaving it all to the men. If a girl doesn't show she cares about a man, how's he to know—and when she don't meet him—and when her father keeps her shut up—*shameful!*'

She flung the word out through her small, shut teeth, the brows meeting over her flashing eyes.

'Oh! it's shameful, is it—eh, Miss Purcell?' said a harsh, mimicking voice coming from the dark passage leading into the shop.

Lucy sprang up in terror. There on the steps stood her father, bigger, blacker, more formidable than he had ever been in the eyes of the two startled girls. All unknown to them, the two doors which parted them from the shop had been slightly ajar,

and Purcell, catching their voices as they came in, and already on the watch for his daughter, had maintained a treacherous quiet behind them. Now he was entirely in his element. He surveyed them both with a dark, contemptuous triumph. What fools women were to be sure!

As he descended the two steps into the parlour the floor shook under his heavy tread. Dora had instinctively thrown her arm round Lucy, who had begun to cry hysterically. She herself was very pale, but after the first start she looked her uncle in the face.

'Is it you that's been teaching Lucy these *beautiful* sentiments?' said Purcell, with ironical emphasis, stopping a yard from them and pointing at Dora, 'and do you get 'em from St. Damian's?'

Dora threw up her head, and flushed. 'I get nothing from St. Damian's that I'm ashamed of,' she said in a proud voice, 'and I've done nothing with Lucy that I'm ashamed of.'

'No, I suppose not,' said Purcell dryly; 'the devil don't deal much in shame. It's a losing article.'

Then he looked at Lucy, and his expression suddenly changed. The flame beneath leapt to sight. He caught her arm, dragged her out of Dora's hold, and shook her as one might shake a kitten.

'Who were you talking of just now?' he said to her, holding her by both shoulders, his eyes blazing down upon her.

Lucy was much too frightened to speak. She stood staring back at him, her breast heaving violently.

Dora came forward in indignation.

'You'll get nothing out of her if you treat her like that,' she said, with spirit, 'nor out of me either.'

Purcell recovered himself with difficulty. He let Lucy go, and walking up to the mantelpiece stood there, leaning his arm upon it, and looking at the girls from under his hand.

'What do I want to get out of you?' he said, with scorn. 'As if I didn't know already everything that's in your silly minds! I guessed already, and now that you have been so obliging as to let your secrets out under my very nose—I *know!* That chit there'—he pointed to Lucy—all his gestures had a certain theatrical force and exaggeration, springing, perhaps, from his habit of lay preaching—'imagines she going to marry the young infidel I gave the sack to a while ago. Now don't she? Are you going to say no to that?'

His loud challenge pushed Dora to extremities, and it was all left to her. Lucy was sobbing on the sofa.

'I don't know what she imagines,' said Dora, slowly, seeking in vain for words; the whole situation was so ridiculous. 'Are you going to prevent her falling in love with the man she chooses?'

'*Certainly!*' said Purcell, with mocking emphasis. 'Certainly—since she chooses wrong. The only concern of the godly

in these matters is to see that their children are not yoked with unbelievers. Whenever I see that young reprobate in the street now, I smell *the pit*. And it'll not be long before the Lord tumbles him into it; there's an end comes to such devil's fry as that. Oh, they may prosper and thrive, they may revile the children of the Lord, they may lift up the hoof against the poor Christian, but the time comes—*the time comes*.'

His solemnity, at once unctuous and full of vicious meaning, only irritated Dora. But Lucy raised herself from the sofa, and looked suddenly round at her father. Her eyes were streaming, her hair in disorder, but there was a suspicion and intelligence in her look which seemed to give her back self-control. She watched eagerly for what her father might say or do next.

As soon as he saw her sitting up he walked over to her and took her again by the shoulder.

'Now look here,' he said to her, holding her tight, 'let's finish with this. That young man's the Lord's enemy—he's my enemy—and I'll teach him a lesson before I've done. But that's neither here nor there. You understand this. If you ever walk out of this door with him, you'll not walk back into it, with him or without him. I'd have done with you, and *my money* 'ld have done with you. But there'—and Purcell gave a little scornful laugh, and let her go with a push—'*he* don't care twopence about you—I'll say that for him.'

Lucy flushed fiercely, and getting up began mechanically to smooth her hair before the glass, with wild tremulous movements, will and defiance settling on her lip, as she looked at herself and at the reflection of her father.

'And as for you, Miss Lomax,' said Purcell deliberately, standing opposite Dora, 'you've been aiding and abetting somehow—I don't care how. I don't complain. There was nothing better to be expected of a girl with your parentage and bringing up, and a Puseyite into the bargain. But I warn you you'll go meddling here once too often before you've done. If you'll take my advice you'll let other people's business alone, and *mind your own*. Them that have got Adrian Lomax on their hands needn't go poaching on their neighbours for something to do.'

He spoke with a slow, vindictive emphasis, and Dora shrank and quivered as though he had struck her. Then by a great effort—the effort of one who had not gone through a close and tender training of the soul for nothing—she put from her both her anger and her fear.

'You're cruel to father,' she said, her voice fluttering; 'you might be thinking sometimes how straight he's kept since he took the Parlour. And I don't believe young Grieve means any harm to you or anybody—and I'm sure I don't.'

A sob rose in her throat. Anybody less crassly armoured in self-love than Purcell must have been touched. As for him, he turned on his heel.

'I'll protect myself, thank you,' he said dryly; 'and I'll judge

for myself. You can do as you like, and Lucy too, so long as she takes the consequences. Do you understand, Lucy?'

'Yes,' said Lucy, facing round upon him, all tremulous passion and rebellion, but she could not meet his fixed, tyrannical eye. Her own wavered and sank. Purcell enjoyed the spectacle of her for a second or two, smiled, and went.

As soon as he was gone, Lucy dragged her cousin to the stairs, and never let her go till Dora was safe in her room and the door bolted.

Dora implored to be released. How could she stay in her uncle's house after such a scene? and she must get home quickly anyway, as Lucy knew.

Lucy took no notice at all of what she was saying.

'Look here,' she said, breaking into the middle of Dora's appeal, and speaking in an excited whisper—'he's going to do him a mischief. I'm certain he is. That's how he looks when he's going to pay some one out. Now, what's he going to do? I'll know somehow—trust me!'

She was sitting on the edge of the bed, her arms behind her, supporting her, her little feet beating each other restlessly—a hot, vindictive anger speaking from every feature, every movement. The pretty chit of seventeen seemed to have disappeared. Here was every promise of a wilful and obstinate woman, with more of her father's stuff in her than anyone could have yet surmised.

A pang rose in Dora. She rose impulsively, and throwing herself down by Lucy, drew the ruffled, palpitating creature into her arms.

'Oh, Lucy, isn't it only because you're angry and vexed, and because you want to fight Uncle Purcell? Oh, don't go on just for that! When we're—we're Christians, we mustn't want our own way—we must give it up—we *must give it up*.' Her voice sank in a burst of tears, and she drooped her head on Lucy's, kissing her cousin's brown hair.

Lucy extricated herself with a movement of impatience.

'When one *loves* anybody,' she said, sitting very upright and twisting her fingers together, 'one must stick to him!'

Dora started at the word 'love.' It seemed to her a profanation. She dried her eyes, and got up to go without another word.

'Well, Dora,' said Lucy, frowning, 'and so you'll do nothing for me—*nothing*?'

Dora stood a moment in a troubled silence. Then she turned, and took gentle hold of her cousin.

'If I get a chance, Lucy, I'll try and find out whether he's thinking of marrying at all. And if he isn't—and I'm sure he isn't—will you give it all up, and try and live comfortable with Uncle Purcell, and think of something else?'

Her eyes had a tender, nay a passionate entreaty in them.

'No!' said Lucy with energy; 'but I'll very likely drown myself in the river some fine night.'

Dora still held her, standing above her, and looking down at her, trying hard to read her true mind. Lucy bore it defiantly for a minute; then suddenly two large tears rose. A quiver passed over Dora's face; she kissed her cousin quickly, and went towards the door.

'And I'll find out what father's going to do, or my name isn't what it is!' said the girl behind her, in a shrill, shaking voice, as she closed the door.

Dora ran back to Market Place, filled with a presentiment that she was late, though the hand of the Cathedral clock was still far from three.

At the side door stood a woman with a shawl over her head, looking distractedly up the street.

'Oh, Miss Dora! Miss Dora! they've sent. He's gooin—goin quick. An' he keeps wearyin' for "mither an' Miss Dora."'

The powerful scarred face had the tremulous helplessness of grief. Dora took her by the arm.

'Let us run, Sarah—at once. Oh, never mind the work!'

The two women hurried through the crowded Saturday streets. But halfway up Market Street Sarah stopped short, looking round her in an agony.

'Theer's his feyther, Miss Dora. Oh, he wor a bad 'un to me, but he had allus a soft spot for t' lad. I'd be reet glad to send worrud. He wor theer in the ward, they tell't me, last week.'

Three years before she had separated from her husband, a sawyer, by mutual consent. He was younger than she, and he had been grossly unfaithful to her; she came of a good country stock and her daleswoman's self-respect could put up with him no longer. But she had once been passionately in love with him, and, as she said, he had been on the whole kind to the boy.

'Where is he?' said Dora.

'At Mr. Whitelaw's yard, Edgell Street, Great Ancoats.'

They had just entered the broad Infirmary Square. Dora, looking round her in perplexity, suddenly saw coming towards them the tall figure of David Grieve. The leap of the heart of which she was conscious through all her preoccupation startled her. But she went up to him without a moment's hesitation. David, swinging along as though Manchester belonged to him, found himself arrested and, looking down, saw Dora's pale and agitated face.

'Mr. Grieve, will you help me?'

She drew him to the side and explained as quickly as she could. Sarah stood by, and threw in directions.

'He'll be to be found at Mr. Whitelaw's yard—Edgell Street—an' whoever goes mun just say to him, "Sarah says to tha—Wilt tha coom, or wilt tha not coom?—t' lad's deein."'

She threw out the words with a sombre simplicity and force, then, her whole frame quivering with impatience, she crossed the road to the Infirmary without waiting for Dora.

'Can you send some one?' said Dora.

'I will go myself at once. I'll find the man if he's there, and bring him. You leave it to me.'

He turned without more ado, broke into a run, and disappeared round the corner of Oldham Street.

Dora crossed to the Infirmary, her mind strangely divided for a moment between the solemn image of what was coming, and the vibrating memory of something just past.

But, once in the great ward, pity and death possessed her wholly. He knew them, the poor lad—made, as it seemed, two tremulous movements,—once, when his mother's uncontrollable crying passed into his failing ear—once when Dora's kiss was laid upon his hollow temple. Then again he lay unconscious, drawing gently to the end.

Dora knelt beside him praying, his mother on the other side, and the time passed. Then there were sounds about the bed, and looking up, Dora saw two figures approaching. In front was a middle-aged man, with a stupid, drink-stained face. He came awkwardly and unsteadily up to the bedside, almost stumbling over his wife, and laying his hand on the back of a chair to support himself. He brought with him an overpowering smell of beer, and Dora thought as she looked at him that he had only a very vague idea of what was going on. His wife took no notice of him whatever.

Behind at some little distance, his hat in his hand, stood David Grieve. Why did he stay? Dora could not get him out of her mind. Even in her praying she still saw the dark, handsome neat and lithe figure thrown out against the whiteness of the hospital walls.

There was a slight movement in the bed, and the nurse, standing beside the boy, looked up and made a quick sign to the mother. What she and Dora saw was only a gesture as of one settling for sleep. Without struggle and without fear, the little lad who had never lived enough to know the cost of dying, went the way of all flesh.

'They die so easily, this sort,' said the nurse to Dora, as she tenderly closed the patient eyes; 'it's like a plant that's never rooted.'

A few minutes later Dora was blindly descending the long stairs. The mother was still beside her dead, making arrangements for the burial. The father, sobered and conscious, had already slouched away. But at the foot of the stairs Dora, looking round, saw that David was just behind her.

He came out with her.

'He was drunk when I found him,' he explained, 'he had been drinking in the dinner hour. I had him by the arm all the way, and thought I had best bring him straight in. And then—I had never seen anyone die,' he said simply, a curious light in his black eyes.

Dora, still choked with tears, could not speak. With shaking hands she searched for a bit of veil she had with her to hide her eyes and cheeks. But she could not find it.

'Don't go down Market Street,' he said, after a shy look at her. 'Come this way, there isn't such a crowd.'

And turning down Mosley Street, all the way he guided her through some side streets where there were fewer people to stare. Such forethought, such gentleness in him were quite new to her. She gradually recovered herself, feeling all the while this young sympathetic presence at her side—dreading lest it should desert her.

He meanwhile was still under the tremor and awe of the new experience. So this was dying! He remembered 'Lias holding Margaret's hand. *'Deein 's long—but it's varra, varra peaceful.'* Not always, surely! There must be vigorous, tenacious souls that went out with tempests and agonies; and he was conscious of a pang of fear, feeling himself so young and strong.

Presently he led her into St. Ann's Square, and then they shook hands. He hurried off to his business, and she remained standing a moment on the pavement outside the church which makes one side of the square. An impulse seized her—she turned and went into the church instead of going home.

There, in one of the old oak pews where the little tarnished plates still set forth the names of their eighteenth-century owners, she fell on her knees and wrestled with herself and God.

She was very simple, very ignorant, but religion, as religion can, had dignified and refined all the elements of character. She said to herself in an agony—that he *must* love her—that she had loved him in truth all along. And then a great remorse came upon her—the spiritual glory she had just passed through closed round her again. What! she could see the heaven opened—the Good Shepherd stoop to take his own—and then come away to feel nothing but this selfish, passionate craving? Oh, she was ashamed, she loathed herself!

*Lucy!*—Lucy had no claim! should have no claim! He did not care for her.

Then again the pale dead face would flash upon her with its submissive look,—so much gratitude for so little, and such a tender ease in dying! And she possessed by all these bad and jealous feelings, these angry desires, fresh from such a presence!

*'Oh! Lamb of God—Lamb of God—that takest away the sins of the world!'*

#### CHAPTER VI

AND David, meanwhile, was thinking of nothing in the world but the fortunes of a little shop, about twelve feet square, and of the stall outside that shop. The situation—for a hero—is certainly one of the flattest conceivable. Nevertheless it has to be faced.

If, however, one were to say that he had marked none of Lucy Purcell's advances, that would be to deny him eyes as well as susceptibilities. He had, indeed, said to himself in a lordly way that Lucy Purcell was a regular little flirt, and was beginning those ways early. But a certain rough young modesty, joined with a sense of humour at his own expense, prevented him from making any more of it, and he was no sooner in his own den watching for customers than Lucy vanished from his mind altogether. He thought much more of Purcell himself, with much vengeful chuckling and speculation.

As for Dora, he had certainly begun to regard her as a friend. She had sense and experience, in spite of her Ritualism, whereas Lucy in his eyes had neither. So that to run into the Parlour, after each new day was over, and discuss with Daddy and her the ups and downs, the fresh chances and prospects of his infant business, was pleasant enough. Daddy and he met on the common ground of wishing to make the world uncomfortable for Purcell; while Dora supplied the admiring uncritical wonder, in which, like a warm environment, an eager temperament expands, and feels itself under the stimulus more inventive and more capable than before.

But marrying! The lad's careless good-humoured laugh under Ancrum's probings was evidence enough of how the land lay. Probably at the bottom of him, if he had examined, there lay the instinctive assumption that Dora was one of the girls who are not likely to marry. Men want them for sisters, daughters, friends—and then go and fall in love with some minx that has a way with her.

Besides, who could be bothered with 'gells,' when there was a stall to be set out and a career to be made? With that stall, indeed, David was truly in love. How he fingered and meddled with it!—setting out the cheap reprints it contained so as to show their frontispieces, and strewing among them, in an artful disorder, a few rare local pamphlets, on which he kept a careful watch, either from the door or from inside. Behind these, again, within the glass, was a precious shelf, containing in the middle of it about a dozen volumes of a kind dear to a collector's eye—thin volumes in shabby boards, then just beginning to be sought after—the first editions of nineteenth-century poets. For months past David had been hoarding up a few in a corner of his little lodging, and on his opening day they decoyed him in at least five inquiring souls, all of whom stayed to talk a bit. There was a 'Queen Mab,' and a 'Lyrical Ballads;' an 'Endymion;' a few Landors thrown in, and a 'Bride of Abydos'—this last not of much account, for its author had the indiscretion, from the collector's point of view, to be famous from the beginning, and so to flood the world with large editions.

Round and about these dainty morsels were built in with solid rubbish, with Daddy's 'Journals of Theology,' 'British Controversialist,' and the rest. In one top corner lurked a few battered