

Chapter VIX - Little Mother

The morning light was in no hurry to climb the prison wall and look in at the Snuggery windows; and when it did come, it would have been more welcome if it had come alone, instead of bringing a rush of rain with it. But the equinoctial gales were blowing out at sea, and the impartial south-west wind, in its flight, would not neglect even the narrow Marshalsea. While it roared through the steeple of St George's Church, and twirled all the cowls in the neighbourhood, it made a swoop to beat the Southwark smoke into the jail; and, plunging down the chimneys of the few early collegians who were yet lighting their fires, half suffocated them. Arthur Clennam would have been little disposed to linger in bed, though his bed had been in a more private situation, and less affected by the raking out of yesterday's fire, the kindling of to-day's under the collegiate boiler, the filling of that Spartan vessel at the pump, the sweeping and sawdusting of the common room, and other such preparations. Heartily glad to see the morning, though little rested by the night, he turned out as soon as he could distinguish objects about him, and paced the yard for two heavy hours before the gate was opened.

The walls were so near to one another, and the wild clouds hurried over them so fast, that it gave him a sensation like the beginning of sea-sickness to look up at the gusty sky. The rain, carried aslant by flaws of wind, blackened that side of the central building which he had visited last night, but left a narrow dry trough under the lee of the wall, where he walked up and down among the waits of straw and dust and paper, the waste droppings of the pump, and the stray leaves of yesterday's greens. It was as haggard a view of life as a man need look upon.

Nor was it relieved by any glimpse of the little creature who had brought him there. Perhaps she glided out of her doorway and in at that where her father lived, while his face was turned from both; but he saw nothing of her. It was too early for her brother; to have seen him once, was to have seen enough of him to know that he would be sluggish to leave whatever frowsy bed he occupied at night; so, as Arthur Clennam walked up and down, waiting for the gate to open, he cast about in his mind for future rather than for present means of pursuing his discoveries.

At last the lodge-gate turned, and the turnkey, standing on the step, taking an early comb at his hair, was ready to let him out. With a joyful sense of release he passed through the lodge, and found himself again in the little outer court-yard where he had spoken to the brother last night.

There was a string of people already straggling in, whom it was not difficult to identify as the nondescript messengers, go-betweens, and errand-bearers of the place. Some of them had been lounging in the rain until the gate should open; others, who had timed their arrival with greater nicety, were coming up now, and passing in with damp whitey-brown paper bags from the grocers, loaves of bread, lumps of butter, eggs, milk, and the like. The shabbiness of these attendants upon shabbiness, the poverty of these insolvent waiters upon insolvency, was a sight to see. Such threadbare coats and trousers, such fusty gowns and shawls, such squashed hats and bonnets, such boots and shoes, such umbrellas and walking-sticks, never were seen in Rag Fair. All of them wore the cast-off clothes of other men and women, were made up of patches and pieces of other people's individuality, and had no sartorial existence of their own proper. Their walk was the walk of a race apart. They had a peculiar way of doggedly slinking round the corner, as if they were eternally going to the pawnbroker's. When they coughed, they coughed like people accustomed to be forgotten on doorsteps and in draughty passages, waiting for answers to letters in faded ink, which gave the recipients of those manuscripts great mental disturbance and no satisfaction. As they eyed the stranger in passing, they eyed him with borrowing eyes - hungry, sharp, speculative as to his softness if they were accredited to him, and the likelihood of his standing something handsome. Mendicity on commission stooped in their high shoulders, shambled in their unsteady legs, buttoned and pinned and darned and dragged their clothes, frayed their button-holes, leaked out of their figures in dirty little ends of tape, and issued from their mouths in alcoholic breathings.

As these people passed him standing still in the court-yard, and one of them turned back to inquire if he could assist him with his services, it came into Arthur Clennam's mind that he would speak to Little Dorrit again before he went away. She would have recovered her first surprise, and might feel easier with him. He asked this member of the fraternity (who had two red herrings in his hand, and a loaf and a blacking brush under his arm), where was the nearest place to get a cup of coffee at. The nondescript replied in encouraging terms, and brought him to a coffee-shop in the street within a stone's throw.

'Do you know Miss Dorrit?' asked the new client.

The nondescript knew two Miss Dorrits; one who was born inside - That was the one! That was the one? The nondescript had known her many years. In regard of the other Miss Dorrit, the nondescript lodged in the same house with herself and uncle.

This changed the client's half-formed design of remaining at the coffee-shop until the nondescript should bring him word that Dorrit

had issued forth into the street. He entrusted the nondescript with a confidential message to her, importing that the visitor who had waited on her father last night, begged the favour of a few words with her at her uncle's lodging; he obtained from the same source full directions to the house, which was very near; dismissed the nondescript gratified with half-a-crown; and having hastily refreshed himself at the coffee-shop, repaired with all speed to the clarionet-player's dwelling.

There were so many lodgers in this house that the doorpost seemed to be as full of bell-handles as a cathedral organ is of stops. Doubtful which might be the clarionet-stop, he was considering the point, when a shuttlecock flew out of the parlour window, and alighted on his hat. He then observed that in the parlour window was a blind with the inscription, MR CRIPPLES'S ACADEMY; also in another line, EVENING TUITION; and behind the blind was a little white-faced boy, with a slice of bread-and-butter and a battledore.

The window being accessible from the footway, he looked in over the blind, returned the shuttlecock, and put his question.

'Dorrit?' said the little white-faced boy (Master Cripples in fact). 'Mr Dorrit? Third bell and one knock.' The pupils of Mr Cripples appeared to have been making a copy-book of the street-door, it was so extensively scribbled over in pencil.

The frequency of the inscriptions, 'Old Dorrit,' and 'Dirty Dick,' in combination, suggested intentions of personality on the part Of Mr Cripples's pupils. There was ample time to make these observations before the door was opened by the poor old man himself.

'Ha!' said he, very slowly remembering Arthur, 'you were shut in last night?'

'Yes, Mr Dorrit. I hope to meet your niece here presently.'

'Oh!' said he, pondering. 'Out of my brother's way? True. Would you come up-stairs and wait for her?'

'Thank you.'

Turning himself as slowly as he turned in his mind whatever he heard or said, he led the way up the narrow stairs. The house was very close, and had an unwholesome smell. The little staircase windows looked in at the back windows of other houses as unwholesome as itself, with poles and lines thrust out of them, on which unsightly linen hung; as if the inhabitants were angling for clothes, and had had some wretched bites not worth attending to. In the back garret - a sickly room, with a turn-up bedstead in it, so hastily and recently

turned up that the blankets were boiling over, as it were, and keeping the lid open - a half-finished breakfast of coffee and toast for two persons was jumbled down anyhow on a rickety table.

There was no one there. The old man mumbling to himself, after some consideration, that Fanny had run away, went to the next room to fetch her back. The visitor, observing that she held the door on the inside, and that, when the uncle tried to open it, there was a sharp adjuration of 'Don't, stupid!' and an appearance of loose stocking and flannel, concluded that the young lady was in an undress. The uncle, without appearing to come to any conclusion, shuffled in again, sat down in his chair, and began warming his hands at the fire; not that it was cold, or that he had any waking idea whether it was or not.

'What did you think of my brother, sir?' he asked, when he by-and-by discovered what he was doing, left off, reached over to the chimney-piece, and took his clarionet case down.

'I was glad,' said Arthur, very much at a loss, for his thoughts were on the brother before him; 'to find him so well and cheerful.' 'Ha!' muttered the old man, 'yes, yes, yes, yes, yes!'

Arthur wondered what he could possibly want with the clarionet case. He did not want it at all. He discovered, in due time, that it was not the little paper of snuff (which was also on the chimney-piece), put it back again, took down the snuff instead, and solaced himself with a pinch. He was as feeble, spare, and slow in his pinches as in everything else, but a certain little trickling of enjoyment of them played in the poor worn nerves about the corners of his eyes and mouth.

'Amy, Mr Clennam. What do you think of her?'

'I am much impressed, Mr Dorrit, by all that I have seen of her and thought of her.'

'My brother would have been quite lost without Amy,' he returned. 'We should all have been lost without Amy. She is a very good girl, Amy. She does her duty.'

Arthur fancied that he heard in these praises a certain tone of custom, which he had heard from the father last night with an inward protest and feeling of antagonism. It was not that they stinted her praises, or were insensible to what she did for them; but that they were lazily habituated to her, as they were to all the rest of their condition. He fancied that although they had before them, every day, the means of comparison between her and one another and themselves, they regarded her as being in her necessary place; as holding a position

towards them all which belonged to her, like her name or her age. He fancied that they viewed her, not as having risen away from the prison atmosphere, but as appertaining to it; as being vaguely what they had a right to expect, and nothing more.

Her uncle resumed his breakfast, and was munching toast sopped in coffee, oblivious of his guest, when the third bell rang. That was Amy, he said, and went down to let her in; leaving the visitor with as vivid a picture on his mind of his begrimed hands, dirt-worn face, and decayed figure, as if he were still drooping in his chair.

She came up after him, in the usual plain dress, and with the usual timid manner. Her lips were a little parted, as if her heart beat faster than usual.

'Mr Clennam, Amy,' said her uncle, 'has been expecting you some time.'

'I took the liberty of sending you a message.'

'I received the message, sir.'

'Are you going to my mother's this morning? I think not, for it is past your usual hour.' 'Not to-day, sir. I am not wanted to-day.'

'Will you allow Me to walk a little way in whatever direction you may be going? I can then speak to you as we walk, both without detaining you here, and without intruding longer here myself.'

She looked embarrassed, but said, if he pleased. He made a pretence of having mislaid his walking-stick, to give her time to set the bedstead right, to answer her sister's impatient knock at the wall, and to say a word softly to her uncle. Then he found it, and they went down-stairs; she first, he following; the uncle standing at the stair-head, and probably forgetting them before they had reached the ground floor.

Mr Cripples's pupils, who were by this time coming to school, desisted from their morning recreation of cuffing one another with bags and books, to stare with all the eyes they had at a stranger who had been to see Dirty Dick. They bore the trying spectacle in silence, until the mysterious visitor was at a safe distance; when they burst into pebbles and yells, and likewise into reviling dances, and in all respects buried the pipe of peace with so many savage ceremonies, that, if Mr Cripples had been the chief of the Cripplewayboo tribe with his war-paint on, they could scarcely have done greater justice to their education.

In the midst of this homage, Mr Arthur Clennam offered his arm to Little Dorrit, and Little Dorrit took it. 'Will you go by the Iron Bridge,' said he, 'where there is an escape from the noise of the street?' Little Dorrit answered, if he pleased, and presently ventured to hope that he would 'not mind' Mr Cripples's boys, for she had herself received her education, such as it was, in Mr Cripples's evening academy. He returned, with the best will in the world, that Mr Cripples's boys were forgiven out of the bottom of his soul. Thus did Cripples unconsciously become a master of the ceremonies between them, and bring them more naturally together than Beau Nash might have done if they had lived in his golden days, and he had alighted from his coach and six for the purpose.

The morning remained squally, and the streets were miserably muddy, but no rain fell as they walked towards the Iron Bridge. The little creature seemed so young in his eyes, that there were moments when he found himself thinking of her, if not speaking to her, as if she were a child. Perhaps he seemed as old in her eyes as she seemed young in his.

'I am sorry to hear you were so inconvenienced last night, sir, as to be locked in. It was very unfortunate.'

It was nothing, he returned. He had had a very good bed.

'Oh yes!' she said quickly; 'she believed there were excellent beds at the coffee-house.' He noticed that the coffee-house was quite a majestic hotel to her, and that she treasured its reputation. 'I believe it is very expensive,' said Little Dorrit, 'but MY father has told me that quite beautiful dinners may be got there. And wine,' she added timidly. 'Were you ever there?'

'Oh no! Only into the kitchen to fetch hot water.'

To think of growing up with a kind of awe upon one as to the luxuries of that superb establishment, the Marshalsea Hotel!

'I asked you last night,' said Clennam, 'how you had become acquainted with my mother. Did you ever hear her name before she sent for you?'

'No, sir.'

'Do you think your father ever did?'

'No, sir.'

He met her eyes raised to his with so much wonder in them (she was scared when the encounter took place, and shrunk away again), that he felt it necessary to say:

'I have a reason for asking, which I cannot very well explain; but you must, on no account, suppose it to be of a nature to cause you the least alarm or anxiety. Quite the reverse. And you think that at no time of your father's life was my name of Clennam ever familiar to him?'

'No, sir.'

He felt, from the tone in which she spoke, that she was glancing up at him with those parted lips; therefore he looked before him, rather than make her heart beat quicker still by embarrassing her afresh.

Thus they emerged upon the Iron Bridge, which was as quiet after the roaring streets as though it had been open country. The wind blew roughly, the wet squalls came rattling past them, skimming the pools on the road and pavement, and raining them down into the river. The clouds raced on furiously in the lead-Coloured sky, the smoke and mist raced after them, the dark tide ran fierce and strong in the same direction. Little Dorrit seemed the least, the quietest, and weakest of Heaven's creatures.

'Let me put you in a coach,' said Clennam, very nearly adding 'my poor child.'

She hurriedly declined, saying that wet or dry made little difference to her; she was used to go about in all weathers. He knew it to be so, and was touched with more pity; thinking of the slight figure at his side, making its nightly way through the damp dark boisterous streets to such a place of rest. 'You spoke so feelingly to me last night, sir, and I found afterwards that you had been so generous to my father, that I could not resist your message, if it was only to thank you; especially as I wished very much to say to you - ' she hesitated and trembled, and tears rose in her eyes, but did not fall.

'To say to me - ?'

'That I hope you will not misunderstand my father. Don't judge him, sir, as you would judge others outside the gates. He has been there so long! I never saw him outside, but I can understand that he must have grown different in some things since.'

'My thoughts will never be unjust or harsh towards him, believe me.'

'Not,' she said, with a prouder air, as the misgiving evidently crept upon her that she might seem to be abandoning him, 'not that he has anything to be ashamed of for himself, or that I have anything to be ashamed of for him. He only requires to be understood. I only ask for him that his life may be fairly remembered. All that he said was quite true. It all happened just as he related it. He is very much respected. Everybody who comes in, is glad to know him. He is more courted than anyone else. He is far more thought of than the Marshal is.'

If ever pride were innocent, it was innocent in Little Dorrit when she grew boastful of her father.

'It is often said that his manners are a true gentleman's, and quite a study. I see none like them in that place, but he is admitted to be superior to all the rest. This is quite as much why they make him presents, as because they know him to be needy. He is not to be blamed for being in need, poor love. Who could be in prison a quarter of a century, and be prosperous!'

What affection in her words, what compassion in her repressed tears, what a great soul of fidelity within her, how true the light that shed false brightness round him!

'If I have found it best to conceal where my home is, it is not because I am ashamed of him. God forbid! Nor am I so much ashamed of the place itself as might be supposed. People are not bad because they come there. I have known numbers of good, persevering, honest people come there through misfortune. They are almost all kind-hearted to one another. And it would be ungrateful indeed in me, to forget that I have had many quiet, comfortable hours there; that I had an excellent friend there when I was quite a baby, who was very very fond of me; that I have been taught there, and have worked there, and have slept soundly there. I think it would be almost cowardly and cruel not to have some little attachment for it, after all this.'

She had relieved the faithful fulness of her heart, and modestly said, raising her eyes appealingly to her new friend's, 'I did not mean to say so much, nor have I ever but once spoken about this before. But it seems to set it more right than it was last night. I said I wished you had not followed me, sir. I don't wish it so much now, unless you should think - indeed I don't wish it at all, unless I should have spoken so confusedly, that - that you can scarcely understand me, which I am afraid may be the case.'

He told her with perfect truth that it was not the case; and putting himself between her and the sharp wind and rain, sheltered her as well as he could.

'I feel permitted now,' he said, 'to ask you a little more concerning your father. Has he many creditors?'

'Oh! a great number.'

'I mean detaining creditors, who keep him where he is?'

'Oh yes! a great number.'

'Can you tell me - I can get the information, no doubt, elsewhere, if you cannot - who is the most influential of them?'

Little Dorrit said, after considering a little, that she used to hear long ago of Mr Tite Barnacle as a man of great power. He was a commissioner, or a board, or a trustee, 'or something.' He lived in Grosvenor Square, she thought, or very near it. He was under Government - high in the Circumlocution Office. She appeared to have acquired, in her infancy, some awful impression of the might of this formidable Mr Tite Barnacle of Grosvenor Square, or very near it, and the Circumlocution Office, which quite crushed her when she mentioned him.

'It can do no harm,' thought Arthur, 'if I see this Mr Tite Barnacle.'

The thought did not present itself so quietly but that her quickness intercepted it. 'Ah!' said Little Dorrit, shaking her head with the mild despair of a lifetime. 'Many people used to think once of getting my poor father out, but you don't know how hopeless it is.'

She forgot to be shy at the moment, in honestly warning him away from the sunken wreck he had a dream of raising; and looked at him with eyes which assuredly, in association with her patient face, her fragile figure, her spare dress, and the wind and rain, did not turn him from his purpose of helping her.

'Even if it could be done,' said she - 'and it never can be done now - where could father live, or how could he live? I have often thought that if such a change could come, it might be anything but a service to him now. People might not think so well of him outside as they do there. He might not be so gently dealt with outside as he is there. He might not be so fit himself for the life outside as he is for that.' Here for the first time she could not restrain her tears from falling; and the little thin hands he had watched when they were so busy, trembled as they clasped each other.

'It would be a new distress to him even to know that I earn a little money, and that Fanny earns a little money. He is so anxious about

us, you see, feeling helplessly shut up there. Such a good, good father!

He let the little burst of feeling go by before he spoke. It was soon gone. She was not accustomed to think of herself, or to trouble any one with her emotions. He had but glanced away at the piles of city roofs and chimneys among which the smoke was rolling heavily, and at the wilderness of masts on the river, and the wilderness of steeples on the shore, indistinctly mixed together in the stormy haze, when she was again as quiet as if she had been plying her needle in his mother's room.

'You would be glad to have your brother set at liberty?'

'Oh very, very glad, sir!'

'Well, we will hope for him at least. You told me last night of a friend you had?'

His name was Plornish, Little Dorrit said.

And where did Plornish live? Plornish lived in Bleeding Heart Yard. He was 'only a plasterer,' Little Dorrit said, as a caution to him not to form high social expectations of Plornish. He lived at the last house in Bleeding Heart Yard, and his name was over a little gateway. Arthur took down the address and gave her his. He had now done all he sought to do for the present, except that he wished to leave her with a reliance upon him, and to have something like a promise from her that she would cherish it.

'There is one friend!' he said, putting up his pocketbook. 'As I take you back - you are going back?'

'Oh yes! going straight home.'

'As I take you back,' the word home jarred upon him, 'let me ask you to persuade yourself that you have another friend. I make no professions, and say no more.'

'You are truly kind to me, sir. I am sure I need no more.'

They walked back through the miserable muddy streets, and among the poor, mean shops, and were jostled by the crowds of dirty hucksters usual to a poor neighbourhood. There was nothing, by the short way, that was pleasant to any of the five senses. Yet it was not a common passage through common rain, and mire, and noise, to Clennam, having this little, slender, careful creature on his arm. How young she seemed to him, or how old he to her; or what a secret either

to the other, in that beginning of the destined interweaving of their stories, matters not here. He thought of her having been born and bred among these scenes, and shrinking through them now, familiar yet misplaced; he thought of her long acquaintance with the squalid needs of life, and of her innocence; of her solicitude for others, and her few years, and her childish aspect.

They were come into the High Street, where the prison stood, when a voice cried, 'Little mother, little mother!' Little Dorrit stopping and looking back, an excited figure of a strange kind bounced against them (still crying 'little mother'), fell down, and scattered the contents of a large basket, filled with potatoes, in the mud.

'Oh, Maggy,' said Little Dorrit, 'what a clumsy child you are!'

Maggy was not hurt, but picked herself up immediately, and then began to pick up the potatoes, in which both Little Dorrit and Arthur Clennam helped. Maggy picked up very few potatoes and a great quantity of mud; but they were all recovered, and deposited in the basket. Maggy then smeared her muddy face with her shawl, and presenting it to Mr Clennam as a type of purity, enabled him to see what she was like.

She was about eight-and-twenty, with large bones, large features, large feet and hands, large eyes and no hair. Her large eyes were limpid and almost colourless; they seemed to be very little affected by light, and to stand unnaturally still. There was also that attentive listening expression in her face, which is seen in the faces of the blind; but she was not blind, having one tolerably serviceable eye. Her face was not exceedingly ugly, though it was only redeemed from being so by a smile; a good-humoured smile, and pleasant in itself, but rendered pitiable by being constantly there. A great white cap, with a quantity of opaque frilling that was always flapping about, apologised for Maggy's baldness, and made it so very difficult for her old black bonnet to retain its place upon her head, that it held on round her neck like a gipsy's baby. A commission of haberdashers could alone have reported what the rest of her poor dress was made of, but it had a strong general resemblance to seaweed, with here and there a gigantic tea-leaf. Her shawl looked particularly like a tea-leaf after long infusion.

Arthur Clennam looked at Little Dorrit with the expression of one saying, 'May I ask who this is?' Little Dorrit, whose hand this Maggy, still calling her little mother, had begun to fondle, answered in words (they were under a gateway into which the majority of the potatoes had rolled).

'This is Maggy, sir.'

'Maggy, sir,' echoed the personage presented. 'Little mother!'

'She is the grand-daughter - ' said Little Dorrit.

'Grand-daughter,' echoed Maggy.

'Of my old nurse, who has been dead a long time. Maggy, how old are you?'

'Ten, mother,' said Maggy.

'You can't think how good she is, sir,' said Little Dorrit, with infinite tenderness.

'Good SHE is,' echoed Maggy, transferring the pronoun in a most expressive way from herself to her little mother.

'Or how clever,' said Little Dorrit. 'She goes on errands as well as any one.' Maggy laughed. 'And is as trustworthy as the Bank of England.' Maggy laughed. 'She earns her own living entirely. Entirely, sir!' said Little Dorrit, in a lower and triumphant tone.

'Really does!'

'What is her history?' asked Clennam.

'Think of that, Maggy?' said Little Dorrit, taking her two large hands and clapping them together. 'A gentleman from thousands of miles away, wanting to know your history!'

'My history?' cried Maggy. 'Little mother.'

'She means me,' said Little Dorrit, rather confused; 'she is very much attached to me. Her old grandmother was not so kind to her as she should have been; was she, Maggy?' Maggy shook her head, made a drinking vessel of her clenched left hand, drank out of it, and said, 'Gin.' Then beat an imaginary child, and said, 'Broom-handles and pokers.'

'When Maggy was ten years old,' said Little Dorrit, watching her face while she spoke, 'she had a bad fever, sir, and she has never grown any older ever since.'

'Ten years old,' said Maggy, nodding her head. 'But what a nice hospital! So comfortable, wasn't it? Oh so nice it was. Such a Ev'nly place!'

'She had never been at peace before, sir,' said Little Dorrit, turning towards Arthur for an instant and speaking low, 'and she always runs off upon that.'

'Such beds there is there!' cried Maggy. 'Such lemonades! Such oranges! Such d'licious broth and wine! Such Chicking! Oh, AIN'T it a delightful place to go and stop at!'

'So Maggy stopped there as long as she could,' said Little Dorrit, in her former tone of telling a child's story; the tone designed for Maggy's ear, 'and at last, when she could stop there no longer, she came out. Then, because she was never to be more than ten years old, however long she lived - '

'However long she lived,' echoed Maggy.

'And because she was very weak; indeed was so weak that when she began to laugh she couldn't stop herself - which was a great pity - '

(Maggy mighty grave of a sudden.)

'Her grandmother did not know what to do with her, and for some years was very unkind to her indeed. At length, in course of time, Maggy began to take pains to improve herself, and to be very attentive and very industrious; and by degrees was allowed to come in and out as often as she liked, and got enough to do to support herself, and does support herself. And that,' said Little Dorrit, clapping the two great hands together again, 'is Maggy's history, as Maggy knows!'

Ah! But Arthur would have known what was wanting to its completeness, though he had never heard of the words Little mother; though he had never seen the fondling of the small spare hand; though he had had no sight for the tears now standing in the colourless eyes; though he had had no hearing for the sob that checked the clumsy laugh. The dirty gateway with the wind and rain whistling through it, and the basket of muddy potatoes waiting to be spilt again or taken up, never seemed the common hole it really was, when he looked back to it by these lights. Never, never!

They were very near the end of their walk, and they now came out of the gateway to finish it. Nothing would serve Maggy but that they must stop at a grocer's window, short of their destination, for her to show her learning. She could read after a sort; and picked out the fat figures in the tickets of prices, for the most part correctly. She also stumbled, with a large balance of success against her failures, through various philanthropic recommendations to Try our Mixture, Try our Family Black, Try our Orange-flavoured Pekoe, challenging competition at the head of Flowery Teas; and various cautions to the

public against spurious establishments and adulterated articles. When he saw how pleasure brought a rosy tint into Little Dorrit's face when Maggy made a hit, he felt that he could have stood there making a library of the grocer's window until the rain and wind were tired.

The court-yard received them at last, and there he said goodbye to Little Dorrit. Little as she had always looked, she looked less than ever when he saw her going into the Marshalsea lodge passage, the little mother attended by her big child. The cage door opened, and when the small bird, reared in captivity, had tamely fluttered in, he saw it shut again; and then he came away.