

dinner-time. I thought perhaps he was not going to do any work because this was Christmas week. When he saw me sitting there, he stooped down and gave me a kiss, but he did not say anything. What a very long, dreary morning it felt!

After dinner, Skinny told me I might go into the town with her to get a prescription made up. As I went to put my hat on, I met two gentlemen on the stairs. One of them was the doctor that always came when any of us were ill. I did not know who the other was, but he looked very kindly at me, and took hold of my hand, and said,—

‘Poor little girl! she will be very lonely.’

As we went past the open door of the oriel room, everything was just as we had left it the night before. The servants had been so busy, Skinny said, going backwards and forwards with messages, and preparing hot baths, that they had not been able to make it tidy. Our Christmas-tree, which had looked so pretty only a few hours before, was quite faded and spoiled now. The presents were gone, and the tapers had burned out, and most of the coloured paper ornaments which mamma had taken so much trouble to make, were fallen on the floor. Only the