

"interior" through the open French windows of the drawing-room, Landon expressed his admiration. "Why, I did not know Woolwich could boast of such a bower, Miss Mayne ; your home looks like Fairyland."

"Yes, it is certainly pretty for Woolwich," answered the young lady ; "and it also resembles Fairyland in one particular, that it is inhabited by a wicked enchanter."

"I know about the enchanter, but I did not know she was wicked," answered Landon.

"I did not mean myself, sir, as you very well knew," returned she, reprovingly, "I was referring to my uncle, Colonel Juxon, a gentleman rather formidable to folks who don't know him ; in the army he is called a fire-eater, I believe ; but at home ——"

"Who in the fiend's name, my dearest Ella, have you brought here ?" inquired a sharp testy voice, as the fly drew up at the door, and a short spare old gentleman in undress uniform, presented himself at it. His hair and moustache were as white as snow, and made by contrast a pair of copper-coloured and bloodshot eyes look yet more fiery ; altogether he had the appearance of a ferret, and also of a ferret who was exceedingly out of temper.

"This is Mr. Cecil Landon, uncle, to whom Gracie Ray and I have just been indebted for the greatest possible service."

"The devil you have !" said the colonel, sardonically.

"Yes, uncle ; Gracie and I were returning quietly home, after a walk along the Greenwich road——"

"A deuced bad road to choose for a walk," interrupted the colonel, angrily ; "the most deuced bad road."

"So indeed it turned out, uncle," continued the young girl in unruffled tones, "for a lot of drunken people from Charlton fair——"

"Aye, cadets, I suppose ; I've heard of their doings," interrupted the colonel, regarding Landon with great disfavour ; "there's going to be a clean sweep made of them by Sir Hercules this time, however."

"But it was not the cadets, uncle ; on the contrary, it was to the cadets, or at least to two of them, one of whom was this gentleman here, that Gracie and I are indebted for escaping perhaps with our lives."

"Pooh, pooh, what did they want with your lives ?" returned the colonel contemptuously. "The dashed vagabonds wanted to kiss you, and by the look of your bonnet they must have done it. By the living Jingo ! if I had only caught them at it, I'd have set a mark on one or two that would have taken a deal of rubbing to get it off again."

"That is exactly what, in our humble, and doubtless less effectual way, we did," explained Landon deferentially.

*(To be continued.)*