

In the meantime Curdzon and Hardy chatted pleasantly until they began to think it about time to depart.

"Come Curdzon" said his companion "Let's risk the storm. Here, my boy, have another drink, if we meet the rain, we may as well be wet inside as outside, eh?"

"Yes I s'pose so" replied Curdzon willingly accepting the proffered glass. Feeling fully refreshed, the men muffled up, returned to their horses, and without further delay, set out once more upon their journey.

About fifteen miles of the road stretched before them, and in view of the threatening clouds that frowned from above, their drive promised to be under rather unpleasant conditions. However, the prospect of a shower, by no means dampened the drivers' spirits, which had been greatly enlivened by frequent application of the cheering glass. On the road Curdzon became unusually talkative. Hardy held his own in the conversation which drifted from topic to topic. A slight rain began to fall, but not a whit did it interfere with the travellers' mirth. Coarse jokes and spicy stories were in turn recounted and uproariously enjoyed. Soon their flashes of wit began to be followed by flashes of lightening, while their unrestrained laughter was mocked by the rumblings of the distant thunder. The storm speedily increased in its ferocity. The clouds flashed streaks and sheets of vivid fire. The thunders clashed like the meeting of supernatural hosts contending in frightful battle. Curdzon's cheerfulness quickly subsided. He fell into a contemplative mood. "Say Hardy" he suddenly questioned after breaking from a prolonged silence "d'ye believe in ghosts?"

"Ghosts!" exclaimed Hardy, with difficulty suppressing a smile; "nobody has better reason to believe in them." And herewith, to the discomfiture of his impatient listener, he began to recount a hair-raising adventure of personal experience. The darkness and lonesome appearance of the road gave his story a realistic coloring. With glowing language he described the incidents of his narrative; how through curiosity, and a desire to make a showing of bravery, he and a companion had entered what was reported to be a haunted house; how they had waited quietly for that hour usually appointed for ghostly apparitions; how their lanterns were mysteriously