

Lady stood with her back to him, Danny in her arms, and said after a pause and coldly :

" Perhaps, I'll see what I'll say," and added, kitten like, " perhaps not."

Joliff touched his cap.

" Thank you, 'M," he said, " but it ain't that. Excuse me, 'M, but A don't 'eed what yo' say, beggin' your pardon, 'M. It's Master."

" What about him ?" coldly.

" What'll A say to him when he asks me ?"

She swept round on him.

" Asks you what ?"

" If it's a-done !"

" What's done ?" sharp as a sword.

Joliff licked his lips.

" Ma dooty," said he.

" Well, you can say yes—if it's true," said the lady. " If it's not—well, you'd better say whatever comes into your head."

The keeper shook his head.

" He'll ha' heard 't shot," he said. " He'll ask——"

" What ?" sword sharp.

" If A've shot owt ?" said Joliff, drawing his hand across his mouth.

" Well," said the lady, with high nose, " tell him you haven't. Tell him you had a little dog tied to the end of a string and were practising at it—and you missed."

Joliff shook his head.

" A couldna tell him that, 'M."

" Then, I'll tell him for you," said the lady brightly.

" He'll say, ' If yo' canna hit a dog at t' end o' string yo're none the man for me,' he'll say."

" Then," said the lady and looked at him with straight eyes, " you'll just say you had no orders to shoot a dog at the end of a string or otherwise."

" Then he'll just say, ' Yo' can take your month,' he'll say."

" Then you'll say, ' What for ?' "