

fighting—fighting the Americans—and I was nearly killed many a time, but not quite. And they told me you were dead—my own Eve was dead. Think what I felt then.”

“I ban’t dead. You grow cold and your heart stops when you’m dead. My heart beats yet; my blood be warm.”

A sudden inspiration touched his mind.

“Nay,” he said, “you must be dead, for they told me so. I believed it. I tried to die too. I went about where there was best chance of getting a bullet through my brain. Yes, you must be dead, little Eve. I am sure you must.”

She looked puzzled, then laughed.

“How silly ’tis of ’e to talk so. Your uncle be dead. That’s death. He lies like a marble figure in church, an’ his fires be out for ever. I kissed him, but he didn’t know it. My faither as killed him be dead too. What be they saying to each other now? I know what death is. But I—I be living. I can think an’ speak, can’t I?”

“An’ so can I, my precious. But you say that I am dead.”

“You’m spirit, I’m flesh an’ blood. You could hurt me—I can cry wet tears. I can sleep, I can dream.”

“And so can I do all that. No, no, my pretty Eve is dead.”