

The Adventure of the Ledge. 317

—thou hast found it, sweetheart—thou has found the Splendid Spur!”

She broke off, and clapp'd her hands together very merrily; and then, as a tear started—

“But thou'lt come for me, ere long, Jack? Else I am sure to blame some other woman. Stay——”

She drew off her ring, and slipp'd it on my little finger.

“There's my token! Now give me one to weep and be glad over.”

Having no trinkets, I gave my glove: and she kiss'd it twice, and put it in her bosom.

“I have no need of this ring,” said I: “for look!” and I drew forth the lock I had cut from her dear head, that morning among the alders by Kennet side, and worn ever since over my heart.

“Wilt marry no man till I come?”

“Now, that's too hard a promise,” said she, laughing, and shaking her curls.

“Too hard!”

“Why, of course. Listen, sweetheart—a true woman will not change her mind: but, oh! she dearly loves to be able to! So, bating this, here's my hand upon it—now, fie, Jack! and before all these mariners!—well, then if thou *must*——”

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I watch'd her standing in the stern and waving, till she was under the *Godsend's* side: then turn'd, and mounting Molly, rode inland to the wars.

THE END.