

said the squire, tearing the letter into pieces and throwing it into the fire. 'And so, *Misther O'Grady*, you say I'm a spoon!' and the blood of the Egans rose as the head of that pugnacious family strode up and down the room: 'I'll spoon you, my buck—I'll settle your hash! maybe I'm a spoon you'll sup sorrow with yet!'

Here he took up the poker, and made a very angry lunge at the fire that did not want stirring, and there he beheld the letter blazing merrily away. He dropped the poker as if he had caught it by the hot end, as he exclaimed, "What the d—l shall I do? I've burnt the letter!" This threw the Squire into a fit of what he was wont to call his 'considering cap,' and he sat with his feet on the fender for some minutes, occasionally muttering to himself what he began with—'What the d—l shall I do? It's all owing to that infernal Andy—I'll murder that fellow some time or other. If he hadn't brought it, I shouldn't have seen it—to be sure, if I hadn't looked; but then the temptation—a saint couldn't have withstood it. Confound it! what a stupid trick to burn it. Another here, too—must burn that as well, and say nothing about either of them; and he took up the second letter, and, merely looking at the address, threw it into the fire. He then rang the bell, and desired Andy to be sent to him. As soon as that ingenious individual made his appearance, the squire desired him with peculiar emphasis to shut the door, and then opened upon him with,

'You unfortunate rascal!'

'Yis, your honor.'

'Do you know that you might be hanged for what you did to-day?'

'What did I do, sir?'

'You robbed the post-office.'

'How did I rob it, sir?'

'You took two letters you had no right to.'

'It's no robbery for a man to get the worth of his money.'

'Will you hold your tongue, you stupid villain! I am not joking: you absolutely might be hanged for robbing the post-office.'

'Sure I didn't know there was any harm in what I done; and for that matter, sure, if they're sitch wonderful value, can't I go back again wid 'em?'

'No, you thief; I hope you have not

said a word to any one about it.'

'Not the sign of a word passed my lips about it.'

'You're sure?'

'artin.'

'Take care, then, that you never open your mouth to mortal about it, or you'll be hanged, as sure as your name is Andy Rooney.'

'Oh, at that rate I never will. But maybe your honor thinks I ought to be hanged?'

'No,—because you did not intend to do a wrong thing; but only I have pity on you, I could hang you to-morrow for what you've done.'

'Thank you, sir.'

'I've burnt the letters, so no one can know anything about the business unless you tell on yourself: so remember,—not a word.'

'Faith, I'll be as dumb as the dumb baste.'

'Go, now; and, once for all, remember you'll be hanged so sure as you ever mention one word about this affair.'

Andy made a bow and a scrape, and left the squire, who hoped the secret was safe. He then took a rumination walk around the pleasure-grounds, revolving plans of retaliation upon his false friend O'Grady; and having determined to put the most severe and sudden measure of the law in force against him for the moneys in which he was indebted to him, he only awaited the arrival of Murtough Murphy from Dublin to execute his vengeance. Having settled this in his own mind, he became more contented, and said, with a self-satisfied nod of the head, 'We'll see who's the spoon.'

In a few days Murtough Murphy returned from Dublin, and to Merryvale he immediately proceeded. The squire opened to him directly his intention of commencing hostile law proceedings against O'Grady, and asked what most summery measure could be put in practice against him.

'Oh! various, various, my dear squire,' said Murphy; 'but I don't see any great use in doing so yet,—he has not openly avowed himself.'

'But does he not intend to coalesce with the other party?'

'I believe so;—that is, if he's to get the pension.'