

her how base to her I have been. Believe me, it is not you that have hurt her."

"You love her yourself?" Jack muttered.

"Mr. Dane, I have never known a man act so vilely to a woman as myself. It is to me marvellous that Mistress Charlbury can forgive me. Nor to her nor to you can I pretend to excuse myself." The passionless voice fell to a deeper note. "Believe me, if yet you can, I had no thought to rob you of her love."

"I never had it, I know that," Jack muttered. "But what I said to her—oh, why have you made me such a knave?" And Beaujeu stared at the ground. Jack gave a short sharp laugh. "Begad, I think there has been but one gentleman of my name for many a year, and that is my cousin Tom." Beaujeu stirred in his chair. "And you say he is dead?" said Jack sharply.

"Certainly he is dead," Beaujeu repeated.

"And I am left!" said Jack, and laughed again. "A curst quaint world!" Then he turned on Beaujeu. "Tom loved the Charlbury, you know."

"Perhaps not more worthily than I," said Beaujeu quietly.

Jack looked at him sneering a moment; then rose wearily: "I go to Nell," he said; but on his way to the door turned back and caught Beaujeu's arm: "Man, if they talk of her in town answer it, for God's sake—till I am back again."

Beaujeu bowed: "But I do not think they will talk," said he, and his eyes glittered.

*(To be continued)*