

"Do I not?" says Mr. Healy. "Do I care for him less than you? Come away now, come away," and he shepherded them out.

Mr. Wharton, looking back as he was pressed on, saw Beaujeu turn and move slowly, feeling before him towards the grey glint of the sword.

CHAPTER XLIII

M. DE BEAUJEU COMES TO HIS OWN

Now more than ever was the sword desirable. M. de Beaujeu had discovered what it was to be pitied. He did not intend to be pitied again.

Feeling before him, he stooped, and the cold blade met his hand. He raised it, and moved on unsteadily to the side of the room. Then he turned sharp, and, with his right shoulder keeping touch with the wainscot, sought the corner; he made an odd picture, the tall stooping figure nursing his sword like a child, and moving slowly, purposeful.

Rose stood in the doorway, and saw. Then she sped to him, and cast her arms about him, and she cried low, "My dear——!"

There came the long clatter of a fallen sword. Turning in her arms, Beaujeu gazed blindly, and the hawk-face flushed dark. "Rose?" he said hoarsely.

"Who else?"

M. de Beaujeu stood erect, and his hands were clenched at his side. "Why have you come?" he cried.

Still she clung to him, and glowing eyes looked close at the proud haggard face. "Dear heart!" she said tenderly, and gave a little sad laugh.

"Healy brought you. . . . I will speak to Healy," says Beaujeu. "You were wrong to come, child. I'll not have you stay."

Rose drew away from him a little, and caught his hands