

*The Feast of St. John Baptist*

her face was half in shadow. She rested her head on her left; hand the right lay on her knee. It was stripped of any ring — unadorned white. Her cheeks were pale — the olive reigned unchallenged; her lips were set tight, her eyes downcast. She made no movement when Lord Lynborough entered.

He bowed low, but said nothing. He stood opposite to her some two yards away. The clock ticked. It wanted still a minute before noon struck. That was the minute of which Lynborough had raved and dreamed the night before. He had the fruit of it in full measure.

The first stroke of twelve rang silvery from the clock. Lynborough advanced and fell upon his knee. She did not lift her eyes, but slowly raised her hand from her knee. He placed his hand under it, pressing it a