

"Nay, Nell, I have no leisure now," said Jack, with solemnity. The girl reined up by his side and looked at his gloomy face and laughed.

"'No leisure!'" she mimicked solemnly. "Oh, alack! And is it in Heaven you are needed, Mr. Dane? To sober their joys, sir?"

"I have no heart to jest, Nell. Good-bye." He held out his hand.

"Faith, I crave your divinity's pardon!" the girl cried, and bowed and drew away. But he held out his hand still, and while she looked defiance at his eyes she saw they were gloomy. So she came again and gave him her hand. Jack Dane held it a moment.

"Some folks," said the girl modestly, "would kiss it." Jack Dane obeyed.

"Good-bye, little girl," said he.

"Till ——?"

"God knows!" said the tragic hero, and rode off.

"Oh brave!" the girl laughed, and sat looking after him. "How cross he was!" she murmured, and reflected: "I like him cross. He was never so much a man. I suppose he has quarrelled with his father. I should! He is—he is worse than mother." To which flattered parent Mistress Nelly d'Abernon then rode home.

M. de Beaujeu and Mr. Healy had come to their rendezvous. "Ye Red Barne: by J. Ottaway: for man and beast." Mr. Healy read aloud from the sign. "Shall we stop and bait, Beaujeu?" Beaujeu, who was staring at the inscription, shrugged his shoulders.

"I would be the better of a dinner," said Mr. Healy, dismounting, and was surprised that Beaujeu showed no reluctance to enter nor any interest in aught inside. Also relieved.

At dinner Jack Dane found them; and Mr. Healy, rising: My friend, M. de Beaujeu, a French gentleman of the Imperial service, Mr. Dane."

"At your command, sir," says Beaujeu bowing. "I knew your uncle and honoured him." Jack Dane flushed.