

now, to put an end to the gaiety of her utter ignorance, that was harder to him to bear than the worst reproach. And even harder than that, the tender solicitude for his injured brow. How could he repulse her mock-imperious command to him to come under the hands of the surgeon ; her gentle, and indeed dexterous, handling of the slight wound he could easily have ignored ; her mock censure of his molestation of her darling bird—how without self-betrayal ? He had no heart to feign a light, jesting mood to answer hers. His safest course would be to let his best attempt towards a genial one pass for a churlishness just a shade beyond his morning's wont. For it was a common speech enough with her that his sulky lordship must needs break his fast before he could find a civil word to speak. And last night more wine than usual had gone to nourish his moroseness of the day to come.

"Where did you ride so fast this morning, Oliver mine ?" said she, as she attended to his wound. They had passed into the house, and were in the room that opened on the terrace, when she asked this question.

"How came you to know I rode at all ?" She had had to wait for his answer, but he did not wait for hers. "By the Long Park to the Swan's Mead, along by King's Theydon and Russet Cross. There is hay to cut s'ill in the Abbey meadows." 'This was true, of a sort. But had it not been for that ugly dream, he would have said : "Beyond the Mausoleum," not "By the Long Park."

Her answer came to his question, rather in the rear of the argument : "I felt you go, in my sleep, and was not of a mind to wake up to stop you. Then the tread of the horses on the turf beat into my dreams. Are you not hungry ?"

"Hungry enough. A ride betimes whets the appetite. . . . Breakfast on the cedar-lawn ? . . . Yes, that