

themselves. And they did; that is, they talked, and the captain spoke first.

"So you—you bear a grudge—don't you, Lavina?"

"Well, I guess if I owed you a very heavy one, I've got a good chance to pay it off now," she remarked, grimly.

He twirled his hat in a dejected way, and did not speak.

"You an officer in the Union Army?" she continued, derisively. "You a pattern of what a gentleman should be; you to set up as superior to these rough-handed miners; you to act as if this Government owes you a pension! Why, how would it be with you, Alf Leek, if I'd tell this camp the truth of how you went away, engaged to me, twenty-five years ago, and never let me set eyes on you since—of how I wore black for you, thinking you were killed in the war, till I heard that you had deserted. I took off that mourning quick, I can tell you! I thought you were fighting on the wrong side; yet if you had a good reason for being there, you should have staid and fought so long as there was breath in you. And if I was to tell them here that you haven't a particle of right to wear that blue suit that looks like a uniform, and that you were no more 'captain' of anything than I am—well, I guess Lorena Jane wouldn't have much to say to you, though maybe Mr. Overton would."

He grew actually pale as he listened. His fear of some one overhearing her was as great as his own mortification.

"But you—you won't tell—will you, Lavina?" he said pleadingly. "I haven't done any harm! I—"

"Harm! Alf Leek, you never had enough backbone to do either harm or help to any one in this world. But