

"I married him on July 11, 18—, at Egremont Church. There," pointing to Matt Pattison, "is the witness. Here is a copy of the license and the 'lines.' They are signed, 'Launcelot Sandal' and 'Ducie Latrigg.'"

"Confusion!"

"Eh? No, no! There's not a bit of confusion, Mr. Sandal. It is all as clear as the multiplication table, and there is nothing clearer than that. Launcelot Sandal married Ducie Latrigg; they had one son, Stephen Sandal, otherwise known as Stephen Latrigg: proofs all ready, sir, not a link missing, Mr. Sandal. When will you vacate? The squire is inclined to be easy with you, and not to back-reckon, unless you force him to do so."

"This is a conspiracy, Moser."

"Conspiracy! Eh? Ugly word, Mr. Sandal. An actionable word, I may say."

"It is a conspiracy. You shall hear from me through some respectable lawyer."

"In the meantime, Mr. Sandal, I have taken, as you will see, the proper legal steps to prevent you wasting any more of the Sandal revenues. Every shilling you touch now, you will be held responsible for. Also," and he laid another paper down, "you are hereby restrained from removing, injuring, or in any way changing, or disposing of, the present furniture of the Seat. The squire insists specially on this direction, and he kindly allows you seven days to remove your private effects. A very reasonable gentleman is Squire Sandal."

Without further courtesies they parted; and the deposed squire locked the room-door, lifted the various documents, and read them with every sense he had. Then he went to Sophia; and at that hour he was almost angry with her, although he could not have told how, or why, such a feeling existed. When he opened the door of the parlour, her first words were a worry over the non-arrival, by mail, of some floss-silks, needful in the bird's-nest she was working for a fire-screen.

"They have not come, Julius," she cried, with a face full of inquiry and annoyance.

"They? Who?"

"The flosses for my bird's-nest. The eggs must be in white floss."

"The bird's nest can go to Jericho, or Calcutta, or into the fire. We are ordered to leave Seat-Sandal in seven days."

"I would not be so absurd, Julius, so unfeeling, so ungentlemanly."

"Well, then, my soul," and he bowed with elaborate grace, "Stephen Latrigg, squire of Sandal-Side, orders us to leave in seven days. Can you be ready?"

She looked into the saue, mocking, inscrutable face, shrugged her shoulders, and began to count her stitches. Julius had many varieties of ill-humour. She regarded this statement only as a new phase of his temper; but he soon undeceived her. With a pitiless exactness he went over his position, and, in doing so, made the hopelessness of his case as clear to himself as it was to others.