

chimes waving bravely, "in having wronged you by . . . an unfortunate mistake. You have forgiven him, haven't you . . . let bygones be bygones? Can you do as much . . . for me?"

"Don't," he begged with sudden hoarseness — and there the mannersome insouciant Varney waved an easy hand and blew himself away, like the rascally light o' heels he was — "I have to ask forgiveness of you — not give it," he said.

"You have much to forgive. That day in the road — I was angry. I was not just . . . not fair. I am mortified to remember . . . what I said to you."

His heart contracted for the trouble in her voice; his spirit made obeisance to the courage which carried her so perfectly through that pretty suit for pardon; but for himself —

"There is not one thing — believe me — that your goodness can reproach itself for — not one thing for you to be sorry for. If you have forgiven me now — for all that you had to forgive — I go away quite happy."

His first easy composure, which far outmatched her own, had unsteadied her. His wasted and scarred face, which she had been quite unprepared for, had shocked her inexpressibly. And now there was this new thought knocking at the door of her mind — that he was going away quite happy.

"There was something else I wanted to tell you . . . if you could wait a moment . . . some news."

He turned toward her with a movement of pleasant interest, meant to verify his recent gallant promise;