

The Queen's Tragedy

the smoke rising from the burning house whence the new Queen had just made her escape.

Little by little more had come out. Master Manton had not said much himself, but Tom Bradshawe, his boy, had whispered that the Queen had made great promises, although his master had not been the first to bring her the news; that she had thanked him for what he had done and suffered, and asked him for his name. The arrow that pierced his arm had been shot by one of Northumberland's men in a drunken fit, who had staggered out beside the watch-fire at the noise of the galloping hoofs.

But the months went by, and the rebels had paid the forfeit for their fierce game, and the Queen had been crowned, and the arrow-wound long healed; Mary had slept at Cambridge on her return-journey, had sent for Master Manton and talked with him, and then had gone her way, to meet the smouldering sedition in London. This had burst into flame in Wyatt's rebellion, had been quenched by a strong hand and died down again. Yet no word had come for Master Manton.

And now it had come; and he was to go next day.

Some of those who heard the news in the College hall from Master Bacon's lips were not altogether displeased. It was pleasant to think that the little community had a finger in public affairs—the last connection of the kind had consisted in the removal from their jurisdiction of Physwick hostel, at the hands of King Henry—and it was not wholly unpleasant to one or two of the company to think that they had seen the last of Master Manton. He was a strange creature; they could understand neither his tendernesses nor his spasms of rage. He had made himself ridiculous more than once in his friendships, showing a compassion for queer persons that they could