

"If you strike him, I leave your house," exclaimed the young girl, throwing herself between them.

"You'll leave it with him, perhaps," cried the old gentleman, pointing to Landon with the whip, as he stood with folded arms upon the doorstep. "A penniless beggar of a cadet!"

"I blush for you, sir, as I never thought to blush for any of my kin," answered the girl, haughtily.

"You had better keep a blush or two for yourself, Miss Ella," rejoined the old gentleman; but bitter as were his words, he laid the whip aside as he spoke them, and there was a manifest lull in the tempest of his wrath. "What is it he wants? What the devil have you brought him here for?" continued he fretfully; "you don't know what these cadets are, Ella."

"I only know, sir, that this cadet has done me a great service. I brought him here—since you put it so—that he might receive the thanks of my uncle and guardian. Instead of which you have treated him—yes—in a manner very unbecoming an officer and a gentleman."

"No, no, no," replied the old fellow, in ludicrous expostulation, "nobody can ever say that of Gerald Juxon; though I may have been a little warm, may I be tried by court-martial if I ever treated man or woman that way. I am sure I am very glad to see Mr. What's-his name at Hawthorne Lodge, just once and away; and I beg to thank him—yes, sir, I beg to thank you, if you have done my niece good service, and I shall take dashed good care that you are not put to any inconvenience upon her account again."

Landon, with a good-natured smile, bowed his thanks for this handsome acknowledgment. The character of Colonel Gerald Juxon was not unknown to him, though he had never before had the privilege of his personal acquaintance. A "smart" artillery officer, and one who had served with no little distinction in the field, the colonel was yet shunned by the more respectable members of the regiment, for his fiendish temper, and reckless tongue. He had served, he was wont to say, "all the world over;" so that he must have served in Flanders, to which therefore may be attributed his inveterate use of bad language. Even in ladies' society, including that of his niece, of whom he was genuinely fond, he was unable wholly to divest himself of this bad habit. His nature was also said by some to be grasping, but this was denied by others; and certainly since Ella had come to reside with him—for whose accommodation he had left his barrack quarters and taken Hawthorne Lodge—this idiosyncrasy was not apparent. The fact was, though greedy after gain, he was lavish rather than otherwise with what he had, and especially lavish with the property of others. His private income was considerable, and that of his niece still larger, though neither