

"Hi!" protested an urgent voice. "Bide a bit."

The Englishman turned.

Simon was standing behind him, the picture of protest.

"Are you for drowning him, Mr. Joliff?" he protested.

"What's that to you?" scowled the Englishman.

Simon shifted, nibbled.

"Ye swore to crucify him," he said, and sniggered.

The Englishman breathed deep.

"Drowning's none good enough, eh?" he asked.

Simon, with sideways head like a coy child, tittered.

"A-well," he said, "may be crucifyin's the more laffable."

"Happen so," mused the Englishman, measuring the distance between Simon and himself.

"And it lasts longer," continued Simon, gathering courage.

"Happen it does," said the Englishman! "Here!" and held out the prisoner.

Simon slipped a yard back.

"What is it?" he cried.

"Kill him," said the Englishman. "And I'll crucify him."

"Kill him!" shrilled Simon, "and where will be the sport in crucifyin' the dead? Na," he cried, "there is little laffableness in that at all that I can see."

The Englishman regarded him.

"Art 'fear'd?" he scoffed.

Simon giggled.

"Minnie bid me not handle him," said he.

"Yo' dursena!" scoffed the Englishman. "A proper mak' o' man surely!" and turned in scorn.

"See here, Mr. Joliff!" urged Simon at his back.

"If you will crucify him as you swore, I will kill him," said Simon, "after just a bit," coaxingly.

The Englishman turned slow-eyed.

"Is that a bargain?" he asked.

Simon nodded.

"Strike hands on that!" said the Englishman, and came to him with huge frank hand stretched forth.