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*A Merry Tale of a Merry Time*

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and revealed the first gray streaks of the breaking light of day.

"Nay, do not tantalize me, Nell," besought the King, throwing himself upon the couch. "I am sad to-night."

The woman's forgiving heart was touched with sympathy. Her eyes sought his sadly beautiful face. She ran to him, fell upon her knees and kissed his hand tenderly.

"Tantalize my King!" she cried. "The day will be so happy; for I've seen you at the dawn." There was all the emotional fervour and pathetic tenderness which the great composer has compressed into the love-music of "Tristan and Isolde" in her voice.

"My crown is heavy, Nell," he continued. "Heaven gives us crowns, but not the eye to see the ending of our deeds."

"God sees them," said Nell. "Ah, Sire, I thank the Maker of the world for giving a crown to one whom I respect and love."

"And I curse it," cried the King, with