

the extreme: he did not even give him a sign of recognition.

‘Well, too,’ quoth Mr. Ford rudely. ‘I did not ask for you, did I? It’s the old man I want to see.’

‘You can’t see him,’ said Robert shortly. ‘Please say what you have to say, and go. There can be no welcome for you, sir, in this house.’

Mr. Ford absolutely glared, but somehow he felt afraid of Robert Hazell. He was quiet, but determination sat on every feature. The plotter and schemer knew in a moment that his reign was over.

‘Oh, there can’t, can’t there? And why not, pray? I’ve come to know the meaning of last night’s pretty business. I believe you all know more of it than you’ll admit: your high and mighty sister’—

‘If you mention my sister’s name again, I’ll kick you out of the house. I’m a man of my word,’ said Robert savagely.

Mr. Ford shifted uneasily from one foot to another, but his demeanour became quieter.

‘Well, them that did it will have their deserts. If that Becker doesn’t get seven years, there won’t be justice in the land. What’s the governor saying to it, eh?—a nice dish for his breakfast, wasn’t it? How does he like the sight he sees now from his bedroom window, instead of the thriving colony he was so proud of?’

‘My father is too ill to take much interest in anything,’ responded Robert. ‘You cannot see him. I must refer you to Mr. Atkins, the attorney, if you want to speak about legal business. In any other