

had to rise and drag him away by force. "Easy, easy, Sir John," said the Admiral with rough sympathy. "Be satisfied. He will get his deserts. Please God, if I had him on my ship an hour his back should be worse than Oates's ever was!"

Sir John's rage and disappointment were painful to witness, and trying even to men of the world. But what shall I say of the fury of the man at bay, who denounced and convicted in his moment of triumph saw, white-faced, his long-spun web swept easily aside? Doubtless he knew, as soon as he saw me, that the game was lost, and could have slain me with a look. And most men would without more ado have been on their knees. But he possessed, God knows, a courage as rare and perfect as the cause in which he displayed it was vile and abominable; and in a twinkling he recovered himself, and was Matthew Smith once more. While the room rang with congratulations, questions, answers and exclamations, and I had much ado to answer one half of the noble lords who would examine me, his voice, raised and strident, was heard above the tumult.

"Your Majesty is easily deceived!" he cried, his very tone flouting the presence in which he stood; yet partly out of curiosity, partly in sheer astonishment at his audacity, they turned to listen. "Do you think it is for nothing his Grace keeps a double in his house? Or that it boots much whether he or his Secretary went to meet Sir John? But enough! I have here! here," he continued, tapping his breast and throwing back his head, "that, that shall out-face him; be he never so clever! Does his double write his hand too? Read that, sir. Read that, my lords, and say what you think of your Whig leader!"

And with a reckless gesture, he flung a letter on the table. But the action and words were so lacking in respect for royal chambers that for a moment no one took